MAKING GOOD NEWS: WHAT EXPLAINS THE QUALITY OF COVERAGE OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT*

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When social movement organizations receive extensive newspaper coverage, why is it sometimes substantive and sometimes not? By "substantive," we mean coverage that reflects serious treatment of the movement's issues, demands, or policy claims. Scholars agree that the news media are key to movement organizations' influence, helping them alter public discourse and effect political change, but often find that protests are covered nonsubstantively. Employing insights from literatures on historical institutionalism, the social organization of the news, and the consequences of movements, we elaborate an "institutional mediation" model that identifies the interactive effects on coverage of news institutions' operating procedures, movement organizations' characteristics and action, and political contexts. Although movement actors suffer compound legitimacy deficits with journalists, the institutional mediation model identifies the openings news institutions provide, the movement organizational characteristics, the forms of collective action likely to induce substantive news treatment, and the political contexts that will amplify or dampen these effects. We derive four interactive hypotheses from this model, addressing the effects of organizational identities, collective action, and political contexts on news outcomes. We appraise the hypotheses with comparative and qualitative comparative analyses of more than 1000 individually coded articles discussing the five most-covered organizations of the 1960s U.S. civil rights movement across four national newspapers. We find support for each hypothesis and discuss the implications for other movement organizations and the current media context.

Michael Lipsky (1968) argued that relatively powerless groups often employ protest to gain influence, but also that protest is a flawed tool. Based on symbolic displays, protest relies on the news media to transmit a group's demands and issues to more powerful third parties. However, even when news organizations cover protest, they often do not cover it substantively (Earl, Martin, McCarthy, and Soule 2004; Gitlin 1980; McCarthy, McPhail, and Smith 1996; McLeod 2007; Ortiz, Myers, Walls, and Diaz 2005; Sobieraj 2011). Movement organizations often have been newsworthy for significant periods of time, including recent actors in the Occupy, Tea Party, Black Lives Matter, and alt-right/white supremacy movements (Amenta, Caren, Olasky, and Stobaugh 2009; Boydstun 2013; Seguin 2016), but movement organizations are able to get substantive coverage only sometimes, meaning having their demands and issues seriously discussed in the news (Amenta, Gardner, Tierney, Yerena, and Elliott 2012; Ferree, Gamson, Gerhards, and Rucht 2002; Gaby and Caren 2016; Koopmans 2004; Rohlinger 2007; Snow, Vliegenthart, and Corrigall-Brown 2007). So we ask these questions: When movement organizations receive extensive newspaper coverage, why are they sometimes able to transmit their demands and issues in news stories and sometimes not? More generally, under what conditions can movements alter institutional practices and outcomes that benefit power holders (Pierson and Skocpol 2002; Schneiberg and Lounsbury 2017)?

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We propose an institutional mediation model that explains when movement organizations will gain substantive news coverage, working from literatures on the consequences of movements and the social organization of the news (Amenta, Caren, Olasky, and Stobaugh 2010; Gans 1979; McCarthy et al. 1996; Schudson 2011; Uba 2009). As with political mediation models, we see institutions as mediating the influence of movement organization and action on news outcomes (Amenta 2006; Giugni 2007; King 2008). The first component of the model concerns the structure and procedures of news institutions. From the literature on the social organization of the news, we see news institutions as being organized in specific ways with rules about what constitutes political news. These rules marginalize movements, which suffer compounded legitimacy deficits in the view of journalists and usually produce nonsubstantive, "protest paradigm" coverage (McLeod 2007). However, news institutions also provide openings for movement organizations to break through this paradigm. The second component concerns movement organizations' characteristics and actions. To the extent that movement actors resemble and act like institutional political actors, while maintaining their movement form, we argue, the more likely they will be able to exploit these openings to achieve substantive news coverage. They can do so notably in action that goes beyond protest, including assertive political action and boycotts that will reduce movement organizations' legitimacy deficits with journalists and activate news processes that will bring substantive treatment. Less moderate organizations in goals and strategies will have better chances of substantive coverage by acting jointly with more moderate ones. Third, we argue that favorable political contexts will amplify the influence of legitimacy-increasing action. However, being acted upon or repressed by state authorities will aggravate movement actors' legitimacy deficits and forestall substantive news treatment.

We appraise hypotheses generated from the model using the same case as Lipsky—the 1960s U.S. civil rights movement—on which many theories of social movements are based (Andrews 2004; Luders 2011; McAdam 1982; Polletta 2002). Specifically, we analyze the extensive runs of coverage of five prominent organizations: the "Big Four"—the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)—and the Black Panther Party (Bloom and Martin 2013; Davenport 2010; Seguin 2016). These five were by far the movement's highest-profile organizations, accounting for over 80 percent of movement organization coverage in this period. But this coverage varied considerably in terms of substance, across both organizations and in articles. The Black Panther Party was rarely discussed substantively, whereas the NAACP and SCLC mostly were, though even these more moderate organizations were treated nonsubstantively in many articles.

Specifically, we appraise the model with data from the Political Organizations in the News (PONs) project, which encompasses complete coverage of national U.S. movement organizations in the most prominent national newspapers: the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Wall Street Journal*. Coverage includes discussions of organizations when they did and did not engage in contentious collective action. We analyze large-volume "runs" of coverage—when organizations remained continuously in the news for a significant period. Analyzing these runs allows us to focus on coverage's substance rather than its amount. We employ two main criteria of substance: whether the article published movement actors' demands or frames and whether the coverage was mainly issue-oriented, addressing, for instance, civil or voting rights. Each is key in movements' bids to influence the public sphere (Ferree et al. 2002; Iyengar 1991; Koopmans 2004; Snow and Benford 1988; Wouters 2015). We employ comparative and historical analyses across the organizations and qualitative comparative analyses (QCA) on articles. QCA is appropriate as we hypothesize multicausal pathways to substantive coverage (Ragin 2008; Schneider and Wagemann 2013). We find support for each hypothesis and discuss the implications for the current context.

INSTITUTIONAL MEDIATION: NEWS INSTITUTIONS, MOVEMENT ORGANIZATION AND ACTION, AND POLITICAL CONTEXTS

Scholarship shows that institutions are difficult to change and tend to reproduce themselves and power disparities, but also indicates institutional practices and outcomes can be altered to reduce these disparities (Pierson and Skocpol 2002; Schneiberg and Lounsbury 2017). In addition, social movements frequently prompt such change, but research shows that they can exert influence only under certain conditions (Amenta et al. 2010; Giugni 2007; King 2008; Luders 2010; McAdam and Su 2002). Scholars have analyzed openings for movement influence provided by political institutions, corporations, universities, and increasingly the news media (Amenta 2006; Arthur 2011; Ferree et al. 2002; Giugni 2007; King 2008; McAdam and Su 2002; Moore 2009; Rohlinger 2007; Snow et al. 2007; Soule and Olzak 2004; Soule 2009). Often movement influence comes through innovative action that addresses the specific openings presented by institutional contexts (Amenta 2006; Arthur 2011; King 2008). Yet, each institution has its own procedures of operation and provides different potential openings. In short, the influence of movement action is institutionally mediated, but the processes differ from institution to institution.

News coverage is a potential cultural consequence of movement actors as they seek to intervene in public debates, but decisions about whether and what to report are made by journalists in news organizations (Earl 2004). Also, movements cannot influence political debates, powerful third parties, and reference publics without substantive news coverage, which we view as having two major components. The first is whether an article presents an organization's demand, a central frame element often known as a "prescription" (Snow and Benford 1988) or a "claim" (Tilly 1999), aimed at a target deemed appropriate to grant concessions. Transmitting demands is crucial to contests over meaning and often conveys the movement actor's orientation toward a policy issue (Amenta et al. 2012; Ferree et al. 2002; Rohlinger 2007). Even if a published article downplays a demand, this frame element "resonates" or is amplified in the public sphere (Koopmans 2004). Second, we examine whether the article is mainly concerned with an issue relevant to a movement organization, which is similar to "thematic" coverage, and associates the organization with an issue (Iyengar 1991, 2011: 75-76; Wouters 2015).

The institutional mediation model is designed to explain such substantive coverage and has three main components. It first addresses the ways news institutions are structured and operate, identifying how they typically cover politics and movements, and thus the constraints and opportunities they hold for movement influence over coverage. The second component includes the movement actor characteristics and action that can best capitalize on opportunities for substantive coverage, or might forestall them. The third component comprises political contexts that amplify or reduce the influence of movement action on substantive news coverage.

News Institutions Usually Marginalize Movements, But Provide Openings for Influence

We start with how news institutions are structured and operate, given that these institutions make the final decisions on what counts as news, and how they typically address movement actors. We rely on the literatures regarding the social organization of the news and how news media select collective action and movement organizations for coverage (Earl et al. 2004; Gans 1979; McCarthy et al. 1996; Oliver and Maney 2000; Ortiz et al. 2005; Schudson 2011; Sigal 1973; Tuchman 1980). The social organization of the news concerns professional news organizations' forms, practices, and thinking concerning what counts as valuable "news" to their audiences (Schudson 2002, 2011). U.S. news organizations are typically commercial entities connected to political institutions through their professional missions and business models (Schudson 2011)—which center on reporting key political action and holding accountable political officials. Editors and reporters see as newsworthy events that are timely, with potential impact, novel, close in proximity to readers, exhibit conflict, or include prominent people. Although journalists act as gatekeepers, in writing articles journalists view themselves as

objective referees in coverage, "balancing" the two main sides of debates (Ferree et al. 2002; Gamson and Wolfsfeld; Gans 1979; Tuchman 1980). However, sometimes they also participate in debates themselves (Hallin 1984). They decide which actors and views get covered by way of conventions regarding what constitutes news and how to write specific sorts of articles.

In nationally oriented newspapers, political coverage dominates the news. It centers on the activities of institutional political officials, who exercise legitimate authority over the polity and make influential policy decisions, doubling their newsworthiness, and typically control political issues and public debates about them through the news media (Bennett 2007; Dahl 1971; Fishman 1980; Gamson and Wolfsfeld 1993; Gans 1979; Oliver and Maney 2000; Tuchman 1980). The parameters of these debates are usually taken for granted, especially in situations of policy monopoly (Baumgartner and Jones 1993). If there is contention over an issue, the two main sides being balanced are usually those of major political parties.

For parallel reasons, the news arena is slanted against movement actors (Ferree et al. 2002; Hallin 1984). Unlike institutional political officials, movement organizations are not elected or certified through political processes, and thus do not exercise any legitimate political authority in the Weberian sense. Their claimed constituency is usually far more extensive than their membership (McCarthy and Zald 1977; Skocpol 2003). Moreover, movement actors typically express views at odds with the mainstream of current political discourse and often engage in behavior outside the bounds of institutional politics (Benford and Snow 2000; McAdam 1982). Finally, movement organizations are usually not politically influential, further reducing the news value of their views (Giugni 2007). For all these reasons, journalists only sometimes find movement actors newsworthy and when they do often fail to cover them substantively and instead often feature them in crime-related reporting that focuses on threats to public order posed by protest (Bennett 2007; Gamson and Wolfsfeld 1993; Gitlin 1980; Oliver and Maney 2000; Sobieraj 2011). That journalists typically treat protest as analogous to crime is the key insight of the protest paradigm in media studies (McLeod 2007).

However, some openings for movement influence and substantive coverage appear in the news values and routines of media organizations. These openings derive from news institutions' focus on politics, interest in novelty and conflict, and concern for balance. Movement actors can exploit these institutional openings to gain substantive coverage. The second part of the model focuses on movement organizations, their characteristics and lines of action (Andrews and Caren 2010; Rohlinger 2015) that can help to reduce legitimacy deficits, but with a specific concern regarding how these characteristics and actions fit with news values and routines.

Movement Characteristics, Action, and Legitimacy Deficits with News Organizations

Gaining legitimacy is a key goal of organizations seeking political influence for groups with little power (McAdam 1982; Skocpol 2003), and we argue that movement actors need to reduce their compounded legitimacy deficits with journalists to gain substantive treatment. They can do so by way of forms and actions that will play on openings in news institutions provided by news rules and values, and that often depends on movement actors mimicking institutional political actors, seeking to preempt their functions, or targeting other actors that are less legitimate than elected officials. Movement organizations take different forms and engage in a wide variety of political actions beyond protest. The substance in their coverage will depend importantly on how well their forms and actions fit with the organizational forms and practices of news institutions, as we outline below.

We argue first that the more closely movement actors resemble institutional political actors in form, the more likely they are to be covered substantively (Andrews and Caren 2010; Elliott, Amenta, and Caren 2016; Rohlinger, Kail, Taylor, and Conn 2012). Devising collective action profiles that involve close engagement with institutional politics notably helps reduce legitimacy deficits with journalists, and engagement with political processes, ranging from school board elections to running candidates for office, signals political seriousness. In addition, scholars have found that ideologies, frames, and strategic profiles that resonate with social norms are more

appealing to the news media (Benford and Snow 2000). In contrast, espousing goals outside of mainstream values or violent tactics will marginalize an organization (Gamson and Wolfsfeld 1993; Lipsky 1968). Therefore, movement organizations with commitments to the political process, moderate ideologies, and nonviolence will have better chances at substantive coverage and fit better into news routines concerning politics. Moreover, extensive membership and organizational resources, such as a large budget, formal organization, national office, and media department, increase the possibilities of substantive coverage (Andrews and Caren 2010; Elliott et al. 2016; McCarthy and Zald 1977; Rohlinger et al. 2012; Skocpol 2003; Staggenborg 1988). These characteristics reduce the legitimacy deficits of these organizations as political actors.

But even these organizations will have to engage in specific types of action consistently to gain substantive coverage, mainly through engaging the political process directly or employing sanctions that go beyond symbolic protest, or both (Amenta et al. 2012; Luders 2010). One prominent type of such action is assertive political action, which is deemed the most politically influential for movement organizations according to the political mediation model (Amenta 2006). Assertive action directly engages politics by contesting the prerogatives of institutional political actors, typically policymaking, and employing sanctions to do so. It includes the fight for passage of movement-sponsored legislation and initiatives (Martin 2008), electioneering, such as running candidates for office or seeking to defeat political enemies and support friends, mass political meetings and conventions to devise policy (Amenta 2006), law-challenging litigation (McCammon and McGrath 2015), and direct actions that test the enforcement of laws (Piven and Cloward 1977). Assertive collective action is typically institutional, but most institutional collective action is too mild to qualify as assertive. For example, letter writing, petitioning, and behind-the-scenes lobbying are not assertive, as they do not typically challenge or sanction institutional actors (Sampson, McAdam, MacIndoe, and Weffer-Elizondo 2005). We argue that the coverage of assertive action will usually treat movement actors as a legitimate and relevant side of an issue, as it directly and seriously engages politics. It is difficult for journalists to avoid discussing a movement organization's demands or issues in articles about their legislation, litigation, candidates, endorsements, or conventions.

A second likely route to substantive coverage through movement action involves boycotts and strikes. Like assertive action and unlike protest, as Lipsky (1968) notes, boycotts and strikes involve applying sanctions directly, though often to nonpolitical targets (King 2008; Luders 2011). Such action plays on the balancing norms of journalism, as the grievances and demands of movement organizations are almost always going to constitute a side of the story in such action (Schudson 2011). Also, in such disputes, the movement organization's opponents are unlikely to be top state officials, which reduces the legitimacy deficits. In addition, businesses may be more vulnerable to boycotts due to potential losses of income or reputation (King 2011; Luders 2011).

Third, we argue that nondisruptive public relations, informational, or community-relations actions, such as press conferences, meetings with officials, or teach-ins, will be treated substantively when they are covered. These sorts of activities mimic activities of institutional political actors, who often seek to transmit messages through the news in this manner (Cook 1998). However, we suspect these actions will be covered only rarely and this may depend on the organization's status as being newsworthy (Seguin 2016).

Because less moderate movement organizations face greater legitimacy deficits, however, even these legitimacy-increasing actions may not be enough to produce substantive coverage. We argue that collective action will have a better chance to produce substantive articles for nonmoderate organizations when others, including larger and more moderate organizations, also engage in it, following research finding that protest is more likely to be covered when larger organizations are involved (Earl et al. 2004; Ortiz et al. 2005). These organizations will typically increase the legitimacy of the action and will improve the chances for substantive coverage for all organizations involved. As for protest proper, because it is largely symbolic and involves no real sanctions, we do not expect that it will improve chances for substantive coverage (Lipsky 1968). However, it similarly may be most productive of substantive coverage when undertaken by moderate organizations or, when not, through joint action.

However, we argue that some types of coverage will increase legitimacy deficits and lead to nonsubstantive coverage. Specifically, we expect no substance in articles in which movement organizations or members are being acted upon. These sorts of articles are typically initiated by state sanctions on movement actors and often involve coercive and overt repression (Earl 2011). When major social movement organizations and actors are the target of legislative investigations or trials, they will often appear extensively in the news. Organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan and the Townsend Plan have been subjected to congressional investigation, and many movement organizations and actors have suffered repression, direct and indirect, and sometimes commit crimes (Amenta 2006; Cunningham 2013; Earl 2011). For all these reasons, we argue that accounts of state repression, trials, arrests, and investigations will place movement actors on the defensive and discussions of the charges against them will prevent substantive coverage.

How Political Contexts Influence Relationships between Movements and the News

Finally, we argue that political contexts will influence the relationships between movement organizations and their action and the news. One of the key insights of political mediation models is that favorable political contexts will augment the political influence of the collective action of movement organizations (Amenta 2006; Giugni 2007; King 2008). Following these leads, we argue that such contexts will also amplify the influence of legitimacy-increasing collective action of movement organization on their substantive coverage by news organizations. Political contexts are processed by news organizations, and during times when a party backing a movement is in control journalists will be alert to the possibility of movement-influenced political change. That in turn will enhance the news benefits of political action by movement organizations. There is some support for this claim in the literature, as Amenta et al. (2012) found that the Townsend Plan consistently received demands in coverage when engaged in assertive action during favorable political contexts.

Working from the institutional mediation model, we provide a series of hypotheses regarding substantive coverage. Because movement organizations face legitimacy deficits with news organizations, most of the hypotheses concern how these organizations can reduce these deficits, by playing to openings provided by news institutions, and thereby gaining substantive coverage, though political influence is also addressed. The hypotheses are interactive and indicate multiple routes to consistent substantive coverage.

Hypothesis 1: *Moderate*, politically engaged, and better-resourced organizations will have better chances at substantive coverage. But they will also typically need to engage in hypothesized political *legitimacy-increasing action*, including *assertive political action, boycotts, or public relations*, to gain that sort of coverage consistently. These actions play to news institutions interest in politics or activate balance norms, or both.

Hypothesis 2: *Less moderate groups* will have a more difficult time to gain substantive coverage and will need to engage in both *legitimacy-increasing action* and in *joint action* with other movement organizations to gain substantive coverage consistently.

Hypothesis 3: Articles in which movement organizations are being *acted upon* will almost always produce a story without substance because news organizations will treat movement actors as being part of crime rather than political stories. This implies that not being acted on is a necessary condition for substantive coverage.

Hypothesis 4: *Favorable partisan political contexts* will amplify the influence of movement organizations' legitimacy-increasing action on substantive coverage, because news organizations will be more alert to the possibility of policy change backed by movements.

DATA AND METHODS

To assess the institutional mediation theory and the four hypotheses, we examine the newspaper coverage of U.S. movement organizations from the Political Organizations in the News (PONs) Project, which includes articles in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Wall Street Journal*. There are approximately 1500 qualifying movement organizations, with approximately one million article mentions across the newspapers. Here we seek not to measure some other underlying phenomena, such as contentious collective action (reviews in Earl et al. 2004; Ortiz et al. 2005), but directly focus on discourse surrounding movement organizations that appear in the news and have a complete population of these data. We focus on large "runs" of newspaper coverage, and an organization is credited with one when it is covered with no more than four days between mentions and with a volume of coverage—total article mentions—greater than or equal to 180, or about half a year of daily attention. Altogether, 322 runs of coverage across the four newspapers were identified.

We strategically selected six runs of the five most-covered civil rights organizations in the 1960s and examine their front-page coverage in the four newspapers, for several reasons. The NAACP, Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and Black Panther Party were each widely covered (capsule histories available online in appendix A, p. 49).[1] It aids comparability that they were from the same movement at around the same time. Moreover, from 1960 through 1970, the five organizations were the only ones in the movement that received runs of coverage and accounted for 82 percent of this movement's organizational coverage. Focusing on these runs partly controls for the amount of coverage each organization gained and helps us address why movement organizations that receive extensive coverage only sometimes receive substantive coverage, which is our focus. Simply randomly sampling all civil rights organizations would include many that received little coverage and thus would not provide leverage on our question or on other organizations that were extensively covered. Although the 1960s constitute a relatively brief period historically, during it political contexts varied dramatically: they became increasingly Democratic-dominated by the middle of the decade, before bringing reduced Democratic majorities in Congress and then a Republican White House at the end. Because the NAACP appeared in three runs that almost entirely span the 1960s, we examine all its front-page coverage from its middle 1960s run and sample its front-page coverage for the rest of the decade, making it possible to appraise the influence of political contexts, as in hypothesis 4. SCLC and SNCC had two runs each, and we examine the first of each. Although CORE had four runs, the first two, beginning in 1963, and the second two, beginning in 1966, were separated only by a few weeks. We combine the first two into an early 1960s run and the second two into a later 1960s run; we analyze each of these combined runs because CORE's ideology and tactical approach changed between them, giving us greater purchase on hypothesis 2. The Black Panthers had one run, beginning late in the decade, which we analyze (see table 1).

Table 1. *New York Times* Runs of Coverage for Five Civil Rights Organizations and Three Civil Rights-Related Organizations

SMO	*1960s Runs*	*Run Starts*	*Run Ends*	*Run Articles*	*Front Page Articles in Sample*
NAACP	3	01/05/63	09/18/65	2033	350
CORE (1963)	4	04/01/63	09/16/65	1276	290
SCLC	2	10/30/64	09/15/65	203	66
SNCC	2	12/17/65	01/16/67	293	102
CORE (1966)	4	04/12/66	11/25/67	449	91
Black Panthers	1	05/12/68	12/15/70	1790	213
Total Civil Rights	12			10452	1112

Our analyses are of substantive coverage in national newspapers, given their greater influence, rather than local or partisan newspapers (Davenport 2010; Earl et al. 2004; Rohlinger et al. 2012). The analyses are based on detailed coding of all front-page articles mentioning these organizations during their runs in all four newspapers. We dropped articles that were not significantly about the organization, inaccurately mentioned it, or were fewer than five paragraphs, yielding 1112 front-page articles. The outcome or dependent measure of substantive coverage relies on two aspects of its quality: whether the article presents an organization's demand, and whether the article is mainly concerned with an issue relevant to the organization (Iyengar 1991, 2011: 75-76; Koopmans 2004; Snow and Benford 1988; Tilly 1999; Wouters 2015). To count as mainly issue-related, most of the article had to address an issue the organization considered key to its mission. For most of the organizations of the movement, central issues were civil or voting rights, and any sort of racial discrimination. For SNCC after 1966, the issues also included the Vietnam War and African American self-determination. The Black Panther Party had a ten-point program (for details, see online appendix A). Each coder had a list of issues for each organization and there was almost complete agreement on the coding of them (see below). If an article includes a demand or discusses issues relevant to the organization, we label to the coverage as substantive.

As for potential causal influences, we first address whether a movement organization was moderate and nonviolent from monographs about them (see online appendix A). Among the civil rights organizations, we coded the NAACP and SCLC as moderate and nonviolent during their runs of coverage, and CORE as moderate and nonviolent during its first run. SNCC during its run and CORE in its second run adopted a more radical ideology and disavowed nonviolence, though largely remained nonviolent, and code them as not moderate for the QCA, though also examine them as being partly moderate. Unlike CORE or SNCC, the Black Panther Party began without any commitment to nonviolence or a moderate ideology. We code it as not moderate.

We then identified and coded several categories of contentious movement organizational action, including assertive political action, boycotts, public relations, and protest, including legal protest and civil disobedience (for details, see online appendix B).[2] These categories are mutually exclusive, addressing the main action, if any, taken by the sampled organizations as described in the article. Although research indicates that newspapers do not cover most movement collective action, when coverage occurs it is broadly accurate in describing that action (Earl et al. 2004). It should be noted that one third of the articles do not include contentious collective action by the organization covered (for details on these articles, see online appendix C).[3] Also, only about one quarter include protest, meaning that most action is of other types. We also coded for whether multiple organizations engaged in joint collective action, which could be any type. In addition, we coded whether movement organizations or state actors initiated an article, and articles initiated by state actors were coded for whether the organization or its members were being acted upon. We expect that these articles, mainly involving trials or investigations, would deflect substantive coverage, as indicated in hypothesis 3. We coded also for the number of paragraphs in an article. The authors, with the help of two students, coded the articles, and the Krippendorf's alpha was well above .80 for all measures.

We engage in two main types of analyses. First, we compare substantive coverage across the five organizations, providing a basic appraisal of the hypotheses. We then turn to article-level qualitative comparative analyses (QCA), which can address multiple combinations of causes leading to outcomes and appraise the four hypotheses directly (Ragin 2008; Schneider and Wagemann 2013). In this we follow in a tradition of scholarship on the consequences of movements, using QCA address to simultaneously the influence of aspects of movements and the contexts in which they contend (Amenta et al. 2009; Amenta et al. 2012; Bartley and Child 2014; Cress and Snow 2000; Giugni and Yamasaki 2009; McAdam and Boudet 2012).

COMPARATIVE ANALYSES

In analyzing coverage across the five African American rights organizations in the 1960s, we seek to answer the following questions: Did extensive coverage necessarily mean substantive

coverage? Did some organizations receive more substantive coverage than others? Is substance in coverage associated with the ideological and strategic orientations of the organizations or with the action they engaged in, as expected by the hypotheses?

To answer the first question, the main civil rights organizations received fairly extensive substantive coverage during their runs of attention, at least on the front page (see table 2). More than a third of the coverage in which a movement organization was mentioned mainly discussed a relevant issue and almost a third carried a demand. All told, slightly more than half of the front-page coverage in our analytical sample scored one on our indicator of substantive coverage, by including an extensive issue discussion or a demand, or both. Second, some organizations received far more substantive coverage than others. The SCLC and NAACP are at the top in terms of demands with 44 and 43 percent, respectively, far more than for the Black Panther Party, at the bottom with only 6.6 percent. The disparity is similar for attention to the organization's issues (see table 2.) The SCLC is the overall leader in substantive coverage, with 82 percent of its coverage including at least one of the two forms, followed by the NAACP, then the first and second CORE runs, and SNCC. The Black Panthers trail with 11 percent.

Overall, the more moderate organizations received more substantive coverage, as table 2 also indicates. Moderate organizations receive substantive coverage in 64 percent of front-page coverage during their high-profile years, significantly more than the organizations that started moderate and changed—SNCC and CORE during its second run—average 54.4 percent. The Black Panthers, which began nonmoderate, are far below at 11.3 percent.

Next, we address the types of action in which organizations were covered. In table 3, we divide the coverage into three types of movement action—assertive political action, boycotts, and public relations and press conferences, each of which we expect will be given substantive treatment when covered, as per hypotheses 1 and 2. By contrast, we expect a lack of substance in articles in which movement actors are acted upon, as per hypothesis 3. The final column summarizes substantive coverage. The organizations are arrayed in descending order according to their amount of assertive action, boycotts, and public relations, the most reliable sources of substantive coverage, according to our arguments. At the top of table 3 is the NAACP, which was covered in the context of assertive action about 31 percent of the time. It has the second most substantive coverage. Next is CORE's second run, which has 23 percent of its coverage in the assertive category and 28 percent of its coverage in public relations. We suspect it offset potential losses to substantive coverage due to its more radical identity with a more legitimacy-increasing action profile. Next is the SCLC, with 12 percent of its coverage in the assertive category, about nine percent in boycotts, and 14 percent in public relations and the most substantive coverage. Finally, the Black Panthers had the least favorable profile of action coverage and the least substantive coverage.

Table 2. Percent of Front-Page Coverage Featuring Demands, High Issue Attention, or Either, by Organizational Characteristics

Organization	*Demands*	*High Issue Attention*	*Demands or High Issue Attention*
NAACP	42.6	54.3	66.6
SCLC	43.9	74.2	81.8
CORE (1963)	39.7	31.4	56.9
Moderate	41.5	46.7	64.0
CORE (1966)	38.5	34.1	56.0
SNCC	25.5	40.2	55.9
Intermediate	31.6	37.8	54.4
Black Panthers	6.6	5.6	11.3
Not Moderate	6.6	5.6	11.3
Total	33.1	37.3	52.2

Table 3. Percentage of Coverage of Organizations Featuring Selected Collective Action or Being Acted On and Substantive Coverage

SMO	*Assertive Action*	*Boycott/ Strike*	*Public Relations*	*Acted On*	*Substantive Coverage*
NAACP	31.1	5.4	17.7	1.1	66.6
CORE (1966-1967)	23.1	0.0	27.5	0.0	56.0
SCLC	12.1	9.1	13.6	4.5	81.8
CORE (1963-1965)	13.4	5.5	15.2	3.1	56.9
SNCC	13.7	5.9	6.9	9.8	52.9
Black Panthers	2.8	0.0	5.2	23.9	11.3
Overall	17.7	4.2	14.2	6.9	52.2

QUALITATIVE COMPARATIVE ANALYSES AND DISCUSSION

We turn to QCA, which can appraise the combinational hypotheses at the article level. We expect that *Moderate* organizations will have easier routes to substantive coverage, in that they will not have to engage in joint action, but will typically need to engage in one of three types of legitimacy-increasing actions, as indicated in hypothesis 1. This measure scores one for the NAACP, SCLC, the first run of CORE, and zero for the Black Panther Party, as well as for SNCC and the second run of CORE. (For details and robustness checks, see online appendix B.) *Assertive/Boycott/PR* is a combined measure scoring one if an article reports mainly on assertive action, a boycott, *or* public relations. We combine them because they are expected to work in causally similar ways and doing so reduces the number of causal conditions (Ragin 2008; Schneider and Wagemann 2013). Each action component is expected to increase legitimacy and in combination with other measures produce substantive coverage. *Joint Action* scores one for when the article is both about the sampled organization's action and at least one other movement organization's action; the measure cuts across types of action. Similarly, non-moderate groups are expected to be more likely to need joint action to gain substantive coverage through assertive political action, boycotts, or public relations, as specified by hypothesis 2. By contrast *Acted on*, which scores one for articles in which the organization is acted on, is expected to deflect substantive coverage, according to hypothesis 3.

Here we report the "intermediate" QCA results, which solve for easy counterfactuals—counting missing rows as associated or not with the outcome—by using theoretical criteria (Ragin 2008). We follow standard procedure, using major breaks in the truth tables close to the conventional .80 standard of consistency to identify positive rows, though without ever dropping below .75 (Ragin 2008; Schneider and Wagemann 2013). (For the truth tables and the breaks in them, see online appendix B.) In our results, we report consistency, which indicates the degree to which cases with a given combination of causal conditions constitute a subset of the cases with the outcome, and addresses goodness of fit. We also report coverage, which indicates the degree of overlap between the cases with the causal combination and those with the outcome, constituting the percent of the outcome accounted for or explained by the combination (Ragin 2008). For the initial results, we count rows as present if there are four or more cases in them. We employ the R package for QCA (Thiem and Dusa 2014). In preliminary regression analyses, each causal measure has a significant coefficient in the expected direction (Amenta, Elliott, Shortt, Tierney, Türkoğlu, and Vann 2016).

The four-measure QCA results provide two solution terms (or causal routes) that largely support hypotheses 1, 2, and 3. Each solution term includes the measure of Assertive, Boycott, or Public Relations action, supporting hypothesis 1, though this condition is not, strictly speaking, necessary (see online appendix B). The first solution term also includes Moderate, covers 44 percent of the outcome, and is 83 percent consistent with it. This causal route does not require Joint action, suggesting that moderate organizations face one less hurdle to gain

substantive coverage, as anticipated by hypothesis 1. The second solution term includes Joint and covers 18 percent of the outcome at an 88 percent level of consistency. This causal route does not include Moderate, supporting hypothesis 2 by indicating that nonmoderate organizations require Joint activity to be fairly assured of substantive coverage. Each term includes the absence of Acted On, providing some support for the contention in hypothesis 3 that it deflects substantive coverage, though the absence of this measure is also not found to be strictly necessary (see online appendix B). Together the solutions cover 48 percent of the outcome at a level of 82 percent consistency (see table 4). In short, moderate organizations received substantive treatment through the three hypothesized types of action, and nonmoderate organizations also had to act jointly in order to be treated similarly. The second solution term of course includes moderate organizations, but they also have the first, individual causal route to substantive coverage.

We next added measures of *Protest,* including *Legal Protest* and *Civil Disobedience*. We do not consider protest as likely to lead to substantive coverage as the other forms of action, given protest's remote connection to institutional politics and its lack of sanctions (Lipsky 1968), but speculate above that protest may similarly produce substantive coverage when undertaken by moderate organizations or through joint action. Because protest is so prominent in the literature, we explore this possibility by entering individually overall protest, and then its components, legal protest, and civil disobedience. But only the latter improved the explanation (see table 4). The solution replicates two of the solution terms from the previous QCA, but adds a third term that involves the simultaneous presence of Civil Disobedience and Joint (as well as the absence of Acted On). This causal route covers about three percent of the positive cases, increasing the overall coverage to 51 percent, at the same level of consistency. This result indicates that civil disobedience produces substance in coverage best during the involvement of multiple organizations. Under certain conditions, civil disobedience can break through the protest paradigm and be treated substantively.

Table 4. Intermediate QCA Solutions for Substantive Coverage, Five Civil Rights Organizations

Recipe	Consistency	Coverage	Unique Coverage
*Four Measure Analysis**			
MODERATE*ASSERTIVE/BOYCOTT/PR	0.826	0.442	0.296
ASSERTIVE/BOYCOTT/PR*JOINT	0.876	0.182	0.036
Total	0.822	0.478	
*Five Measure Analysis**			
MODERATE*ASSERTIVE/BOYCOTT/PR	0.826	0.442	0.296
ASSERTIVE/BOYCOTT/PR*JOINT	0.876	0.182	0.036
CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE*JOINT	0.850	0.029	0.029
Total	0.824	0.508	
Five Measure Analysis for Absence of Substantive Coverage			
moderate*assertive/boycott/pr*joint	0.802	0.397	0.305
ACTED ON	0.870	0.126	0.034
Total	0.801	0.431	

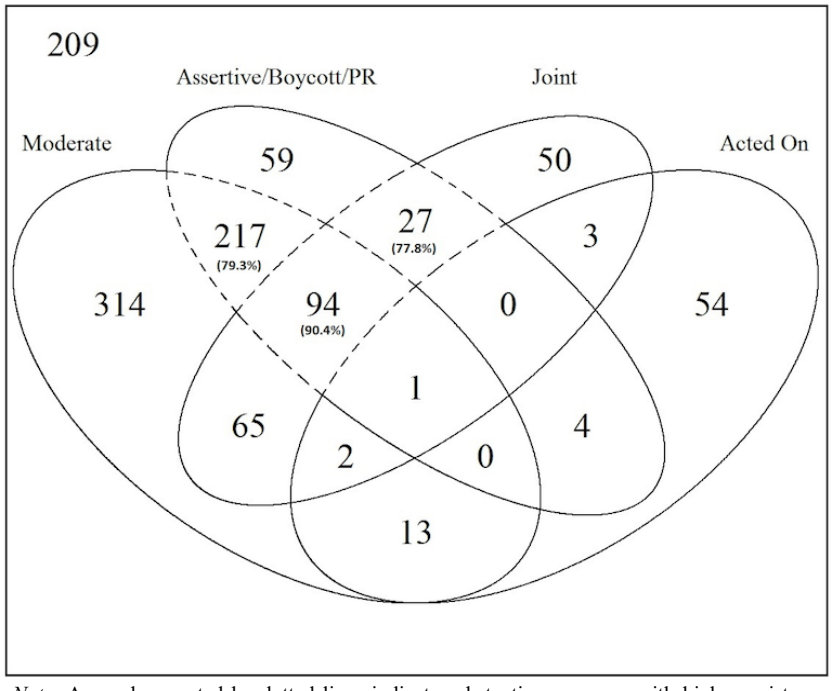
*Each term also includes the absence of Acted On.

The interactive influences can be more easily seen by way of Venn diagrams. In the initial four-measure results, three areas of overlap indicate the combinations of causes that reliably yield substantive coverage: where Assertive/Boycott/PR overlaps with Moderate and with Joint (see figure 1). Moreover, any intersection of the sets with Acted On yields spaces with no substantive coverage. When we add Civil Disobedience (while dropping Acted On for a clearer picture), the diagram shows that the intersection between the set of Civil Disobedience and Joint also yields substantive coverage consistently, for moderate and not moderate organizations (see figure 2).

QCA can also examine influences that are not symmetrical—that the determinants of the presence of an outcome will not necessarily parallel those regarding its absence (Ragin 2008). Hypothesis 3 expects Acted On to be almost always disqualifying to substantive coverage, and this contention can be appraised further through these absence analyses. For the four-measure truth table, there were five rows with sufficient cases in them that consistently included no substance (see online appendix B.) Reducing them provides two solution terms that cover 41 percent of the outcome, at the 81 percent level of consistency. One solution includes the simultaneous *absence* of *Moderate*, *Joint* action, and *Assertive/Boycott/Public Relations* action. This indicates that the joint absence of specific action types that tend to promote substance will also routinely lead to a lack of substance. The other includes simply the presence of *Acted On*, which by itself constitutes a causal route to a lack of substantive coverage. This provides additional support for hypothesis 3.

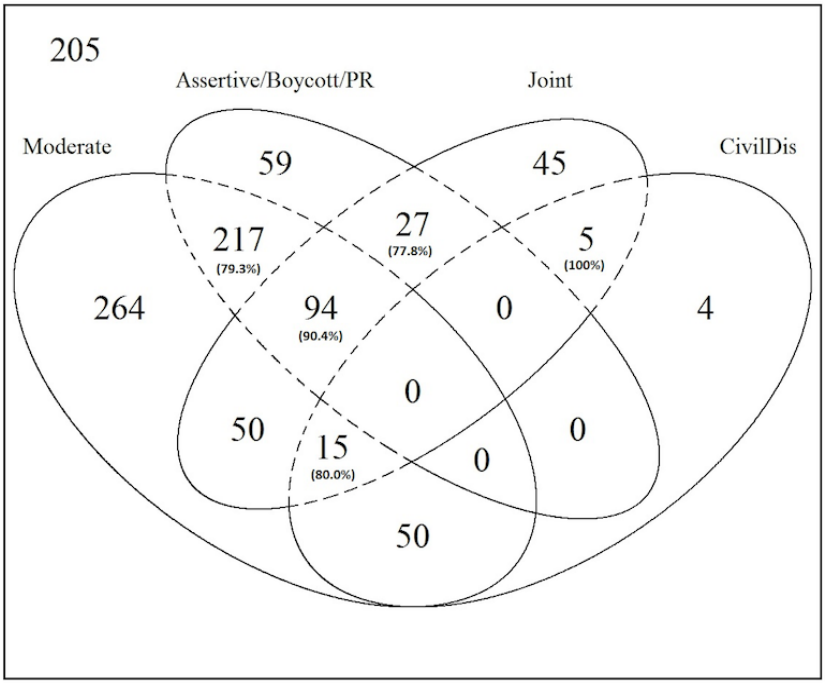
We next address hypothesis 4, which holds that favorable political contexts can amplify the influence of movement actors and actions on substantive coverage, by analyzing the NAACP. Unlike the other organizations, it received extensive press attention across the entire decade, during a variety of different political contexts. The QCA relies on different measures. We drop Moderate, which does not vary, and Acted On, which only rarely applied to the

Figure 1. Venn Diagram of Four Measure QCA Results for Substantive Coverage: Moderate, Assertive/Boycott/PR, Joint Action, and Acted On



Note: Areas demarcated by dotted lines indicate substantive coverage with high consistency (with the consistency percentages in parentheses).

Figure 2. Venn Diagram of Five-Measure QCA Results for Substantive Coverage: Moderate, Assertive/Boycott/PR, Joint Action, Civil Disobedience, and Acted On



Note: Areas demarcated by dotted lines indicate substantive coverage with high consistency (with the consistency percentages in parentheses). Acted On does not appear in the figure, but all areas indicated include the absence of Acted On.

Table 5. Intermediate QCA Solutions for Substantive Coverage, NAACP

Five Measure Analysis			
Recipe	Consistency	Coverage	Unique Coverage
ASSERTIVE	0.899	0.421	0.421
BOYCOTT*joint	0.818	0.039	0.039
CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE*JOINT	1.000	0.013	0.013
PR*JOINT	0.947	0.077	0.077
Total	0.901	0.549	
Six Measure Analysis			
ASSERTIVE	0.899	0.421	0.421
BOYCOTT*democratic	0.900	0.039	0.039
CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE*JOINT	1.000	0.013	0.013
PR*JOINT	0.947	0.077	0.030
PR*DEMOCRATIC	0.829	0.124	0.077
boycott*JOINT*DEMOCRATIC	0.931	0.116	0.021
Total	0.883	0.648	

NAACP. We enter individually Assertive Action, Boycotts, and Public Relations for a sharper identification of their influences, along with Civil Disobedience. Each of the four measures are mutually exclusive. We also include the measure Joint. After running the analyses with these measures, we test the hypothesis by adding the measure *Democratic* dominance, which scores one for the period after the election of the Democrat Lyndon Johnson in 1964 and when northern Democrats dominated Congress, through 1966, when they suffered major losses in midterm elections (see online appendix B).

The results largely support hypothesis 4. The analysis of the NAACP without the Democratic measure provides results similar to that for all the organizations, with each action measure appearing in a solution term (see table 5). Assertive and Boycott appear in solution terms individually, whereas Public Relations and Civil Disobedience combine with Joint. Assertive action by itself accounts 41 percent of the outcome, with the group as a whole covering 55 percent of the outcome as at a 90 percent level of consistency. Adding Democratic improves the coverage to 65 percent, at a similar, 88 percent, level of consistency. The presence of the Democratic measure appears in two solution terms, combining with Public Relations and Joint Action. (The results are similar when the Democratic measure is calibrated as a fuzzy set—see online appendix B.) Though limited to one organization, the results suggest that during highly favorable regimes, additional causal routes to substantive coverage appear.

All in all, the QCA provides key support for each of the four hypotheses. For moderate organizations, hypothesized legitimacy-increasing action through political engagement and/or sanctions led to substantive coverage, supporting hypothesis 1. For nonmoderate organizations, the only consistent path to substantive coverage was through joint action in the context of legitimacy-increasing action, supporting hypothesis 2. The absence of being acted on appears in all solutions for substantive coverage, and for the absence of substantive coverage being acted on is a sufficient condition. Both results lend support to hypothesis 3. Finally, although our appraisal of hypothesis 4 is limited to one moderate organization, a Democratic-dominated regime amplified the influence on substantive coverage of two types of legitimacy-increasing action.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Movement actors seek to transform political debates through the news, but even the most covered organizations only sometimes are able to gain substantive coverage, airing their demands and issues (Amenta et al. 2012; Ferree et al. 2002; Gaby and Caren 2016; Koopmans 2004; Rohlinger 2007; Snow et al. 2007). Our institutional mediation model seeks to explain when they receive substantive coverage. It starts with the institutional features of the news media, which make all coverage decisions, in interaction with movement characteristics and collective action, and the political contexts in which they act. Institutional features of the news media make journalists routinely deflect the views of movement organizations. Movement actors suffer compounded political legitimacy deficits, as they are not elected through state political processes, have views that tend to diverge from those of the main parties, and often engage in noninstitutional action. Also, they are not routinely influential in politics. However, we also identify aspects of the standard practices of news institutions, including their concerns with politics, novelty and conflict, and balance, which provide openings for movement actors to influence the substance of the news.

We argue that movement organizations can become more legitimate political actors in the eyes of journalists through organizational characteristics. Organizations more moderate in ideologies, claims, and action profiles will have greater chances at substantive coverage when in the news. Moreover, some types of action play well into news routines and will lead to movement actors being treated as a legitimate side of story, when covered. These types include assertive political action, in which movement actors engage and contest political processes, boycotts, which employ legitimate sanctions against specific targets, and public relations events like press conferences, which mimic institutional action. Less moderate organizations may have to engage in joint action to get views across reliably. By contrast, when movement organizations are being

acted upon, as by trials and investigations, that will undermine their chances for substantive treatment. We argue, finally, that favorable political contexts influence the relationship between movement action and substantive coverage, by improving the chances that legitimacy-increasing actions will lead to substantive coverage.

We develop four hypotheses from this model and appraise them by way of analyzing long strings of 1960s coverage on the Big Four civil rights organizations (the NAACP, SCLC, CORE, and SNCC) and the Black Panther Party—which accounted for the vast majority of civil rights organizational coverage—in four major newspapers. We qualitatively code front-page articles from these runs and find that these organizations placed a demand or saw one of its issues addressed in about half of their front-page coverage across the four newspapers. But substantive coverage also varied greatly across organizations and articles. We address both why some organizations were treated better than others and why some articles were more substantive. Comparative analyses generally support our hypotheses about organizations and action. Moreover, in the QCA we found that moderate organizations benefited especially in articles that included assertive political action, boycotts, or public relations. The routes to reliable substantive coverage were more difficult for the nonmoderate organizations, as expected, and we found that for them joint movement action was a key component. Being acted on in coverage was enough by itself to lead to the absence of substantive coverage. A more favorable political climate improved the productivity of some legitimacy-increasing lines of action undertaken by the NAACP. Generally, the results support the arguments of Lipsky (1968) that protest may not be a reliable way to transmit demands and messages. However, we identify other action—assertive political action, boycotts, and public relations—that works better.

The news media have been transformed in the last two decades, with the rise of twenty-four-hour cable news channels, Fox News and right-wing radio, and the ubiquity of the Internet and other electronic means of communication. The concomitant decline in ad revenue for the print news media has killed many newspapers and altered the delivery of news, such as the Web transformations of *Newsweek* and *U.S. News* (Pew 2015). The decline in journalists mean that more articles are simply initiated by political institutional press releases (Pew 2010). Social media is a key gatekeeper to news (Schudson 2011). And the balance norm, which movements can manipulate, has been increasingly subject to question by journalists (Sullivan 2017). All that said, the national newspapers remain the central institutions of newsgathering and retain great legitimacy, and the folding of regional newspapers heightens the importance of the remaining news organizations (Pew 2010; Schudson 2011). The prestige press including the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* still sets the agenda for other news outlets, and mainstream news organizations constitute the top digital news entities (Pew 2015). Newspaper coverage has been shown to influence recent European political agendas, aid the mobilization of the Tea Party and mediate the discursive influence of Occupy, each of which appeared in the news intensively (Banerjee 2013; Gaby and Caren 2016; Vliegenthart, Walgrave, Wouters, Hutter, Jennings, Gava, Tresch, Varone, Grossman, Breunig, Brouard, and Chaques-Bonafont 2016). The current mainstream news environment may provide more opportunities for substantive movement coverage, including through features and news analyses, on which news organizations increasingly focus (Schudson 2011).

Though addressing events from half a century ago, our results have some current applications. This sort of explosive or path-dependent coverage is not uncommon, as there were more than 300 runs of such coverage for movement organizations in the twentieth century (Boydstun 2013; Seguin 2016). Recent years have seen the extensive coverage of organizations associated with the Tea Party and Occupy, and more recently with Black Lives Matter and the so-called alt right. Most movements are represented in the news by only a handful of organizations at any given time (Amenta et al. 2009; Banerjee 2016; Gaby and Caren 2016). And although there are now many more opportunities for movements to get attention, through the Internet and social media, movement actors continue to seek mainstream and especially prestige press coverage, given its wide circulation among elites, its amplification properties, and its legitimacy-conferring advantages (Koopmans 2004). Some lessons from the most prominent civil rights movement organizations in their heyday should be applicable to contemporary and past movement organizations that simi-

larly find themselves repeatedly in the news and which seek to transmit demands and insert new views of issues into the public sphere. It is almost impossible for movement actors to get across messages while being acted on or repressed. Protest may gain attention, but after that it may be valuable to act jointly and launch targeted boycotts. In periods when political allies are ascendant, it may be productive to stage press conferences and high-profile meetings. And most of all, to insert new demands and issues into the public sphere, movement actors should engage politically and test the prerogatives of institutional actors in all aspects of the political and policymaking processes.

NOTES

[1] Online appendices are available at https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/5qe2r/. Appendix A begins on page 49
[2] Appendix B is available online beginning on page 56: https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/5qe2r/
[3] Appendix C is available at https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/5qe2r/ starting on page 67.

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