

Why US Movements Received Newspaper Coverage

All the Right Movements? Mediation, Rightist Movements, and Why US Movements Received Extensive Newspaper Coverage

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Under which conditions do social movements receive coverage by the mainstream news media? News coverage matters for movements for political, cultural, and organizational reasons, but only rarely have scholars analyzed the coverage of movements comparatively and at the movement level. To address the question, we apply a political mediation model of the influence of movements to professional news media, using ideas from the social organization of the news perspective. From this model, we hypothesize four main multicausal paths to extensive coverage for movements. These involve the joint occurrence of two specific movement characteristics—disruptive capacities and extensive organization—and two specific political contexts—unified partisan regimes and enforced policies. Working from scholarship that argues that rightist movements have different determinants, we also devise hypotheses for their coverage. These hypotheses are appraised through qualitative comparative analyses on an updated Political Organizations in the News data set. The latter includes information on all the coverage of national US movement organizations in four major national newspapers across the twentieth century. These analyses provide extensive support for the mediation model and support claims that rightist movements have separate and in some ways more difficult routes to extensive news coverage.

Introduction

Under which conditions do social movements receive coverage by the mainstream news media? Newspaper coverage is a potential cultural consequence of movements (Earl 2004). Movements often seek to change ways of thinking, cultural codes, and public discourse, and can do so through the news. Newspaper coverage promotes other key goals of movements, including increasing public

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attention to their issues, gaining legitimacy and support, and affecting political change (Andrews and Caren 2010; Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Gamson and Wolfsfeld 1993; Koopmans 2004; Lipsky 1968; Vliegenthart, Oegema, and Klandermans 2005). In short, the coverage of movement actors touches on issues not only regarding social movements and the news media, but also those surrounding social problems, politics, and culture.

This paper seeks to identify the conditions behind extensive newspaper coverage for movements. It advances in several ways over previous research. First, we elaborate and appraise a mediation model of movement influence over news media. This model relies on the logic of political mediation models of movement influence (Amenta 2006; Giugni 2007), regarding the interaction of movement and political contexts, and incorporates insights from the social organization of the news perspective (Schudson 2002, 2011), which focuses on how journalists work. We argue that combinations of movement characteristics, including disruptive capacities and organizational strength, and political contexts, including unified partisan regimes and favorable policies, produce extensive coverage. In addition, we specify and analyze different causal paths to extensive newspaper coverage for rightist movements. These movements have been argued to have goals and determinants that differ from those of left-wing or center social movements (Martin 2013; McVeigh 2009; reviews in Blee and Creasap 2010; Lo 1982) and receive less news coverage overall (Amenta et al. 2012). We argue that rightist movements, unlike others, do not reap coverage benefits from policy.

To address the question and appraise these arguments, we employ new data from the Political Organizations in the News (PONs) data set. These data include the newspaper coverage of all covered social movement organizations in the 100 years of the twentieth century in the *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *New York Times*. We employ qualitative comparative analysis (QCA), which is appropriate to appraise configurational and multicausal arguments (Ragin 2008), such as those of the political mediation model. The political mediation model holds that multiple conditions need to coincide to produce influence for movements and that there may be more than one route to influence (Amenta 2006; Giugni 2007).

The results provide extensive support for a mediation model of movement news coverage. The analyses find four multicausal mediation routes to extensive coverage, including both movement and contextual features, as expected by the mediation model. Adding the measure of rightist movements indicates that policy gains are not important for their coverage, also as expected. This latter finding both supports our arguments and helps to solve the puzzle as to why rightist movements receive less coverage overall. We conclude by drawing implications for further research.

Motivation and Previous Research: The Coverage of Movements

Movement organizations provide critical resources to seek social change (McCarthy and Zald 1977), help to construct political identities and interests (Skocpol 1992),

allow challengers to survive hard times (Staggenborg 1988), and spur collective civic engagement (Sampson et al. 2005). Scholars agree that the attention of the mass news media is critical to the struggles of these organizations (Ferree et al. 2002; Koopmans 2004). Gaining coverage is also an indication that organizations are seen as legitimate spokespersons for the groups or causes they claim to represent (Berry 1999; Gamson 2004). News coverage increases their support (Banerjee 2013; Vliegenthart, Oegema, and Klandermans 2005) and helps movements influence public opinion and the policy agenda (Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Lipsky 1968; Walgrave et al. 2008). The coverage of movements matters thus to those studying movements (Vliegenthart et al. 2005), cultural and discursive change (Ferree et al. 2002), and the identification of social problems and the development of public policy (Walgrave et al. 2008).

There has been extensive research regarding why and when protest is covered by mainstream, professional newspapers (see Earl et al. 2004; Ortiz et al. 2005). Although *all* movement coverage matters for movement actors, there has not been as much research on why movement actors receive coverage in newspapers. Movement organizations frequently appear in articles about collective action, but are also often covered in reacting to proposed legislation, school board meetings, court decisions, and other events. Moreover, often movement actors appear in arts, sports, or business coverage. Research on the newspaper coverage of movement actors typically asks why some organizations get covered more frequently than others and finds that smaller and protest-oriented organizations do not get covered as extensively as well-resourced and moderate organizations (Andrews and Caren 2010; Corbett 1998; Elliott et al. 2016; Rohlinger et al. 2012). Yet the determinants of coverage may differ between individual organizations and movements. Protest-oriented organizations in some movements may not be covered as frequently, but may in brief bursts be covered extensively and may also provide coverage opportunities for the well-resourced organizations (Gamson and Wolfsfeld 1993), and thus increase the coverage of the movement as whole. Furthermore, scholars have found that conservative and right-wing movements (Blee and Creasap 2010; cf. Tilly 1978 and van Dyke and Soule 2002 on “reactive” movements) have different determinants (McVeigh 2009; Martin 2013) and media strategies (Fetner 2008; Rohlinger 2015) from those of nonright movements and are covered less frequently (Amenta et al. 2012; Rohlinger 2015). But no scholarship has compared the determinants of the news coverage of rightist and nonright movements.

Here we seek to fill these gaps. We theorize and analyze the influence of interactions between movement characteristics and political contexts on newspaper coverage at the movement level (Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Elliott et al. 2016; Ferree et al. 2002; Oliver and Maney 2000; Rohlinger 2007). We also theorize and analyze the influence of rightist movements on coverage, addressing the conditions under which they are likely to gain extensive coverage.

The Social Organization of the News and Mediation Models

To theorize the influence of movements on newspaper coverage, we build on the political mediation model of movement consequences (Amenta 2006;

Giugni 2007), employing insights from the literature on the social organization of the news (Schudson 2011). In this view, the news media are politically oriented, designed to provide public information about politics and government (Schudson 2011), based on professional standards regarding what constitutes “news” (Gans 1979; Tuchman 1978). These standards focus on timeliness, an event’s impact, novelty, currency, or degree of conflict, the prominence of the people involved, and an event’s proximity to readers (Mencher 2008). These newspaper decision-making processes strongly influence the opportunities for the coverage of movements.

Following political mediation thinking, we argue that movement coverage is jointly influenced by the characteristics and actions of the movements themselves and by the political contexts in which movements act (see reviews in Amenta et al. 2010; Giugni 2007). The political mediation model is a “joint effects” one, in which internal movement characteristics and actions combine with favorable political contexts to produce influence and favorable outcomes for movements (Giugni 2007). In this way, the political mediation model builds on arguments such as the resource mobilization model (McCarthy and Zald 1977), which focuses on internal movement characteristics, and the political process model (McAdam 1982), which focuses on political contexts. For movements to gain extensive influence or favorable outcomes, a few favorable internal movement and external political characteristics may have to coincide (Amenta 2006). We hypothesize similarly that specific movement characteristics and actions need to combine with favorable political contexts to produce extensive movement coverage. Because newspaper coverage is generated differently than political outcomes, however, these movement characteristics and political contexts are not always the same as those expected to bring political influence. We specify these conditions next. In addition, as we indicate below, we expect processes of media influence to work differently for rightist movements as they typically have different goals.

We address two characteristics of movements and two political contexts that we expect will influence coverage. The two movement characteristics are disruptive capacities and an extensive organizational presence. Following political mediation models, we argue that these movement characteristics will have to coincide with favorable contextual ones to produce extensive media coverage. The two favorable political contexts include a unified partisan regime and government policy that favors a movement’s constituency. We discuss these movement characteristics and political contexts individually below, before addressing how we expect them to combine to yield extensive newspaper coverage.

One characteristic of movements that matters for their coverage is their capacity and propensity to engage in disruption. Disruption is something that newspapers attend to, especially to the degree that is dramatic and includes many people (Mencher 2008). Research shows that newspapers are far more likely to cover protest events that are disruptive or violent (McCarthy et al. 1996; Oliver and Myers 1999; see review in Earl et al. 2004). Disruption can also produce concessions for movements (Piven and Cloward 1977). Moreover, although research suggests that with specific movements protest-oriented organizations

are not as well covered as ones that rely on insider tactics and that have greater resources (Andrews and Caren 2010; Elliott et al. 2016), disruption will often be covered and sometimes provide occasions for coverage for more established organizations (Gamson and Wolfsfeld 1993). Thus we argue that disruptive capacities in a movement are likely to lead to coverage for a movement as a whole, if not always for disruptive actors.

We also expect newspapers to cover movements according to their *size and organizational presence*. Journalists seek to cover extensive social phenomena (Gans 1979), and this criterion would include instances when many organizations are addressing a social issue. Also, the research on protest events indicates that they are more likely to be covered in newspapers if a large organization is involved in them (Oliver and Maney 2000; review in Earl et al. 2004). The idea that advantages in coverage will go to movements with many organizations and the resources they bring is also consistent with the resource mobilization theory of movements (McCarthy and Zald 1977) and the movement infrastructures (Andrews 2004) perspective on the political impact of social movements. From both perspectives, movements are expected to have influence in relation to available organizational resources, including the organizations in the movement itself.

We turn next to the influence of political contexts and argue that movements' news coverage is boosted by the rise of *unified partisan regimes of the left or right*. It is typically argued that partisan regimes that are working in the same ideological direction as movements, or "allies" (for instance, a liberal Democratic regime and the abortion rights movement), will spur them. In contrast, partisan regimes pushing against the ideological direction of the movement are typically expected to do the opposite (see review in Meyer and Minkoff 2004). We argue instead that unified partisan political contexts will lead to the mobilization and coverage of all movements—right or left. Evidence suggests that most transformations in US social policy came during the dominance of left-wing regimes (Hicks 1999), and bids to undermine policy have come under ideologically conservative regimes (Pierson 1996). More recently, the unified Democratic regime under Barack Obama (2009–2010) significantly spurred the rightist Tea Party, and recent unified Republican regimes in individual states, such as Wisconsin, spurred the mobilization and coverage of labor movements (Amenta and Caren 2016). Early evidence suggests that the unified Republican regime of Donald Trump has spurred left-wing mobilizations and coverage, notably surrounding the January 21, 2017, Women's March in Washington, DC, and the Tea Party-inspired Indivisible movement (Zernicke 2017). Thus we expect that unified partisan regimes will provoke movement mobilization, both offensive and defensive, and this mobilization will lead to coverage.

A second political context is based on the historical institutionalist (Pierson and Skocpol 2002) insight that *policy* alters politics—which we apply to opportunities for movements' newspaper coverage. The politics of policy-making receives a high profile in newspaper coverage as it has high impact and involves prominent elected officials, to whom reporters have access (Bennett 2007; Fishman 1980; Gans 1979; Oliver and Maney 2000; Sobieraj 2010; Tuchman

1978). Policies receive recurrent attention as legislators propose, enact, amend, or repeal them; so do law-like court decisions and executive decisions about the enforcement of policies. Policies typically identify the groups that will benefit from them and encourage their mobilization (Campbell 2003), and policies provide legitimation for advocacy organizations (Amenta 2006). In the issue attention cycle model (Downs 1972), moreover, issues that have been addressed once are expected to achieve a higher level of attention than those that have not. Accordingly, we argue that movements are more likely to be covered when policies have been enacted to benefit their constituents. When such policies exist, often specific organizations are treated as spokespersons for the group, as with veterans and the American Legion, the elderly and the American Association of Retired Persons, and feminists and the National Organization for Women. Any political contention surrounding policies for these groups may draw newspaper attention to these organizations. We argue that the policy-making process influences movements and their coverage in ways that are long term (Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Berry 1999; Downs 1972).

As with political mediation models, we hypothesize that favorable movement characteristics and political contexts will need to combine to produce extensive coverage for movements. Neither internal movement characteristics nor favorable political contexts by themselves will be sufficient to lead to extensive coverage for a movement. Instead we expect extensive coverage to occur with the joint occurrence of movement and contextual characteristics. Our initial hypotheses are that three or more of the causal conditions promoting movement coverage, movement- and context-related, would need to combine to produce extensive newspaper coverage. From this point of view, the movement-related pairs of causes (disruptive capacities and organizational presence) might serve as functional substitutes for each other. So would the political context-related pairs of causes (a partisan political context and enacted and enforced policies). This leads to our first hypothesis.

H1: The joint occurrence of three of the four proposed internal movement and political contextual conditions in combination will be sufficient to produce extensive coverage for movements.

Recent theory and research have also focused on the peculiarities in the determinants of mobilization and influence of rightist movements (Blee and Creasap 2010; Cunningham 2013; Martin 2013; McVeigh 2009). We follow these scholars in addressing the specific conditions under which movements of the right will gain extensive newspaper coverage. In our definition, we include both of what Blee and Creasap (2010) refer to as “conservative” and “right-wing” movements, which together constitute “rightist” movements. Scholars agree that rightist movements often seek to block social change demanded by other groups and generally oppose state action to secure these changes. For instance, rights for minorities and immigrants have been opposed by the Ku Klux Klan and other nativist groups (Cunningham 2013; McVeigh 2009), income taxes by economic conservative movements (Martin 2013), reproductive rights by the anti-abortion movement (Halfmann 2011), LGBT rights by the Christian right

(Fetner 2008), and expansions of social spending and health care by Tea Party activists (Skocpol and Williamson 2012). Generally, rightist movements are identified, ideologically, by whom and what they oppose (Lo 1982) and overlap extensively but not entirely with “reactive” movements (Cunningham 2013; Tilly 1978; van Dyke and Soule 2002). Rightist movements importantly interact with states, usually to oppose social change, and are defined in part by these political interactions (Blee and Creasap 2010).

For those reasons, we expect rightist movements also to be activated and covered during unified partisan regimes—of either the left or right. That is because policies they oppose would be at stake. But such movements have policy agendas that seek to undo, repeal, or retrench the rights or benefits of groups they oppose. For that reason, we argue that rightist movements are *unlikely to gain long-term benefits in coverage from policy* in the manner of movements that seek new policy advances. The sorts of favorable policy developments that help to mobilize and provide long-run coverage opportunities for nonright movement actors will not do the same for rightist movement actors. Thus, we are arguing that there are fewer routes to high coverage for rightist movements. The lack of benefits to coverage from policy might also help to account for why rightist movements receive less newspaper attention, other things equal (Amenta et al. 2012). This leads to our second hypothesis.

H2: Rightist movements require disruptive capacities, large numbers of organizations, and partisan political contexts to gain extensive coverage.

Data, Methods, Measures, and Hypotheses Operationalized

To appraise these hypotheses and ascertain the determinants of extensive coverage, we employ data on the most highly covered US movements in the twentieth century. We use the newest Political Organizations in the News (PONs) data set, which initially consisted of the population of newspaper coverage in the *New York Times* across the twentieth century of national social movement and public interested advocacy organizations. To identify these organizations, the researchers rely on definitions by McCarthy and Zald (1977) and Gamson (1990) that specify formal organizations with goals allied with a social movement, seeking to mobilize a previously unmobilized constituency outside of institutional channels. This definition is limited to politically oriented organizations with national goals. Each organization was categorized in the best fitting of thirty-one substantive movements or three residual movements—progressive, other; conservative, other; and civil rights, other (see Amenta et al. 2009, 2012 for a list of movements and the most covered organizations in them). (For a further discussion of the PONs data, see the online appendix.)

The newer data go beyond the previous versions in two main ways. First, there are more organizations and article mentions. (An article mention occurs when a newspaper article mentions an organization within a movement.) The data set includes now 1,522 organizations and more than 400,000 article mentions in the *New York Times*, versus 1,247 and approximately 300,000 previously

(Amenta et al. 2009). Second, the data set includes three additional national newspapers—the *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Wall Street Journal*—for approximately one million articles.¹ Research on collective action coverage indicates that using multiple newspapers considerably reduces biases in attention to movement action (Franzosi 1987) and likely to overall movement coverage. We analyze total article mentions, which correlate closely with front-page article mentions (Amenta et al. 2012). In the QCA, we address the thirty-one substantive movements over the 100 years of the twentieth century, leading to more than 2,000 movement-years to analyze.

We employ QCA analyses of extensive coverage to address the combinational and multicausal theoretical expectations provided by a mediation model of newspaper coverage. QCA is especially valuable in addressing arguments that hold that multiple conditions need to coincide to produce influence and that there may be more than one such combinational route to influence (Ragin 2000). For these reasons, QCA has been employed in political mediation studies (Amenta et al. 2005; Giugni and Yamasaki 2009) and other studies of movement influence (Bartley and Child 2014; Cress and Snow 2000; McAdam and Boudet 2012). We employ both fuzzy and crisp set analyses for two main reasons. Fuzzy sets are more accurate, employing precise calibrations of measures that are not categorical (Ragin 2008). But crisp ones are technically less complex—involving truth table rows versus the vector space corners of fuzzy sets—and make it easier to transition to substantive discussions. Also, some of the measures employed are categorical. Because the results are largely the same in each set of analyses, we are mainly presenting crisp set ones, though all analyses are available in an online appendix.

Our analyses below have several other advantages not often seen in QCA. Although QCA usually is undertaken in small- and medium-N research, we rely on the population of coverage and have many cases, more than 2,000. However, we can identify anomalous cases and search for additional causes—which is more typical of small-N research. The QCA here also follows on regression results that find significant influences of each of the five measures analyzed (Amenta et al. 2012). Such regression analyses can help to identify “INUS” causes (Mahoney 2008): a cause that is insufficient but necessary to a combination of causal factors that is itself unnecessary but sufficient to produce the outcome (Mackie 1974). These INUS causes in turn can be theorized and analyzed in terms of where they fit in causal configurations, which we do with our hypotheses and QCA (Goertz and Mahoney 2012). In addition, we use QCA to address the different paths to influence for rightist and left movements. This is similar in approach to analyzing poor people’s movements (Piven and Cloward 1977), which were famously argued to have different and more difficult causal paths to influence than middle-class movements and have been analyzed accordingly with QCA (Ragin 1989).

QCA requires the calibration of sets. The outcome measure *extensive coverage* (C) is defined as follows: a movement-year of coverage is fully in the extensive coverage set if it received 1.5 times the daily coverage. Daily coverage or less is defined as fully out of the set of extensive coverage. The inflection point is the midpoint between the two standards. (See appendix A for more detailed

descriptions of all measures.) For the crisp set analyses, we used inflection or crossover points as the cutoff, which is standard in QCA (Ragin 2008). Of the 2,235 cases (or movement-years in the data set), 391, or about 17 percent, were above the crossover point. However, the results are robust with respect to different calibrations of the outcome and causal measures (see below and the online methodological appendix). Using these standards, labor was extensively covered over the entire 100-year period. Next in amount of coverage is the veterans' movement, which was over the threshold in 70 years. The feminist and African American civil rights movements were each covered extensively for about half of the century, along with the right-wing supremacist/nativist movement. By contrast, more than half of the movements, sixteen of the thirty-one, never passed the crossover point for extensive coverage, including such well-researched ones as the anti-abortion and LGBT rights movements.

We analyze five causal measures. *Disruptive capacities* (D) is a categorical measure that varies by movement by year and scores one if any organization in the movement was engaged in disruptive action (Amenta et al. 2009). A movement is all the way in the set of *organizational strength* (O), based on the number of organizations in a movement in a given year, if it had fifty organizations available for coverage during the year, with fewer than fifteen organizations available as completely out of the set and forty being the inflection point. As for the political contextual measures, the partisan political context (P) is a categorical measure that varies by year and captures unified partisan regimes, whether of the left or right. It scores one for 1921 through 1930, 1935 through 1938, 1965 through 1966, and 1981 through 1984, and zero otherwise (Amenta et al. 2012). For the enacted and enforced policy (E) measure, we employ the five-point scale of Amenta et al. (2012) and count zero as all the way out, one as 0.33, two as 0.67, and three or higher as 1. For crisp set analyses, we employ two as the cutoff point. We expect that the greatest amount of influence will be at the lower levels. Finally, the measure *rightist movement* scores one for four movements—the supremacist/nativist, Christian right, anti-abortion, and gun rights movements. (See appendix A for details on all measures.)

The expectations for hypothesis 1 are as follows:

$$C \leq D * O * E + D * P * E + D * O * P + O * P * E$$

Extensive newspaper coverage (C) is expected to result from the joint occurrence of any three of the causal measures; any combination of three causes should be sufficient to produce extensive coverage. Thus any truth table row with the presence of three or more of the conditions is expected to be highly consistent with the outcome extensive coverage.

The expectations for hypothesis 2 regarding the five-measure analyses, including rightist movements, are as follows:

$$C \leq D * O * P * R + D * O * E * r + O * P * E * r + D * P * E * r$$

We argue that the enforced policy measure will not be part of any solution for rightist movements and that including the enforced policy measure will imply the absence of rightist movements. This leaves right movements to gain extensive coverage from the joint occurrence of disruptive capacities, organizational strength, and partisan regimes.

Results and Discussion

We begin by appraising the first hypothesis, employing the first four causal measures—the two movement measures, disruptive capacities (D), and organizations (O), and the two political contextual measures, partisan political context (P) and enacted and enforced policies (E). After presenting these four-measure analyses, we then add the measure of rightist movements (R) to appraise the second hypothesis. Because there are four causal measures, there are 16 rows in the truth tables, and each row is represented by empirical cases. We analyze all rows using the QCA package for R (Duşa and Thiem 2014). We start with the analyses of crisp sets, mainly because they are more easily understood (and are similar to the fuzzy set results). For inclusion in the solutions, we employ the standard 80 percent level of consistency (Ragin 2008). “Consistency” means the degree to which cases with a given combination of causal conditions constitute a subset of the cases with the outcome and is a goodness-of-fit measure.

The crisp set QCA provides extensive support for the mediation model and hypothesis 1. As the truth table, or table of combinations (table 1), indicates, five rows are consistent with extensive coverage at this level or higher, and these rows are the ones that are expected by hypothesis 1. The row with the presence of all four causal measures is 100 percent consistent with the outcome. The consistent row with the most cases is DOpE, which indicates movements with disruptive capacities, high numbers of organizations, and an enforced policy in favor of its constituency, with a partisan regime absent. (The “presence” of a condition is indicated by a capital letter, and its “absence” by a lowercase one.) Yet the partisan regime measure apparently serves as a functional substitute for the enforced policy measure as the row DOPE is also highly consistent with the outcome of extensive coverage, though with fewer cases.

All four of the expected three-measure solution terms appear in table 2, which provides the minimization of the rows. As a group, these solution terms are consistent with the outcome at a 93 percent rate and “cover” about 39 percent of the outcome. “Coverage” indicates the degree of overlap between the cases with the causal combination and the cases with the outcome, indicating the degree to which the outcome is explained or accounted for by the causal combination (Ragin 2008). The solution term with the greatest coverage is $D * O * E$, which accounts for about 31 percent of the outcome, one-quarter uniquely, and is 94 percent consistent with the outcome. The terms $D * O * P$, $D * P * E$, and $O * P * E$ are both even more consistent with the outcome set, at 95 percent or greater, but uniquely cover only about 8 percent of it, with the other 6 percent shared by the solution terms, which overlap. (See table 2.) Figure 1 shows the results in a Venn diagram.

Table 1. Four-Measure Crisp set Truth Table of Extensive Newspaper Coverage

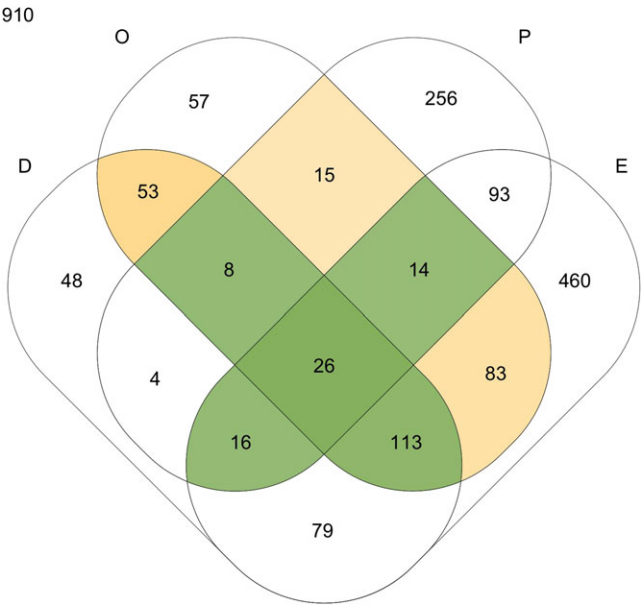
D	O	P	E	C	N	Cons
1	1	1	1	1	26	1.000
1	1	0	1	1	113	0.929
1	0	1	1	1	16	0.875
1	1	1	0	1	8	0.875
0	1	1	1	1	14	0.857
1	1	0	0	0	53	0.792
0	1	0	1	0	83	0.639
0	1	1	0	0	15	0.533
0	0	1	1	0	93	0.258
1	0	0	0	0	59	0.136
0	0	0	1	0	460	0.126
0	1	0	0	0	57	0.123
1	0	0	1	0	79	0.114
0	0	1	0	0	256	0.051
0	0	0	0	0	899	0.043
1	0	1	0	0	4	0.000

Table 2. Four-Measure Crisp set and Fuzzy set QCA Results for Extensive Coverage

Solution Terms	Consistency	Coverage	Unique coverage
Crisp set			
DOE	0.942	0.308	0.247
DOP	0.971	0.078	0.016
DPE	0.952	0.094	0.033
OPE	0.950	0.089	0.028
Total	0.927	0.386	
Fuzzy set			
DOE	0.873	0.291	0.235
DOP	0.976	0.078	0.023
DPE	0.961	0.076	0.020
Total	0.878	0.333	

Next, we turn to the fuzzy set analyses, which mainly confirm the crisp set ones. The truth table—see table 3—indicates that four rows are highly consistent with the outcome—DOPE, DOPE, DoPE, and DOpE. Each row is expected to be consistent with extensive coverage. However, the row dOPE, the final one expected to be associated with the outcome, is consistent with extensive coverage only at the 61 percent

Figure 1 Venn Diagram for Crisp set Configurations with Four Measures



Note: Green (dark gray) indicates rows of the truth table coded as being consistent with the outcome. Yellow (light gray) indicates rows of the truth table coded as being inconsistent, but which were close to the consistency cutoff.

level. The truth table yields the three solution terms $D * O * E$, $D * O * P$, and $D * P * E$, which as a group cover about one-third of the outcome at a consistency level of 88 percent. (See table 3.) The only expected but missing term is $O * P * E$. The $D * O * E$ term is again the main recipe for extensive news attention—covering approximately 24 percent of outcome set uniquely. Although the disruptive capacity measure appears in each solution term, it does not pass a test for necessity (Schneider and Wagemann 2013). (See the online appendix.) All the same, the fact that three of the four expected solution terms appear at such high levels of consistency provides support for the combinational and multicausal theoretical expectations of the mediation model.

The main results are robust with respect to different calibrations of the outcome and causal measures, as well as to a series of other checks. If the outcome set is specified as twice daily coverage as fully in, daily coverage as fully out, and 1.5 times the daily coverage as the inflection and crisp set cutoff point, the results are similar. Changing the threshold for an extensive organizational presence (O) to vary over time, given that organizations increase over time, brings similar results. So, too, does including the three residual movements: progressive, conservative, and civil rights other. The labor movement accounts for a high percentage of the positive cases, but when it is removed from the analysis, the five rows driving the crisp set solution remain more than 80 percent consistent with the outcome. Combining the feminist and the abortion rights movements

Table 3. Four-Measure Fuzzy set Truth Table of Extensive Newspaper Coverage

D	O	P	E	C	N	Cons
1	1	1	1	1	26	0.990
1	1	1	0	1	7	0.931
1	0	1	1	1	16	0.883
1	1	0	1	1	111	0.849
1	1	0	0	0	53	0.700
0	1	1	1	0	14	0.611
1	0	1	0	0	4	0.568
0	1	0	1	0	81	0.489
0	1	1	0	0	15	0.301
0	0	1	1	0	93	0.278
1	0	0	0	0	59	0.240
1	0	0	1	0	79	0.171
0	1	0	0	0	54	0.139
0	0	0	1	0	460	0.131
0	0	1	0	0	256	0.066
0	0	0	0	0	899	0.057

and the anti-abortion and Christian right movements, because of their great overlap in goals and ideology, produces the same solution sets. (All the above results are available in an online appendix.)

Next, we dig further into the results by identifying the cases in each row of the crisp set truth table. For the highly consistently positive rows, table 4 lists all of the cases, and for rows inconsistent with the outcome, table 4 lists prominent ones. To take an example from the row including all four of the causal measures: the African American civil rights movement gained extremely high coverage in 1965 and 1966, during the period after the election of Lyndon Johnson, when northern Democrats dominated Congress, and in the wake of the passage of the Civil Rights (1964) and Voting Rights (1965) Acts, averaging around 3,000 article mentions per year. The NAACP, Congress of Racial Equality, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee all had extensive coverage. The movement had disruptive capacities and an average of fifty-five organizations. We next take an example from rightist movements, from the row including the presence of all the causal measures except enforced policy: The supremacist/nativist movement gained its highest level of coverage since the 1920s in 1965, at more than 1,500 article mentions, also during the period when Johnson and the Democrats dominated, despite having suffered what it viewed as setbacks in civil rights. This movement had disruptive capacities, relying on terror (Cunningham 2013), and forty organizations,

Table 4. Four-Measure Crisp set Truth Table of Extensive Newspaper Coverage, with Selected Movements Indicated in Rows

Row	Success	Total	Most prominent SMO families
DOPE	26	26	Labor (20/20); CR-Black (2/2); Environment (4/4)
DOPe	105	113	Labor (68/68); CR-Black (14/14); Feminism (5/6); Environment (18/18); Anti-Abortion (0/7)
DoPE	14	16	Veterans (2/2); Supremacist (12/14)
DOPe	7	8	Supremacist (6/6); Antiwar (1/2)
dOPE	12	14	CR-Black (4/4); Feminism (8/10)
DOPe	42	53	Labor (12/12); Supremacist (25/29); Antiwar (5/9); LGBT Rights (0/3)
dOpE	53	83	CR-Black (21/22); Feminism (24/49); Environment (8/9); CR-Chicano/a (0/2); Anti-Abortion (0/1)
dOPe	8	15	Feminism (8/10); Antiwar (0/4); LGBT Rights (0/1)
doPE	24	93	Veterans (14/18); Anti-Alcohol (10/10); Children's Rights/Protection (0/10); Farmers (0/20); Old Age (0/6); Abortion/Reproductive Rights (0/4)
Dope	8	59	Supremacist (2/9); Anti-Alcohol (5/11); Civil Rights, Jewish (1/28); LGBT Rights (0/4); CR-Chicano/a (0/5); Anti-Abortion (0/1)
dopE	58	460	Veterans (51/77); CR-Black (1/1); Environment (0/2); Anti-Alcohol (3/3); Children's Rights/Protection (0/55); Farmers (1/80)
dOpe	7	57	Feminism (4/8); Antiwar (3/37); LGBT Rights (0/12)
DopE	9	79	Veterans (3/3); CR-Black (3/3); Supremacist (3/42); Animals (0/10); Anti-Abortion (0/3); AIDS (0/12)
doPe	13	256	CR-Black (0/14); Environment (0/16); Anti-Alcohol (1/10); Antiwar (0/14); Civil Liberties (4/6); Children's Rights/Protection (1/10)
dope	39	899	CR-Black (2/30); Feminism (1/17); Environment (0/49); Anti-Alcohol (2/66); Antiwar (1/33); Civil Liberties (28/46)
DoPe	0	4	Civil Rights, Jewish (0/4)

dominated by the Ku Klux Klan. Nativist supremacist news coverage reached another local peak in coverage with a similar configuration of causes in the early 1980s, during the conservative Reagan regime.

From here, we focus on right movements, which we hypothesize have different routes to influence. In the almost universally positive DOPe row, the rightist anti-abortion movement has seven years of less than extensive coverage, constituting “deviant cases with respect to consistency” (Schneider and Rohlfing 2014). The fact that they do not fit the pattern provides preliminary support for hypothesis 2 that enacted policy does not spur the coverage of right movements.

In other rows, the positive influence of the supremacist/nativist movement dominates. This DoPE row has fourteen of the sixteen cases that are from this rightist movements, and the DOPE row has seven positive cases, six from the supremacist movement.

To address the issue directly, we add to the analyses the measure rightist (R) movements. The truth table for the crisp set analyses is used again for greater clarity given the similarity to fuzzy set results (see online appendix). Table 5 indicates that only twenty-seven of thirty-two possible rows appear in the data. This empirical deficit is due to five rows without a positive score on R; that is perhaps unsurprising as only four movements are coded as right wing. Table 5 identifies seven rows that are consistent with extensive coverage at the 0.80 level or greater, including four with the absence of the R measure, including DOPeR, the most numerous row, DOPeR, DoPEr, and dOPeR. Among these consistent rows are three with the presence of R, including DoPeR, DOPeR, and DoPER. We report the “complex” solutions because the truth table contains five zero-case rows.

The minimization of the truth table rows provides four solution terms mainly support our second hypothesis. (See table 6.) Overall, the solution now covers now cover 44 percent of the outcome, versus 39 percent in the four-measure results, improving the reach of the explanation. They also increase consistency slightly—95 percent, versus 94 percent in the previous results. Moreover, each of the four recipes in the four-measure results has a counterpart in the five-measure results: $D * O * E * r + O * P * E * r + D * o * P * E + D * O * e * R$. The first two solution terms, which include the absence of rightist movements, also include the presence of enacted and enforced policies (E). Again, they provide support for our second hypothesis as they are identical to two of our four hypothesized combinations. $D * O * E * r$ is the one with the greatest coverage, uniquely accounting for one-quarter of the outcome. This means that for nonright movements, disruptive capacities, a large number of organizations, and an enacted and enforced policy lead to extensive coverage. Similarly, the $O * P * E * r$ term indicates that the existence of a large number of organizations, a partisan regime, and the presence of enforced policy lead to extensive coverage for nonright movements. In short, in two terms, the absence of rightist movements appears in conjunction with the presence of the enacted policy measure, just as expected. The news coverage of nonright movements is driven importantly by the presence of policy in favor of their constituents.

We turn to the other two solution terms, which involve rightist movements. They are consistent with our hypothesized ones, but differ in some ways. As expected, there is one term with the presence of rightist movements in it: $D * O * e * R$. This route to extensive coverage involves both disruptive capacities and an extensive organizational presence, while including the *absence* of an enacted and enforced policy, as expected. It does not include, however, a partisan political context, and thus is somewhat less restrictive than our hypothesis. Rightist movements do not need to rely on unified partisan regimes to achieve extensive coverage and may benefit from policy deficits. The last solution term, $D * o * P * E$, is similar to (and is a subset of) the $D * P * E$ term from the

Table 5. Five-Measure Crisp set Truth Table for Extensive Newspaper Coverage

D	O	P	E	R	C	N	Cons
1	0	1	1	0	1	2	1.000
1	1	1	0	1	1	6	1.000
1	1	1	1	0	1	26	1.000
1	1	0	1	0	1	106	0.991
1	1	0	0	1	1	29	0.862
0	1	1	1	0	1	14	0.857
1	0	1	1	1	1	14	0.857
1	1	0	0	0	0	24	0.708
0	1	0	1	0	0	82	0.646
0	1	1	0	0	0	15	0.533
1	1	1	0	0	0	2	0.500
0	0	1	1	0	0	89	0.270
1	0	0	0	1	0	10	0.200
1	0	0	1	0	0	34	0.176
0	0	1	0	1	0	24	0.167
0	0	0	1	0	0	434	0.134
0	1	0	0	0	0	57	0.123
1	0	0	1	1	0	45	0.067
0	0	0	0	1	0	86	0.058
0	0	0	0	0	0	824	0.047
0	0	1	0	0	0	232	0.039
1	0	0	0	0	0	38	0.026
0	0	0	1	1	0	26	0.000
0	0	1	1	1	0	4	0.000
0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0.000
1	0	1	0	0	0	4	0.000
1	1	0	1	1	0	7	0.000
0	1	0	0	1	?	0	NA
0	1	1	0	1	?	0	NA
0	1	1	1	1	?	0	NA
1	0	1	0	1	?	0	NA
1	1	1	1	1	?	0	NA

previous result. It supplies a path to influence for all disruptive movements that is augmented by both political contexts. That is, it does not explicitly exclude rightist movements, as we had expected. It covers about 3 percent of the positive cases. Although the hypothesis that rightist movements suffer disadvantages in media

Table 6. Crisp set QCA Results for Extensive Coverage, with Five Causal Sets

Solution terms	Consistency	Coverage	Unique coverage
DOEr	0.992	0.308	0.247
OPEr	0.950	0.089	0.028
DoPE	0.875	0.033	0.033
DOeR	0.886	0.073	0.073
Total	0.954	0.442	

coverage is largely supported by these analyses, these two solution terms suggest somewhat fewer disadvantages than we had hypothesized for rightist movements.

Yet there remain many instances where a movement gained extensive coverage that were not explained by any of the consistent causal combinations. These “deviant cases with respect to coverage” (Schneider and Rohlfing 2014) may require either a different explanation or way of measuring a current explanation. Several such unexplained positive cases of coverage come from the veterans’ and anti-alcohol movements, which often had extensive coverage in the first half of the century. As shown in table 5, the row doPE—which is not highly consistent with extensive coverage—has fourteen of eighteen positive veterans’ cases and ten of ten positive anti-alcohol ones. It seems likely that this circumstance is explained in part by the way we measure organizational strength, which, because of a lack of complete data on membership and revenues, relies on the number of organizations. However, early twentieth century movements were dominated by a few very large membership organizations, including the Grand Army of the Republic, Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, and Women’s Christian Temperance Union; like many organizations before World War II, these ones were federated with many chapters enjoying considerable autonomy and were among the largest voluntary organizations in US history (Skocpol 2003, 26–28).

To examine this issue further, we give movements in this period additional organizational credit for their large, federated membership organizations. Specifically, we count as separate organizations the state chapters of federal organizations on Skocpol’s (2003) list of the largest US voluntary organizations during their peak period of mobilization. This recoding boosts the scores for organizational strength for the veterans’, supremacist, anti-alcohol, and old age movements at various parts of the first half of the century. Reanalyzing the data with this coding brings two main results. It improves the coverage and consistency of the results, as table 7 indicates. Although it also drops one of the combinations in the four-measure results, $D * P * E$, that is because there are only a few cases remaining in the row with movements having disruptive capacities, a unified partisan regime, and an enforced policy, but also with a low number of organizations in the movement (see online appendix).

All in all, the QCA results provide considerable support for the hypotheses and the mediation model. In the four-measure analyses, the crisp set results for extensive coverage provide all four of expected mediation solution terms. In

Table 7. Four- and Five-Measure Crisp-Set QCA Results with Alternative Organizational Measure

Solution	Consistency	Coverage	Unique Coverage
Four Measure Results			
D * O * E	0.942	0.341	0.254
D * O * P	0.978	0.104	0.016
O * P * E	0.973	0.167	0.080
Total	0.939	0.438	
Five Measure			
D * O * e * R	0.886	0.072	0.059
D * O * E * r	0.993	0.320	0.254
O * P * E * r	0.969	0.146	0.080
D * O * P * E	1.000	0.087	0.000
Total	0.968	0.494	

every term, favorable internal movement and external political conditions appear, including the measure of policy gains. A series of robustness checks mainly confirm the analyses (see the online appendix). Moreover, adding the measure rightist movement to the analyses improves the explanation and provides solutions consistent with our second hypothesis, that enacted policies will not provide an analogous boost to rightist movements. The main implication is that right movements have fewer routes to extensive media coverage for the reasons we hypothesized, based on the mediation model.

Conclusion

These analyses make theoretical and empirical advances. Theoretically, we elaborate mediation arguments (Amenta 2006; Giugni 2007) about the news coverage of movement actors by augmenting them with ideas from the social organization of the news perspective (Schudson 2011). We specify how movement-related and political and contextual factors interact with the organizational processes of professional news organizations to produce extensive coverage for movements. We also develop and appraise ideas regarding differences in influence for rightist movements. We argue that enforced policies favoring constituents are not as likely to boost rightist movements, given their reactive nature. This effect also would help to explain why rightist movements are covered less extensively.

Empirically, we employ additional data, use better measures than in previous analyses, and build on previous regression analyses. The data from the Political Organizations in the News Project notably address four national newspapers, including the *Los Angeles Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *Washington Post*, as well as the *New York Times*. We also use better measures of the policy context facing movements than previously available. Moreover, regression analyses

indicated that rightist movements receive less extensive coverage; the other measures we employ in the QCA provided significant, though positive, influences on overall coverage in regression analyses (Amenta et al. 2012). Here we take the next step by analyzing the combinations of conditions that are sufficient to produce extensive coverage for both types of movements.

The results provide support for a mediation model regarding movement influence on newspaper coverage. In the four-measure analyses, all four expected solution terms were found. The pathways to extensive coverage include a confluence of three conditions, including at least one movement or political contextual condition in each. The results also provide support for the idea that rightist movements have different paths to media influence than nonright ones, while still being mediated. Rightist movements are boosted in mobilization and prominence more by threats than policy gains, a finding in line with recent research (McVeigh 2009; see Blee and Creasap 2010). The results indicate that the routes to high coverage for rightist movements are less numerous, which may help to account for why they receive less newspaper attention, but also help to identify their possibilities for influence.

Our analyses also have methodological implications. Mahoney (2008) notably suggested following regression analyses with set-theoretic methods to identify causal configurations. The negative binomial analyses in Amenta et al. (2012) indicated that all five major causal measures were significantly influential in regression models. Our configurational analyses go beyond addressing the individual effects of measures by identifying causal patterns among these influences and indicating the conditions under which different types of movements are likely to gain extensive coverage. Moreover, through QCA we located typical cases, which helped to confirm the analyses and hypotheses. Furthermore, we were able to identify cases that were left unexplained by the hypotheses and then to help explain some of them through better measurements. Our findings affirm the value of going beyond the hypothesis testing in QCA to return to the cases for further analysis (Schneider and Rohlfing 2014).

It is worth addressing the portability of the arguments and findings, as well as possibilities for future research. The arguments may apply best to highly professionalized and nationally oriented newspapers, such as the four we analyze. Further research would be required across different sorts of newspapers, whether underprofessionalized or local, to assess the boundaries on the theoretical claims. Similarly, the results probably apply best to countries most similar to the United States in terms of political and party systems, notably those with governments that do not include coalitions. Also, we are focusing on the largest and best-covered movements, and the arguments may have less relevance to movements with key organizations that seek to avoid mainstream media coverage (Rohlinger 2015). Finally, it is not clear whether disruptive capacities influence coverage below the movement level. Research on the environmental movement (Andrews and Caren 2010) and the LGBT movement (Elliott et al. 2016) indicates that protest-oriented organizations receive less coverage than better-resourced and institutional organizations. However, research on protest also

suggests that disruption increases coverage (Earl et al. 2004); also, many of the most covered organizations in the most-covered movements, such as the labor and civil rights movements, also had disruptive capacities and used them to their advantage in coverage. Whether some organizations through disruption are driving coverage opportunities for moderate organizations (Gamson and Wolfsfeld 1993), or whether the organizations' disruption is driving their own coverage, is a worthy subject for further research.

It is also worth discussing the implications for current news media, which have been transformed in the last two decades. These changes include the rise of partisan news television organizations, notably cable's Fox News, and 24-hour cable news channels, notably CNN, as well as the ubiquity of the Internet and other new electronic means of communication. Moreover, a drop in ad revenue for the print news media has killed many newspapers, while altering their delivery of news, such as the web transformations of *Newsweek* and *U.S. News* (Pew Research Center 2015). All that said, the national newspapers remain the central institutions of newsgathering and retain great legitimacy as sources. The folding of newspapers heightens the importance of the remaining ones, which now refer to themselves as "news organizations" (Schudson 2011). National ones such as the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* still set the agenda for other news outlets, including television network news, and their articles are amplified by aggregating web sites and social media like Facebook (Gottfried and Shearer 2016.) Mainstream news organizations constitute the top digital news entities (Pew Research Center 2015). Former President Obama closely attended to newspapers (Chosick 2012). The role of the main news organizations in getting on the radar of political actors may have changed little, even if the current president refers to their outputs as "fake news." Newspaper coverage has been shown to influence recent European political agendas (Vliegenthart et al. 2016a, 2016b). Moreover, newspaper coverage influenced the mobilization of the Tea Party (Banerjee 2013) and the discursive influence of Occupy Wall Street (Gaby and Caren 2016).

The analyses have implications for the current period and the future of US politics. One is that the larger US movements are likely to continue to see increases in their coverage and all the secondary influences that come from coverage. Organizational growth continues among movement and advocacy organizations. Moreover, unified partisan governments, at the national and state levels, have become more prevalent in recent years. It would be valuable to have further research on the current period, but the implication of the model is that such circumstances would promote further movement coverage.

Note

1. The *Los Angeles Times* is available only through 1986, the *Wall Street Journal* through 1993, and the *Washington Post* through 1994. We employ the mice package in R to impute missing values, based on counts from other newspapers and the number of active movement organizations (van Buuren and Groothuis-Oudshoorn 2011).

Appendix A

Measures and Calibrations

Extensive Coverage (C)

The outcome measure is the total number of articles a movement's SMOs were mentioned in per year. Following [Amenta et al. \(2009\)](#), we smooth out spikes in coverage by calculating a three-year moving average and calibrate the measure based on this count. For our fuzzy-set analysis, a movement-year is fully in the set if it received 1.5 times daily coverage, with daily coverage as fully out, and the inflection point at the midpoint between the two. For the crisp-set analyses, we used inflection or crossover points as the cutoff, which is standard in QCA ([Ragin 2008](#)). A series of robustness checks on the calibration of this measure appear in the online appendix.

Disruptive Capacities (D)

The disruptive capacity of a movement is a categorical measure that varies by movement-year. A movement-year scores 1 if any organization in the movement was engaged in disruptive collective action, such as strikes, boycotts, occupations, other collective illegal activity, and unruly mass protests that drew the reaction of authorities. This measure is coded from scholarly monographs of movements and from websites of current SMOs ([Amenta et al. 2009](#)).

Organizational Strength (O)

Organizational strength is based on the number of active SMOs per movement per year. This count is based on founding and death years coded for all SMOs in the dataset. An SMO is counted as active starting in the year of its founding and ending the year of its death. We then calibrate the fuzzy set for organization strength with 50 organizations as fully in, 15 organizations as fully out, and 40 organizations as the crossover point and crisp-set cutoff. The online appendix includes robustness results with different calibrations of this measure.

Partisan Political Context (P)

This measure captures unified partisan regimes, whether of the left or right. A left partisan regime is defined as having a liberal Democrat in the White House with a liberal majority in both houses of Congress. A right or conservative political regime is defined as having a conservative Republican in the White House and a conservative majority in both houses of Congress. A liberal Democratic president is one who scores 65 percent or higher on an averaged "social" and "economic" ideology score, and a conservative Republican president is one who scores 35 percent lower on this averaged score ([Segal, Timpone, and Howard 2000](#)). A liberal or left Congress is one that has a majority in both houses made up of northern Democratic and radical third-party representatives, plus 25

percent of southern Democrats. Similarly, a conservative Congress has majorities in both houses of Republicans and right third-party members, plus 40 percent of southern Democrats (Poole and Rosenthal 2011). This procedure produces two periods of liberal dominance (1935 through 1938 and 1965 through 1966) and two periods of conservative dominance (1921 through 1932 and 1981 through 1982). Years during these periods score 1 for the causal set.

Enforced Policy (E)

The enacted and enforced policy (E) measure is a time-varying ordered categorical variable ranging from 0 to 5 and representing the comprehensiveness of major policies, including court rulings, new legislation, and bureaucracies to enforce or administer a central policy law regarding the movement's constituency, from Amenta, Caren, and Stobaugh (2012). To identify major legislation and legislative-like rulings, they searched monographs about the specific movements and related policies, agencies administering policies, and the Policy Agendas Project. In the case of the African American civil rights movement, for instance, they examined several monographs, the websites of the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division and several organizations, including the NAACP, as well as the Policy Agendas Project (Baumgartner and Jones 2011). They then evaluated these identified policies in relation to one another. The consensus was that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was the most important and best fit for our criteria. Based on all the evaluations, this movement received a score of 0 from 1900 to 1954, when *Brown v. Board of Education* was decided. It added two more points for the Civil Rights Act, one more for the Voting Rights Act, and one additional point for the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (also known as the Fair Housing Act). With the *Bakke* decision in 1978, the score was reduced to a 4. We calibrate this measure by counting 0 as all the way out, 1 as .33, 2 as .67, and 3 or higher as 1, with 2 being the cutoff for the crisp-set analyses.

Rightist Movements (R)

Finally, there are four movements of the 31 that score 1 for rightist—the supremacist/nativist, Christian right, anti-abortion, and gun rights movements. Among the three residual movements, the conservative movement also is counted as rightist. Results regarding it appear in the online appendix.

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Supplementary Material

Supplementary material is available at *Social Forces* online.

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