

# Aggressive Political Behavior: Predisposition and Protest Behavior. East and West, Then and Now

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## 1. Introduction

The goals of this paper are to use recent developments in ALLBUS measurement to (1) compare our ability to predict protest predispositions as opposed to protest behavior, and (2) compare the factors associated with protest in the old and new federal states. We do this in two conceptual steps – the first is to articulate a model based on four domains of putative causal influence (we find measures in three of those domains). The second is to test a regression model that finds representative variables and test them in a fashion homologous to the theoretical scheme.

The theoretical approach uses a conventional conceptualization of "domains" according to whether they are *structural, contextual, attitudinal, or situational*. The domains are arrayed on a continuum of causal proximity to behavior; the more distant from behavior, the less direct and the less powerful the causal influence. Conversely, the closer the domain is to actual behavior, the more direct the influence. The purpose of this distinction is to make explicit the place we believe the variable fits in a causal scheme. The distinction used here is a relatively conventional one, consisting of four domains. The general convention followed in this analysis will be to use the terms in the following fashion:

The *structural domain* denotes in this analysis those demographic variables that represent both characteristics of a population, and represent for the individual a *location* in the social structure. Social class is a classic structural factor - one that serves to locate the individual in the social network. The location is up or down, in or out – and it conditions and filters the way in which the individual experiences the society. Thus, structural factors such as age, social class, or gender are implicitly or explicitly expected to have a phenomenological component that is conditioned by the individual's location in the social structure. Almost by definition, the attitudinal domain is closer to behavior, but has origins in the diffused effects of social structure. Therefore the structural domain is expected to have primarily mediated effects on behavior.

The domain of *context* is one step closer to behavior. Operationally this domain is more diffuse and often goes under various other names. Opp and Finkel (this volume) refer to aspects of this domain with the term "life-style". Others think of this as the "meso" or middle level of social relations. In any event, the exact terminology is not critical here. We use it here as a relational concept that connects individuals to their experience of the social world through friendships and other close connections, and to their orientation toward social stimuli such as media. An inward-looking relationship would be a focus on the privatistic and personal context; an outward-looking relationship has a broader horizon with an orientation toward public involvement, informational media, and politically active friends. Broadly speaking this is the life-world in which the individuals form and express their identity, and receive encouragement and inhibition for social action. Since context is closer in the causal chain to actual behavior, it should be more closely associated with behavior than is structure *if context is well measured*.

*Attitudes* are a step closer in the causal chain. While it is not necessary to review the vast number of definitions of attitude here, the central measures here are designed to reflect certain conventionally-measured aspects of political phenomenology (e.g., ideology) but, more importantly, behavior-relevant predispositions. Multiple-item, behaviorally specific attitude scales have the greatest potential for predicting behavior. The current survey (ALLBUS 1998) contains a rich set of measures in this domain.

In distinction to the attitude domain which contains a complex array of cognitions, emotional potentialities, and behavioral dispositions, the *situational* domain contains influence existing in the actual situation in which behavior occurs. Theoretically, the *situation* should be a powerful predictor of action: it includes the immediate source of reward and punishment. Here we find the forces that amplify and suppress behavior. It is here that the specific contours of the situation call forth aspects of the individuals' predispositions, skills, emotions, and social learning. Usually a thick description using qualitative methods and hermeneutic interpretation is employed in this sort of analysis, but no doubt more can be done with survey methods.

The ALLBUS 1998 German national survey contains a conventional set of indicators in the structure domain, a reasonable selection in the context domain, and a highly developed set of predisposition measures. There was nothing in the situational domain; therefore, our analysis incorporates independent variables in the three domains of structure, context and attitude.

## 2. Attitudes and Behavior

The purpose of the analysis is to explain as much as we can about protest predispositions and protest behavior. Therefore we need to look more closely at the measurement properties of these elements of the analysis.

We have the opportunity with ALLBUS to examine two aspects of the more aggressive forms of political protest – the *predisposition* to engage in protest, and *actual past protest behavior*. Predisposition is measured here as the individual's subjective estimate of taking part in various protest activities. Actual behavior can be measured in two different ways using the ALLBUS 1998 survey. The first measure allows for an unlimited retrospective on any and all protest behavior that the respondents might remember from the past; the second measure elicits recalled protest behavior for the two years preceding the survey (since 1996).

Since predisposition is by its definition a phenomenological ideational concept, its relationship to overt behavior is complex. Imagine, for example, a social isolate who may be mobile and actionistic but lacks the social context of political action; or a middle-aged citizen who may be intellectually prepared in the abstract for political protest, but be hindered from its performance by personal or professional responsibilities. In other cases, the predisposition may be only modest, but the inhibitions are low; consider, for example, a younger citizen caught up in a street action for the excitement but with no clear notion of the political goals. Many other examples could be imagined, but the point is that the predisposition is not determinative; its phenomenology is filtered through a variety of contextual and situational factors.

In each of these examples, the system that organizes attitudes is somewhat different from the system of opportunities, sanctions and rewards that surround actual behavior. The first is proportionally more ideational; the second is more sensitive to the social context of the individual. As a theoretical proposition, we suggest that as one moves from attitudes to behavior (from predispositions to action) the social context becomes proportionally more important. How does this logic apply to what is known about the protest predisposition and protest behavior?

## 2.1 Predictors of Unconventional Political Participation

The literature on political participation since the late 1970's points to certain predictable correlates of protest activity. Unconventional participation in Western democracies has for some decades been associated with left-libertarian political leanings, higher education, youth, and has been found somewhat more among males than females (Barnes, Kaase et al., 1979; Jennings and van Deth, 1990). Among youth there is evidence of a surge of enthusiasm for actionistic political participation around mid-adolescence that peaks around age 17 to 18, remains relatively high through the 20's, and declines rapidly thereafter (Watts, 1990, 1992, 1996). This corresponds with the general trend for actionism in other realms of behavior, long noted by sociologists and criminologists (see Watts, 1999). The left-ideological element of protest seems to extend somewhat longer into the 20's, particularly for the better educated. However, since the early 1990's, the surge of right-activism and xenophobic violence corresponds more closely to a pattern of adolescent male actionism (Watts, 1997; 1999); the classic empirical status of left ideology with protest behavior has been attenuated somewhat by the increase of right-wing activism. The cultural meaning of protest is still associated with left content, but the association appears to have weakened in recent years (Watts & Zinnecker, 1998).

More recent analyses confirm essential elements of this pattern. Opp and Finkel (this volume) find that the milder forms of legal protest behavior such as citizen initiatives (*Bürgerinitiative*), petitions, and approved demonstrations show a relatively weak association with *structural/demographic factors*, but a much stronger association with *political attitudes* (political discontent, belief that protest can promote change). They interpret this to mean that protest is largely attributable to an affectively based motivation (dissatisfaction) and a rational, strategic calculation (that change can be promoted effectively through protest). They argue that such attitudes are stronger predictors of behavior than such contextual factors as the orientation to public life or attachment to family and friends (Opp and Finkel, this volume; also Opp and Gern, 1993).

Van Deth (this volume) finds that conventional and unconventional participation is associated with higher educational attainment, with political interest, and with participation in social organizations (*Vereine*). The associations are stronger for West Germans than for respondents from the new federal states. One might well imagine that the different traditions of education and of associational membership would produce differences between the two regions; perhaps the passage of time will homogenize this German-German difference. But there is more. Van Deth's attempt to scale

political behavior indicates that the structure of participation is different in West and East. A reliable scale of participation could be constructed for respondents in the old federal states, but that scale had no reliable counterpart among respondents in the new federal states.

From these studies we can draw several tentative conclusions for our analysis of the stronger forms of political behavior:

- First, the *structure* of protest behavior is likely to be different from East to West; concretely, we might expect it to form a familiar intensity scale in the West but not in the East.
- Second, the *correlates* of behavior are likely to differ, particularly for educational attainment, which has different traditions in the old and new federal states.
- Third, measures of political behavior are strongly reflective of events that extent well into the past for some respondents. This means that some of the associations with protest are in fact a kind of behavioral archeology, anchored in quite different historical circumstances. It is therefore reasonable to expect that prediction of protest predispositions and protest behavior will differ from East to West.
- Fourth, analyses of German youth have shown a decreased tendency for protest to be associated with leftist ideology (Watts & Zinnecker, 1998). This is evidence that the left/protest link has weakened and that the right/protest link may have strengthened. The evidence so far is that it may be happening with youth. After a decade that has seen an increase in aggressive rightist sentiment in Germany, we might expect to find some signs of this change in our data.
- Fifth, we expect that the three domains will predict successively well the closer they are to behavior. In principle, structural factors should be the weakest, contextual factors should be somewhat stronger, and attitudinal factors strongest of all. (Theoretically, the phenomenology of the *situation* should also contain strong predictors, but survey measurement of this domain is not yet well represented in ALLBUS).

### 3. Data Analysis

Before turning to the actual relationships between the various domains and political protest, it is important to examine the reliability of the measures of Protest Predisposition and Protest Behavior that are available in the ALLBUS 1998 survey.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Readers who are not interested in the technical aspects of measurement may wish to skip directly to section 3.3.

### **3.1 The Dependent Measures: Protest Predisposition and Protest Behavior**

The first technical question to be resolved concerns the way in which predisposition and behavior are measured. As Duckitt summarizes the long literature on attitudes and behavior: "In order to predict ... an act at a reasonable level of accuracy ... *the specific attitude to acting in that particular way would have to be considered ('attitude toward the act')*, as well as the normative expectations of others concerning the performance of that act." (Duckitt, 1994: 38; emphasis added). Fortunately, it is possible to construct attitudinal measures for the acceptability and effectiveness of political protest (including violence) that certainly seem to be relevant to the performance of the relevant behaviors. Of no less importance is the quality of the dependent measures, Protest Predisposition (attitude toward political protest) and Protest Behavior (personal history of assertive protest action). Here it is desirable to have as many indicators as possible. As Duckitt points out:

"A generalized attitude toward any object will determine the overall tendency to behave favorably or unfavorably to that object. It will not predict specific single acts with much accuracy because of act- and situation-specific influences. However, *it should show a very strong relationship with multiple-act criteria, that is, behavior aggregated over a variety of different acts and situations.*" (Duckitt, 1994: 41-42).

This criterion is met in the ALLBUS survey. There are two sets of items included in the survey which ask respondents about past protest behavior over their entire lives, and about activities occurring in the two years preceding the survey (i.e., since 1996). The following discussion on scalability and reliability refers to the more general set of items. The first question is whether these items form a scale – and the answer is both "yes" (for respondents in the old federal states) and "no" (for respondents in the new federal states).

The first sign of measurement difficulty shows up in the factor analysis of the participation inventory (see van Deth, this volume). The structure of participation, at least as measured by the classic participation inventory of the Political Action Study (Barnes, Kaase et al 1979; Jennings and van Deth, 1990) yields different factors in East and West. While van Deth found some comparability between East and West for some conventional and the unconventional tactics, the factorial structures for the more assertive protest tactics

were quite different. This would suggest that a simple measure of protest behavior would also not survive classic reliability analysis. Constructing summed scales of the six aggressive protest items tested this.

The first measure, *Protest Predisposition* is the summed score of interviewee responses as to whether they would engage in occupation actions, participate in unapproved demonstrations, create a disturbance at a demonstration, use violence against other persons, intimidate political opponents, and take part in a traffic blockade (see Appendix). By region, these items scaled with Cronbach's alpha coefficients of .74 for the West and .64 for the East. These are plausible coefficients that indicate moderate scalability for predispositions (but more so for respondents in the old than in the new federal states).

When the same tactics are reported as actual *behavior*, a scale of moderate reliability is obtained in the West but any hint of scalability collapses for respondents in the new federal states. For the East, the Cronbach's alpha is .14. For the West, the behaviors are more scalar, reaching an alpha value of .64. This echoes the results from the factorial analysis.

Perhaps it should not be surprising that a behavioral index is less scalar than a predispositional measure. Behavior is subject to a more complex system of opportunities, inhibitions and catalysts than are attitudes. The behavioral measure we employ here potentially includes all past protest in which the respondents have participated. That behavior would have taken place in quite different opportunity structures in West and East. This no doubt accounts for much of the difference in the meaning of protest behavior. However, we cannot make much progress in examining those regional differences unless we can usefully measure the behavior among respondents in both the old and new federal states.

One possible answer to the problem lies in the fact that in both regions the most common behavior is that of taking part in a non-approved demonstration. Only a very small minority of respondents in either region took part in more than one activity, and most of them were young. As a result, the index actually reduces to a near-dichotomous measure that includes one protest behavior for most respondents. This was tested by generating a dichotomous index of behavior that simply measured whether the respondents had engaged in *any* of the tactics. The resulting dichotomous index turned out to be virtually the same as the multi-item. The correlation between the two measures was .88 for the West and .96 for the East. Neither measure is elegant, but both perform about equally well. Though both ways of constructing a behavior measure are not as elegant as we would like, they are nearly equivalent in a practical sense. However, regardless of this similarity, the summed version of the behavioral index is used in the remainder of this

analysis. This preserves some additional variance for those who engaged in more than one activity (in practice, both forms of the indexes were tried out, with no substantive difference in interpretation).

### **3.2 Measuring the Domains (Operationalization of the Independent Variables)**

In this analysis the structural/demographic domain is represented by *region* (West versus East), *gender*, *age*, and *educational level*. The attitudinal domain is represented by *ideology*, *acceptance of political violence*, and belief about the *effectiveness of assertive political protest*.

The context domain is more indirectly measured and requires more description. Here we have conceptualized the context domain as one characterized by individuals' relationship to their private and public worlds - in broad terms we mean the degree of "politico-centricity" present in their attention to media, to friends, and to public engagement. Arguably these are attributes of individuals and therefore at the micro level. As we argued at the outset, the measurement is certainly at the micro level, but the level of causation is attributable to a domain we call the social context of the individual. In a sense, it represents the personal political culture of the individual and relates the individual to the sociopolitical network of action. The presence of *politically active friends* in this domain adds to the picture of a social context in which one actively relates to political information, feels an inclination to engage in social action, and has politically active friends. A privatistic, inward-looking tendency is represented by the emphasis on family and friends, and by a preference for 'trivial' television entertainment. These dimensions are measured by *public involvement*, and *orientation to political and social information on television*, having *politically active friends*, the *importance of family and friends*, and preference for 'trivial' entertainment *television*. Details of these measures are given in the Appendix.

Before examining the coefficients there are two caveats that are important to note. The first concerns the assignment of variables to the contextual domain. The second concerns the temporal status of the independent variables.

With respect to the first caveat: Other researchers may question whether these measures properly constitute a context domain. This is a question of operationalization, and in secondary analysis of large data sets this is always a problem worth discussion. Our operating assumption here is that each of these measures is a plausible indirect measure of some aspect of the individuals' wider sociopolitical context. Though they are measured by the same process as other attitudes, their referent is the individuals' relationship with the social environment. Should other researchers disagree with this interpretation, the

ensuing analysis is still sufficiently transparent so that the contribution of each variable should be clear. In any event, the two main goals - the comparison of the models' success in comparing predisposition and behavior, and comparing West and East - are sufficiently transparent in the regression models that disagreement over operational measurement will not stand in the way of evaluation of the main propositions.

The second caveat concerns the time span to which the variables refer. The relevant items for behavior represent a longer time scale than the items for predispositions. By definition, predispositions are measured in present time. The same is largely true of the independent variables representing structural and contextual factors. Political behavior, however, is measured on a longer time scale that includes the present and the past – *any* political protest activities may be relevant, including those that may have occurred some years in the past. The ALLBUS survey anticipated this problem by using parallel items for the previous two years (since 1996), but scales constructed from those items provided no analytic improvement. In principle we might expect that recent behavior would be more strongly associated with structure and context. That turns out not to be the case. Moreover, recent protest shows evidence of the surge of protest-like behavior on the right.

### 3.3 Correlates of Protest Predispositions and Protest Behavior

#### Structure

For *Protest Predispositions*, there is an association with youth that is significant in both East and West (Table 1). Gender is in a slightly positive direction, indicating that protest is more associated with males, but the coefficient is not significant. Amount of formal education is significant, but only for respondents in the old federal states. The pattern for *Protest Behavior* also shows an association with youth (and infinitesimally with gender). Level of formal education is significant throughout, but the level of association is higher for respondents in the old federal states.

#### Context

Contrary to expectations, *Protest Predispositions* are not associated with a strong orientation toward friends and family (Privatism), but they are associated with an orientation toward public involvement (though only in the West). “Kitsch TV” is negatively associated in both regions of Germany, indicating that enthusiasm for trivial culture is contradictory to the culture of protest.

*Protest Behavior* is associated negatively with privatism and positively with public involvement in the West, but not in the East. Politically active friends are important in supporting protest behavior, just as they were in sup-

porting protest predispositions. Also related is the distaste for trivial entertainment; here, the association appears to be somewhat higher in the East than in the West.

#### The Attitudinal Domain

*Protest Predispositions* show an association with leftist ideology in the West, much as has been the case for the past three decades. That is not true in the East, where the association with ideology is nonsignificant. The most powerful predictors are the belief that violence is justified in the pursuit of political goals, and the belief that aggressive protest can be an effective political instrument. *Protest Behavior* is also associated with leftist ideology in the West. It is also associated with a belief that violence is justified and that protest is effective, though these attitudes are associated at a lower level than for predispositions. The most powerful predictor of all is the Protest Predisposition, which has associations of .43 (West) and .46 (East).

Table 1: Simple Correlations for Protest Predispositions and Protest Behavior, Germany 1998<sup>1</sup> (German citizens only, ages 18-59)

	Predisposition <sup>2</sup>		Behavior		Behavior (since 1996)	
	West	East	West	East	West	East
<i>Structural Factors</i>						
Age	-.15**	-.16**	-.10**	-.15**	-.10**	-.10*
Gender	.05	.03	.03	.02	.05	.04
Education	.11**	.06*	.14**	.09*	.03	-.01
<i>Context</i>						
Privatism	.00	-.05	-.07*	-.03	-.10**	-.04
Public Involvement	.10**	.03	.12**	.04	.04	.01
Kitsch TV	-.08**	-.15**	-.09**	-.13**	-.06	.01
Information TV	.04	.00	.06*	.00	-.01	-.05
Politically Active Friends	.09**	.10*	.12**	.12**	.05	.09*
<i>Attitudinal</i>						
Ideology (Left-Right)	-.13**	-.05	-.14**	-.03	-.07*	.10*
Violence Justified	.26**	.24**	.13**	.14**	.09**	.12**
Protest Effective	.41**	.40**	.21**	.21**	.09**	.12*
Protest Predisposition	-	-	.43**	.46**	.21**	.22**

<sup>1</sup> Information on the constructed scales and indexes appears in the Appendix. Gender is coded as a dichotomous dummy variable with 1 = "male"; ideology is coded with "left" as the lower and "right" as the higher score.

<sup>2</sup> Maximum sample size for west = 1367, for east = 709. Coefficients are constructed on a pairwise basis, so actual n's vary somewhat because of missing data.

\* = p ≤ .05; \*\* = p ≤ .01

Recent political *Protest Behavior* (since 1996) is represented by a measure of activities in which the respondents engaged during the past two years (since 1996). In principle this measure should show a stronger association with the structural and, above all, the context domains, because they are measured closer in time to the actual behavior. The last two columns test this possibility.

The *structure* domain shows the familiar association with youth, and a slight (nonsignificant) positive association with being male. But the association with education vanishes. For *Context*, Privatism is associated for the West, but not the East. Public involvement is unrelated, as are the other context factors. Even more unusual is the drop or reversal of correlations in the attitudinal domain. Left ideology is related to protest in the West, but in the East the association is the opposite – protest is associated with the right of the political spectrum. Justification of violence remains associated, as does the belief that protest is effective. Important also is the predisposition to protest, though this association is much lower than it was for the general protest behavior measure in the middle columns of Table 1.

We suspect two influences to be at work in these reversals for recent protest behavior: First, the fact that the association for the East is reversed may point to the discrediting of the left in the aftermath of the former German Democratic Republic; second, this may indicate the increased militancy of the political and xenophobic right. The effect of right-of-center activism throughout Germany might have traces in the reduction of the leftist association in the West and the reversal of the association in the East. This does not represent a massive shift in protest from left to right, but it does show a drift in that direction.

### 3.4 Multivariate Models of Protest Dispositions and Protest Behavior

The simple correlations presented above are interesting in their own right, but we want to simplify the analysis both empirically and theoretically. There are several ways a multiple regression accomplishes this. In the first place it can clarify whether the various factors have an independent influence, or whether they are so intercorrelated that they do not add much new predictive power. This is particularly important in the attitudinal domain where the various measures are likely to be strongly correlated. Second, we can test whether the more proximal domains mediate the more distant ones; if they do, then the more distant domains (context and structure) will have very little predictive power in a multivariate model. The third product of a multivariate test will provide an estimate of the predictive power (explained variance) associated with each domain.

The basic procedure is to organize each domain into a statistical 'block' of explanatory variables. In order to differentiate among the various theoretical domains, the independent variables were categorized into structural, contextual, and attitudinal blocks; each block was then progressively entered into the regression equation after the preceding block had been estimated. A comparison of the increase in statistical power provided by each block will provide an estimate of the importance of each domain in West and East, and between attitudinal and behavioral outcomes. The order of inclusion of the domains is from the most distant domain (structure) to the most proximal (attitude). This 'forward' strategy seems to correspond best to the theoretical logic of distality/proximality and is displayed here (the alternative strategy that moves 'backward' from attitude through context to structure was also tested). The results of the model estimation(s) for the Protest Predispositions are given in Table 2 and for Protest Behavior in Table 3.<sup>2</sup> The model for Protest Behavior is estimated without the Protest Predisposition scale and again with it (Model 3a in the tables). Recent Protest Behavior is estimated in a separate set of models that are identical to those in Table 3; here, in Table 4, we pursue the anomalies from the correlation analysis that make us ask "what has happened since 1996?".

### 3.4.1 Regression Models: Protest Predisposition

Model 1 tests the structural domain alone and finds that youth has a significant independent association with protest predispositions (Table 2). This influence remains intact in Model 2, which includes context factors, but is strongly reduced in Model 3. This indicates that structure is only slightly mediated by context, but strongly so by attitude. Youth is associated with protest, but youth is obviously associated with protest-related attitudes and thus is mediated by the attitude domain.

The modest association of education with predispositions (West only) vanishes when other domains are taken into account in Models 2 and 3. In Model 2 context plays a small role, with Privatism retaining a slight influence. Kitsch television retains some influence also; it shows some instability between Models 2 and 3, but the Model 3 indicates that affection for trivial culture is negatively associated with protest predispositions in both

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<sup>2</sup> Missing data may have produced some anomalies in the regression models. The most affected variable is "Politically Active Friends" for which as many as fifteen to eighteen percent did not respond. All other variables showed fewer missing cases. For political ideology about three to five percent were missing, and the remaining variables had even fewer missing cases. Fortunately, apart from a few anomalies between successive models, the missing data do not seem to undermine our basic conclusions.

East and West. A taste for trivial television entertainment is a more powerful predictor than level of formal education, a finding we return to in the concluding discussion.

*Table 2:* Multivariate Models for Protest Predispositions, Germany 1998  
(German citizens only, ages 18-59)

	Protest Predisposition					
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	West	East	West	East	West	East
<i>Structural Domain</i>						
Age	-.15***	-.14**	-.15***	-.13**	-.08*	-.07
Gender	.02	.05	.02	.01	-.01	.02
Education	.07*	.06	.02	.02	-.00	.03
<i>Context</i>						
Privatism			.03	-.08	.08*	-.01
Public Involvement			.06	.00	.06	-.02
Information TV			.02	.01	.01	.03
Kitsch TV			-.06	-.10	-.12***	-.12**
Politically Active Friends			.07*	.06	.02	.01
<i>Attitudinal Domain</i>						
Ideology (Left-Right)					-.08**	-.05
Violence Justified					.14***	.19***
Protest Effectiveness					.36***	.33***
R	.17	.18	.21	.22	.48	.46
R <sup>2</sup>	.03	.03	.05	.05	.23	.22
R <sup>2</sup> (adjusted)	.03	.02	.04	.03	.22	.20

\* = p ≤ .05; \*\* = p ≤ .01; \*\*\* = p ≤ .001

The attitudinal domain appears to mediate the prior domains and provides the most powerful predictors of protest predisposition. The influence of left ideology is mildly significant (West), but the real importance is in the belief that protest can be effective. This estimate of tactical efficacy overshadows the notion that political violence is justified and reduces its influence sharply from that indicated by the simple correlations seen in Table 1.

To estimate the power of the three domains, we need only look at the multiple correlation coefficients (R) and the variance estimates (R<sup>2</sup>). In summary, the structural domain explains only three percent of the variance (Model 1); this figure nearly doubles (to .05) with addition of context (Model 2) and quadruples (to about .22) with the addition of attitudes in Model 3.

### 3.4.2 Regression Models: Protest Behavior

The regression models for Protest Behavior (Table 3) show that age remains significant as a predictor (slightly more so in the East than in the West). In comparison to protest predispositions (Table 2), youth retains more of its independent influence across the successive models; substantively, this means that youthful actionism retains its influence on behavior (see Watts, 1999) even when attitudes are taken into account (recall that for protest predispositions, youth was more strongly mediated by attitudes). Beyond this, the addition of context adds only one explanatory variable of significance – public involvement – and that is a factor only in the West. It appears that the traditional forms of public and community involvement (clubs, organizations) have an effect in the old federal states but not in the East. The collapse of party- and state-related organizations created a vacuum, and those integrative, organizing institutions have not been replaced in the East by the sort of voluntary public involvement that is common in the West.

*Table 3:* Multivariate Models for Protest Behavior, Germany 1998  
(German citizens only, ages 18-59)

	Protest Behavior							
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 3a	
	West	East	West	East	West	East	West	East
<i>Structural Domain</i>								
Age	-.09**	-.12**	-.11**	-.12*	-.08*	-.09*	-.04	-.05
Gender	.03	.06	.01	.04	.01	.04	.01	.03
Education	.13***	.10*	.07	.05	.07	.06	.07	.05
<i>Context</i>								
Privatism			-.04	-.01	-.02	-.03	-.05	.04
Public Involvement			.08*	.03	.09**	.03	.07*	.03
Information TV			.04	.03	.04	.03	.04	.02
Kitsch TV			-.05	-.07	-.06	-.08	-.01	-.03
Politically Active			.06	.05	.04	.02	.03	.01
Friends								
<i>Attitudinal Domain</i>								
Ideology (Left-Right)					-.12***	-.01	-.08**	.01
Violence Justified					.07*	.07	-.01	.01
Protest Effective					.13***	.20***	.02	.05
Protest Predisposition							.40***	.44***
R	.17	.18	.22	.20	.30	.30	.46	.49
R <sup>2</sup>	.03	.03	.05	.04	.09	.09	.21	.24
R <sup>2</sup> (adjusted)	.03	.03	.04	.03	.08	.07	.20	.22

\* = p ≤ .05; \*\* = p ≤ .01; \*\*\* = p ≤ .001

The attitudinal domain makes the greatest contribution to predicting protest behavior. Leftist ideology remains an influence in the West, but its influence vanishes in the East. In Model 3 the most powerful factor in the old and new federal states is the belief that protest is effective, a factor that may be correlated with ideology in some instances, but which is in principal ideology neutral. The belief in the legitimacy of political violence remains slightly associated, but obviously its effects are overshadowed by the perceived efficacy of protest. In the final model, here designated as Model 3a, protest predisposition (the dependent variable in Table 2) is included. There is a noticeable increase in association, but it is clearly at the cost of two other attitudinal measures – justification of violence and protest effectiveness. Thus, Protest Predisposition is the best predictor of protest behavior, and obviously mediates the influence of attitudes related to the legitimacy and effectiveness of aggressive protest (reducing the beta coefficients found in Model 3).

The estimates of variance explained show that structure accounts for only about three percent ( $R^2 = .03$ ) and that context makes an incremental improvement to about four or five percent. The real increase is a doubling of the variance explained in Model 3 and a four to five-fold increase in Model 3a. In explaining behavior, attitude is the most important factor. Comparing Models 3 in Table 2 and Table 3 shows that attitude is less powerful in predicting Protest Behavior than it is for Protest Predispositions. As a result, the relative influence of the two prior domains is somewhat higher even though their absolute influence is about the same for both predispositions and behavior. Taking protest disposition into account as an explanatory factor for behavior (Model 3a, Table 3) produces a greatly improved prediction equation. This shows the power of a well-constructed attitudinal measure that meets the criteria of multiple, behaviorally relevant items.

### 3.4.3 Recent Political Protest Behavior

An anomaly appears in Table 3. In Models 3 and 3a the influence of leftist ideology is significant in the West but not in the East. This suggests that past protest in the East was neither left nor right, or both. That makes sense in the context of a socialist system in which protest could come both from democratic reformers on the socialist left and from non-socialist critics on the right or far right. But that was the past, which is reflected in our general measure of protest behavior. What about now? Table 4 attempts to answer that question.

The general measure of Protest Behavior (Table 3) elicits information on protest activities that may be recent, or may be well in the past. For older respondents in the old federal states those events may have been recent ones, but they may also have been as far in the past as the surge in unconventional participation of the late 1960s and 1970s. Older respondents in the new federal states could be reporting activities in the demonstrations of

1989/1990, but it is possible that some of them were engaged in earlier protests. However, we do not know with certainty whether those protests were in regime-supported or regime-critical demonstrations. For younger respondents in both East and West it seems certain that they are reporting activities of the 1990's. Here, too, we do not know whether the intent of the protest activity was progressive or regressive, reformist or reactionary. If any of the protests were related to foreigners, we do not even know whether they were motivated by tolerance or intolerance. The regression models for Recent Protest Activities (since 1996) do provide some clues.

*Table 4:* Multivariate Models for Recent Protest Behavior ("Since 1996"), Germany 1998 (German citizens only, ages 18-59)

	Protest Behavior							
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 3a	
	West	East	West	East	West	East	West	East
<i>Structural Domain</i>								
Age	-.10**	-.05	-.10**	-.05*	-.09*	-.03	-.07	-.02
Gender	.03	.07	.01	.08	.01	.07	.01	.07
Education	-.02	.04*	-.04	.05	-.04	.06	-.04	.05
<i>Context</i>								
Privatism			-.09*	-.00	-.08*	.00	-.10**	.00
Public Involvement			.05	.03	.05	.00	.04	.00
Information TV			-.01	-.04	-.01	-.03	-.01	.04
Kitsch TV			-.03	.03	-.03	.01	-.01	-.04
Politically Active Friends			.03	.07	.02	.06	.02	.06
<i>Attitudinal Domain</i>								
Ideology (Left-Right)					-.06	.10	-.04	.11*
Violence Justified					.05	.07	.02	.04
Protest Effective					.02	.08	-.03	.01
Protest Predisposition							.17***	.21***
R	.10	.10	.15	.13	.17	.20	.22	.28
R <sup>2</sup>	.01	.01	.02	.02	.03	.04	.05	.08
R <sup>2</sup> (adjusted)	.01	.00	.01	.00	.01	.01	.04	.05

\* = p ≤ .05; \*\* = p ≤ .01; \*\*\* = p ≤ .001

As Table 4 shows, youth is still a factor in protest, though more strongly in the West than in the East. Males still tend to have greater involvement. However, formal education has mixed results – higher education is still related slightly in the East but the coefficients, small and insignificant as they are, change sign in the West. Privatism is negatively related to recent protest

behavior, at least in the West. There is also some evidence that having politically active friends is a factor in the East, but the effects do not reach significance (see note 2).

The most interesting difference is in the apparent change in the relationship between political ideology and political protest. The relationship is still slightly in the direction of leftist sentiment in the West, but the relationship is not significant. In the East, however, the sign is reversed and significant. At +.10/.11 the association of protest behavior in the East is with the political right. One might speculate that protest in the East was associated with the more rightist sentiments of the second wave of protesters in 1989/90, but this is only one factor. In Table 3 past political behavior in the East was still associated slightly with the left. Since 1996 the association tends toward the political right. Together with the findings concerning age and education, there is evidence that recent protest, particularly in the East, has increasingly been associated with youth and the right. In addition, there is a continuing association evidenced in Model 3a that protest predisposition exerts a role. This is plausible, but we can also see here that the predisposition to protest is ideologically neutral – it can be related to the left and the right. That has long been visible as a tendency, but this is perhaps the first such clear indication in the ALLBUS national surveys of a rightward shift in the youthful protest culture.

The amount of variance explained in Table 4 shows that the models for recent behavior are less powerful than those for past behavior. Each model in Table 4 accounts for half or less the variance explained by the corresponding model in Table 3. This could have a number of explanations that we cannot untangle here. The first might be that the opportunity structure of the previous two years did not give as rich a picture of protest propensities as the longer time span of the general protest behavior measure. The second might be that recent behavior is simply different from past behavior in that it is more youthful, more ideologically diverse and right leaning. A third explanation for a difference might have been that the recent behavior was more closely related to structural and contextual factors, but in fact this did not occur at all. On the contrary, the models functioned *less* well for recent protest behavior.

#### 4. Conclusions and Discussion

We return briefly to our original questions: How useful is the domain scheme as an explanatory framework? How different is our ability to predict predispositions and behavior? How do the old and new federal states differ? To this must be added a fourth question that emerged from the analysis: How has recent protest behavior differed from the past?

How useful is the domain scheme as an explanatory framework?

The conceptual scheme based on domains was useful as an organizing device for selecting and ordering the explanatory factors. It also was consistent with a regression procedure employing 'blocks' of independent variables that corresponded to the domains. It was also useful for ordering the substantive interpretation of our findings.

The analysis clearly showed that the structural factors of youth, education and gender have a persistent but variable influence. Youth is the most important factor. Also, context does make a difference. The variance explained remains small, but roughly doubles, when such factors as privatism, public involvement, aversion to trivial culture and political friendships are included. The proximal attitudinal domain is the most powerful, and it mediates some of the influence of factors in the structural and contextual domains.

How different is our ability to predict predispositions and behavior?

The analysis has also shed light on the connection between protest predispositions and protest behavior among German citizens. The indexes of Protest Predisposition and Protest Behavior were correlated fairly strongly (at slightly over .40 for both regions), but the three domains of explanatory (independent) variables varied in their ability to predict them. The relative predictive ability of attitudes is not only lower for behavior but it is proportionally less than in the prediction of predispositions. Perhaps this may now seem obvious, since it has been long known that attitudes predict other attitudes better than behavior. But the technical and theoretical point is a bit more complex:

It is theoretically significant that the overall ability to predict is reduced from about twenty percent of the variance for Predisposition to about ten percent of the variance for Behavior. We can improve the prediction of behavior by including the predisposition measure as an independent variable. This allows a model that explains about twenty percent of the variance for past protest behavior, and about five to eight percent for recent protest behavior.

How do the old and new federal states differ?

The models for predispositions and behavior predict about equally well for East and West. The models are the most similar for predispositions. This confirms that the basic structure of attitudes concerning political protest is similar among citizens in the old and new federal states. Privatism plays a role in East and West, but the West differs in its tradition of public involvement - an association not shared in the East. In East and West, the most

powerful predictors of protest predispositions are the beliefs that political violence is justified and that it can be effective. On the other hand, ideology has its traditional leftward tendency in the West, but in the East that tendency is minimal; in recent years it appears to have been reversed. This is clearest in the question of recent protest behavior.

How has recent protest behavior differed from the past? What has happened since 1996?

The original intention in developing and testing this measure was a theoretical one. It seemed likely that recent behavior would be more closely to structural and contextual factors than past protest behavior. That was not the case; prediction was no stronger, and often weaker. The reasons for this difference between the two measures of behavior are not clear, but one explanation might be that the measure of recent behavior accentuates the youthful component of protest. In any given period the young are simply more likely to have been engaged in actionistic politics (see Watts, 1999). The general behavior measure would include protest by older respondents that was not only recent, but also occurred when they were younger.

A second factor might be that youthful protest during the 1990's shifted to the right of the political spectrum. The classic association between left-liberalism and protest is less dominant and right-leaning protest has become more common. This now appears in the analysis of recent protest behavior where the ideology-protest relationship in the West is weaker, and in the East is reversed. This is obviously an important baseline from which to observe future trends in protest activism.

#### **4.1 A Comment on Education and Kitsch**

The relationship between education and kitsch deserves a special mention in the regional comparison. The issue is that formal education has less explanatory power in the East than the West, but aversion to Kitsch arguably has more. Obviously the first observation is fairly easily explained – the educational system in the new federal states was quite different from that in the West, both with respect to its content and its ideology of social differentiation.

We had reasoned that trivial entertainment (Kitsch TV) might be meaningful in East-West comparisons, adding information to the inconclusive associations with formal education. The logic was that education, to borrow Bourdieu's terminology, plays (or played) a stronger role in the West in producing social and political differentiation. In Bourdieu's approach (see, for example, Bourdieu, 1983), education represents a process of acquisition of

cultural capital, capital that provides for cultural distinction and which can be converted into social and economic advantage. It is therefore closely related to the acquisition of 'taste' as an element of social differentiation. Therefore, formal education differentiates social action in Western societies - in recent years it has supported a form of bourgeois progressivism that is associated with protest politics. In East German society this relationship seems not to have existed in the same form. Education and political protest are not related as they have been in Western politics; it is, however, associated with taste. In both West and East, higher education is associated with a preference for informational television (INFO-TV) and negatively with trivial television preferences (KITSCH-TV). We would expect education to increase in predictive power in the East as the classic function of education in producing bourgeois taste (progressive or not) is reproduced in the new federal states. These are only speculations; there is obviously room for much more work to be done on the differentiation of taste and cultural capital in East and West.

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## Appendix: Scales and Constructed Indexes

### Protest Predisposition:

Summed index representing the number of tactics in which the respondent engaged. Scored “1” for each tactic named, “0” for “not named”, “none of the above” (“nichts davon”). Missing responses (“keine Angabe”) were excluded from analysis.

- V91 gegebenenfalls: Teilnahme an ungenehmigter Demonstration
- V92 gegebenenfalls: Teilnahme an Besetzungsaktionen
- V93 gegebenenfalls: Krach schlagen bei Demonstrationen
- V94 gegebenenfalls: Kampf mit Gewalt gegen Personen
- V95 gegebenenfalls: politische Gegner einschüchtern
- V100 gegebenenfalls: Teilnahme an Verkehrsblockade

### Protest Behavior (same coding as for Protest Predisposition)

- V107 habe an ungenehmigter Demonstration teilgenommen
- V108 habe an Besetzungsaktionen teilgenommen
- V109 habe auf Demonstrationen Krach geschlagen
- V110 habe Gewalt gegen Personen angewendet
- V111 habe politische Gegner eingeschüchtert
- V116 habe an Verkehrsblockade teilgenommen

**Privatism**

- V9      Wichtigkeit: eigene Familie und Kinder  
V11     Wichtigkeit: Freizeit und Erholung  
V12     Wichtigkeit: Freunde und Bekannte  
V13     Wichtigkeit: Verwandtschaft  
(Constructed from 1<sup>st</sup> dimension of factor analysis of  
'Wichtigkeit' items)

**Public Involvement**

- V32     Freizeit: Beteiligung in Politik  
V33     Freizeit: ehrenamtliche Tätigkeiten

**Kitsch TV**

- V53     Fernsehinteresse: Shows, Quiz  
V59     Fernsehinteresse: Heimatfilme  
V62     Fernsehinteresse: Unterhaltungsserien

**Information TV**

- V56     Fernsehinteresse: Nachrichten  
V57     Fernsehinteresse: politische Magazine  
V58     Fernsehinteresse: Kunst und Kultur