A Spatial History of Protest in Boston

By

Cortni Kerr
BA in Arabic Studies and History
Williams College, 2010

Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master in City Planning

at the

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

June 2017
© 2017 Cortni Kerr. All rights reserved.

The author hereby grants to MIT permission to reproduce and to distribute publicly paper and
electronic copies of this thesis document in whole or in part in any medium now known or hereafter
created.

Signature of Author ____________________________
Department of Urban Studies and Planning
May 22, 2017

Certified By ____________________________
Assistant Professor Justin Steil
Department of Urban Studies and Planning
Thesis Supervisor

Accepted By ____________________________
Associate Professor P. Christopher Zegras
Chair, MCP Committee
Department of Urban Studies and Planning

JUN 14 2017
LIBRARIES
ARCHIVES
A Spatial History of Protest in Boston

By Cortni Kerr

Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning on May 23, 2017 in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER IN CITY PLANNING

at the

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Abstract:

The location of a protest is a crucial element in protesters’ ability to make their grievances or demands heard. Despite the significance of protest location and scholars’ emphasis on the importance of urban space in social movement mobilization, there is limited research on the spatial patterns of protest over time. This thesis utilizes the Dynamics of Collective Action dataset to identify, geocode, and map 421 protests, rallies, sit ins, and marches that took place in the Boston area between 1960 and 1995. In addition to identifying the location of protest events, this study classifies and analyzes protest space typologies. The analysis reveals the durability of university and government spaces as protest locations, as well as the Boston Common. In addition, it identifies the significance of Boston Public School desegregation as a catalyst for neighborhood protests during the 1970s, particularly in South Boston. This thesis concludes with a discussion of the mechanisms that shape the spatial patterns of urban protest and engages in a critical reflection on the consequences for urban planners and residents.

Thesis Supervisor: Justin Steil, Assistant Professor of Law and Urban Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Thesis Reader: Mariana Arcaya, Assistant Professor of Urban Planning and Public Health, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Acknowledgements

I am especially grateful to my advisor Justin for his patience and feedback as this project developed, as well as my partner Matt for his support, good humor, and love, which helped keep me grounded throughout the MCP program. I am also thankful to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning for providing financial support to present this research at the 2017 Annual Meeting of the American Association of Geographers. In addition, thank you to DUSP's GIS and Data Visualization Specialist Mike Foster for providing feedback on mapping and offering the opportunity to present my initial results at the AAG Mapathon. Finally, thank you to the Rodwin Family for supporting my Lloyd and Nadine Rodwin International Travel Fellowship in summer 2016. With the fellowship support I traveled to Bahrain for research that ultimately motivated the direction of this thesis.
# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements .......................................................................................................................... 3
  Tables and Figures .......................................................................................................................... 5
Introduction ....................................................................................................................................... 6
Literature Review ............................................................................................................................. 11
  Why Study Protest ......................................................................................................................... 11
  Why Place Matters to Protest ......................................................................................................... 11
  Which Places Matter to Protest ....................................................................................................... 13
  Influences on Protest Space ........................................................................................................... 14
  Outcomes for Protest Locations .................................................................................................... 16
Data and Methods ............................................................................................................................. 18
  Data ................................................................................................................................................ 18
  Limitations ..................................................................................................................................... 22
  Methods .......................................................................................................................................... 22
  Spatial Analysis ............................................................................................................................... 24
Results ................................................................................................................................................ 27
  Protest Space Typologies ................................................................................................................ 27
    Place Typologies by Decade .......................................................................................................... 27
  Mapping Locations .......................................................................................................................... 29
  Clustering Analysis ......................................................................................................................... 30
  Hot Spot Analysis ............................................................................................................................ 32
Time Series Comparison .................................................................................................................. 35
  1960-1969 ..................................................................................................................................... 35
  1970-1979 ..................................................................................................................................... 37
  1980-1989 ..................................................................................................................................... 39
  1990-1995 ..................................................................................................................................... 41
Discussion .......................................................................................................................................... 43
  Significance of Universities ............................................................................................................ 43
  Significance of Government Spaces ............................................................................................... 44
  Significance of Boston Common ...................................................................................................... 45
  Significance of South Boston High School and School Desegregation ........................................... 47
  Other Patterns that Emerge ............................................................................................................. 49
Conclusion .......................................................................................................................................... 50
  Key Takeaways ............................................................................................................................... 50
  Policy Implications .......................................................................................................................... 52
  Limitations ....................................................................................................................................... 52
  Future Work ...................................................................................................................................... 52
Introduction

Urban space has long been a site of political dissent. According to Nemeth and Hollander (2010), “Open cities provide the playing field for dissent and protest, where diverse sets of users might declare and deliberate opposing opinions and viewpoints” (p. 21). The last 60 years provide numerous examples of groundbreaking dissent erupting in cities, including Zuccotti Park’s Occupy Wall Street demonstrations, Tahrir Square’s Arab Spring protests, Tiananmen Square’s democracy movement, and the National Mall’s March on Washington, among others. Each of these iconic examples utilized a large, public space in the city for demonstrations to gather supporters and make their claims against the state known. These movements, with significant impacts on the state, are best known by the place in which they happened. However, protests take place across a diverse array of urban space typologies and scales, from the steps of State Houses to university quads to neighborhood schools.

In this thesis, I explore the relationship between urban space and protest events. Specifically, I am interested in analyzing how the relationship between urban space and protest events changes or remains constant across time. Recent events in the United States, such as the policing of protests in Baltimore and Baton Rouge and proposed legislation in Minnesota, provoke questions about the changing dynamics of and limits of protest in urban space. These examples also suggest that changes may be underway in the dynamic between protest and city. Below, I highlight these three examples that motivate questions about the right to protest in public spaces, the policing of protest, and state control of protests.

April 30, 2015: Demonstrators gathered in front of City Hall in Baltimore, Maryland to protest the death of Freddie Gray while in Baltimore City Police custody, as shown in Figure 1.

![Figure 1: Maryland National Guard stand between protesters and Baltimore City Hall, April 30, 2015 (Credit: Maryland National Guard, Creative Commons, CC BY 2.0 License)](image-url)
The photo in Figure 1 brings up questions about boundaries of protest space. The National Guard are standing behind a fence, restricting access to City Hall, a public area. Why weren’t protesters allowed closer and what is the logic of blocking off the area? In addition, the activation of the National Guard in response to protests motivations raises questions about the role of policing protest. What is the role of military units and military-grade equipment in the crowd control, management, and policing of protest? Activists and journalists have raised concerns over militarized responses to protests, specifically using equipment from the Department of Defense 1033 program that transfers military equipment to local law enforcement agencies (Alijore, 2015; Cook, 2014; Masgrave et al 2014). Symbolic and direct shows of force through militarized policing of protest is meant to intimidate and repress protest. Repeated uses or shows of force can influence future protests by encouraging protesters to pick sites that are well protected from police interference or by discouraging protesters from protesting at all.

July 2016: Black Lives Matter protesters faced off with police in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, as shown in Figure 2. The protesters were demonstrating in response to the police killing of Alton Sterling on July 5, 2016.

Several protesters were arrested in Baton Rouge over the course of multiple demonstrations following the death of Sterling. The Louisiana Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) joined local groups in filing a lawsuit against the Baton Rouge Police Department for violating the First Amendment rights of demonstrators who were protesting peacefully (ACLU, 2016). According to the lawsuit, the Baton Rouge police dispersed protests using excessive force, physical and verbal abuse, and wrongful arrests (ACLU, 2016). The Baton Rouge Police Department settled the lawsuit in November 2016, jointly agreeing to a Memorandum of Understanding between the local

1 The photographer dated the photo July 2015, however additional research revealed this photo was taken in 2016.
organizations that brought the suit. Again, the question of what is the role of protest policing 
emerges from this example. More specifically, the question arises: what are the consequences for 
future protesters and their decisions on whether and where to protest?

December 4, 2014: Black Lives Matter protesters hold a sit-in on highway I-35 in Minneapolis, 
Minnesota, as shown in Figure 3.

In January of 2017, Minnesota representatives introduced two bills to criminalize protest. One 
specifically aimed increasing penalties for obstructing highway traffic (SF 918, 2017). The second 
bill would allow municipalities to sue protesters for costs associated with protests deemed unlawful 
large municipal expenditures on protests as motivation for the bill, claiming that in an 18-month 
period, the Cities of Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Bloomington had spent $2.5 million to respond to 
protests. However, the Minnesota Chapter of the ACLU and the Minneapolis NAACP have argued that 
the bills are attempts to silence the Black Lives Matter movement and suppress First Amendment 
rights. According to the statement filed by the Minneapolis NAACP (2017):

This bill, along with other companion legislation increasing protest criminal penalties, is the 
shameful Republican response to the Black Lives Matter movement in Minnesota. Our state 
is facing racial disparities that are among the worst in the nation in areas including income, 
education, health care, and policing. Rather than address these injustices, Republican 
politicians are seeking to stifle the protests that bring critically needed attention. We must 
stand up for free speech and the right to protest in Minnesota.
According the American Civil Liberties Union (2017), Minnesota was one of 15 states in early 2017 where state legislators had introduced bills that would criminalize particular forms of protest. Bills in Florida, Iowa, Washington state, and Georgia would criminalize or increase penalties for protesters who obstruct traffic, some with penalties of up to five years in prison. The bill in Washington state would deem blocking traffic, as well as protest activity that disrupts commerce, “economic terrorism” and would be considered a felony crime. State legislators in Florida, North Dakota, and Tennessee introduced bills that would limit liability for drivers who hit protesters with their vehicles. In Michigan, anti-picketing and anti-union laws were passed in the House that would limit workers’ rights to protest. The Michigan bills have since been shelved. An Oregon bill targets student protesters by proposing that public universities and community colleges be required to expel students convicted of participating in a violent riot. These are just some examples of the bills proposed as of March 2017.

While some of these bills have already been abandoned, they represent a potential threat to the use of urban space for protest. Moreover, increased criminalization of protest forms may legitimize increased, aggressive policing of protest. Regulating the type and location of protest effectively limits the extent to which protesters can express their grievances. Further, the focus on obstruction of traffic and highways in the legislation suggests a possible change in protest spaces. Is the legislation motivated by an increase in the use of highways or by something else? If there is an increase in the use of highway spaces, is it a result of declining protest space elsewhere or an evolution in protest strategy? Together, this legislation and recent examples of militarized policing motivate a discussion on the impact to future protest. To better understand the potential impact, we need a clear picture of the spatial history of protests in cities. However, the spatial dynamics of protests have been understudied until now.

To understand variation in the spatial dynamics of protest over time, I will look specifically at protest events in the Boston area. I will perform a spatial analysis to address my primary question: how have the locations of protests changed over time in Boston? Specifically, I will utilize a hot spot analysis to
identify which locations host statistically significant high levels of protest activity in each decade. I will also look at how the distribution of protests across space typologies changes over time. Then, I will discuss the implications of these patterns for policymakers, urban planners, and civil society.
Literature Review

This study focuses on the relationship between protest events and urban space. Protest events are defined as specific forms of collective action. Uhrig and Van Dyke (1996) define protest events as any event “in which individuals collectively make a claim or express a grievance on behalf of a social movement organization or social category.” Sampson, McAdam, MacIndoe, and Weffer-Elizondo (2005) expand this definition by noting that protests can be disruptive and contentious in nature, even entailing violence, or orderly and peaceful in nature (p.684-5). Familiar forms of protest in the 21st century include marches, rallies, sit ins, and demonstrations. However, Gould (2005) suggests conceptualizing contemporary protest events within the spectrum of historical contentious collective action, including, “peasant jacqueries, bread riots and grain seizures, slave revolts, ‘rough music,’ eighteenth-and nineteenth century democratic societies, urban uprisings, artisanal blacklists and workshop turnouts, and revolutionary sections” (p.286). The point of considering the historical spectrum of protest activity, is to recognize that patterns exist in the way protest shifts from one form to another (Gould, 2005, p.292). These patterns reflect the sociopolitical context of protest as well as the relationship with the urban space in which they take place. Castells (1983) argues that space is not merely a reflection of society, that space is society. Urban space is both the physical component of a city and the social. Urban space expresses and performs the interests of the dominant classes and implements power structures of the state (Castells, 1983).

Why Study Protest

Social movements and protest events highlight both shared interests and societal tensions. Protests can attract thousands or just a few people. The study of urban protest reveals the political, social, and economic cleavages of a city. Sampson et al. (2005) argue that social movements and protest events are not merely the aggregation of individuals; rather they are “social products born of complex interactive dynamics played out within established social settings” (p. 678).

Sassen (2011), responding to the uprisings that swept several Middle Eastern countries in 2011, argues that contemporary political practices, including protest, “have to do with the production of ‘presence’ by those without power and with a politics that claims rights to the city and to the country rather than protection of property” (Sassen, 2011, p. 574). Furthermore, Sassen (2011) positions the city as a key site for protest and claim making. Through urban protest, the powerless are able to leverage power over the dominant power.

For policymakers and urban planners, understanding protest events is relevant not only for understanding the claims which are expressed, but also for comprehending the role of the urban form in framing protest locations, shaping protest mobilization, and inhibiting or prohibiting state protest repression.

Why Place Matters to Protest

While the claims expressed in protest events are important, it is also useful to consider spatial aspects of protest events. For example, where in the city do protests happen frequently? In what types of spaces do protests take place? Is there a relationship between different protest locations? Where don’t protests happen? Harvey (2009) argues that theorizing about the city requires both a spatial approach and sociological approach.

We must relate social behavior to the way in which the city assumes a certain geography, a certain spatial form. We must recognize that once a particular spatial
form is created, it tends to institutionalize and, in some respects, to determine the future development of social process. We need, above all, to formulate concepts which will allow us to harmonize and integrate strategies to deal with the intricacies of social process and the elements of spatial form (p. 27).

Here, Harvey is arguing that an understanding of both form and social meaning of space are critical to developing a theory of urban processes. For theorizing the relationship between protest and the built environment, this means developing a conceptualization of both the geographic location of protests and the social typology of protest spaces. The location of a protest is a key element to protesters' ability to make their grievances or demands heard. Scholars have emphasized the importance of urban space to social movement mobilization (Tilly, 2000; Castells, 1983; Mitchell 2003; Nemeth & Hollander, 2010; Marom, 2013; Rafail, 2016). Castells (1983) argues that the socioeconomic crises arising in cities in the late twentieth century should be analyzed for their spatial dimension, highlighting the importance of space in struggles to upend the political status quo. Specifically, Castells points to how spatial forms are “earmarked by the resistance from exploited classes, from oppressed subjects, and from dominated women,” and repurposed for new meaning and function (Castells, 1983, p. 4). Likewise, Tilly (2000) identifies the power of the spatial for protest:

When it comes to symbolic geography, spatial patterns figure in contentious politics as established and meaningful itineraries for public displays of force, as use of emblematic monuments, locales, or buildings in dramatization of demands, as struggle for control of crucial public spaces in validation of claims to political power, and as conversion of authorized public assemblies into occasions for otherwise forbidden or unfeasible political expression (p. 137).

Here, Tilly is describing how protest and social movements can leverage the symbolism and meaning imbued in urban space to validate or legitimate their claims. For example, a protest that takes place on a monument marking a Revolutionary War victory might channel support for the protesters’ claims for independence or autonomy. Likewise, organizers holding a protest that takes place where a historic civil rights rally was once held, may be able to leverage the narrative of the site to build momentum and excitement for their claims. Moreover, Tilly (2000) identifies five key arguments linking the spatial and contentious politics:

1. To begin with the obvious, contention always takes place in humanly occupied space, often including the built environment. Hence not only time-distance costs but also spatial configurations present both opportunities and constraints to participants in public claim making.

2. Everyday spatial distributions, proximities, and routines of potential participants in contention significantly affect their patterns of mobilization, for example in the distinction between workers who gather daily in the same workplace and revolutionary conspirators who improvise new meeting places day by day.

3. By definition, governments always play some part in contentious politics. Governments always organize at least some of their power around places and spatial routines. Hence contentious politics often challenges or disrupts governmental activity, and thereby incites governmental intervention.

4. Routine political life, including the contained contention of parades, parliaments, public ceremonies, and the like, endows different places and spatial routines (e.g. surrounding the dwelling of a reprobate or gathering in a
public square to hear a speaker) with symbolic significance, which is then available for adoption, parody, or transmutation by participants in transgressive politics.

5. Contention itself transforms the political significance of particular sites and spatial routines, as when locations of massacres become objects of pilgrimage or when funerals become major occasions for expressions of political preference. (p.138-9)

Which Places Matter to Protest

Castells (1983), Tilly (2000), and Sassen (2011) make clear the importance of spatial forms for protest. Urban space provides the physical location and shapes the social meaning of protests. However, not all space is created equal for protest. As Harvey suggests, we should consider both the spatial and social. Some locations are better suited for protest than others based on physical and social characteristics.

Table 1 presents common protest space typologies, followed by the proposed typology of protest space that I will utilize in this study. These typologies reveal that physical characteristics of size, relative location, and freedom (or safety) are important for protest space. The typologies also reveal that historical reference and symbolic manifestations of power are key social characteristics of protest spaces.

Table 1: Protest Space Typologies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Global Orientation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The public square</strong></td>
<td>&quot;Almost a byword for freedom itself, the university may not constitute one particular place type, but is more a conceptual and psychological space in which young minds have pushed the boundaries of intellectual, civic and political freedoms, sometimes even in the face of violence.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;I think of the space of ‘the street’, which of course includes squares and any available open space, as a rawer and less ritualized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Another communal space, albeit with a much greater sense of physical freedom, the park was in the 20th century used as a site for positive change and non-violent protest.&quot;</td>
<td>Boulevard and piazza – signals rituals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The streets*: "Their very purpose being to convey movement, the network of pathways which runs through every city is a ready-made space for freedom marches and expansive demonstrations. They have played host to some of the most iconic freedom movements of modern times."
space. The Street can, thus, be conceived as a space where new forms of the social and the political can be made, rather than a space for enacting ritualized routines."

Rafail (2016, p.3)

U.S. Centric

"Physical spaces that may be conducive for hosting large gatherings" "Centers of power that provide symbolic and physical manifestations of state and private-sector power" "College campuses, which are traditional hotbeds of activism"

Based on these typologies, I propose the following protest event typologies for Boston data:

First, parks, or physically open spaces that are conducive to gatherings. Second, government spaces that represent power and authority. These spaces are not limited to one specific jurisdiction or department of government, rather they include a range of public authorities. Third, university and college campuses. Fourth, commercial spaces which can represent specific actors whom protesters are making a claim against (e.g., a company that sources products or labor unethically or a store that practices discriminatory policies). Commercial spaces can also be utilized as a highly visible place to make claims, (e.g. in a busy shopping district). However, the history of protests in Boston will reveal a more diverse set of protest spaces in the forthcoming chapters.

Influences on Protest Space

Several factors can influence the mobilization of and location of protest. In addition to the physical and social characteristics of protest space described above, social control can influence protesters’ selection of space. Earl (2006) outlines a typology of protest control identifying three main actors in the social control of protest: state agents tightly connected with national political elites, state agents loosely connected with national political elites and private agents, as shown in Table 2. Protest control according to Earl (2006) can be described as coercion or channeling and may be either observable or unobservable. Coercion involves shows and/or uses of force and other forms of police and military action, whereas channeling is less direct, using “carrots and sticks”. to encourage or discourage protest (Earl, 2003, 2006).

Several of the tactics described in Table 2 might prevent protest mobilization by depleting resources or organizational capacity (cells 3,4,8). However other tactics have a more explicit relationship to protest site selection. For example, cells 1, 5, and 9, may encourage protest organizers to select sites that are protected, either legally or physically to prevent violent action. Cells 7 and 12 may restrict the locations which can utilized for protest events. The tactics outlined by Earl (2006) could also be reorganized into a simpler classification defined by Oliver (2008). According to Oliver (2008) protest control or protest repression can be categorized by deterrence, incapacitation, and surveillance.
Table 2: A Typology of Protest Control (Earl, 2006, p. 131)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coercion</th>
<th>Observable</th>
<th>Unobserved</th>
<th>Channeling</th>
<th>Observable</th>
<th>Unobserved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Agents (Tightly Connected with National Political Elites)</td>
<td>military action against protests</td>
<td>FBI counterintelligence programs</td>
<td>Cutting off funding to social movement groups</td>
<td>U.S. tax law on nonprofits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Agents (Loosely Connected with National Political Elites)</td>
<td>local policing of public protest events in the U.S.</td>
<td>local police departments' counterintelligence programs</td>
<td>permitting requirements for protest events</td>
<td>financial aid restrictions on students convicted of crimes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Agents</td>
<td>violence by a countermovement</td>
<td>private threats made by a countermovement</td>
<td>elite patronage limited to specific protest goals or group tactics</td>
<td>company towns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: This is a condensed version of the typology introduced in Earl (2003). Please see the original article for a complete discussion. For a breakout of private repression that also uses this typology, see Earl (2004).

Returning to the social control strategies with direct influence on protest spaces, McPhail, Schweingruber, and McCarthy (1998) identified two primary models of protest policing that have developed since the 1950s in the United States: escalated force and negotiated management. However, the linear progression from one to the other has been challenged by other scholars who point to the continued use of escalated force and use of specialized, militarized units, such as SWAT teams (Vitale, 2007; Kraska & Kappeler, 1997; Soule & Davenport, 2009; Earl, 2011). Escalated force is the direct use of force to disperse protesters, what Earl (2003, 2006) categorized as coercion. McPhail et al. (1998) characterized escalated force by a denial of the right to protest, a low tolerance for community disruption, minimal communication between police and protesters, immediate arrest or physical punishment of demonstrators, and the use of force as the standard protest response. On the other hand, negotiated management involves significantly more communication between police and protesters, and police hold protection of First Amendment rights in equal importance to protecting property and lives. In addition, McPhail et al. (1998) characterized negotiated management by a higher tolerance for community disruption, use of arrests as a last resort, and minimal use of force.

Whether or not there was a sharp transition between the two forms of protest policing, the important contribution is identifying the Public Order Management System (POMS) (McPhail et al., 1998). Backlash from the use of escalated force policing during the 1960s and 1970s led to negotiated management and the development of POMS in cities. According to McPhail et al. (1998):

Public order management systems consist of (1) civilian and/or military police organizations, (2) the public order policies of these organizations, (3) these organizations' programs for recruiting and training personnel (civilian or military) to enact these policies, (4) the actual practices of these policing personnel, and (5) the technology and equipment used while carrying out these practices (p.64).

Next to the physical policing of protest events, the other highly visible component of a POMS is protest permitting, which falls under cell 3 in Earl’s (2006) social control typology in Table 4. Permits specify the time, place, and manner in which protests may take place and require that protesters make prior notification, typically through a permit application process (McPhail et al., 1998, p.64). In ideal contexts, protest permits can provide legitimacy to protesters ability to rally, march, or demonstrate in urban space. However, the protest permitting process can also become a burdensome process for demonstrators to engage in, or it may provide authorities legitimacy to deny permits and shut down non-permitted protest events.
Outcomes for Protest Locations

Although a large body of social movement literature exists that identifies the characteristics of social movement organization, resource mobilization, and mechanisms of protest control, there appears to be little analysis of the spatial nature of protests. McCarthy and McPhail (2006) observed that “In spite of both the great theoretical and practical implications of the location of protest gatherings, there exists almost no systematic evidence about its variation” (p. 230). There are two studies notable for considering the spatial nature of protest in urban areas. In addition, the literature on university protest is useful considering the number of universities in the Boston context.

First, Sampson et al. (2005) analyzed over 4,000 Chicago area collective action events between 1970 and 2010 based on Chicago Tribune and Defender archives. Sampson et al. (2005) address three research areas. First, the nature of collective civic behavior and the relationship between protest and civic engagement. Second, the claims or purposes of collective civic action and how those claims and purposes have changed over time. Third, the predictors of collective civic action at the community level (p.677). Although Sampson et al. (2005) collected locational data on protest events in Chicago, they did not look specifically at the role of space. Rather, their study focused on neighborhood-level predictors of collective action, but did not identify specific built form factors. Relevant here, Sampson et al. (2005) found evidence of spatial clustering of collective action events. Specifically, many of the events in their dataset occurred in the Loop or downtown area. Sampson et al. (2005) concluded that neighborhood-level organizational infrastructure is the best predictor for collective action.

At least one study looks specifically at how protest locations have changed over time. Rafail (2016) mapped and analyzed 6,217 protest events in New York City between 1960 and 2006 based on New York Times archives. In this study, New York City Census tracts were assigned a count of protest events, as well as four groups of variables: 1) binary variables for the presence of a public park and the presence of a publicly owned private space (POPS); 2) proximity scores for the tract’s distance to New York City Hall and the nearest courthouse; 3) count of university students residing in the tract and a proximity score for nearest university; and 4) control variables for the demographic characteristics of the tracts. Rafail (2016) finds five key results.

First, protests in New York City increasingly occurred in Census tracts with privately owned public parks over time. Second, protests in Census tracts with symbols of government power had higher levels of protest consistently through the study period. Third, Census tracts in close proximity to a university or college had higher rates of protest (compared to those tracts not near a university), but residential student population did not have as large a mobilizing effect. Fourth, Rafail (2016) finds that overall protests became increasingly spatially clustered in those New York City Census tracts with POPS, symbols of power, and universities over time. Finally, the demographic control variables have little predictive power. Together these results point to the importance of urban space, characterized by its physical and social characteristics, in shaping protest.

Regarding protest events on university and college campuses, there is some evidence to explain variation across different campuses. Van Dyke (1998) found that a history of activism was a key factor in explaining which university campuses experienced higher levels of protest during the 1960s. Van Dyke’s study of 423 colleges and universities, established a strong correlation between schools with protest in the 1930s and protests during the 1960s. This builds on earlier work that looked at on-campus activism in the 1960s. Other scholars have shown that large schools (in terms of student population) and more elite institutions (Bayer and Astin 1969; Buchanan and Brackett 1970; Hodgkinson 1970; Lipset 1972) are more likely to experience protest. Soule (1997) found that a large financial endowment, which could be correlated with size and elite status, was a strong predictor of South African divestment activism on campuses between 1985 and 1990. Van Dyke’s
(1998) finding is suggestive of Harvey’s (2009) argument that spatial forms can institutionalize social processes. Spaces that are imbued with a history of protest, encourage the replication of that tradition, whereas spaces that do not have a memory of protest are less likely to generate that social process. However, the other literature suggests a less spatial explanation; institutional size, reputation, and financial resources shape protest. The high number of universities and colleges in the Boston area make it an interesting case to explore the mobilization power of different campuses.

In summary, the literature on protest and social movements is clear on the crucial role of urban space in protest mobilization. However, the nature of this relationship over time has been understudied. This thesis contributes to the literature on spatial variation of protest by analyzing protest data for Boston. Rather than focusing on a specific time period of social uprising, this study looks at 35 years of protest activity to capture variation in protest locations across different social movement moments (Olzak 1989). Specifically, the study will analyze variation in protest locations by decade, looking at how protest loci, or hot spots, change between decades. In the next chapter, I will identify the data and methods used to identify, map, and classify protest spaces in Boston between 1960 and 1995.
Data and Methods

Data
To map Boston area protests, this paper utilizes the Dynamics of Collective Action dataset (McAdam et al. 2009a), which catalogs collective action events in the United States from 1960 to 1995. Researchers developed the dataset by reviewing microfilm archives of every issue of the daily national newspaper The New York Times to identify collective action events. All sections of the newspaper were surveyed except: Letters to the Editor, Editorials, Wedding and Anniversary Announcements, Movie Listings, the Sunday magazine and Book Reviews (McAdam et al. 2009b). There are 104 attributes for each event recorded, including form of event, location of event, title of the related New York Times article, and type of claim, among others. Events in the dataset have three defining features: (1) individuals act collectively to make a claim, (2) participant claims seek to change their society in some fundamental way, and (3) it is public (McAdam et al. 2009b). The dataset also includes “instances of ethnic and racial conflict” where the researchers felt groups were making claims in the event (McAdam et al. 2009b). The full dataset includes 23,616 events, and is left-skewed with the highest number of events occurring during the 1960s and decreasing toward 1995, as shown in Figure 5.

For this study, the data was limited to events identified as taking place in the City of Boston or in a neighboring municipality. A total of 653 events in the dataset took place in the Boston area. The Boston area events are less skewed toward the 1960s than the overall dataset, as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 5: Histogram for collective action events in the United States, 1960-1995. (n=22,951)

---

2 Some events had missing attributes for the event year (evyy).
3 Municipalities sharing a border with the City of Boston include: Brookline, Cambridge, Canton, Chelsea, Dedham, Everett, Milton, Needham, Newton, Quincy, Revere, Somerville, Watertown, and Winthrop. The City of Medford was also included in the study because the Tufts University campus is located on the border between Somerville (a Boston neighbor) and Medford. The only events appearing from Medford were at Tufts University.
The study area is identified in Figure 7. In this research, I am specifically interested in the role of the urban built environment. Rather than only considering the City of Boston, I have included Boston's neighboring municipalities to capture protest events at the edges.

Figure 6: Histogram for collective action events in Boston area, 1960-1995
In addition, the sample was restricted to specific forms of collective action. There are 18 coded event forms in Dynamics of Collective Action, as well as two codes for other or unknown forms (McAdam et al. 2009c). Each record is coded with up to four forms of event. Since this research is focused on protest events specifically, rather than all collective action, I filtered the records to pull in events with a protest-type listed for any of the four form attributes. The protest forms selected were: rally, demonstration, march, vigil, picket, civil disobedience, riot, melee, mob violence, boycott, strike, slow down, and sick-in, as well as events coded as other or unknown, for which a determination was made if it resembled the other forms. Applying the selection filter to the national dataset reduced it to 15,394 events, and the distribution of events across years maintained a left skew, as shown in Figure 8. Applying the selection filter to Boston area events resulted in 421 events, and the distribution of the events became more left skewed than the unfiltered set of Boston events, as shown in Figure 9.
Forms excluded from the study were: ceremony, dramaturgical demonstration, motorcade, information distribution, symbolic display, attack by instigators (group assault), press conference, organization formation announcement or meeting, and lawsuit or legal maneuver. For a full description of forms, the event form coding rubric is included in the Appendix. After selecting the study data based on location and event form, there were 412 records in Boston between 1960 and 1995.
Limitations
Although the Dynamics of Collective Action dataset provides a unique and rich history of events in Boston, the dataset also has several limitations. First, the dataset relies on newspaper coverage of protest events. There are two main criticisms of the use of newspaper data in studying collective action: selection bias and description bias. Earl et al. (2004) review three sets of characteristics in the literature identified for influencing selection bias: event characteristics (location, size, presence of police, level of violence etc.), news agency characteristics (use of wire services, reporting routines), and issue characteristics (general media attention to or legislative conflict around). These characteristics determine the extent to which an event is covered or if it is covered at all. Davenport (2007) further describes selection bias as encompassing: 1) threshold effects: the event must reach a particular level of significance to receive coverage (see also McCarthy et. al 1996, Taylor & Jodice 1983), 2) fatigue effects: events of shorter duration are more likely to receive coverage (see also Gerner & Schrodt 1996), and 3) news hole effects: coverage is determined by available space in the newspaper (see also Honig et al. 1991).

Given that Boston and New York are over 200 miles apart, the event proximity is of concern. There may be events that are not covered by the New York Times, but it is likely that this selection bias is consistent across the time period of interest in this paper. In addition, the New York Times has Boston-based reporters, which likely decreased geographic coverage bias. A potential alternative approach in future studies would be to create a similar Boston-based dataset utilizing a local newspaper, as Sampson et al. (2005) did for a study of Chicago area civic action events. Despite the geographic bias limitation, the Dynamics of Collective Action data appear to be the most comprehensive record available of such events for Boston.

Description bias may result in error of reported event attributes, including size of event, nature of event, and descriptions of motivations and claims. This bias will only impact the mapping if the event location is not properly described. To decrease description bias, events were cross-referenced in the Boston Globe or other local newspapers. In addition to selection and description bias of utilizing newspaper sources, there may be error in the creation of dataset, such as duplicates and typos, which McAdam (2009b) et al. have attempted to address. Finally, there may be user error in coding event locations. I attempted to verify the year-appropriate address of buildings utilizing the Boston Globe, City of Boston archives, and web searches, however it is possible that I misattributed some locations. In some instances, an exact address was not possible (e.g. Sumner Tunnel) therefore a nearby address was coded. Location coding will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

Methods
Although the dataset includes over 100 attributes, the exact location is not recorded for all events. Often the most granular information is the name of the city, e.g. Boston or Cambridge. In addition, for locations that are identified, such as the Boston Common or Federal Building, the location is not suitable for import in a Geographic Information System (GIS). Once the dataset was restricted to the sample of interest and exported to an Excel worksheet using the open-source statistical package R, I then searched each record by the title attribute in the New York Times Proquest archive. I skimmed each article to identify the location of the event. I then cross-referenced it in the Boston Globe Proquest archive to verify the event and find increased location detail. Additional web searches were performed to confirm addresses. All addresses were confirmed in Google Maps. I added new attributes to the dataset for the New York Times archive url, the cross-reference URL, location (street address), and space typology. The event coding process is illustrated in Figure 10.
Before searching in the *New York Times* archive, I converted the title attribute to Title case. In some instances, the title did not produce a result on the first try. Generally, this was the consequence of a typo in the dataset. Most were easily identifiable. For titles that didn’t return a result after correcting for typos, the content attribute and date were used to supplement the search.

Some events occurred in more than one location. For example, a rally may have taken place in the Boston Common and then participants marched to a second location, such as Boston City Hall. For such start and end events, location 1 and location 2 are recorded. Alternatively, one article may have reported on multiple, but unrelated events. In such instances, each location is given its own record. When street locations were not reported directly in the newspaper articles, I utilized Google Maps and attempted to verify that the location was the same at the time of the event through online searches. In one case I had to contact the City of Boston archives to provide the address of a school that has been demolished since the 1960s.

In addition to recording the location street address, I created an attribute to classify the place typology of each location. Although I anticipated four primary event types, the data presented a more diverse set of typologies, as described in Table 3.

**Table 3: Boston area protest space typologies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place Typology</th>
<th>Typology Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>University and college buildings, campuses, or university administrator residences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>City halls, court houses, post offices, military bases, federal buildings, municipal offices, jails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park</td>
<td>Open park spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Elementary, middle, and high school buildings, Boston Public School Committee building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit</td>
<td>MBTA stations, bridges, tunnels, Boston Logan airport</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Spatial Analysis

After recording street addresses and typologies, I geocoded the addresses using Google Fusion Tables, an online data visualization tool. I imported the geocoded data into ArcMap and ran the Collect Events tool to better visualize point locations with multiple events. Collect Events aggregates data points that share the same locations, as shown in Figure 11.

![Figure 11: ArcMap's Collect Events Tool aggregates data points in the same location](image)

During the aggregation process, each unique location is assigned a count attribute for the number of events that took place there. All subsequent analysis is run utilizing the count attribute. The minimum count is 1 event and the maximum count is 42 events, with an average count of 2.3 events.

Next, I calculated summary statistics of the protest event locations. I ran the Average Nearest Neighbors tool, which established that the protest locations tend to be clustered with an average distance of 413 meters from each point. The longest distance between neighbors is 3,515 meters. Then, I ran the High/Low Clustering (Getis-Ord General G) tool, which determined with 90% confidence that high values cluster in the dataset.

---

4 I exported a Keyhole Markup Language file (KML) from Google Fusion Tables containing the geocoded data. I utilized Google Earth to translate the KML file to a KMZ file (a compressed version of KML) for importing to ArcMap. I then converted the KMZ to a shapefile and projected the data.
The two main analytic tools utilized in this study are Cluster and Outlier Analysis (Anselin Local Moran's I) and hot spot Analysis (Getis-Ord Gi*). The first tool, Cluster and Outlier Analysis, identifies spatial clusters of high or low values and spatial outliers using the Anselin Local Moran’s I statistic (esri, a). The Local Moran’s I calculations are shown in Figure 12.

\[ I_i = \frac{x_i - \bar{X}}{S_i^2} \sum_{j=1, j\neq i}^{n} w_{i,j} (x_j - \bar{X}) \]  

where \( x_i \) is an attribute for feature \( i \), \( \bar{X} \) is the mean of the corresponding attribute. \( w_{i,j} \) is the spatial weight between feature \( i \) and \( j \), and:

\[ S_i^2 = \frac{\sum_{j=1, j\neq i}^{n} (x_j - \bar{X})^2}{n - 1} \]

with \( n \) equating to the total number of features.

The \( z_{I_i} \)-score for the statistics are computed as:

\[ z_{I_i} = \frac{I_i - E[I_i]}{\sqrt{V[I_i]}} \]

where:

\[ E[I_i] = -\sum_{j=1, j\neq i}^{n} \frac{w_{ij}}{n - 1} \]

\[ V[I_i] = E[I_i^2] - E[I_i]^2 \]

Moran’s I is utilized to develop a sense of where protests clustered. When running this tool in ArcMap, the result is a new shapefile with attributes for local Moran's I index, z-score, p-value, and COType for each of the input features (in this case, protest event locations). Local Moran’s I is a relative measure, that must be considered with the p-value. For Moran’s I, a positive value is an indication that a feature has neighboring features with similarly high or low values (esri, a). In other words, a positive value indicates the presence of a cluster. A negative value for I is an indication that the feature is an outlier, its neighbors have dissimilar values (esri, a). These values must be confirmed by a p-value small enough to indicate a statistically significant finding. If statistical significance is met at a 95% confidence level (p-value less than .05), there are four possible output types (COType). COType can indicate a cluster with HH (a cluster of high values) or with LL (a cluster of low values). COType can indicate an outlier with HL (an outlier in which a high value is surrounded by low values) or LH (an outlier in which a low value is surrounded by high values). A null value for COType indicates that statistical significance was not met.
The second tool, hot spot Analysis, identifies locations with statistically significant high activity. It is the primary analytic for this research. “A feature with a high value is interesting but may not be a statistically significant hot spot. To be a statistically significant hot spot, a feature will have a high value and be surrounded by other features with high values as well” (esri, b). The tool determines hot spots utilizing the Getis-Ord Gi* local statistic, as shown in Figure 13. To understand protest location variation, I look at the hot spot analysis by decade. A decade-by-decade analysis allows a comparison of the important locations, and allows for tracing the rise and fall of different locations in the Boston protest landscape.

The Getis-Ord local statistic is given as:

\[
G_i^* = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^{n} w_{i,j} x_j - \bar{X} \sum_{j=1}^{n} w_{i,j}}{\sqrt{n \sum_{j=1}^{n} w_{i,j}^2 - \left(\sum_{j=1}^{n} w_{i,j}\right)^2}}
\]

where \(x_j\) is the attribute value for feature \(j\), \(w_{i,j}\) is the spatial weight between feature \(i\) and \(j\). \(n\) is equal to the total number of features and:

\[
\bar{X} = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^{n} x_j}{n}
\]

\[
S = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{j=1}^{n} x_j^2}{n} - \left(\bar{X}\right)^2}
\]

The \(G_i^*\) statistic is a z-score so no further calculations are required.

In other words, the Gi* statistic is a z-score that compares the local sum for a feature and its neighbors to the sum of all features (esri, b). When running this tool in ArcMap, the output is a new shapefile a z-score, p-value, and confidence level bin (Gi_Bin) for each feature in the input shapefile (in this study, protest event locations). Statistically significant z-scores, with p-values less than 0.05, indicate the presence of a hot spot (positive z-score) or cold spot (negative z-score). The z-score value indicates the intensity of the high or low value clustering (esri, b).

The cluster and hot spot analysis tools include the option to apply False Discovery Rate (FDR) correction. FDR correction is intended to reduce false positives. By default, both tools set statistical significance at the 95% confidence level, meaning features with p-values less than 0.05 are considered statistically significant. The FDR correction calculates a smaller p-value threshold to better reflect a 95% confidence level for the input features given multiple testing and spatial dependency (esri a).
Results

Data analysis and coding resulted in 421 protest events between 1960 and 1995 in the Boston area. In this chapter I will describe the types of spaces these protest events took place in and the spatial distribution of these events across Boston and neighboring municipalities. In addition, I will present the results of Anselin Local Moran's I clustering and outlier analysis, as well as Getis Ord Gi* hot spot analysis. The key to answering the primary research question – how have the locations of protest changed over time in Boston – is breaking the analysis down by decade to understand changes to protest locations and spaces across time. Specifically, I will look at how hot spot protest locations changed by decade and how the protest space typologies changed by decade.

Protest Space Typologies

Table 4 reveals the distribution of protest events across the space typologies identified in the previous chapter. Approximately 28% of all events took place in university spaces. The second most frequent type of location was government, which accounted for 21% of all protest spaces. Park or open space locations accounted for 17% of all events. These top three typologies make up two-thirds of all event locations in the dataset. The remaining one-third of events took place in the eight other place typologies.

Table 4: Number of protest events by place typology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place Typology</th>
<th>Number of Protest Events</th>
<th>Percentage of All Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&lt; 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Place Typologies by Decade

Table 4 speaks to the overall pattern from 1960 to 1995, however the distribution of protest spaces over time is also important to understanding protest dynamics. To analyze patterns over time, Figure 14 breaks down the protest space data by decade, although the 1990s only covers the time period from 1990 to 1995. University spaces show up as a dominant space across the decades. The 1970s, however, reveal a disruption to this pattern. Although university spaces in the 1960s, 1980s, and 1990s account for the three highest percentages of events in the dataset, during the 1970s, university spaces are only the fourth most common space. In the 1970s, education spaces are the most common space, accounting for 22% of all protests in Boston. Park, government, and university spaces account for 20%, 20%, and 18% of protest spaces in the 1970s respectively. Although education spaces are most common in the 1970s, they make up less than 10% of protest locations in the other decades. This spike in education space protests corresponds to the school desegregation and busing movement in Boston public schools, which will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.
Government protest spaces consistently account for approximately one out of five protest locations across each decade. While park spaces are the third most common typology overall, they make up less than 5% of locations during the 1990s. Medical spaces do not appear in the data until the 1990s with the emergence of protests related to abortion rights at medical facilities that perform abortion procedures. Transit, commercial, civic, residential, and other spaces account for 11% or less of protests in each decade.

Protest Space Typologies as a Percentage of All Protests: Boston Area 1960-1995

![Protest Space Typologies Graph](image)

*The 1990s
*The 1980s
*The 1970s
*The 1960s

Figure 14: Protest space typologies as a percentage of all protest events
Mapping Locations
The 421 protest events took place at 182 unique protest locations as shown in Figure 15. At the 182 unique locations, there is a minimum of one protest event and maximum of 42 events, with an average of two events. The median number of events per site is one. Mapping the events reveals clusters of events in the downtown Boston area, near the Boston Common, City Hall, and Post Office Square. In addition, a cluster of events is present in South Boston, as well as in Cambridge in the Harvard Square area. There is a sharp drop in events moving south from the Fenway and South End neighborhoods until a collection of events in lower Roxbury, Dorchester, and Jamaica Plain.

Moving further south, protest events are noticeably scarce in the neighborhoods of West Roxbury, Hyde Park, and Roslindale. Similarly, protest events are scarce outside of Boston, except in Cambridge. Although the study area was set to Boston and neighboring municipalities, most events took place in Boston and Cambridge, with zero to few events occurring in the rest of the study area, as shown in Table 5.
Table 5: Protest events by municipality (1960-1995)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Number of Protest Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brookline</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somerville</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newton</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medford</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedham</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quincy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canton</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelsea</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everett</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milton</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needham</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revere</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watertown</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winthrop</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>412</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Clustering Analysis**

Performing an Anselin Local Moran’s I clustering and outlier analysis reveals that as the map in Figure 15 suggests, there are statistically significant clusters of high protest counts in downtown Boston. Specifically, there are clusters of high protest counts at the Massachusetts State House, the John F. Kennedy Federal Building, Boston City Hall, and the John W. McCormack Post Office and Court House, as shown in Figure 16. High outliers are located at Harvard Yard and South Boston High School. A high outlier indicates a location with a high event count that is a spatial outlier, or spatially dissimilar compared to other locations of high protest counts.

---

5 The spatial join missed 9 events in the dataset, due to boundary issues.
To test the robustness of these findings, a second Anselin Local Moran's I clustering and outlier analysis was performed with False Discovery Rate (FDR) correction. As described in the previous chapter, FDR correction applies a lower p-value threshold to meet 95% confidence for statistical significance. The more conservative analysis, shown in Figure 17, removes the McCormack building and South Boston High School from the results.
In addition to mapping Boston area events, I mapped only the events occurring within the City of Boston. Spatial analysis was carried out on both series of events to identify whether the event clustering in Cambridge is impacting the identification of hotspots and clusters within the City of Boston. The results of clustering and outlier analysis for Boston only, with and without FDR applied, align with the locations identified in the Boston area analysis from Figure 16 and Figure 17.

**Hot Spot Analysis**

Next, I tested whether the clusters and outliers from Figure 16 reflect statistically significant hot spot locations in the dataset. The hot spot analysis reveals which protest locations had significantly higher levels of protest activity compared to others. The results of the Getis Ord Gi* hot spot analysis, shown in Figure 18, reveal that from 1960 to 1995, there are six hot spot protest locations. Within Boston, the South Boston High School, Boston Common, and City Hall are hot spots, with 99% confidence, while the Massachusetts State House is a hot spot with 95% confidence. In Cambridge, Harvard Yard is a hot spot with 99% confidence and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) is a hot spot with 90% confidence.
As with the clustering analysis, Getis Ord Gi* hot spot analysis was also performed with False Discovery Rate correction. The more conservative analysis, as shown in Figure 19, removed the State House and MIT from the hot spot results.
The hot spot locations from Figure 19 are summarized in Table 6. Interestingly, although university spaces dominated the protest space typology analysis, only one university space is included in the hot spots. The four hot spots each represent one of the top four protest space typologies from Table 4.

**Table 6: Boston area protest hot spot locations (1960-1995)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hotspot Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Place Typology</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number of Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boston Common</td>
<td>139 Tremont Street,</td>
<td>Park</td>
<td>A City of Boston public park, of approximately 50 acres, with direct access</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
<td></td>
<td>to the MBTA subway system at the Park Street Red and Green line station.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Established 1664.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston City Hall</td>
<td>1 City Hall Plaza,</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>A municipal government building with outdoor concrete</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As with the clustering and outlier analysis, I performed a hot spot analysis of only City of Boston events. The hotspots revealed in the analysis without and with FDR, align with the hot spot analysis from the Boston area data. Based on these results, it does not appear that the Cambridge events impact the weight of Boston events in the overall dataset.

**Time Series Comparison**

So far, the analysis provides an overall picture of protest activity across the 35-year period in the dataset. However, a finer grained look at protest events by decade is informative for understanding how the locations of protest have evolved over time.

**1960-1969**

There were 95 protests events at 56 unique locations between 1960 and 1969. The 1960s events, shown in Figure 20, cluster in similar places to the full dataset. There is clustering in downtown Boston around the Common and City Hall, as well as in Cambridge. There is a small cluster of events in the Roxbury area. Activity around South Boston High School is noticeably lighter when compared to the full dataset. There is not any protest activity appearing in the Charlestown, East Boston, West Roxbury, Hyde Park, Mattapan, or Roslindale areas.
Figure 20: Boston area protest events 1960-1969

The statistically significant hot spots during the 1960s, mapped in Figure 21, include the Boston Common and Harvard Yard, and the John McCormack Federal Building and Post Office.
1970-1979
There were 187 protest events at 92 unique locations between 1970 and 1970. Events during the 1970s are more geographically dispersed than the previous decade and resemble the pattern of the full dataset. As Figure 22 shows, event clusters form in downtown Boston and South Boston.
A hotspot analysis of the years 1970 to 1979, shown in Figure 23, reveals three hotspots with 99% confidence in Boston at the South Boston High School, City Hall, and Boston Common. During this time, Harvard Yard is a hotspot with 95% confidence. Although South Boston High School is a hotspot for the full dataset, this is the only decade in which the school emerges as a hot spot, indicating that there was a period of intense event activity over a limited time. Indeed, of the 29 protests at the school or within a quarter mile of it, 24 take place during the 1970s. Of those 24 events, 23 are related to school desegregation.
1980-1989
There were 97 protest events at 54 unique locations between 1980 and 1989. As shown in Figure 24, 1980s events cluster around downtown Boston and in Cambridge. Compared to the 1970s, there is much less activity in the South Boston, Charlestown, and East Boston neighborhoods.
A hot spot analysis reveals that there are three hot spots during the 1980s. As shown in Figure 25 the Boston Common and Harvard Yard are hotspots with 99% confidence and Harvard Law School is a hot spot with 90% confidence. Unlike the 1960s and 1970s, there is not a government space in the hot spots.
1990-1995
There are 42 protest events at 27 unique locations between 1990 and 1995, as shown in Figure 26. Events during the 1990s are primarily located in downtown Boston and surrounding neighborhoods, as well as Cambridge. There aren't any protest events occurring in the Roxbury, Dorchester, Roslindale, West Roxbury, or Hyde Park neighborhoods. There are small number of events in Charlestown and South Boston, but no events in East Boston.
Since there are only 27 unique locations, a Getis Ord Gi* hot spot analysis is not appropriate for the 1990s events. Getis Ord Gi* requires 30 input features for reliability.
Discussion

This study started with the question: How have the locations of protests changed over time in Boston? The Dynamics of Collective Action dataset provided an opportunity to understand spatial and temporal patterns of protest events in the Boston area specifically between the years 1960 and 1995. The results point to four key findings on the spatial dynamics of protest in Boston. First, universities are a durable space for Boston area protest activity across time. For example, Harvard University's Harvard Yard represents a significant hot spot in Boston's protest landscape. Second, government protest spaces are durable over time as well. Together, university and government spaces accounted for nearly half of all Boston area protest locations. Third, the Boston Common stands out among all other single locations as a place for protest consistently throughout the period of study. Finally, protests related to public school desegregation generated a particular pattern of neighborhood protest unlike other protest activity. In the following section I will discuss each of these findings, keeping two guiding questions in mind: why might this be and how does it relate to the literature on social movements? Then, I will discuss other trends that appear toward the later years of the dataset, suggesting future areas for research.

Significance of Universities

The Boston area is home to several universities, including Boston University, Boston College, Emerson College, Northeastern University, Suffolk University, Simmons College, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Lesley College, Harvard University, and formerly Radcliffe College. Compared to the other Boston area universities and colleges, the Harvard campus hosted the most events in the dataset, as shown in Table 7. Similarly, Van Dyke (2003) found that Harvard University hosted a significantly higher number of protest events compared to eight other U.S. universities between 1930 and 1990 (p.234). These findings are in line with the theory that larger (measured in student population) and more elite institutions are foci for protest activity (Bayer and Astin 1969; Buchanan and Brackett 1970; Hodgkinson 1970; Lipset 1972; Van Dyke 1998).

Table 7: Protest events at Boston area universities (1960-1995)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Number of Protest Events</th>
<th>Market Value of Endowment Assets as of Fiscal Year 1995</th>
<th>In top 120 largest campuses nationally by fall 1993 enrollment (NCES, 1995, p.217)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harvard University*</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>$7,045,863</td>
<td>Yes, 26,007 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston University</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>$380,975</td>
<td>Yes - 28,653 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts Institute of Technology</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>$2,078,414</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tufts University</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>$247,191</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston College</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>$500,163</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeastern University</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$508,238</td>
<td>Yes, 25,554 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simmons College</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$91,823</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Massachusetts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$75,952</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Harvard University also includes Radcliffe College locations as the two institutions informally merged in 1977
Specifically, Harvard Yard attracted the most events on the Harvard campus. Harvard Yard, approximately 25 acres of green space, university buildings, and quadrangles, is “the oldest part and symbolic heart of the campus” (The Cultural Landscape Foundation, n.d.). Harvard Yard was the site of several protests making claims on the University’s administration, including sit ins of the main administrative building in the Yard. For example, Harvard students protested grading policies, course curricula, student diversity policies, and hiring practices on campus. The Harvard Law School emerged as a hot spot during the 1980s when students organized a series of protests over faculty hiring practices. However, Harvard protests (in the Yard and elsewhere on campus) also made claims on a range of topics from internal and external university affairs, domestic politics, and international affairs.

Demonstrations against the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) were reported taking place at Harvard, MIT, and Northeastern University. In response to 40 students occupying a university building in protest of the ROTC, Northeastern President Asa S. Knowles deflected the claims:

> Even if I accepted the simplistic S.D.S. [Students for a Democratic Society] explanation of our involvement in the unhappy Vietnam situation, it is apparent that the university cannot be held responsible for the foreign policy of our nation. It is not possible for me to accept the notion that the university should abolish R.O.T.C. because continuance involves the university in ‘complicity’ in a so-called ‘imperialistic, capitalistic plot to inflict genocide on a small Asian nation.’ (“40 Protest at Northeastern”, 1969)

His response highlights the ways in which academic institutions tried to create a buffer between global politics and activity on their campus. However, student organizing challenged that narrative of neutrality. At Harvard, an estimated 500 students occupied the main administrative building, University Hall, in April 1969, for a five-hour “mill-in” to protest the ROTC (Smith, 1969a). Nearly 200 students were tried in municipal court for their role in the sit in and found guilty of misdemeanor criminal trespassing and fined $20 (Smith, 1969b). A week after the mill-in, students organized by SDS, marched into the Harvard University planning office to protest Harvard’s expansion plans, which the students claimed displaced low- and moderate-income families from Cambridge and Boston (Reinhold, 1969c).

Harvard and Boston College also witnessed student demonstrations against the recruitment of students to work for Dow Chemicals, the maker of the deadly napalm agent used in Vietnam (Croft, 1967; “45 March in Protest”; “Harvard Lock-In Stalls Recruiter”). Similarly, students at MIT protested the Institute’s involvement in military and defense research on numerous occasions (Reinhold 1969e, 1969f). During the 1980s, several Boston campuses witnessed protests demanding that their university divest from South African holdings.

The protests at Boston area universities highlighted the degree to which the local universities balanced the protection of academic freedom and freedoms of speech and association, as well as the degree to which academic institutions are entangled in work that has implications far wider than their campus boundaries.

**Significance of Government Spaces**

The second most common protest space typology was government spaces. One in five protests took place in a government affiliated space. The most common government location was the new Boston City Hall. The Boston City Hall location is notable for the large plaza located outside the building, as shown in Figure 27.
Boston City Hall is located in downtown Boston and accessible by the Government Center MBTA station located underneath the plaza. The building and plaza were designed specifically as a public space: “Completed in 1968, the Brutalist style city hall bridges the public and private sectors of government through a gradient of reveal and exposure that allows the public to become integrated, either physically or visually, into the daily affairs of the governmental process” (Kroll, 2011). The plaza hosts public events such as sports rallies, festivals, and concerts. It was designed for public use and, as the data show, protesters have used it to make their claims on city officials.

Protests took place at a range of government spaces and representing the different levels of government jurisdiction in the Boston area. Protest spaces representing government at the city and federal level were the most common locations, as shown in Table 8. Four out of five government space protests took place at either a city (municipal) institution or federal institution.

### Table 8: Government jurisdictions at protest spaces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction Level Represented at Location</th>
<th>Number of Protest Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Government Spaces</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Significance of Boston Common

The Boston Common, shown in Figure 28, is an approximately 50-acre public park in downtown Boston, in proximity to government and financial centers. A total of 42 protest events took place on
the Boston Common between 1960 and 1995, as shown in Figure 29. No other individual location in the dataset witnessed as many events.

Figure 28: Aerial view of the Boston Common

Protest Events at the Boston Common 1960-1995

Figure 29: Protest events at the Boston Common
The dataset contained 20 other park locations across Boston, Allston, Cambridge, and Somerville. There was an average of 1.45 protests per park at which there was at least one protest between 1960 and 1995.

Tilly (2000) argued that what links the importance of the spatial with contentious politics is that spatial configurations, along with time-distance costs, present opportunities and constraints to public claim making (p.138). The Boston Common’s location and spatial configuration make it an accessible, accommodating, and flexible location.

One of Boston’s main public transportation hubs, the Park Street station, is located on the Common, providing direct access from the Green and Red MBTA subway lines. In addition, the Common is less than one-quarter mile walking distance from Downtown Crossing station, providing access via the Orange subway line.

The Boston Common is a large, open space that can accommodate tens of thousands of people. A reported 100,000 people gathered on the Boston Common April 15, 1970 to protest the Vietnam War (Kenney, 1970). More recently, an estimated 135,000 to 175,000 marched on the Common in the January 2017 Women’s March (Barnett, 2017). Although these examples are outliers in terms of protest participation, they serve to highlight the Common’s capacity to host large crowds.

By flexible, I mean that the Common is a useful location to make claims against a range of political authorities. Most obviously, the Massachusetts State House is located across the street. However, the Common is only a half-mile walking distance from the current Boston City Hall, the old Boston City Hall, county and state courthouses, and the JFK Federal Building. Several marches traveled between these points and the Common.

The Common has a long history of being an accessible, accommodating, and flexible location for protest and public events. The Common served as a site for 16th century public executions, 17th century revolutionary celebrations, and 19th century recruitment rallies, antislavery protests, and public mourning (Friends of the Public Garden).

**Significance of South Boston High School and School Desegregation**

South Boston High School was identified as a protest hot spot in the cumulative data, even though most of the events occurring there took place during the 1970s only. The 1970s were contentious years in Boston related to the issue of school desegregation. Unlike the protests taking place at university and government spaces which responded to a wide range of issues, 23 out of 24 protests taking place at or immediately around South Boston High School were related to school desegregation.

Boston experienced a notoriously contentious and violent public school desegregation. Although the Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* in 1954 that the segregation of public education based solely on race violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, Boston public schools were formally ordered to desegregate in 1974 by U.S. District Judge Arthur Garrity. The solution to desegregate schools was to bus students from their home neighborhood to a different school district to better balance school demographics. Gellerman (2014) describes South Boston during the early busing years: “Southie [South Boston] was ground zero for anti-busing rage. Hundreds of white demonstrators — children and their parents — pelted a caravan of 20 school buses carrying students from nearly all-black Roxbury to all-white South Boston. The police wore riot gear.”

As the above passage describing Boston busing efforts in 1974 reflects, the politics of the desegregation of the Boston Public School (BPS) system were contentious. Although the official desegregation and busing mandate wasn’t given until 1974, protests over school segregation show
up in the data as early as 1963. School segregation reflects residential segregation, which in the Boston and U.S context has been shaped by a long history of discriminatory practices, from early 20th century racial zoning and restrictive covenants to mortgage redlining and exclusionary zoning (Silver 1997; Brooks and Rose 2013; Rothstein 2014). Fighting segregation at the school level is intricately tied to the spatial politics of land. According to Theoharis (2001), “Much more than black children sitting next to white children in school, the movement to end segregation sought a fundamental transformation in the economic, political, and social landscape of the city—and ultimately the nation” (p. 67-68).

Ruth Batson, a Roxbury resident and advocate for school desegregation once described the centrality of the fight for better education in an interview: “When we fight about education, we’re fighting for our lives. We’re fighting for what that education will give us, we’re fighting for a job, we’re fighting to eat, we’re fighting to pay our medical bills, we’re fighting for a lot of things. So this is a total fight with us.” (“Keys to the Kingdom”).

Much of the protest related to school desegregation came from South Boston High School, where white students and parents fought to keep out black students from other neighborhoods. One third of protest events related to school desegregation took place in the South Boston neighborhood. Boston City Councilwoman Louise Day Hicks advocated on behalf of those who were against busing. In a letter dated August 21, 1974, just weeks before busing was set to start in Boston, Hicks wrote to Judge Garrity:

I believe in quality integrated education, but what moral or legal justification can there be for forcing any parent to send his child into these high crime areas?

Until the so-called ghetto conditions are eliminated, will you inform me and the parents of the Boston public school children if anyone can guarantee that no harm to their children will take place if they comply with your order of forcible busing? (Hicks and Garrity Jr., 1974)

A total of 95 protest events were related to school segregation, across 43 unique locations in the City of Boston. School segregation related protests made up large percentages of overall number of protests in several of Boston’s neighborhoods, as shown in Table 9. It is notable that the Downtown and Beacon Hill neighborhoods, which include the Boston Common, State House, City Hall, and the old Boston School Committee headquarters, witnessed 26 out of the 95 Boston school segregation protests.

Table 9: Protest events by Boston neighborhood

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boston Neighborhood</th>
<th>Square Miles</th>
<th>Total Number of Protest Events</th>
<th>Number of Protest Events Related to School Segregation</th>
<th>Percent of Protest Events Related to School Segregation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Boston</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlestown</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorchester</td>
<td>7.29</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyde Park</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Boston</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beacon Hill</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roxbury</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica Plain</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Other Patterns that Emerge

The dataset cannot tell us what happens after 1995. However, some potential patterns emerge toward the later years of the dataset that might foreshadow trends beyond 1995. First, the proportion of protest events occurring in parks drops sharply, as shown in Figure 14. In the three preceding decades, park protests account for 15 to 20% of all protests, but they only account for 5% of protests between 1990 and 1995. This contrasts with Rafail (2016)'s finding that protests in parks, in particular privately owned parks, increase over time. Second, protests at medical facilities appear in the dataset during the 1990s, accounting for over 15% of protests. These protests were all related to the issue of abortion. The role of parks and medical facilities could be explored in additional studies that collect data beyond 1995. In the next chapter I will discuss potential future work in more detail, as well as the broader implications of the Boston results.
Conclusion

The main contributions of this research are twofold. First, this study leveraged the Dynamics of Collective Action dataset to create the first spatial history of Boston area protest activity between 1960 and 1995. The new dataset includes 421 protest event locations that have been geocoded and mapped. Second, the analysis reveals patterns in protest locations in Boston that are useful for understanding the relationship between urban space and protest. I started with the primary question: how have the locations of protests changed over time in Boston? To answer this I utilized a hot spot analysis to identify which locations hosted statistically significant high levels of protest activity by decade. This revealed which locations were durable in their significance over time and which locations were only significant during a specific period. In addition, I analyzed the distribution of protest space typologies by decade to understand variation in the types of spaces hosting protests.

In each of three full decades analyzed, the Boston Common and Harvard Yard emerged as hot spot locations for protest. They are the only two sites that are consistent hot spots over time. Other hot spot locations appeared for only one decade at a time. During the 1960s, the John McCormack Court House and Post Office emerged as a hot spot, but was not significant in the decades following. During the 1970s, the newly constructed Boston City Hall emerged as a hot spot, as did the South Boston High School. The high school witnessed high activity specifically during the implementation years of the Boston Public School desegregation order. Both City Hall and South Boston High declined in significance in the following decade. However, City Hall and the South Boston High School emerged as hot spot locations considering the cumulative data (1960 to 1995), suggesting that increased activity during the 1970s was high enough to influence the entire study period. During the 1980s, Harvard Law School emerged as a hot spot with a series of protests and sit ins related to school policies on faculty hiring. The number of events from 1990 to 1995 was not large enough for a reliable hot spot analysis.

In addition to identifying statistically significant hot spot locations, the analysis revealed patterns in the types of spaces in which protests were held. The most common protest space type across the entire dataset was university spaces, however university protest spaces declined in prominence during the 1970s. During the 1960s, 1980s, and 1990s, university spaces hosted at least one in three protests. During the 1970s, university spaces only hosted one in five protests. Government spaces were the second most common protest space and accounted for one in five protests in each decade, with minimal fluctuation. Park spaces were the third most common protest space overall, but declined from hosting approximately one in five protests in each of the first three decades to hosting one in 20 protests between 1990 and 1995. The fourth most common protest space overall, educational spaces, accounted for one in four protests during the 1970s, but fewer than 1 in 10 protests in other decades.

In this concluding chapter, I will revisit the key arguments Tilly (2000, p. 138-139) identified linking the spatial and contentious politics and discuss what the Boston data reveals about these arguments. Then, I will discuss the implications of these findings for urban planners and policymakers. I conclude with limitations of the study and opportunities for future work in this area.

Key Takeaways

The Boston findings resonate with the first, second, third, and fifth claims.

Tilly’s First Claim: To begin with the obvious, contention always takes place in humanly occupied space, often including the built environment. Hence not only time-
distance costs but also spatial configurations present both opportunities and constraints to participants in public claim making.

The Boston Common appearing as the most frequent single location for protest in Boston supports Tilly's claim about the relationship between time-distance costs and spatial configurations in shaping opportunities and constraints for public claim making. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Common is an accessible and accommodating location in proximity to public transit and large and open enough to host tens of thousands of protesters. These present opportunities. The lack of events in Boston's neighboring municipalities and toward the southern edges of the city might be suggestive of constraints in those areas.6

Tilly's Second Claim: Everyday spatial distributions, proximities, and routines of potential participants in contention significantly affect their patterns of mobilization, for example in the distinction between workers who gather daily in the same workplace and revolutionary conspirators who improvise new meeting places day by day.

The most common protest space typology in the dataset was university space. This can be understood through Tilly's second argument. The centralized campus life of university students also shapes their protest mobilization, pulling them to central university spaces like Harvard Yard or student centers. This also aligns with Rafail's finding that university proximity was a strong indicator of increased protest activity in New York City.

Tilly's Third Claim: By definition, governments always play some part in contentious politics. Governments always organize at least some of their power around places and spatial routines. Hence contentious politics often challenges or disrupts governmental activity, and thereby incites governmental intervention.

Considering Tilly's third argument, it is not surprising that government spaces are the second most common protest space typology in the dataset (Table 4). In addition, the prevalence of the Boston Common as a protest space can also be viewed as space challenging government power, as it is situated across from the Massachusetts State House, with the golden dome a prominent landmark from most points on the Common. The government spaces represent the spectrum of political jurisdictions in the Boston area. For example, protests took place at Boston's former Army base to protest the Vietnam war draft, at Boston's City Hall to address local and national issues, at federal buildings to protest the Vietnam War, civil rights issues, U.S. military action in Grenada, and at court houses to protest the trials of draft defectors.

Tilly's Fifth Claim: Contention itself transforms the political significance of particular sites and spatial routines, as when locations of massacres become objects of pilgrimage or when funerals become major occasions for expressions of political preference. (p.138-9)

The Boston school desegregation mandate was a catalyst for transforming South Boston, East Boston, and Charlestown neighborhood schools into sites for intense, sometimes violent, protest. In particular, South Boston High School was so intense that during the 1970s that it showed us as a hot spot in the 35-year analysis of events. The neighborhood protests were markedly different from those that took place in universities because of their generally singular focus on schools. In addition, unlike most other protests, the protests at South Boston High School were about the space itself.

---

6 Although it is possible the lack of events in those locations reflects a bias of the data source.
Policy Implications

The results revealed key findings about the relationship between urban space and protest in Boston. First, college and university campuses, as well as government spaces, are durable spaces for protest activity over time. These two findings align with Rafail’s (2016) finding that symbols of government power and university campuses were attractors for protest in New York City between 1960 and 2006. In addition, the Boston Common stands out among all other single locations as a place for protest consistently throughout the period of study. The durability of these sites in this study and in the Rafail study suggest that policymakers should seek to preserve campuses, government spaces, and the Boston Common as spaces to exercise protest.

Moreover, two Boston sites stand out as potential examples for the design of democratic space: the Boston Common and the Boston City Hall. First, the Common has three elements that support its use for protest events that also contribute to other civic uses, such as cultural festivals, sporting events, concerts, etc. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Common is accessible by multiple modes of transit, it is a large, open spaces, and it is in close proximity to nodes of government power. Second, the Boston City Hall was designed explicitly with public space in mind. The City Hall Plaza, like the Common, is easily accessible by transit, and is a large open space. Although one might argue that the building’s brutalist architecture is uninviting, the plaza is markedly inviting.

The decline in park protests during the 1990s is worth further investigation to understand whether the decline reflects new policies or other changes.

Limitations

Although this research provides a new dataset of 421 protest event locations in the Boston area between 1960 and 1995, the dataset has some limitations. First, events were first identified utilizing the Dynamics of Collective Action dataset (McAdam et al., 2009), which was developed from New York Times archives. The use of newspaper coverage for event data is subject to selection and description bias. Of concern for this study is that the research area is over 200 miles from the headquarters of the New York Times. To reduce description bias, I cross-referenced events in the Boston Globe or other local newspapers when possible. This verification process also revealed additional protest events, decreasing selection bias. However, it is likely that this dataset is missing some events that were covered by the Boston Globe and events that were not covered at all by newspapers. The data may be more representative of protest events in Boston and Cambridge, which accounted for 301 and 88 events respectively, compared to Boston’s other neighboring municipalities.

It is possible that the violence of Boston’s school desegregation drew a disproportionate amount of attention during the 1970s compared to other protest events. Likewise, it is possible that events at Harvard University, one of the most elite universities in the United States, were disproportionately covered. Similarly, protests around issues that were relevant at the national level, such as civil rights, the Vietnam War, and abortion, may have drawn disproportionate attention. This study, however, does not attempt to draw causal conclusions from the data. The discussion presented here is primarily descriptive.

Future Work

There are two main directions of future work. First, there is room to refine the current analysis. Second, there is room to explore why Boston’s spatial patterns of protest emerged in the way they did. The main limitation to the current analysis is the use of newspaper data. To reduce the
geographic bias that results from utilizing the Dynamics of Collective Action’s New York Times data, a new dataset could be developed from the Boston Globe archives, as well as from other local sources such as the Bay State Banner. Whereas McAdam et al. (2009) and Sampson et al. (2005) employed a team of researchers to manually read archived copies of newspapers, advances in machine learning and semantic analysis could be leveraged to search digital archives to produce the relevant articles. Utilizing local newspaper archives would likely generate a more comprehensive record of protest activity in the Boston area. In addition, developing a methodology for searching the Boston Globe would allow for expanding the time period and capturing events beyond 1995. It would be a worthwhile project to publish the data in an interactive web map to allow users to explore Boston history through the lens of protest from 1960 until present day.

While this research looked at how protest locations changed over time, it does not explain why. Two dimensions are likely key in understanding the “why” question: media and protest control. Future work could investigate the relationship between the media and protest events in depth. For example, it would be possible to code each protest event with a theme and look at changes in themes over time and across locations and space typologies. The thematic investigation could be applied to other cities in the Dynamics of Collective Action dataset to develop a more comprehensive understanding of mainstream media’s relationship to protest events. Another potential methodology for understanding the media’s relationship to protest events is to create database of more contemporary protest events (e.g. 2010 to present) from newspapers and compare that to a database derived from social media analysis. For example, you could scrape Twitter data for tweets reporting protest activity in Boston and compare how Twitter data maps onto newspaper data.

Moreover, future work could analyze the dynamics of policing and managing protest. The Boston area is home to several policing authorities, including municipal agencies, as well as campus police forces and private security firms. Pertinent questions to this line of study include: Do the various law enforcement agencies police protest differently and do those differences influence protester site selection? Do certain sites feel safer to protesters because of the police agency with jurisdiction, or more specifically, does an act of police violence against protesters influence the durability of a protest site? In addition, it would be informative to analyze Boston and Cambridge protest permit data to understand if there are patterns in approval and denial of permit requests. Finally, Sampson et al. (2005) argued that the nature of collective action in Chicago has changed over time, with a decrease in protests and increase in hybrid events, those which combine protest like “claims” for change with civil society “forms” (p.681). This is a potential area to investigate in Boston that may reveal patterns useful to explaining why the particular spatial patterns of protest have emerged.

The study of social movements and social control of protest had become very well developed coming in to the 21st century. However, the extent to which this literature has addressed the spatial dynamics of protests and collective action over time is limited. This thesis, as well as the future work proposed, help build our knowledge about how protest and urban space are related.
References


56


## Appendix

### 1. Forms of Collective Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collective Action Form Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Used to select sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01=Rally/Demonstration</td>
<td>Demonstration, rally, etc. without reference to marching or walking in a picket line or standing in a vigil. Reference to speeches, speakers, singing, preaching, often verified by indication of sound equipment of PA and sometimes by a platform or stage. Ordinarily will include worship services, speeches, briefings.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02=March</td>
<td>Reference to moving from one location to another; to be distinguished from rotating or walking in a circle with picket signs which by definition, constitutes a picket.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03=Vigil</td>
<td>These are almost always designated as such, although sometimes &quot;silent witness,&quot; and &quot;meditation&quot; are code words; also see candlelight vigil; hunger/fasting vigil; If you find no designations re: vigils, meditations, silent witness, etc., but also no reference to sound systems or to marches, it may well be a vigil. Most vigils have banners, placards, or leaflets so that people passing by, despite silence from participants, can ascertain for what the vigil stands.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04=Picket</td>
<td>The modal activity is picketing; there may be references to picket line, to informational picketing; holding signs; &quot;carrying signs and walking around in a circle&quot;). Holding signs or placards or banners is not the defining criteria; rather, it is holding or carrying those items and walking a circular route, a phrase sometimes surprisingly found in the permit application.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05=Civil disobedience</td>
<td>Explicit protest that involves crossing barricade, sit-in of blacks where prohibited, use of &quot;colored&quot; bathrooms, voter registration drives, crossing barricades, tying up phone lines. Also, violence such as bombing.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06=Ceremony</td>
<td>These celebrate or protest status transitions ranging from birth, death dates of individuals, organizations or nations, seasons, to re-enlistment or commissioning of military personnel, to the anniversaries of same. These are sometimes referenced by presenting flowers or wreaths commemorating or dedicating or celebrating status transitions or its anniversary; e.g., annual</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Activity Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Dramaturgical Demonstration</td>
<td>Code 07 ONLY if this is the modal activity; many demonstration may contain some sequence dramaturgical activity; these may be concerts theatrical, dance, musical, artistic, or some combination of the performing arts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Motorcade</td>
<td>Electoral campaign and other issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>Information Distribution</td>
<td>Tabling/ petition gathering, lobbying, letter-writing campaign, teach-ins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Symbolic Display</td>
<td>e.g. Menorah, Creche Scene, graffiti, cross burnings, signs, standing displays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Attack, by Instigators</td>
<td>Ethnic group victim of physical attack, by collective group (not-one-on-one assault, crime, rape). Boundary motivating attack is &quot;other group's identity,&quot; as in gay-bashing, lynching. Can also include verbal attack and/or threats, too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Riot, Melee, Mob Violence</td>
<td>Large-scale (50+), use of violence by instigators against persons, property, police, or buildings separately or in combination, lasting several hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Strike / Slow Down / Sick-Ins</td>
<td>Employee work protest of any kind. Regular strike through failure of negotiations, or wildcat strike. (Make note if a wildcat strike.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Boycott</td>
<td>Organized refusal to buy or use a product or service, rent strikes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Press Conference</td>
<td>If specifically named as such in report, and must be the predominant activity form. Could involve disclosure of information to &quot;educate the public&quot; or influence various decision-makers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Organization Formation Announcement or Meeting</td>
<td>Announcement, meeting or press conference to announce the formation of a new organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Conflict, Attack or Clash, no instigator</td>
<td>(distinct from codes 11 or 12) This includes any boundary conflict in which no instigator can be identified, i.e. black/white conflicts, abortion/anti-abortion conflicts. Often, no claims will be discernable in the activity. Form code 17 will most likely be used with &quot;no target&quot; (question 18 on the code sheet).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Lawsuit, Legal Maneuver</td>
<td>By social movement organization or group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98</td>
<td>Other Form</td>
<td>Not on this list.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information on Form of Event</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>