

The causes of the ethical gap and its consequences are laid in large part at the feet of the news media. Allen and Birch sketch out a new dynamic that has media companies covering and promoting stories about government scandals with the sole purpose of attracting consumers. In the steady rain of scandal-related stories amplified by coverage and drama, the public fails to recognize that the misconduct is being undertaken by a small minority of elected representatives. The news media do not so much undermine trust in elected representatives as create an aura of suspicion about the behaviors and motivations of all elected representatives. Politicians find it difficult to respond to this mistrust, in part because of partisanship. As the authors wryly note, in the tribal setting of politics there is little thought among political opponents to collectively guard their honor (p. 189).

To a certain extent, Allen and Birch are correct about the news media. Certainly, news organizations are struggling for readers, listeners, and viewers, and they are willing to highlight dramatic and controversial stories in order to attract consumers of their news. But while it is easy to focus on the messenger, the message sender figures in the equation as well. In many cases, the story of ethical breaches originates with the partisan opposition.

The rise of media politics in campaigns is another factor that Allen and Birch recognize but do not fully develop. Parties are still the effective force in organizing legislatures, but in the electoral arena, media politics, with its long-standing emphasis on image, has become more important. Media politics is image politics, which is popular among candidates because it is hard to argue with an image, minimizing the need to be conversant on policy. But images can be attacked, and that means that parties and candidates in Great Britain and elsewhere frequently use questions about their opponents' ethics to undermine their opponents' images. The use of ethical allegations and suggestions in negative advertising grows in modern campaigns because it works, but it also denigrates the public's sense of integrity among politicians. One of the tactics employed by the populist parties to undermine the dominance of the leading parties was to play on the discontent and dissatisfaction of the electorate with the status quo. Allen and Birch are no strangers to this idea. Their study supports a suggestion that probity is more important to voters than candidate or party performance (p. 75).

While it may be easy to dismiss a study of British attitudes towards ethics and integrity based on 2009–10 data as dated, this is certainly not the case with Allen and Birch's study. It stands as a model for how to study public attitudes toward elected politicians, and the election of Donald Trump in the 2016 U.S. presidential election suggests the need for similar analysis in the American setting. Trump's dismissal of conflict-of-interest concerns and his family's tone-deaf response to profiting from the presidency suggests a coming debate over American

perceptions of ethics, integrity, and misconduct that is likely to exceed the existing legal framework governing the ethics of elected officials. Even as this review was being written in early 2017, the Republican House caucus secretly voted to amend its rules to abolish independent investigations of ethics breaches, a move that was rolled back by a substantial public outcry and a tweet from President-Elect Trump. That would speak to the very gap between public and elite perceptions of acceptable ethical behavior that Allen and Birch have so aptly identified.

**How Social Movements Die: Repression and Demobilization of the Republic of New Africa.** By Christian Davenport. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015. 352p. \$93.00 cloth, \$33.99 paper.  
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In this fascinating book, Christian Davenport takes on the question implied in the title. While much is written about how social movements begin (or not) and succeed (or not), very little is said about when and how they end. Yet the process of one's death is a reflection of one's life, as is true for most beings and, as in this case, organizations. Studying the end of social movement organizations (SMOs)—particularly when they end in failure, without achieving their goals—gives scholars and activists insight concerning when government repression will dismantle a movement, how organizations and their membership contribute to their own demise, and what organizations can do to guard against each of these threats. Davenport presents a dynamic theory of government and SMO interactions and uses an in-depth analysis of the rise and fall of the Republic of New Africa (RNA) to open a door to understanding this unstudied yet critical stage of a social movement's arc: its end.

The thrust of Davenport's argument is that when governments repress in order to undercut social movements, the organizations of these movements can either recover or crumble under the pressure, an outcome determined by characteristics and actions of an organization itself. This approach is a major contribution: Most political science studies of dissent center on these actions or on the individuals who undertake them. Yet organizations are different organisms, and studying repression without considering how an SMO's preferences and constraints interact with repression leads to static, over-generalized conclusions that cloud our ability to understand movement success or failure.

The theoretical interaction involves two players: a government and an SMO. For an SMO to exist and take action (Davenport refers to these actions as *interventions*), it requires *individuals* (members willing to act collectively), *ideas* (a claim or motive for action), and *institutions* (leadership, structures, and incentives that influence the

activities of the members) (pp. 7, 81). To be effective, the SMO develops some level of *trust* and capacity for *reappraisal*. Davenport defines the former as “the willingness of one to be vulnerable to another based on the belief that this other is (1) competent, (2) open, (3) concerned, and (4) reliable” (p. 45). Such a willingness enables and even encourages costly, risky, and even violent behavior in support of political claims. Reappraisal is a process of learning from experience, identifying cues or heuristics that are connected with repression, and being prepared for what repression may come (pp. 43–45). Both trust and reappraisal are protections that shield SMOs from the negative effects of repression.

The government represses the organization in the attempt to control dissent activities and, ideally, dismantle the SMO. It uses a variety of overt and covert repressive tactics strategically, given its beliefs about the SMO’s weaknesses. Authorities will “attempt to either *overwhelm* an SMO by applying one form of repression to a level that was not expected or to *outwit* an SMO by applying forms of repression for which the dissident organization was not prepared” (p. 47). Such actions surprise dissidents who believed themselves prepared for repression, invoking shocks that undermine the reappraisal process and even trust among members. Additionally, governments can actively build distrust within the organization, both overtly and covertly.

In short, an SMO develops intraorganizational trust and processes of reappraisal to protect itself from repression. The government selects repression tactics to undermine those very elements that would allow the organization to succeed and continue to act. Each updates its beliefs about the other as they interact in this way. SMOs that are able to maintain trust and adapt reappraisal will be able to survive. SMOs that are not, whether because of their structure, leadership, or membership, will fracture, lose members, or lose their willingness to continue.

In an enthralling study, Davenport presents an in-depth analysis of the Republic of New Africa, a radical organization founded in Detroit in 1968 to establish a separate state and identity for African Americans during the Civil Rights era. He draws on tens of thousands of documents from city, state, and federal authorities; from the RNA itself; and from coverage in the press as to the activities, beliefs, statements, and all variety of information about the dissent–repression interactions over a three-year period from 1968 to 1971. The narrative and analysis provides social context, narrative accounts of major events, and descriptive analysis of brand new data of RNA activities, statements, and experiences of repression coded over ten years for this project. Via this detailed and fascinating analysis of five distinct periods in the organization’s life cycle, Davenport demonstrates how repression and the individual and organizational dynamics within the RNA combined,

enabling the organization to first rise and then ultimately fall.

The theory is a complex one with tactics, countermeasures, counter-countermeasures, and conditioning variables. The author provides an overview of the interactive process of SMO creation, operation, and death with a richness that can be a framing study for new and seasoned scholars of social movements and/or government repression. Yet the complexity of the connected and moving parts makes it difficult for the reader (i.e., me) to carefully think through the mechanisms by which variation in one or more characteristics will affect likely outcomes through this dynamic process. And while the goal of *How Social Movements Die* is to outline a theoretical framework with general implications through which to view the RNA events (p. 11), the difficulty of deriving clear expectations leaves gaps for future researchers and activists attempting to understand or even prevent SMO death.

To be more precise, the concepts of trust and reappraisal are quite fluid and interwoven, making it difficult to parse how government and SMO characteristics will interact with them to produce outcomes. Reappraisal and trust go hand in hand in Davenport’s conception, with failure of one damaging the other and strength in one uplifting the other. Government activities or statewide contexts sometimes affect both in the same direction and at other times in opposing directions (Table 2.2 on p. 50). The discussion asserts a number of possible mechanisms as to how each contextual and behavioral predictor might affect reappraisal and trust (and therefore the organization’s durability). This leaves us with a general framework of relationships for understanding the process of change and interaction but wanting a more conceptual treatment of *why* these elements affect outcomes. Drilling into and fleshing out the mechanisms will be an important continuation of this work. We have been pointed in the right direction and have tools for exploration; much more careful thought and analysis will have to be done to identify causal mechanisms as scholars begin to understand the effects of contention on SMOs.

*How Social Movements Die* thus represents a new scholarly foundation from which to build. Scholars of contentious politics can use the ideas presented here to develop operational definitions that can be applied to other SMOs and other countries. Others can dig into particular aspects of the complex framework to consider the strategic logic of the feedback loops. The particular focus on organizations and their internal dynamics, combined with the essential pairing of external and internal forces affecting social movements, is illuminating and frame shifting in studies of political violence, particularly in political science. This book should be considered essential reading for students of political violence in particular and political contention more broadly.