

Online Appendix

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1 Summary of Anniversaries

1.1 Pro-Democracy Anniversaries

Below we provide more information about contemporary China’s five pro-democracy movements, as well as how we identify the candidate focal point date. As we discuss in the main text, we employed four critical criteria for coding. First, these citizen movements must make explicit calls for democratic reforms. Movements such as the 1976 Qing Ming Movement, which called on the CCP government to make internal reforms and fight corruption, are not sufficient. Second, these movements must be driven by domestic actors, rather than foreign ones. Third, we code a single date for each movement as the focal moment: the date on which the movement reached its peak or was violently repressed by the CCP government. Finally, we exclude pro-democracy movements that were subsequently co-opted by the regime. For example, the May 4 Movement of 1919 began with democratic connotations but has since been rebranded as a nationalist holiday. It is now actively celebrated by the CCP (Buckley and Qin 2019). Such co-opting drowns out the democratic focality of a date, for protesters are unwilling to stage rallies that could be seen as supportive of the regime.

Democracy Wall: November 27, 1978

In November 1978, citizens in Beijing’s Xidan neighborhood hung pro-democracy posters on a public wall. Sensing an opportunity, activists formed the Democratic Assembly Group and, on November 27, led a 10,000-person march from “Democracy Wall” to Tiananmen Square. Protest leader Wei Jingsheng demanded that the government adopt democracy as its “fifth modernization,” a rejoinder to Deng Xiaoping’s four modernizations. The CCP arrested participants, including Wei, who spent 18 years in prison and, upon release, was exiled to the United States. After demolishing Democracy Wall in December 1979, Deng called for revoking the constitutional right to hang posters. The “four great [freedoms of] speaking out freely, airing views fully, holding great debates, and writing big character posters,” he proclaimed, “have never played a positive role in China.”¹ We code the focal moment as November 27, the date of the movement’s largest protest.

National People’s Congress Direct Election Movement: December 19, 1986

In 1986, public intellectual Fang Lizhi gave a series of lectures in Shanghai and Ningbo, during which he called on the government to respect freedom of expression. Constitutional rights, he declared, should be treated as “actual rights.” Students were electrified. On December 5, students at the Hefei University of Science and Technology demanded the right to directly elect representatives to the National People’s Congress. The protests spread to Shanghai, Tianjin, Nanjing, Kunming, Hangzhou, Suzhou, Guangzhou, and Beijing. The Beijing and Shanghai protests alone drew some

¹The CCP removed these rights from the state constitution in 1982.

30,000 participants. There were protests at 150 universities, and roughly 2% of all students participated (Kwong 1988). On December 19, Shanghai authorities dispersed protesters with force. In response, students in Hefei staged a sit-in in front of government offices on December 23, demanding that Hefei officials condemn the Shanghai government. Fang brokered a compromise between the students and the Hefei government, which agreed to communicate their demands to Shanghai. Anticipating reforms, the students called off their protests, but the government ultimately refused the reforms to which it agreed. We code the focal moment as December 19, when the movement reached its peak and the government repressed students.

Tiananmen Square: June 4, 1989

In April 1989, following the death of a prominent liberal leader, tens of thousands of students launched a protest in Beijing's Tiananmen Square. They constructed a giant "Goddess of Democracy" statue, positioned across from Mao Zedong's portrait that hangs on the Forbidden City. Following an April 26 editorial in the *People's Daily*, which accused the students of being manipulated by foreign agents, over 100,000 citizens joined the protest. CCP leaders regarded the participation of workers as representative of a broader cross-section of society, and therefore as particularly threatening. Following weeks of indecision among senior leaders, the People's Liberation Army cleared the square on June 4, murdering between several hundred and several thousand citizens. Discussion of the incident has been forbidden in print and online. We code the focal moment as June 4, when the movement reached its peak and the government repressed protesters.

Charter 08: December 10, 2008

On December 10, 2008, 303 Chinese intellectuals, scholars, lawyers, and officials signed a manifesto that demanded independent courts, respect for basic human rights, and an end to one-party rule. Entitled "Charter 08," it was inspired by the "Charter 77" pro-democracy manifesto released by Czech dissidents in 1977.² The document's first sentence referred to the sort of focal moments privileged by our theory: "This year is the 100th year of China's Constitution, the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 30th anniversary of the birth of the Democracy Wall, and the 10th year since China signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights." The document quickly collected 10,000 additional signatures from other prominent citizens, compelling the government to forbid discussion of Charter 08 in the media and censor it online. Citizens responded by distributing the document on Beijing streets (Wines 2009). Although Charter 08 did not culminate in major street protests, it still constituted collective action: prominent citizens signed the document and made it public. The leading signatory, Liu Xiaobo, was widely regarded by the regime and by citizens as China's most important pro-democracy activist until his death in 2017. We code Charter 08's publication as the focal moment.

²Note that it was signed only by prominent Chinese citizens living within China. See Link (2009).

Constitution Day: December 4, 2014

On December 4, 1982, the CCP adopted the state constitution, which grants citizens a range of basic rights: freedom of speech, assembly, and religion; equality before the law; and the right to vote and stand for election. The constitution enshrined a right to privacy and protected citizens against unlawful detention. In 2014, the CCP attempted to buttress its legitimacy by creating a new holiday: Constitution Day, which would be celebrated on December 4.³ Ironically, on the very day the CCP created the holiday, “constitution” was the most censored word on Chinese internet. Dissident bloggers sought to post quotes from the constitution, but were blocked (Allen-Ebrahimian 2014). The government’s Constitution Day proclamation sparked a backlash. On December 4, nearly 1,000 citizens protested outside the CCTV building in Beijing, and dozens of prominent lawyers signed an open letter demanding that the CCP respect the rights enshrined in the 1982 constitution. We code the focal moment as December 4.

1.2 Foreign Inspired Pro-Democracy Anniversaries

We identify three pro-democracy movements that originated abroad: the foundation of the China Democracy Party, Liu Xiaobo’s Nobel Prize, and the Jasmine Movement. Their foreign origins are key, both for our theory and in contemporary Chinese politics. Theoretically, focal moments are powerful insofar as they remind citizens that their compatriots mobilized against the regime in the past. Today, the Chinese propaganda apparatus routinely stigmatizes pro-democracy activists as driven by “foreign hostile forces.” To preserve their integrity in the eyes of compatriots, Chinese dissidents are careful to ensure that their movements are wholly domestic: that they cannot be justifiably branded as “foreign” by the CCP regime’s propaganda apparatus.

Founding of the China Democracy Party

The first foreign pro-democracy anniversary is the China Democracy Party (CDP), which was formed in 1997 by China’s exiled dissident community and just three domestic activists. As if to underscore its foreign origins, the CDP maintained an office in New York and announced its founding on June 25, 1998, during US President Bill Clinton’s visit to China. The CDP’s founding occasioned no collective action domestically.

Liu Xiaobo’s Nobel Prize

The second foreign pro-democracy anniversary occurred on October 8, 2010, when Liu Xiaobo was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The government’s propaganda apparatus stigmatized Liu as an instrument of foreign powers. The *Global Times* called Liu “a victim led astray” by the West (BBC

³Appropriating concepts like democracy and human rights is common in autocratic propaganda, [REDACTED] find.

2017). CCP officials announced that “The West has bestowed upon Liu a halo, which will not linger. By granting him the Nobel Prize, the West has ‘kidnapped’ Liu. However, the West only puts a halo on those useful to them” (Associated Press 2017). Despite the profound salience of Liu’s domestically oriented Charter 08 movement, Liu’s Nobel Prize occasioned no major domestic protests.

The Jasmine Movement

The Jasmine Movement constitutes the third foreign pro-democracy anniversary. Styled after Egypt’s Tahrir uprising, it began with an anonymous post on a US-based online message board, which called for citizens to “stroll” in major cities every Sunday, holding jasmine. Dissident artist Ai Weiwei tweeted that it took days to topple the regimes in the Middle East, and so perhaps it would take months in China. The US ambassador, Jon Huntsman, “accidentally” attended the first protest stroll in Beijing. These foreign linkages discredited the movement, which never drew more than several hundred participants. We code the Jasmine Movement’s anniversary as February 20, 2011, the date of the first protest stroll. Our results are identical if we specify the second stroll as the candidate focal moment.

1.3 Political Anniversaries

A brief description of each of our political anniversaries follows. These include historical events, regularly scheduled political meetings, and national holidays that are political in nature.

Death of Zhao Ziyang

On January 17, 2005, Zhao Ziyang died. He was a liberal leader who sided with protesters during Tiananmen and was placed under house arrest for the rest of his life. He nonetheless managed to have his memoirs smuggled out of China. The death of liberal leaders is a sensitive topic in China, as they sometimes spur calls for more liberalization. The death of Hu Yaobang, for instance, was the immediate pretext for the weeks of protest that led to Tiananmen.

Youth Day (May 4 Movement)

On May 4, 1919, young people in Beijing launched a movement against imperialism. In particular, they were angry that the Treaty of Versailles required China to cede Shandong province to Japan. This movement is often seen as the birth of modern popular nationalism in China. Foreign policy protests are relatively common in China, Weiss (2014) finds, especially when citizens believe the CCP is not adequately standing up to foreign pressure. Though the movement began with pro-democracy connotations, it has since been co-opted by the regime as a nationalist holiday.

Labor Day

May 1 is touted as a “red” ideological holiday in China. On this day, the CCP propagandizes its commitment to workers. Labor Day is potentially embarrassing to the CCP, as many of China’s retired pensioners do not receive their pensions. More, China, an ostensibly communist country, has higher income inequality than the United States.

Founding of the Chinese Communist Party

On July 1, 1921, the CCP was founded in Shanghai. This date could be a focal moment for citizens who are unhappy with CCP policies.

Founding of the Peoples’ Liberation Army

On August 1, 1933, the CCP founded the People’s Liberation Army. It could be a focal moment for citizens who are unhappy with PLA corruption, abuse, or who recall the PLA’s role in the Tiananmen massacre.

Senior Leadership Retreat

For two weeks in mid-August, on or around August 15, senior CCP leaders decamp for a seaside resort three hours outside of Beijing, where they discuss policy and swim (a tradition among senior leaders since Mao). This could be a salient focal moment for citizens who wish to protest CCP policies or corruption among government officials.

Mukden Incident

On September 18, 1931, Japan invaded northeast China. Japan conquered large parts of China during the war. The date recalls the failure of Chinese authorities to protect citizens. Accordingly, it could be a focal moment for expressing discontent about CCP softness in foreign policy.

National Day

On October 1, 1949, Mao Zedong declared the Chinese people had stood up. Like Independence Day in the United States, China’s National Day day is associated with parades and fireworks. It could be a focal moment for citizen discontent about CCP policy.

Belgrade Embassy Bombing

On May 9, 1999, the US accidentally bombed the Chinese embassy in Belgrade. Mainstream opinion in China considers this event a conspiracy in which the United States was trying to test Chinese

resolve. The date could be a focal moment for protest among nationalist citizens who regard the CCP as too accommodating to foreign powers.

Anti-Japanese War

On July 7, 1937, Japanese and Chinese troops were involved in an incident that escalated into a battle. So began the Second Sino-Japanese War, which would not end until after the conclusion of World War II. This date could be construed as potentially embarrassing for the CCP in terms of failing to defend Chinese sovereignty.

Nanjing Massacre

On December 13, 1937, Japan captured Nanjing. So began the six-week period known as the Nanjing Massacre, during which Japanese troops killed approximately 300,000 Chinese civilians and disarmed combatants. This date could be construed as potentially embarrassing for the CCP in terms of failing to defend Chinese citizens and sovereignty.

Party Congress

Every five years in early November, the CCP holds its major political meeting. Accordingly, it could be a focal moment for expressing discontent about CCP policies. In our sample, the Party Congress starts on November 8, 2012.

National People's Congress

Every March, the 3,000 member National People's Congress meets for two weeks. Though a rubber stamp parliament, the meeting is still widely televised across China. Accordingly, it could be a focal moment for expressing discontent about CCP policies. It starts on March 3.

1.4 Cultural Anniversaries

Lunar New Year

This two-week holiday celebrates the turning of the traditional lunar calendar. We record the start date of the holiday each year. It constitutes the largest annual migration in the world. Every year, some of China's 300 million migrant workers cannot afford railway tickets home, and consequently protest unpaid wages in railway stations. The dates are February 7, 2009; February 14, 2010; February 3, 2011; January 23, 2012; February 10, 2013; January 31, 2014; February 19, 2015; and February 8, 2016.

Qing Ming

This lunar holiday is for honoring ancestors. People traditionally visit grave sites and sweep tombs. The dates are April 4, 2009; April 5, 2010; April 5, 2011; April 4, 2012; April 4, 2013; April 5, 2014; April 5, 2015; and April 4, 2016.

Lantern Festival

On this lunar holiday, children carry red lanterns at night and solve riddles. The holiday is also associated with family reunions. The dates are February 9, 2009; February 28, 2010; February 17, 2011; February 6, 2012; February 24, 2013; January 1, 2014; February 19, 2015; and February 22, 2016.

Dragon Boat Festival

This lunar holiday celebrates filial piety. Because the summer is traditionally associated with male energy, this holiday is associated with the masculine image of the dragon. Therefore, dragon boat racing is customary. The dates are May 28, 2009; June 16, 2010; June 6, 2011; June 23, 2012; June 12, 2013; June 2, 2014; June 20, 2015; and June 17, 2016.

Double Seventh

This lunar holiday is drawn from a 2600 year old poem which celebrates two lovers: a weaver maid and a cowherd. They were banished to opposite ends of the galaxy because their love was forbidden, but they are reunited on this day every year by a bridge of magpies. Today, the holiday is sometimes referred to as Chinese Valentine's Day. The dates are August 26, 2009; August 16, 2010; August 6, 2011; August 23, 2012; August 13, 2013; August 2, 2014; August 20, 2015; and August 9, 2016.

Ghost

On this lunar holiday, ghosts are believed to visit the world of the living. Accordingly, people honor the dead, prepare meals for them, and burn incense. The dates are September 3, 2009; August 24, 2010; August 14, 2011; August 31, 2012; August 21, 2013; August 10, 2014; August 28, 2015; and August 17, 2016.

Mid-Autumn Festival

This lunar holiday celebrates the harvest. It takes place during a full moon and is celebrated with moon cakes. It is associated with family gatherings. The dates are October 3, 2009; September 22, 2010; September 12, 2011; September 30, 2012; September 19, 2013; September 8, 2014; September 27, 2015; and September 15, 2016.

Double Ninth

On this lunar holiday, it is customary for people to eat cake, climb mountains, wear chrysanthemum, and drink chrysanthemum tea or wine. The dates are October 26, 2009; October 16, 2010; October 5, 2011; October 23, 2012; October 13, 2013; October 2, 2014; October 21, 2015; and October 9, 2016.

Singles' Day

This holiday originated at Nanjing University in 1993 as “Bachelor’s Day,” a day to celebrate being single. Today, both declarations of love and shopping trips are common on Singles’ Day. The date is November 11.

Winter Solstice

This traditional holiday celebrates the fact that after the winter solstice, there will be more sunlight and positive energy flowing in. It is associated with family gatherings and large meals that feature dumplings. The date is December 22.

New Year’s Day

Though the Gregorian New Year is less important in China than the Lunar New Year, it is nonetheless a public holiday with parties and fireworks. The date is January 1.

1.5 Ethnic/Religious Anniversaries

Tibetan Rebellion

On March 10, 1959, Tibetans in Lhasa rebelled against PRC rule. Guerrilla warfare between Tibetans and the PLA spread throughout the province and lasted until 1962. The Tibetan diaspora celebrates this date as Tibetan Uprising Day. The CCP prominently deploys paramilitary and military forces throughout Tibet during this anniversary.

Xinjiang Uprising

On July 5, 2009, large riots took place in Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang province. Riots turned violent and targeted Han people and businesses. Ultimately, around 200 people died and over 1,700 were injured. Over 1,000 Uyghers were arrested or detained; nearly 30 death sentences were issued. Mosques and communication networks were temporarily closed. The province remains extremely tense, with Muslim practices circumscribed, travel to Central Asia forbidden, and security services widely deployed.

Falun Gong Sit-In

On April 25, 1999, 10,000 members of the Falun Gong religious group staged a peaceful sit-in in front of the Zhongnanhai leadership compound in Beijing. Practitioners aimed to protest against the persecution of group members, and the growing portrayal of the *qigong* they practiced as superstitious and dangerous for young people. Both at the time and subsequently, Falun Gong had many supporters among ordinary citizens and political elites, including then-president Jiang Zemin's rivals.

Falun Gong Banned

On July 20, 1999, the CCP launched a campaign to “eradicate” Falun Gong. Many believe President Jiang Zemin to be personally responsible for the purge, as he felt threatened by senior CCP members who supported the Falun Gong and by the movement's broad popularity. Thousands of practitioners were abducted and detained. The organization was deemed illegal. Membership in “heterodox religions” was subsequently made a crime. Practitioners continued to protest against the regime. One estimate suggests that over 30,000 practitioners have been arrested in Tiananmen Square since 1999 (Johnson 2000).

2 Additional Information on Protest Data

Collecting protest data in authoritarian contexts is an inherently difficult enterprise. Since the Chinese government does not release official data on protests (Cai 2010; Wallace and Weiss 2015), crowd-sourced reports are an accepted way to measure unrest in China. This section provides additional detail on the Elfstrom/CLB protest data across provinces, across time, and in comparison to other datasets.

2.1 Merging the Elfstrom and CLB Protest Data

To confirm that the data generating processes for the CLB and Elfstrom protest data are essentially identical, we conduct the panel granger test proposed by Dumitrescu and Hurlin (2012). The results, from Table 1, suggest that the relationship between CLB_{it-1} and $Elfstrom_{it}$ is significant at the 1% level.

Table 1: Granger Test of $CLB_{it-1} \rightarrow ELF_{it}$

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| \bar{W} | 5.7493 |
| \bar{Z} | 18.0847*** |
| \tilde{Z} | 17.9872*** |
| *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01 | |

2.2 Geographic Variation

There are considerable differences in the number of protests reported across provinces, as shown in Figure 1. The left panel gives the total number of protests reported in each province. On an absolute basis, the greatest number of protests were reported in Guangdong, followed by Shandong, Jiangsu, Henan, and Hebei. All save Henan are relatively wealthy coastal provinces. The right panel gives the average number of protests reported per capita each year. On a per capita basis, the greatest number of protests were reported in Guangdong, Ningxia, Beijing, Shaanxi, and Shanghai. These provinces are very different. Guangdong, Beijing, and Shanghai are coastal and wealthy, whereas Ningxia and Shaanxi are poor and located in the interior. We suspect that more protests are reported in Guangdong because that is where the CLB is headquartered, and in other provinces where there are more social media users. We expect that some variation is due to economic conditions across provinces. In the dataset, 4.7% of province-days experienced at least one protest. At the national level, 44.5% of days experienced a protest anywhere in the country.

2.3 Temporal Variation

Figure 2 suggests that the protest rate has risen considerably since 2003. This may partly reflect the data collection process. By relying on social media reports, the Elfstrom and CLB measures

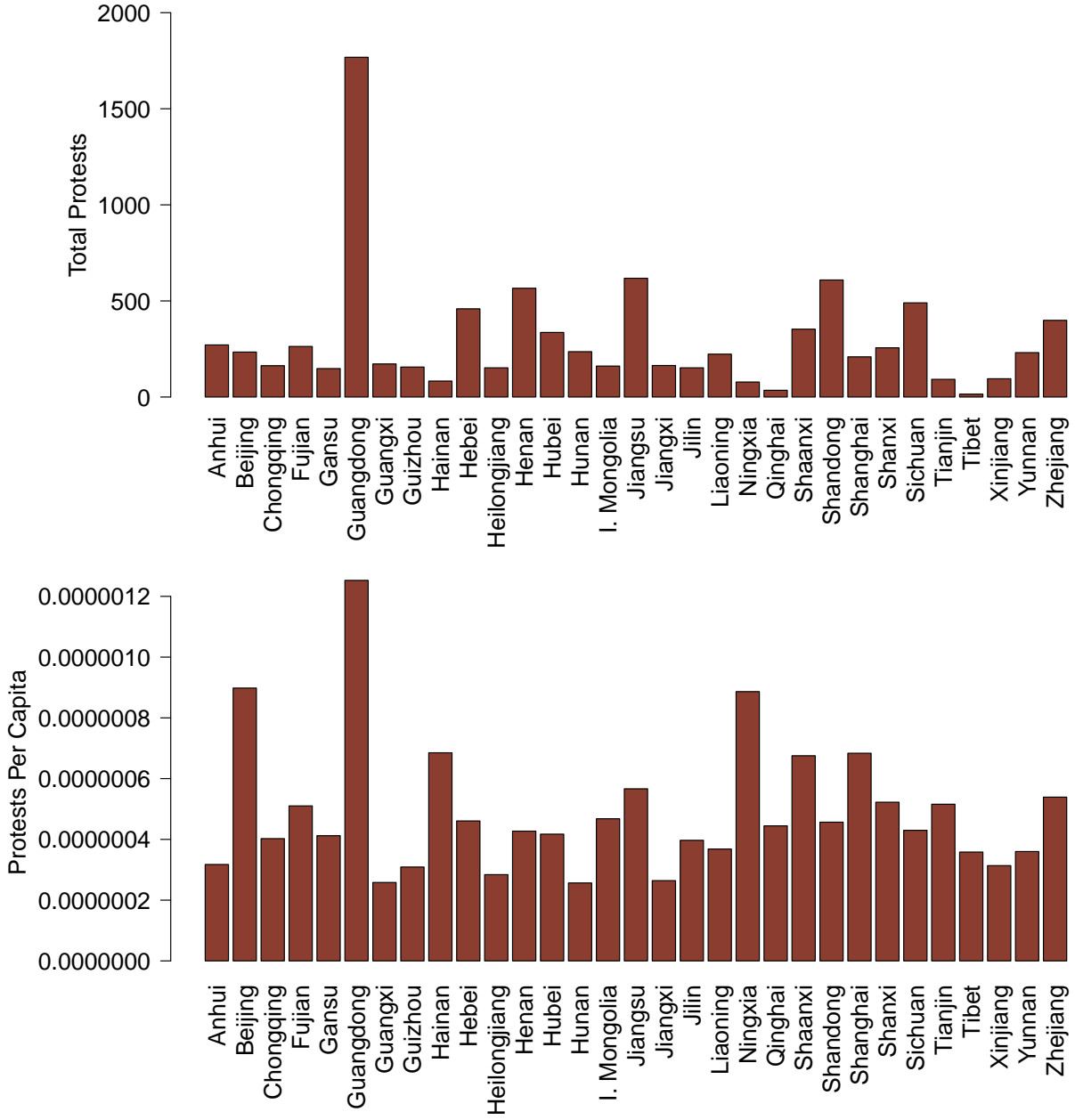


Figure 1: Provincial Protest Rates. The top panel gives the total number of protests in each province. The bottom panel gives the number of protests per capita each year in each province.

may underreport protests prior to the recent boom in internet penetration and social media. There are good reasons to believe, however, that this increase does not only reflect rising social media rates. The Chinese government reported roughly 10,000 protests in 1994 and 80,000 protests in 2008. Then, since its own dataset indicated rising popular discontent, the government stopped

releasing it. One Chinese sociologist estimated that, in 2010, there were 180,000 protests across the country. The CLB estimates that its dataset contains approximately 15% of the total number of collective action incidents in China.⁴ The time trend in Figure 2 also reflects this genuine rise in popular frustration. Figure 3 gives a histogram of the number of protests per day.

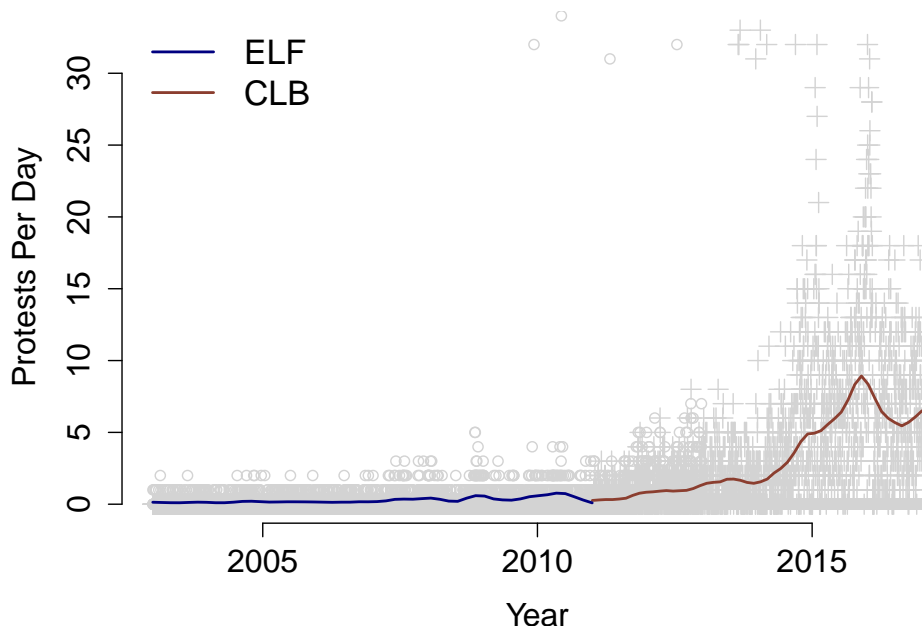


Figure 2: Protests over time. Elfstrom data are shown in blue and cover 2003-2012. CLB data are shown in red and cover 2011-2016. We aggregate these two measures into a single variable, $Protests_{it}$, which uses Elfstrom’s data for the 2003-2010 period and the CLB’s data thereafter.

2.4 Comparison to Other Datasets

As shown above, the Elfstrom/CLB data records more protests in areas with greater internet penetration, stronger media outlets, and more international linkages. This may reflect reporting bias. In turn, Göbel and Steinhardt (2019) argue that social media records represent the least biased data on collective action in China. They suggest that social media captures 110 times as many protests as English-language news and 11 times as many protests as dissident blogs like CLB. However, they regard CLB, which has “extreme overlap” with their social media records, as a special case. Between 2013 and 2016, 97% of CLB protests appeared in Wickedonna, a blog that

⁴They arrive at this figure by comparing their data to the data on the number of “mass incidents” – very large protests – to official government data released until the mid-2000s.

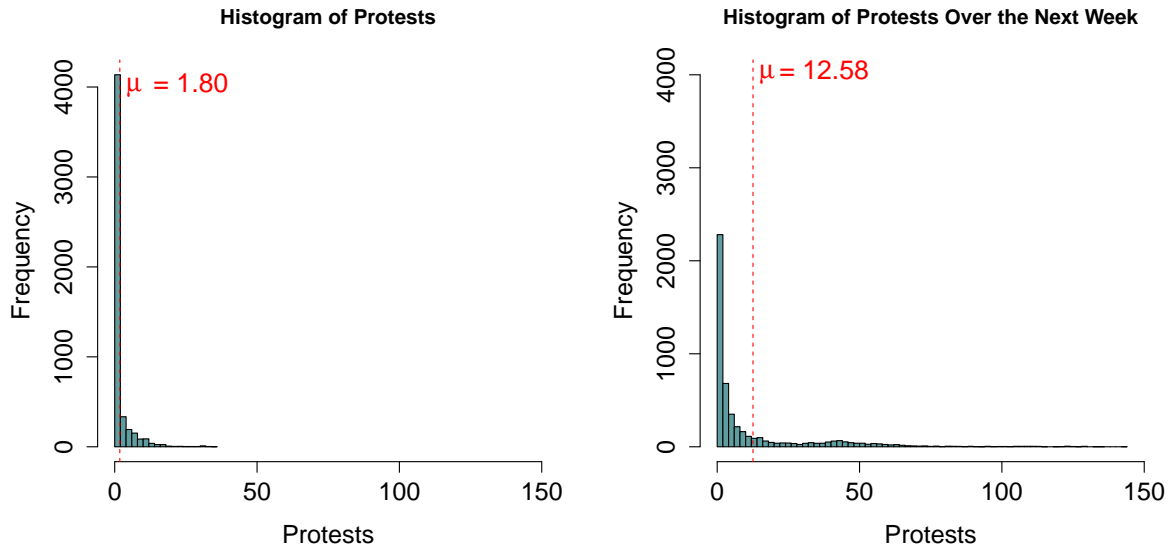


Figure 3: Histogram of protests. The left panel gives the distribution of protests per day. The right panel gives the distribution of protests per week. Mean values are shown in red.

represents their gold standard social media data (Göbel and Steinhardt 2019, 8). In their view, CLB “is the most comprehensive collection of event data from Chinese dissident sources.”

We regard replicating our work with Wickedonna data an important step when this dataset is made public. Nonetheless, we are convinced that potential selection biases in the Elfstrom/CLB data do not prohibit inference. First, the CLB data appears to be quite similar to Göbel and Steinhardt (2019)’s gold standard social media data. Given the “extreme overlap,” we are confident that our protest records represent the best data currently available on collective action in China. Second, we use province fixed effects and year fixed effects throughout to soak up unobserved sources of variation in measures like internet penetration, local media environments, and international linkages.

2.5 Protest-Level Descriptive Statistics

Table 2: Protest-Level Descriptive Statistics

| | Nbr. Val. | Nbr. NA | Min | Max | Mean | Std. Dev | Source |
|--|-----------|---------|--------|-------|-------|----------|---------------|
| Repression _{<i>j</i>} | 2992.00 | 5713.00 | 0.00 | 1.00 | 0.75 | 0.43 | Elfstrom, CLB |
| Protest _{<i>it-1</i>} | 8705.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 8.00 | 0.48 | 0.89 | Elfstrom, CLB |
| Pro Democracy Anniversary _{<i>t</i>} | 8705.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1.00 | 0.04 | 0.21 | Authors |
| Political Anniversary _{<i>t</i>} | 8705.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1.00 | 0.09 | 0.28 | Authors |
| Cultural Anniversary _{<i>t</i>} | 8705.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1.00 | 0.07 | 0.25 | Authors |
| Ethnic/Religious Anniversary _{<i>t</i>} | 8705.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1.00 | 0.03 | 0.16 | Authors |
| Log GRP _{<i>is</i>} | 8705.00 | 0.00 | 6.55 | 11.30 | 10.34 | 0.71 | NBS |
| Log Population _{<i>is</i>} | 8705.00 | 0.00 | 5.73 | 9.31 | 8.69 | 0.58 | NBS |
| Rural Population Share _{<i>is</i>} | 8705.00 | 0.00 | 0.10 | 0.77 | 0.41 | 0.11 | NBS |
| Pension shortfall _{<i>is</i>} | 8705.00 | 0.00 | -11.40 | 3.27 | -2.78 | 3.56 | NBS |
| Urban Unemployment Rate _{<i>is</i>} | 8705.00 | 0.00 | 1.20 | 4.50 | 3.17 | 0.62 | NBS |
| CPI _{<i>is</i>} | 8705.00 | 0.00 | 0.60 | 6.30 | 2.04 | 0.95 | NBS |

Notes:

NBS refers to China's National Bureau of Statistics.

For the anniversary variables, values for +/- one day windows are shown.

3 Robustness Checks

3.1 Varying the Size of the Temporal Window

In the main text, we focus on +/- one and +/- three day anniversary windows. The results are substantively unchanged with a zero day window (that is, only focusing on anniversary days themselves). These results appear in Table 3. As a robustness check, we widen that window to +/- two and +/- five days. The results are substantively unchanged.

Table 3: Anniversary Windows and Protests

| | Dependent variable: Protests _{it} | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| | 0 Day Anniversary Window | +/- 2 Day Anniversary Window | +/- 5 Day Anniversary Window | +/- 5 Day Anniversary Window |
| Pro-Democracy Anniversary | 0.220** (0.094) | 0.220** (0.093) | 0.190*** (0.043) | 0.270*** (0.032) |
| Foreign Pro-Democracy Anniversary | -0.460*** (0.160) | -0.460*** (0.160) | -0.400*** (0.071) | -0.330*** (0.048) |
| Political Anniversary | | -0.056 (0.065) | -0.160*** (0.033) | -0.100*** (0.025) |
| Cultural Anniversary | | -0.140* (0.073) | -0.150*** (0.035) | -0.064** (0.026) |
| Ethnic/Religious Anniversary | | -0.180 (0.120) | -0.240*** (0.055) | -0.070* (0.038) |
| Protests _{it-1} | 0.240*** (0.016) | 0.240*** (0.016) | 0.230*** (0.016) | 0.230*** (0.016) |
| Log GRP | -1.600*** (0.270) | -1.600*** (0.270) | -1.600*** (0.270) | -1.600*** (0.270) |
| Log Population | 0.490 (0.840) | 0.490 (0.840) | 0.480 (0.840) | 0.480 (0.840) |
| Rural Population Share | -9.200*** (1.400) | -9.200*** (1.400) | -9.300*** (1.400) | -9.300*** (1.400) |
| Pension Shortfall | 0.095*** (0.013) | 0.094*** (0.013) | 0.094*** (0.013) | 0.094*** (0.013) |
| Urban Unemployment Rate | 0.220*** (0.073) | 0.220*** (0.073) | 0.220*** (0.073) | 0.220*** (0.073) |
| Consumer Price Inflation | -0.049 (0.034) | -0.049 (0.034) | -0.048 (0.034) | -0.048 (0.034) |
| Constant | -5.600*** (0.160) | 8.700 (7.600) | -5.600*** (0.160) | 8.800 (7.600) |
| Province Fixed Effects | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Year Fixed Effects | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Observations | 158,534 | 134,808 | 158,534 | 134,808 |
| Log Likelihood | -25,947 | -25,209 | -25,926 | -25,154 |

Note: * p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

3.2 Constituent Anniversaries

In this section, we disaggregate from anniversary windows to constituent anniversaries. We employ our most encompassing model, with day-level covariates, annual-level covariates, province fixed effects, and year fixed effects. We accommodate overlapping anniversary windows with terms like “(D) Constitutional Day, Charter 08.” For reasons we discuss in the main text, the pro-democracy anniversaries save Tiananmen and Democracy Wall experience higher protest rates than other calendar days.

Table 4: Disaggregated 3 Day Anniversary Windows and Protest

| | <i>Dependent variable:</i> | | |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | | Protests | |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) |
| (D) Charter 08 | 0.270*** (0.080) | 0.260*** (0.079) | 0.240** (0.097) |
| (D) Constitutional Day | 0.460*** (0.099) | 0.450*** (0.097) | 0.380*** (0.097) |
| (D) Constitutional Day, Charter 08 | 0.790*** (0.210) | 0.770*** (0.210) | 0.700*** (0.210) |
| (D) Democracy Wall | 0.064 (0.081) | 0.071 (0.080) | -0.004 (0.081) |
| (D) NPC Direct Election Movement | 0.470*** (0.070) | 0.470*** (0.069) | 0.200** (0.091) |
| (D) Tiananmen | -0.016 (0.083) | -0.012 (0.083) | -0.021 (0.084) |
| (F) CDP Founded | -0.200** (0.091) | -0.200** (0.091) | -0.200* (0.120) |
| (F) Jasmine Movement | -0.750*** (0.130) | -0.750*** (0.130) | -0.660*** (0.130) |
| (F) Liu Xiaobo Nobel Prize | -0.320*** (0.100) | -0.320*** (0.100) | -0.370*** (0.100) |
| (P) Belgrade Embassy Bombing | | | -0.460*** (0.120) |
| (P) CCP Founding | | | -0.120 (0.150) |
| (P) CCP Founding, The Start of Anti-Japanese War | | | 0.320 (0.250) |
| (P) Death of Zhao Ziyang | | | 0.130* (0.076) |

| | |
|---|-------------------------|
| (P) Founding of PLA | -0.230** (0.091) |
| (P) Founding of PLA, Leadership beach retreat | -24.000 (83,851.000) |
| (P) Labor Day | 0.270** (0.110) |
| (P) Labor Day, Youth Day | -0.470*** (0.130) |
| (P) Leadership beach retreat | 0.016 (0.088) |
| (P) Mukden Incident | -0.140 (0.090) |
| (P) Nanjing Massacre | -0.085 (0.097) |
| (P) National Day | -0.840*** (0.120) |
| (P) National People's Congress | -0.150* (0.086) |
| (P) Party Congress | -1.300** (0.590) |
| (P) The Start of Anti-Japanese War | 0.040 (0.130) |
| (P) Youth Day | -0.170 (0.220) |
| (P) Youth Day, Belgrade Embassy Bombing | -0.300* (0.170) |
| (C) Double Ninth | -0.049 (0.095) |
| (C) Double Seventh | -0.140 (0.090) |
| (C) Dragon Boat Festival | -0.460*** (0.100) |
| (C) Ghost | -0.097 (0.087) |
| (C) Lunar New Year | -0.730*** (0.120) |
| (C) Mid-Autumn Festival | -0.160 |

| | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | | | (0.096) |
| (C) New Year's Day | | | 0.170** (0.075) |
| (C) Qing Ming | | | -0.370*** (0.095) |
| (C) Singles' Day | | | 0.170** (0.075) |
| (C) Winter Solstice | | | 0.320*** (0.086) |
| (E/R) Falun Gong banned | | | -0.300*** (0.092) |
| (E/R) Falun Gong sit in | | | -0.086 (0.084) |
| (E/R) Tibet rebellion | | | -0.430*** (0.098) |
| (E/R) Xinjiang uprising | | | -0.210 (0.150) |
| Protests _{it-1} | 0.230*** (0.016) | 0.230*** (0.016) | 0.210*** (0.016) |
| Log GRP | | -1.600*** (0.270) | -1.600*** (0.270) |
| Log Population | | 0.480 (0.840) | 0.470 (0.840) |
| Rural Population Share | | -9.300*** (1.400) | -9.300*** (1.400) |
| Pension Shortfall | | 0.094*** (0.013) | 0.093*** (0.013) |
| Urban Unemployment Rate | | 0.220*** (0.073) | 0.220*** (0.073) |
| CPI | | -0.048 (0.034) | -0.047 (0.034) |
| Constant | -5.600*** (0.160) | 8.900 (7.600) | 9.200 (7.600) |
| Province Fixed Effects | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Year Fixed Effects | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Observations | 158,534 | 134,808 | 134,808 |
| Log Likelihood | -25,882.000 | -25,148.000 | -25,013.000 |

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

3.3 Dichotomizing Protests

As an additional robustness check, we dichotomize our measure of protests. Our outcome variable $Protest_{it}$ assumes a value of 1 if province i on day t witnessed one or more protests, and 0 otherwise. This robustness check is important, as it ensures that the negative binomial results above are not driven by a handful of pro-democracy anniversaries with many protests occurring on the same province-day. The results appear in Table 5, and are virtually identical to those reported in the main text. Depending on the model, the odds of protest during a pro-democracy anniversary window is between 27% and 37% greater than the baseline. Again, we find that protest is less likely during cultural and political anniversaries, and that foreign inspired anniversaries have no effect.

3.4 High Protest Days

Next, we probe the determinants of “high” and “very high” protest days: defined, respectively, as province-days where the number of protests registers one or two standard deviations above the national mean for that year. The results appear in Table 6 and are visualized in Figure 4. The baseline probability that day t in province s is a very high protest day is 6%; during pro-democracy anniversary windows, the probability of a very high protest day rises to 9%. The baseline probability of a high protest day in a given province is 10%; during pro-democracy anniversary windows, the probability rises to just less than 14%.

3.5 Randomization Inference

We next employ randomization inference to show that our results are not generated by “cherry-picking” pro-democracy anniversaries. In the main text, we focused on five pro-democracy anniversaries, each with a ± 1 day window, yielding a set of 15 pro-democracy window days in the calendar year. In this robustness check, we randomly selected five placebo days outside the 15 pro-democracy window days and two known high-protest periods: the Party Congress period from October 1 to November 15 and the Lunar New Year period from January 1 to January 31. We constructed ± 1 day windows around these five placebo days. We then predicted the number of protests during these placebo windows with Model 2 from Table 3 in the main text, which includes all controls save non-democratic anniversaries (which could conceivably overlap with the placebo windows).

Figure 5 shows a density plot of the coefficients on our placebo window variable. Our true estimated coefficient, from Model 2 from Table 3 in the main text, is shown in red. The probability that we observe a coefficient as extreme as this one is $p = 0.00029$. Zero simulated coefficients were greater than our observed coefficient. In short, it is very unlikely that the levels of protest observed during our pro-democracy windows are a function of random chance.

Table 5: Probability of Protest Days

| | <i>Dependent variable: Protest_{it}</i> | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | <i>1 Day Anniversary Window</i> | | | <i>3 Day Anniversary Window</i> | | |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Pro-Democracy Anniversary | 0.270*** (0.064) | 0.280*** (0.065) | 0.240*** (0.065) | 0.310*** (0.043) | 0.320*** (0.044) | 0.290*** (0.044) |
| Foreign Pro-Democracy Anniversary | -0.530*** (0.110) | -0.520*** (0.110) | -0.540*** (0.110) | -0.420*** (0.068) | -0.420*** (0.068) | -0.430*** (0.068) |
| Political Anniversary | | | -0.200*** (0.046) | | | -0.110*** (0.033) |
| Cultural Anniversary | | | -0.180*** (0.050) | | | -0.100*** (0.034) |
| Ethnic/Religious Anniversary | | | -0.310*** (0.081) | | | -0.160*** (0.052) |
| Protests _{it-1} | 0.430*** (0.035) | 0.420*** (0.035) | 0.410*** (0.035) | 0.430*** (0.035) | 0.410*** (0.035) | 0.410*** (0.035) |
| Log GRP | | -1.800*** (0.280) | -1.800*** (0.280) | | -1.800*** (0.280) | -1.800*** (0.280) |
| Log Population | | -0.280 (0.860) | -0.290 (0.860) | | -0.290 (0.860) | -0.300 (0.860) |
| Rural Population Share | | -9.400*** (1.500) | -9.400*** (1.500) | | -9.400*** (1.500) | -9.400*** (1.500) |
| Pension Shortfall | | 0.063*** (0.015) | 0.063*** (0.015) | | 0.062*** (0.015) | 0.062*** (0.015) |
| Urban Unemployment Rate | | 0.260*** (0.078) | 0.260*** (0.078) | | 0.260*** (0.078) | 0.260*** (0.078) |
| Consumer Price Inflation | | -0.016 (0.036) | -0.016 (0.036) | | -0.016 (0.036) | -0.016 (0.036) |
| Constant | -5.700*** (0.160) | 18.000** (7.800) | 18.000** (7.800) | -5.700*** (0.160) | 18.000** (7.800) | 18.000** (7.800) |
| Province Fixed Effects | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Year Fixed Effects | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Observations | 158,534 | 134,808 | 134,808 | 158,534 | 134,808 | 134,808 |
| Log Likelihood | -22,019 | -21,348 | -21,325 | -21,993 | -21,322 | -21,308 |

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 6: Probability of High and Very High Protest Days (3 Day Anniversary Window)

| | <i>Dependent variable:</i> | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | High Protest | | | Very High Protest | | |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Pro-Democracy Anniversary | 0.420*** (0.030) | 0.470*** (0.033) | 0.410*** (0.033) | 0.410*** (0.038) | 0.560*** (0.043) | 0.540*** (0.043) |
| Foreign Pro-Democracy Anniversary | -0.200*** (0.052) | -0.240*** (0.056) | -0.250*** (0.056) | -0.180** (0.072) | -0.290*** (0.085) | -0.310*** (0.086) |
| Political Anniversary | | | -0.310*** (0.025) | | | -0.080** (0.032) |
| Cultural Anniversary | | | -0.081*** (0.025) | | | -0.120*** (0.033) |
| Ethnic/Religious Anniversary | | | -0.380*** (0.042) | | | -0.310*** (0.055) |
| Protests _{it-1} | 0.630*** (0.036) | 0.670*** (0.037) | 0.660*** (0.037) | 0.660*** (0.055) | 0.720*** (0.058) | 0.720*** (0.058) |
| Log GRP | | 0.230 (0.150) | 0.230 (0.150) | | 0.230 (0.210) | 0.230 (0.210) |
| Log Population | | 0.220 (0.330) | 0.220 (0.330) | | 0.230 (0.450) | 0.230 (0.450) |
| Rural Population Share | | 0.860 (0.730) | 0.850 (0.730) | | 0.800 (1.000) | 0.800 (1.000) |
| Pension Shortfall | | 0.016 (0.011) | 0.016 (0.011) | | 0.019 (0.017) | 0.019 (0.017) |
| Urban Unemployment Rate | | -0.001 (0.005) | -0.001 (0.005) | | -0.002 (0.007) | -0.001 (0.007) |
| Consumer Price Inflation | | -0.024 (0.039) | -0.023 (0.039) | | -0.025 (0.054) | -0.024 (0.054) |
| CPI | | -0.004 (0.017) | -0.004 (0.017) | | -0.002 (0.021) | -0.002 (0.021) |
| Constant | -2.000*** (0.055) | -5.900** (2.800) | -5.800** (2.800) | -2.000*** (0.065) | -6.000 (3.900) | -5.900 (3.900) |
| Province Fixed Effects | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Year Fixed Effects | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Observations | 158,534 | 123,493 | 123,493 | 158,534 | 123,493 | 123,493 |
| Log Likelihood | -48,556 | -38,326 | -38,198 | -33,000 | -23,732 | -23,707 |

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

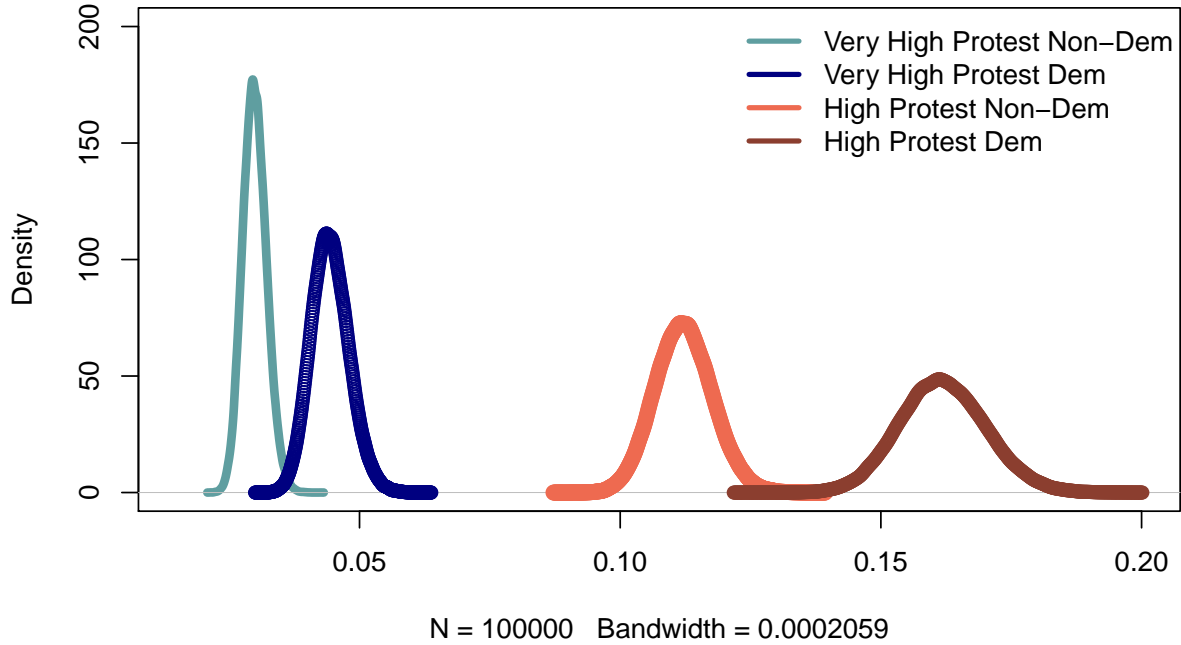


Figure 4: Predicted probability of high protest and very high protest days during pro-democracy anniversary windows and otherwise.

3.6 Focal Moment Formation

A novel feature of our dataset is that it allows us to study the *formation* of focal moments. Two of our pro-democracy focal moments – Charter 08 (December 10, 2008) and Constitution Day (December 4, 2014) – formed during the sample period. As a robustness check, we explore whether these dates experienced elevated protest rates *before* they became focal moments. If they did, this would suggest that some other feature of this period explained elevated protest rates, rather than the focal moment itself. As in the main text, these anniversaries only enter the Pro-Democracy Anniversary set after they become focal. Models 1 through 3 include a Charter 08 placebo that assumes value 1 for December 10 windows prior to 2008 and 0 afterwards. Models 4 through 6 employ a Constitution Day placebo that assumes value 1 for December 4 windows prior to 2014 and 0 afterwards.

Table 7 reports the results. We find no evidence that either anniversary that formed during our sample period experienced elevated protest rates before it became a pro-democracy focal moment.

Table 7: Focal Moment Formation Placebo Test (3 Day Anniversary Windows)

| | <i>Dependent variable: Protests_{it}</i> | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | <i>Charter 08</i> | | | <i>Constitutional Day</i> | | |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Pre-Focal Anniversary | -0.008 (0.410) | -0.039 (0.510) | -0.024 (0.510) | 0.180 (0.140) | 0.140 (0.150) | 0.089 (0.150) |
| Pro-Democracy Anniversary | 0.250*** (0.037) | 0.250*** (0.037) | 0.230*** (0.037) | 0.250*** (0.037) | 0.250*** (0.037) | 0.230*** (0.037) |
| Foreign Pro-Democracy Anniversary | -0.380*** (0.061) | -0.380*** (0.060) | -0.400*** (0.060) | -0.380*** (0.061) | -0.380*** (0.060) | -0.400*** (0.060) |
| Political Anniversary | | | -0.130*** (0.029) | | | -0.120*** (0.029) |
| Cultural Anniversary | | | -0.086*** (0.030) | | | -0.086*** (0.030) |
| Ethnic/Religious Anniversary | | | -0.170*** (0.046) | | | -0.170*** (0.046) |
| Protests _{it-1} | 0.230*** (0.016) | 0.230*** (0.016) | 0.230*** (0.016) | 0.230*** (0.016) | 0.230*** (0.016) | 0.230*** (0.016) |
| Log GRP | | -1.600*** (0.270) | -1.600*** (0.270) | | -1.600*** (0.270) | -1.600*** (0.270) |
| Log Population | | 0.480 (0.840) | 0.480 (0.840) | | 0.480 (0.840) | 0.480 (0.840) |
| Rural Population Share | | -9.300*** (1.400) | -9.300*** (1.400) | | -9.300*** (1.400) | -9.300*** (1.400) |
| Pension Shortfall | | 0.094*** (0.013) | 0.094*** (0.013) | | 0.094*** (0.013) | 0.094*** (0.013) |
| Urban Unemployment Rate | | 0.220*** (0.073) | 0.220*** (0.073) | | 0.220*** (0.073) | 0.220*** (0.073) |
| Consumer Price Inflation | | -0.048 (0.034) | -0.048 (0.034) | | -0.048 (0.034) | -0.048 (0.034) |
| Constant | -5.600*** (0.160) | 8.800 (7.600) | 8.900 (7.600) | -5.600*** (0.160) | 8.800 (7.600) | 8.900 (7.600) |
| Province Fixed Effects | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Year Fixed Effects | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Observations | 158,534 | 134,808 | 134,808 | 158,534 | 134,808 | 134,808 |
| Log Likelihood | -25,907.000 | -25,172.000 | -25,152.000 | -25,907.000 | -25,172.000 | -25,152.000 |

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

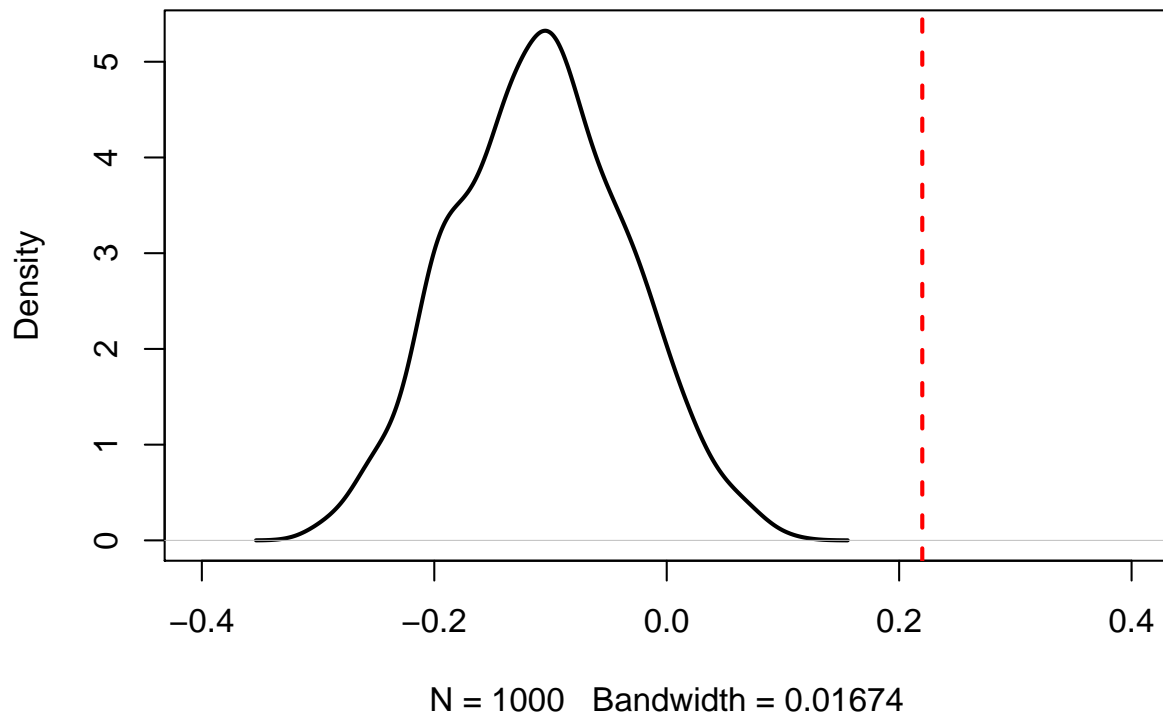


Figure 5: Randomization inference based on Model 2 from Table 3 in the main text. The estimated coefficient is shown in red. The probability of observing a coefficient as extreme as this one is $p = 0.00029$. Zero simulated coefficients were greater than our observed coefficient.

3.7 Protest Size

Our theory does not have obvious implications for the equilibrium number of participants in any given focal moment protest. One force renders them larger: Since focal moments facilitate coordination, more citizens can participate. Another force renders them smaller: Precisely because focal moments are so threatening and governments can prepare for them in advance, focal moment protests are more likely to be repressed. As a result, their equilibrium size is ambiguous, and may vary according to country specific characteristics.

Empirically, we proceed with caution, since ascertaining protest size is difficult. Reflecting this, the CLB employed categories. It recorded 5,807 protests with between 1 and 100 people, 1,966 protests with between 100 and 1,000 people, 482 protests with between 1,000 and 10,000 people, and just 9 protests with greater than 10,000 people. For 441 protests, the number of participants was not observed. Since so few protests exceeded 1,000 people, we create a dichotomous variable, $Size_j$, which records value 1 if protest j exceeds 100 people and 0 otherwise. Our baseline model is

$$Size_j = \alpha + \beta (\text{Pro-Democracy Anniversary Window}_j) + \phi X_j + \psi W_j + \gamma_i + \gamma_s + \epsilon \quad (1)$$

where i indexes province, j indexes protest, and s indexes year. The vectors X_j and W_j include the same day- and year-level covariates, respectively, from above, now indexed by protest. We include province and year fixed effects, given by γ_i and γ_s , respectively. Since the outcome is dichotomous, we employ a logit model.

The results appear in Table 8. Strikingly, there is some evidence that protests that emerge during pro-democracy anniversary windows may be *smaller* than others. The odds that a pro-democracy anniversary protest counts more than 100 people are about 70% as great as otherwise. This suggests that citizens *know* the government is more likely to repress protests around pro-democracy anniversaries, as we found in the main text, and so, though they join protests in higher numbers than on other days, they join protests that are smaller and more diffuse.

Table 8: Anniversary Windows and Protest Size

| | <i>Dependent variable: Size_j</i> | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | <i>1 Day Anniversary Window</i> | | | <i>3 Day Anniversary Window</i> | | |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Pro-Democracy Anniversary | -0.300** (0.140) | -0.300** (0.140) | -0.310** (0.140) | -0.330*** (0.095) | -0.330*** (0.095) | -0.320*** (0.095) |
| Foreign Pro-Democracy Anniversary | 0.260 (0.200) | 0.260 (0.200) | 0.260 (0.200) | 0.290** (0.130) | 0.290** (0.130) | 0.290** (0.130) |
| Political Anniversary | | | -0.072 (0.096) | | | -0.030 (0.068) |
| Cultural Anniversary | | | -0.160 (0.110) | | | -0.140** (0.072) |
| Ethnic/Religious Anniversary | | | 0.180 (0.160) | | | 0.092 (0.100) |
| Protests _{it-1} | -0.079** (0.034) | -0.081** (0.034) | -0.080** (0.034) | -0.079** (0.034) | -0.081** (0.034) | -0.080** (0.034) |
| Log GRP | | -1.200 (0.880) | -1.200 (0.880) | | -1.200 (0.880) | -1.200 (0.880) |
| Log Population | | -1.400 (6.300) | -1.300 (6.300) | | -1.200 (6.300) | -1.200 (6.300) |
| Rural Population Share | | -2.400 (4.500) | -2.400 (4.500) | | -2.400 (4.500) | -2.400 (4.500) |
| Pension Shortfall | | -0.044 (0.040) | -0.044 (0.040) | | -0.043 (0.040) | -0.043 (0.040) |
| Urban Unemployment Rate | | 0.024 (0.200) | 0.019 (0.200) | | 0.017 (0.200) | 0.013 (0.200) |
| Consumer Price Inflation | | -0.098 (0.120) | -0.097 (0.120) | | -0.100 (0.120) | -0.096 (0.120) |
| Constant | 0.140 (0.180) | 25.000 (54.000) | 25.000 (54.000) | 0.160 (0.180) | 23.000 (54.000) | 24.000 (54.000) |
| Province Fixed Effects | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Year Fixed Effects | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Observations | 8,264 | 8,264 | 8,264 | 8,264 | 8,264 | 8,264 |
| Log Likelihood | -4,353.000 | -4,351.000 | -4,348.000 | -4,347.000 | -4,344.000 | -4,342.000 |

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

4 Text Analysis from Section 5 of the Main Text

In the main text, we visualized the most distinctive terms during pro-democracy anniversary windows relative to other days with Kessler (2018)'s `scattertext` algorithm. Figure 6 presents a more rudimentary visualization: the most common terms during pro-democracy anniversary windows compared to other days. As expected, these terms are quite similar.

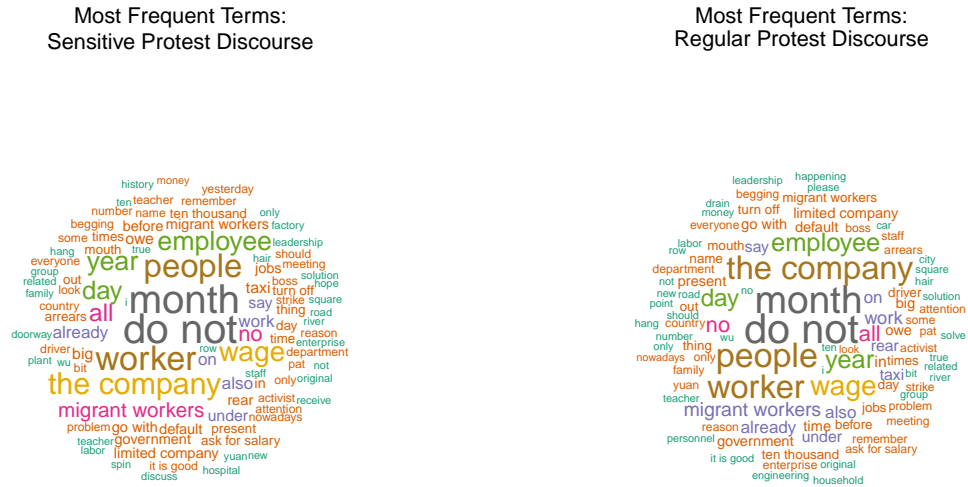


Figure 6: Most frequent protest discourse.

4.1 Protest Imagery Examples

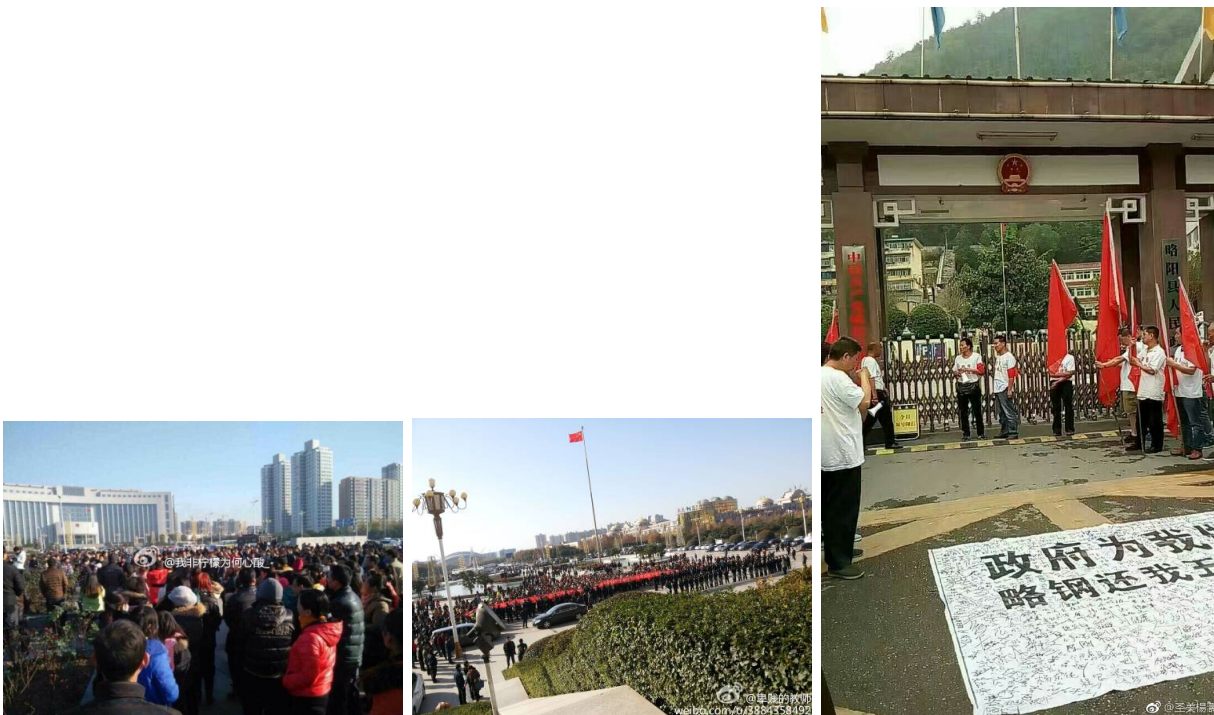


Figure 7: Protest images. The first two panels show the size of the Yuzhou teacher strike, as well as the police response. The third panel shows a Hanzhong protest banner stating “The Government Works for Me” signed by participants, delivered in front of city government offices.

4.2 Regressions

Next, we rule out the possibility that references to rights conscious terms in protest discourse during the pro-democracy anniversaries reflects random chance. Our model is

$$Y_t = \alpha + \beta (\text{Pro-Democracy Window}_t) + \gamma_s + \epsilon \quad (2)$$

where *Pro-Democracy Window*_{*t*} assumes value 1 if day *t* falls within three days on either side of our set of pro-democracy anniversaries. γ_s represents year fixed effects to accommodate unobserved differences by year. Our outcome variables, measured at the day level, include total number of documents published (including all tweets, posters, and banners), the total number of words in these documents, and the total number of references to the rights conscious terms that appear in red in Figure 5 in the main text.

We employ negative binomial models, since all outcomes are counts. The results appear in Table 9, which omits year fixed effects, and Table 10, which includes them. The results are con-

sistent across the two tables. Models 1 and 2 show that protest discourse in general is more common during pro-democracy anniversaries. Whether measured in terms of protest documents or the length of protest documents, Chinese citizens appear to protest more during these periods. Models 3 through 10 show that rights conscious discourse is more common during pro-democracy anniversaries. Protesters are significantly more likely to discuss “bad faith,” a “new world,” “people power teachers,” their “helplessness” or “powerlessness,” as well as their efforts to secure “court enforcement” and their demands for their “right to know.”

From Models 11 and 12, the coefficient on “citizen” and “netizen” is insignificantly positive. It was impossible to estimate these models with precision because the terms are uncommon in the corpus. “Citizen” is an uncommon English homophone that was mentioned 23 times on one day. “Netizen” was mentioned 10 times on one day. We are unable to estimate a model because these terms were never mentioned outside of pro-democracy windows.

Model 13 presents a placebo check. Models 1 and 2 raise the possibility that the increase in rights conscious discourse during pro-democracy anniversaries may be driven by a general increase in the volume of protest discourse. To ensure this is not the case, Model 13 tracks references to “weather” – a term with no democratic connotations. As expected, there is no change in the rate of non-sensitive discourse during pro-democracy anniversaries.

Table 9: Protest Discourse During Pro-Democracy Windows Relative to Rest of Year

| | | <i>Dependent variable:</i> | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|--|
| | Documents (1) | Words (2) | Bad Faith (3) | New World (4) | People Power (5) | Teacher (6) | Helpless (7) | Court Enforcement (8) | Right to Know (9) | Netizen (10) | Citizen (11) | Weather (12) | |
| Dem Window | 0.300*** (0.079) | 0.380*** (0.110) | 1.900*** (0.610) | 2.200* (1.400) | 2.000 (1.600) | 2.700*** (0.760) | 2.000*** (0.650) | 3.800** (1.500) | 2.200*** (0.780) | 22.000 (2,851.000) | 21.000 (1,729.000) | 0.550 (0.370) | |
| Constant | 3.000*** (0.023) | 6.500*** (0.032) | -4.800*** (0.300) | -5.600*** (0.540) | -5.300*** (0.560) | -6.300*** (0.580) | -5.600*** (0.410) | -6.000*** (0.640) | -5.600*** (0.430) | -24.000 (2,851.000) | -23.000 (1,729.000) | -2.700*** (0.120) | |
| Year Fixed Effects | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | |
| Observations | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | |
| Log Likelihood | -7,163.000 | -13,105.000 | -102.000 | -47.000 | -49.000 | -41.000 | -59.000 | -41.000 | -59.000 | -53.000 | -118.000 | -427.000 | |

* p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

Table 10: Protest Discourse During Pro-Democracy Windows Relative to Rest of Year (Continued)

| | <i>Dependent variable:</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| | Documents (1) | Words (2) | Bad Faith (3) | New World (4) | People Power (5) | Teacher (6) | Helpless (7) | Powerless (8) | Court Enforcement (9) | Right to Know (10) | Netizen (11) | Citizen (12) | Weather (12) |
| Dem Window | 0.290*** (0.078) | 0.330*** (0.110) | 2.200*** (0.630) | 4.000*** (1.500) | 3.600*** (1.700) | 2.800*** (0.790) | 2.000*** (0.660) | 2.900*** (1.400) | 2.100*** (0.780) | 22.000 (4,035.000) | 22.000 (2,380.000) | 22.000 (2,380.000) | 0.610 (0.370) |
| Constant | 2.900*** (0.047) | 6.200*** (0.067) | -5.200*** (0.660) | -38.000 (2,705,893.000) | -37.000 (1,346,275.000) | -6.800*** (1.100) | -5.700*** (0.760) | -6.100*** (1.200) | -6.300*** (1.100) | -45.000 (8,663.000) | -43.000 (4,277.000) | -43.000 (4,277.000) | -3.500*** (0.330) |
| Year Fixed Effects | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Observations | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 | 1,766 |
| Log Likelihood | -7,128.000 | -13,059.000 | -97.000 | -43.000 | -42.000 | -39.000 | -55.000 | -40.000 | -56.000 | -38.000 | -85.000 | -85.000 | -421.000 |

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

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