Narratives, violence, nd social conflicts: the case of the 1980s autonomist squatter movement

Steen, B.S. van der

NARRATIVES, VIOLENCE, AND SOCIAL CONFLICTS: THE CASE OF THE 1980s AUTONOMIST SQUATTER MOVEMENT

Bart van der Steen[*]

The relationship between activism, repression, and violent escalation is central to social movement scholarship. The strategic reasons for movements to place "internal brakes" on violence have been mapped, but less is known about how movements create and enforce these brakes. This article argues that narratives play a central role in this process and demonstrates how narratives both enabled and limited violent activism in the 1980s autonomist squatter movement. Although activists acknowledged that the movement's strength relied on its ability to resist the authorities forcefully, there was also an acute awareness among many that violence could easily escalate into a lethal spiral. In response, activists developed narratives that defined the norms for the legitimate use of force and limited violent escalation. They devised narrative strategies to rein in more extremist fellow activists. Narratives often worked to set boundaries on violent activism effectively, but the decline of the movement in the late 1980s was characterized by transgressions into lethal violence and an inability to process or limit these transgressions narratively.

Since the emergence of the student movement of the 1960s and the radicalization of subgroups into urban guerrillas during the 1970s, social movement scholars have paid special attention to the relationship between activism, repression, and violent escalation (for classical approaches, see: Tilly 2003, 2015; Tarrow 1989; della Porta 1995). The fact that other social movements, such as the civil rights, women's, and antiwar movements, also sparked militant or armed groups ensured that the topic remained high on the field's research agenda. This research often assumed a process of escalation that, if unchecked, proposed activists moving from nonviolent to more disruptive and ultimately violent and/or lethal forms of activism and terrorism.

Only recently have scholars started to pay more attention to the fact that activists and movements can consciously and successfully limit violent escalation (Busher, Holbrook, and Macklin 2019; Macklin 2020). The strategic reasons for movements to place "internal brakes" on violence have been mapped, but less is known about how movements create and enforce these brakes. Narratives, this article argues, play a central role in this process. This article, therefore, analyzes how narratives both enabled and limited violent escalation in the 1980s autonomist squatter movement in Western Europe (Benford 2002; da Silva and Ferreira 2020; Wahlström 2011).

Activists started squatting houses as a form of contentious action in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Anders and Sedlmaier 2018; Vasudevan 2017; van der Steen, Katzeff, and Hoogenhuijze 2014b). The 1980s witnessed a new wave of squatter activism and the formation of a militant squatter movement, especially in the metropolises of West Germany, the Netherlands, Den-mark, and Switzerland. The activists, however, did not limit their scope to squatting. Rather, squatted places formed the basis for a new, radical direct-action movement that opposed urban renewal, militarism, nuclear power/weapons, sexism, and racism. In the movement's media, these various causes were discussed and linked to each other. To further reflect this develop-ment, West German activists soon dubbed themselves autonomists, while Dutch activists referred to their movement alternately as the squatters or action movement.[1] Because

* Bart van der Steen is a historian and head of Faculty Liaison and Services at Leiden University Libraries. Direct correspondence to b.s.van.der.steen@library.leidenuniv.nl

© 2024 Mobilization: An International Quarterly 29(3):395-411
DOI 10.17813/1086-671X-29-3-395

they organized their own campaigns and actions while also joining in actions by other social movements—often as a visible militant bloc—the squatters constituted both a radical movement and acted as the radical wing of various other movements. For these reasons, this article refers to them as autonomist squatters.

Their action repertoire grew to include militant demonstrations and riots, vandalism, and property destruction. As a result, the movement was perceived, by authorities as well as by activists themselves, as militant and at risk of growing ever more violent. Radicalization, however, was not something that activists had no control over. In squatted houses, social centers, and movement publications, they continuously discussed the prospect of violent escalation. This article argues that these discussions produced narratives that enabled activists to maintain a certain level of militancy while limiting violent escalation.

This article explores the relationship between narratives and (limited) violent escalation. The first section discusses the role of violence in the rise of the autonomist squatter movement and how previous research has analyzed it. The second section looks at how autonomist squatters developed narratives of militancy during intense struggles against eviction. The third section shows how these narratives worked to process past confrontations and script future battles with the police, and the fourth investigates how autonomist squatters devised narrative strategies to respond to transgressions of the norms of militant activism by fellow activists. The analysis is based on case studies from two countries where the autonomist squatter movement was particularly active: the Netherlands and West Germany.

NARRATIVES AND SOCIAL CONTROL IN MOVEMENTS

This article analyzes interviews with and memoirs of autonomist squatters, approaching these texts as narratives that reflect the relationship among activism, violence, and escalation. The gtoal is to assess how such narratives influenced, enabled, and limited violent escalation.

A narrative is a story, "an account of a sequence of events in the order in which they occurred to make a point" (Polletta and Gardner 2015: 536). Narratives "create coherent stories out of the complex and messy reality of human life" and function as "tools to understand, negotiate, and make sense of situations we encounter" (Graef, da Silva, and Lemay-Hebert 2020: 432-3). Narratives motivate activists, tie them together into movements, and create internal norms as well as shared views of the movement's past, present, and future. It is for this reason that Gary Alan Fine dubbed social movements "bundles of narratives" (Fine 2002: 230, 233, 244). Both before, during, and after mobilizations, activists communicate with each other and exchange their views through meetings, informal conversations, movement media, and interactions with mainstream media. They often do so in storied form—processing reality through narratives. In a militant movement such as the autonomist squatters, violence and escalation often took center stage in many of these narratives.

Exchanging narratives is intended to build consensus within movements and create and defend internal norms. Robert D. Benford has stated that narratives thus form "internal social control mechanisms, channeling and constraining individual as well as collective sentiments, emotions, and action" (Benford 2002: 53). As Mattias Wahlström indicates, "storytelling is thus an important mode of social control in the maintenance of conformity" within movements (Wahlström 2011: 370). Noting a surprising "omission of systematic analyses of intra-movement social-control processes," Benford identifies three ways in which narratives work to set and defend internal movement norms: by scripting actions during preparatory meetings, by calling out and correcting deviant word usage and behavior in social settings, and ultimately by excluding extreme and unresponsive transgressors. Wahlström adds a fourth way in which narratives of past events work to set norms: "Even if these narratives are retrospective constructions, they influence the development of future protest events [because they are] part of an ongoing learning process in which identities are formed and protest tactics develop'" (Wahlström 2011: 382).

Such dynamics can clearly be observed within the autonomist squatter movement. As squatters met and lived together, they extensively debated life inside and outside squats. Through these conversations, they established internal norms and turned squats into formative and normative spaces (Friedrichs 2013; Owens 2009; Haunss 2004; Kadir 2016). This affected language, behavior, and activism. When, in 1986, a researcher interviewed a Nijmegen squatter, the latter told him that during meetings: "I don't use [the c-word and f-word] anymore, [because the others find that offensive.] I simply got used to not using those words anymore" (De Ruyter 1986b: 16). Similarly, through lengthy discussions and social interventions, drug use and deviant behavior would be tolerated and corrected, as in the case of an Amsterdam addict and runaway youth who was resocialized and trained as a construction worker while renovating his squat (Poppe and Rottenberg 2000). If, however, antisocial behavior threatened the stability of a squat, deviants would be evicted by the squatters themselves. Thus, in 1986, two Amsterdam activists remarked that the number of "internal evictions" far outnumbered the number of "official evictions" (Lovink and van der Spek 1986: 29). Narratives thus established norms and created in- and out-groups. Finally, Lynn Owens has reconstructed how an aggressive eviction by Amsterdam police of nonviolent squatters in 1978 was turned into an activist film and screened at various meetings. This film played an important role in the radicalization and increased militancy of many Amsterdam squatters in the following years. Activist narratives of past events thus influenced future actions (Owens 2009).

METHODS AND SOURCES

Following a method pursued earlier by Owens, Knud Andresen and Wahlström (Andresen 2020; Owens 2009; Wahlström 2011), this article analyzes primary sources and published interviews to investigate autonomist squatter narratives on violence and violent escalation. After reviewing the full body of sources, a set of ideal-typical narratives was abstracted, and the sources were again reviewed for the most poignant articulations of these narratives. These were subsequently processed in the analytical section of this article.

This article, like the abovementioned studies, focuses on the content of narratives rather than their structures, interrogating what they are about—i.e., how they work to connect events into sequences or developments and imbue them with meaning and explanatory power—rather than asking how they are "composed to achieve particular communicative aims" (Figgou and Pavlopoulos 2015: 546). Furthermore, this article uses an analogous approach in that it abstracts narratives from a variety of sources. Owens (2008) worked in a similar way when he identified the central "debates and narrative constructions" among Amsterdam squatters from primary written sources and secondary oral histories, stating that "despite their complexity, narratives are easily identified and isolated" (Owens 2009: 27). Working with published interviews, Andresen was aware that his source material had "gone through various filters of editing and selection," but was nevertheless able to abstract from them "four narratives [which] represent prominent narrative patterns" (Andresen 2020: 203). Wahlström similarly identified "recurring patterns" from internet forum debates and interviews with Danish and Swedish left-wing protesters (Wahlström 2011: 373).

Such a method, of course, has its limitations. Narratives drawn from interviews, memoirs, and other ego-documents by (former) activists cannot be taken at face value since narratives are often constructed with the benefit of hindsight in order to legitimize, explain, brush over, or even ignore controversial acts and events. Nevertheless, they provide unique insights into attitudes, norms, and ways of talking within social movements. Furthermore, David R. Maines has observed that "narrative occasions are always potential sites of conflict and competition, as well as cooperation and consensus" (Maines 1993: 21). Owens has characterized the 1980s as an era of "competition for narrative dominance" within the Amsterdam autonomist squatters movement (Owens 2009: 28). Conflicts within movements are reflected in the exchange of conflicting and competing narratives. This research analyzes several prominent narratives that

enabled and limited violent escalation and pays less attention to more marginal (and more violent) narratives of autonomist squatter fringe groups. The research focuses on these dominant narratives and how they influenced the autonomist squatters' activism.

Two main bodies of source material lie at the basis of this research. First, we analyzed a series of published interview collections with Amsterdam squatters (Hofland 1981; Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis 1996 Poppe and Rottenberg 2000; Wietsma et al. 1982;), totaling 65 interviews (table 1). Also, a systematic review of Amsterdam squatter publications in the form of pamphlets and periodicals complemented the interview material. Secondly, we reconstructed autonomist social movement conflicts in the region of Hamburg through a systematic review of activist self-publications and mainstream media (including *Hamburger Abendblatt*, *Die Zeit,* and *Der Spiegel*).[2] West German autonomist squatter conflicts outside of Hamburg have been analyzed using ego-documents, mainstream news sources, and the collection of radical-left publications on squatter conflicts held at the ID Archiv.[3]

Table 1. Overview of Interviews with Amsterdam Squatters Used for this Research

	Total N of interviews	*De stadsoorlog* [a]	*Als je leven je lief is* [b]	*De stad was van ons* [c]	*De kraakgeneratie* [d]
Number of interviews with Amsterdam squatters	65	3	16	28	18
Year of publication	1981-2000	1981	1982	1996	2000

Notes: [a] "The Urban War," Hofland 1981; [b] "If you live, you love," Wietsma et al. 1982; [c] "The City Was Ours," Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis 1996; "The Squatting Generation," Poppe and Rottenberg 2000,

SQUATTERS, NARRATIVES, AND VIOLENCE

In the early 1980s, squatter activism hit Western Europe with a bang, as metropolitan youths occupied houses and militantly resisted eviction. In Amsterdam, an attempt to evict squatters from Vondelstraat 72 in February 1980 caused squatters to fight off the police, build barricades, and maintain them for an entire weekend, after which the city deployed tanks to clear the road, although the squatted house was left undisturbed (Duivenvoorden 2000). An attempt at squatting Fränkelufer 48 in West Berlin in December 1980 led to two nights of rioting, after which the police relented, and the house was squatted (Grauwacke 2020). Squatting in both cities then took a leap, and by the end of 1980, Amsterdam counted more than 206 squatted houses, while a year later, West Berlin had reached the number of 284 (Van der Raad 1982; Grauwacke 2020). Similar confrontations took place in Bremen (May 6, 1980) and Zurich (Opernhaus-krawalle, May 30, 1980), and after a series of intense confrontations with the police, activists jokingly referred to Freiburg as "Polizeiburg" (Regiekollektiv Medienwerkstatt Freiburg 1980).

The surge of militancy led both activists and authorities to fear the violent escalation of squatter conflicts into urban guerrilla warfare. In 1982, an Amsterdam squatter said in an interview that militant activism had proven remarkably effective. It had warded off evictions and enforced legalizations (Wietsma et al. 1982: 62). Still, the squatter conceded, "This conclusion is also very dangerous" because if squatters conceded that violence could bring about political change, this could lead them to steadily escalate their use of force. Referring to the West German urban guerrilla group, Red Army Faction, he feared "RAF-situations" developing in Amsterdam. A second Amsterdam squatter feared a violent spiral, leading to a situation in which "it can become acceptable to pick up firearms." He continued, "It's frightening, because I don't want to go underground" (Wietsma et al. 1982: 90). Police officers had similar concerns. In 1981, a Dutch magazine printed a clandestinely recorded conversation between two policemen. When the first claimed that he had considered firing at squatters, the other replied in dismay, "Once a single shot is fired, where will it end?" (*Haagse Post* 1981).

In West Germany, forceful repression of the 1960s student movement had caused parts of it to radicalize and, in the 1970s, develop into urban guerrillas. The conflict between the West German state and the guerrillas reached its climax in the "German Autumn" of 1977 when members of the Red Army Faction (RAF) initiated a series of killings and kidnappings in an attempt to force the state to release its imprisoned comrades (Aust 2008; Peters 2004). Although this campaign proved unsuccessful, the RAF and other armed groups remained active throughout the 1980s, and the autonomist squatter movement was repeatedly accused by authorities and conservative media of forming the "legal wing" of the RAF or precursors to a new generation of urban guerrillas, despite the squatters' distinct action repertoire. This caused extensive and continuous internal debates among West German autonomists on the RAF, political violence, and its own action forms (Grauwacke 2020; Geronimo 2002).

Although on a smaller scale, the Netherlands also faced surges of political violence and terrorism during the 1970s (Eikelenboom 2005). Foreign actors, such as members of the PLO, the Japanese Red Army, and the IRA, committed some actions. Others were committed by Dutch-Moluccan youths, who demanded government support for their demands for an independent state in the Maluku Islands. The RAF, however, was dominant in the public perception. The RAF was active in the Netherlands, holding the kidnapped Hans Martin Schleyer in Scheveningen and killing three Dutch police officers during arrest attempts (Pekelder 2007 and 2009). Dutch groups such as the Rode Jeugd modeled themselves after the RAF (Dekkers and Dijksman 1988; van Riel 2010), and Dutch activists such as Ronald Augustin joined the RAF. Finally, until the mid-1970s, broad sections of the left-liberal political spectrum sympathized with imprisoned RAF members, criticizing their prison conditions (Pekelder 2007). From the late 1970s onwards, the Rood Verzetsfront started to publish reports and communiqués by the RAF and other armed groups and actively tried to gain support among radical squatters (Moussault and Lust 2009). Although the Rode Jeugd and other groups soon faltered due to amateurism and effective police surveillance, the 1970s ended with a shared belief among Dutch authorities and activists that a volatile cocktail of radical activism and government repression could also spawn armed groups in the Netherlands.

Although both activists and authorities had grave concerns about squatter conflicts escalating into terrorist violence, research has mainly focused on how authorities responded. On a local level, the Amsterdam police were reorganized, better equipped, and better trained—not only in repression but also in de-escalation. Police and squatters even organized several meetings to share experiences and improve relations. The city acquired squats and accepted squatters as negotiating partners in certain situations, and, if all else failed, tried to organize "smart" evictions by overwhelming numbers of police, who would refrain from violence as much as possible (Fijnaut 2008; de Liagre Böhl 2010). On a national level, the Secret Service carefully avoided characterizing squatter activism as "terrorism" to avoid criminalization leading to radicalization (Abels 2008). This strategy of de-escalation through a careful balancing of negotiation, tolerance, police authorities employed similar strategies and repression has been dubbed the "Dutch approach" although similar strategies were employed by police authorities in West Germany, Denmark, and Switzerland, who maintained international contacts (de Graaf 2013). Irrespective of the question of whether fears for violent escalation of squatter conflicts into terrorism were real, the above shows that this possibility was taken very seriously by authorities and had real-life policy consequences.

Much less attention has been paid to the strategies that squatters themselves developed to brake violent escalation. The de-escalation of squatter conflicts has mainly been explained sociologically through declining political opportunities, protest cycles (i.e., the rise and decline of the squatter movement), or internal movement dynamics (Koopmans 1995; de Ruyter 1986a; Owens 2009; Adang 1998). But as squatters met and lived together, they extensively debated activism and the risks of violent escalation. In doing so, they created narratives that established norms that put effective brakes on violent escalation. The following sections analyze how these narratives informed the squatters' militant action repertoires and the boundaries to legitimate use of force.

Anticipating Eviction and "Extreme Violence"

As dozens or even hundreds of houses were squatted in the "movement capitals" of Amsterdam, West Berlin, and Copenhagen, other cities, too, faced increased squatter activity. More often than not, squatted buildings were soon cleared, but if squatters were able to mobilize sufficient material, legal, and/or political support, they could command (temporary) legalization (Pruijt 2013; 2003). Only rarely did squatted houses remain contested for long periods and transform into symbols of squatter resistance. When this happened, however, squatter conflicts could give way to potentially lethal stalemates as activists fortified houses and prepared for a violent eviction. For days, weeks, or even months, squatters found themselves holed up together, imagining and discussing what would happen next, as at the Groote Keyser (located at Keizersgracht 242-252) in Amsterdam in 1979/1980 and the Hamburg Hafenstraße in November 1987. These cases reveal how autonomist squatters developed narratives that enabled and limited violent escalation.

The Groote Keyser consisted of six office buildings in the Amsterdam city center and was squatted in November 1978 (Duivenvoorden 2000; Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis 1996). When an eviction notice was issued in October 1979, hundreds of activists were mobilized to barricade the houses, install steel doors, weld the windows shut, and fill an "armory" with firecrackers, smoke bombs, and Molotov cocktails. As "rumors flew about" when the police would come to evict them (Adilkno 1994), a squatter remembers how, "at meetings and during informal conversations, we continuously spoke about the attack that was about to come" (Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis 1996: chapter 3). And even though the Groote Keyser squatters were never evicted, these conversations had real-life consequences. The pressure built among the squatters through their conversations was released in March 1980, when a squatter action in the nearby Vondelstraat led to extensive riots. A second squatter remembers that "We had already talked so much about violence in the context of the Groote Keyser that when Vondelstraat [riot] came, you were ready for it." (Wietsma et al. 1982: 90). Large groups of squatters fought the police off, using sticks and stones and forcing them to retreat from the Vondelstraat, which was subsequently barricaded.

A similar situation developed in the Hafenstraße in Hamburg, a complex of nine buildings that was squatted in 1981 and housed about a hundred squatters (For the history of the Hafenstraße conflict, see Lehne 1994; Borgstede, Küllmer, and Proemmel 2013; Herrmann 1987; Sichtermann and Sichtermann 2017). In 1983, the squatters acquired rent contracts for three years, but from December 1986 onwards, the houses were fully barricaded against threatened evictions. According to journalist Kai von Appen, "A war of the nerves started, which lasted several months" (Von Appen 2006: 21). Like the Groote Keyser, the Hafenstraße symbolized the squatters' struggle and defiance. In December 1986, 10,000 people demonstrated for the legalization of the squats. After negotiations failed, the city government decided on November 11, 1987, that the squatters would be evicted. In response, they barricaded the streets around the Hafenstraße and stated that they had to "fight for our survival" (*Hamburger Abendblatt* 1987b). After all, activists faced "armored vehicles, submachine guns, gas, and stun grenades" (*Hamburger Abendblatt* 1987a; 1987c). A squatter remembers that, although the houses had been barricaded with thirty steel doors, "The most important defense, however, consisted of ourselves" (*Hamburger Morgenpost* 2012). The squatters placed their bodies and lives on the line to retain the houses.

In interviews, press releases, and retrospective accounts, the Groote Keyser and Hafenstraße squatters conveyed their willingness to protect the houses to the death. In doing so, they primarily referred to their own deaths. A group of Amsterdam squatters remembers that at the Groote Keyser, "there were people who had decided to fight till the death" (Adilkno 1994: chapter 5). A Hafenstraße squatter described in retrospect how he and others had imagined the eviction would unfold: "We would have thrown Molotov-cocktails, but nothing that would kill an officer. From the police's side, however, we expected extreme violence," which could kill activists and start an "unpredictable chain-reaction" of retaliating squatter violence ("'Wir

Wollten Keine Toten Polizisten"' 2012). Another Hafenstraße activist reconstructed the squatters' expectations: "Of course, we would not have left the houses, and in the end they would have dragged us out—but the price would have been two or three lethal casualties. . . . We were terribly afraid. . . . But the other side was surely also scared, that a scenario would have unfolded that could form the basis for a guerrilla movement, this time with broad support" (Sichtermann and Sichtermann 2017: 146). A narrative had developed that legitimized and gave meaning to determined but ultimately futile squatter resistance by connecting the present to predicted future actions of the authorities and imagined responses from the squatters and placing them in a context of violence escalating into terrorism.

Many squatters envisioned themselves as potential martyrs, not potential murderers. Even if the violence that they considered using was potentially lethal, it was presented as self-defense and retaliation. Of course, narratives of fighting to the death were partly staged and dramatized. Amsterdam squatters, for example, invited journalists to see, photograph, and film their "armory." The resulting publicity served to pressure the authorities. The mayors of Amsterdam and Hamburg were so appalled by the prospect of squatters turning into martyrs that they ignored pressure to evict and legalized both squats ('"Sie Sind Das C in Der SPD"' 1987).

The squatters' narrated expectations of extreme violence, however, caused them to prepare severe countermeasures. Hafenstraße squatters stashed large amounts of benzene, placed harpoons on the roofs to avert attacks by helicopters, and even discussed throwing ovens from the roof in case of an eviction. "There were endless debates about how far one could go," one activist remembers (Sichtermann and Sichtermann 2017: 144). Groote Keyser squatters placed refrigerators on the roof and prepared for lethal casualties resulting from police violence in case of an eviction (Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis 1996). Individuals who noted that the throwing down of ovens or refrigerators could cause casualties on the other side were marginalized. When an Amsterdam squatter heard that Molotov cocktails "were actually going to be used" in case of an eviction, she decided to withdraw because she knew she could not dissuade others from such actions (Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis 1996: chapter 3).

By discussing and anticipating violent eviction, squatters developed narratives that enabled them to prepare countermeasures, both mentally and materially. These narratives, however, also limited squatter violence. Only if an eviction by ruthless and heavily armed security forces caused casualties would the extreme wrath of the squatters be unleashed. However, if these conditions were not met, the narrative collapsed, and counterviolence lost its rationale and legitimacy. The effects of such "short-circuits" between narrative anticipation and real-life situations can most effectively be analyzed by zooming in on squatters confronting police during riots, as will be done in the following section.

Riot Codes, Robots, and Policemen

To make themselves heard, autonomist squatters regularly mobilized to show supporters and opponents their Worthiness, Unity, Numbers, and Commitment (Tilly, Castañeda, and Wood 2020). While for many movements, the success of "WUNC-displays" is predicated on conducting them in an orderly and peaceful manner, autonomist squatters set themselves apart by their willingness to militantly confront the police and engage in "bargaining by riot" (Hobsbawm 2015: 58). While riots signaled the squatters' willingness to escalate political conflicts, such violent escalation had clear limits. Rioting squatters adhered to a specific set of rules, which the Amsterdam squatter collective Adilkno referred to as the "riot code" (Adilkno 1994: chapter 5). This code was never written down or formalized, but cases from the Netherlands and West Germany (discussed below) show just how broadly squatters accepted it. While the concept of contentious repertoires, which Charles Tilly defined as "a limited set of routines" for contending power, partially explains why squatter riots soon came to follow a certain script or scenario (Tilly 2005: 42),[4] the squatters' narratives need to be analyzed to understand how the ethics of squatter violence, the "riot code," was developed, articulated, and

communicated. Contentious repertoires, after all, are not simply routines but also expressions of activists' political beliefs and self-understanding. Within social movements, narratives act as the "forms of discourse, vehicles of ideology, and elements of collective action frames" (Polletta and Gardner 2015: 536).

Although images of squatter riots may suggest a high degree of spontaneity, they were often highly scripted events. Like the authorities, activists prepared for confrontations materially (i.e., by procuring helmets, clubs, and the like) and mentally. Before and after protest actions, activists would gather to discuss past events, process experiences, and prepare for what was to come. These discussions gave way to narratives of militancy that shaped both the activists' experiences and actions. In the case of the squatters, individual and shared memories and anticipations of clashes with the police worked together to imagine, prepare, and legitimate protesters' usage of specific kinds of violence.

Amsterdam squatters, for example, often explained and legitimized their militancy by referring to experiences of being helpless in the face of an overpowering and brute police force. A squatter film made of a violent eviction of peaceful protesters in 1978 had such an effect, as an activist remembers: "In the squatter circuit, the film soon became a focus of discussions, going in the direction of, "look, this shows that if you don't do anything, you'll get beaten, the riot squad comes in and you'll be blown away." Discussions went like, "We don't want that anymore, we must defend ourselves, and strategies were drawn up about how to do that" (Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis 1996: ch. 2). In defense of the Vondelstraat riots, a group of Amsterdam squatters recalled how a previous action had been broken up by "police robots" with clubs and drawn pistols, who punched and kicked subdued squatters—something that the squatters would not willingly tolerate a second time (Babeliowsky and Bodoni 1980: 2).

In squatter posters, cartoons, and graffiti, riot police were regularly depicted as gestalt-like beings, their essences reduced to their armor and weaponry, while activists were often portrayed as opposing them in an isolated and vulnerable manner—alone and unprotected, defiant but ultimately defenseless.[5] Posters visually conveyed similar attitudes towards heavily armed police. The police's robot-like nature and alleged invulnerability in the face of righteous and "innocent" squatter resistance became key elements of the Amsterdam squatters' narrative and practice. When an Amsterdam squatter threw a stone at an officer during a riot in 1980, it confirmed this mental image: "He only shook his head briefly, as if a tennis ball had hit him. I believed that they were so well protected that it was almost impossible to hurt them" (Duivenvoorden 2005a: 104).

Extensive reflections and discussions produced a "riot code," which held that squatters could use "honest means" (i.e., sticks and stones) against policemen who seemed near-invulnerable (Adilkno 1994: chapter 5). When reality did not live up to activists' expectations, it deprived militancy of its rationale and could even lead to mental short-circuiting among activists. When an Amsterdam squatter threw a stone and hit a police officer "right in the face" to make him stagger on his feet, the squatter was so shocked by this unexpected effect that he had to withdraw from the confrontation (Niemantsverdriet 2020). When, during the Coronation Riots of April 30, 1980, a police officer fell off his horse, squatters ceased rioting, helped him back on his horse, and gave him free passage back to his colleagues. Only after the officer had rejoined his colleagues and "normality" restored did the riot recommence (Duivenvoorden 2005a; De Gee 2008; Willems 2011).

Of course, this and similar instances do not turn the autonomist squatters into innocent activists; the Coronation Riots rank among the heaviest episodes of postwar unrest, causing 7.5 million guilders' worth of damage and leaving a hundred policemen and many more protesters injured.[6] What is significant, however, is that Amsterdam squatters retold the story of the police officer and his horse time and again in interviews, pamphlets, and letters to international squatter magazines (Babeliowsky 1980; Zwaap 1997; *Große Freiheit* 1980). They did so partly to argue to the broader public that they were not simply hooligans, but conscientious activists.

Their retelling of the story in (international) movement media, however, also functioned to reaffirm among activists the norms and ethics of rioting.

The retelling of events took the form of a narrative. In a 2008 retrospective, a former squatter reconstructed how events unfolded: "The man falls off his horse and there was an atmosphere like, 'We've got you.' [But then] we felt sorry for him, so we helped him back on his horse; and while we sang "Ivanhoe, Ivanhoe," he was reunited with his group" (de Gee 2008). Another squatter recounted the same events in a 1997 interview, driving the point home: "You'd think, 'This is the end for this poor man.' But the squatters simply got him back in his saddle. We weren't bad people" (Zwaap 1997). When, in 1980, a squatter reconstructed events for the Hamburg autonomist magazine *Große Freiheit*, he used the same format, concluding: "Looking back, I believe we did the right thing. Too bad that we did not write "M.E. weg ermee" [down with the police] on his helmet before giving it back" (*Große Freiheit* 1980).

Cases from abroad suggest that autonomist activists embraced this norm internationally, for example, in and around Hamburg. In that region, autonomists actively squatted but also mobilized against the construction of the Brokdorf nuclear power plant and right-wing extremism. These causes mobilized broad-based popular movements, within which autonomists formed a radical wing. During demonstrations and marches, the latter often formed a "black bloc," adding militant action repertoires to mostly peaceful demonstrations, marches, and blockades. When confrontations or riots ensued during such mobilizations, they were often discussed and evaluated within autonomist circles, including in their own media. Two examples reveal similar norms and ethics regarding rioting.

During a mass demonstration against the Brokdorf power plant in 1981, riots ensued, and a police officer slipped and fell into a ditch. Two protesters hit the police officer on his helmet repeatedly, after which others intervened and formed a human shield, dragged the officer out of the ditch, and took him to the protesters' first aid station (Bürgerinitiative Umweltschutz Unterelbe 1981; Strothman 1998). Two years later, at an antifascist demonstration in Fallingbostel, also near Hamburg, events unfolded in a similar way when riots occurred at the end of the demonstration, with a central role for militant and autonomist activists. When a riot police officer was isolated from his colleagues and surrounded, he was disarmed in a way similar to the treatment of the Amsterdam police officer but also beaten. An autonomist activist remembers, "We took everything from him: his helmet, shield, club, pistol. The helmet was destroyed and one guy could not help but hit the officer one time" (Langer 2004: 64). Again, others stepped in, defended the officer, and attended to his wound (*1.10.83 Kampf gegen den NPD Parteitag in Fallingbostel* 1983).

Although autonomists formed only a small section of the protesters in both cases, the riot scenes reveal dynamics similar to those in Amsterdam, with protesters showing a certain amount of restraint in their use of force and fellow activists intervening on behalf of police officers' well-being. Both cases were also discussed among autonomist activists, for example, in the materials produced by the solidarity committee for the two Brokdorf protesters (*Prozessinfo zu den Brokdorfprozessen* 1981-1982), who were later arrested and charged, and the press releases of autonomist antifascists in 1983 (Antifaschistische Gruppen Göttingen, Eichsfeld, Bad Laufenberg 1983). In both cases, activists used narratives similar to those of the Amsterdam squatters, emphasizing the violence of heavily armed police against which the protesters had defended themselves, the limited use of force employed against defenseless officers, and, ultimately, how they had cared for such officers. The impact of beating officers on the head with clubs, however, was often ignored or downplayed in these narratives.

Although the two incidents show strong similarities with the Amsterdam events, they had very different afterlives. The Brokdorf officer suffered a concussion, but the police nevertheless charged two protesters with attempted murder (*Die Zeit* 1982a; *Die Zeit* 1982b). Attempts by the police to identify the Fallingbostel activist failed but caused strife among activist groups about how to respond to the police investigation (Langer 2004; Schöppner 2015). While the Amsterdam incident became a symbol of the limits of squatter violence and the potential for

fraternization between squatters and police, the two Hamburg cases served only to widen the gap between them.

In discussing upcoming protest actions, squatters debated their own deaths, as they did when anticipating evictions. According to the Adilkno collective, activists regularly discussed what would happen should a protester be killed. In that case, "something massive" would happen, and proportional means of response would include Molotov cocktails and even guns. According to the collective, activists echoed the RAF statement, "If we're shot at, we'll shoot back" (Adilkno 1994: chapter 5). But when activists were confronted with the reality of lethal casualties,[7] they shied away from doing exactly that. Although squatters organized militant demonstrations, vandalized shopping centers, and firebombed government offices and warehouses, they limited themselves to rioting and property damage. Perhaps the knowledge of how the RAF had emerged limited the squatters' use of force. In 1982, an Amsterdam female squatter reflected, "When I read the history of the RAF or the hunger strikes in Ireland, I recognize myself in it: character, ideas, actions, political thinking—and it scares me. Like, shit that's me, and I don't want that. It's not worth it" (Wietsma et al. 1982: 14). She concluded that at various moments, she needed to pause and reflect on her attitude, actions, and ideas. Talking about violent escalation thus not only made escalation possible but also restricted it.

Even so, these boundaries were occasionally tested and even crossed. In the wake of Hans Kok's death, for example, Amsterdam squatters published the names and addresses of the officials whom they held responsible. Such actions elicited direct attacks against government functionaries and were controversial even among radical activists (Luchteling 1997). They raised the question of if and how activists could prevent or sanction fellow activists' transgressions of the riot code. The following section discusses squatters' narrative strategies to respond to or limit transgressive actions.

Sabotage Actions, Transgressions, and the Limits of Narrative Power

During the 1980s, sabotage actions by squatters, mainly arson attacks, became more prominent. In part, the turn to clandestine actions was driven by the increased ability of police to control demonstrations and riots. In October 1980, Amsterdam plainclothes officers led a militant demonstration towards a police station, where the protesters were surrounded and 163 of them arrested (Duivenvoorden 2005a). In June 1986, Hamburg police kettled more than 800 protesters for more than twelve hours (Von Appen 2016). An Amsterdam squatter concluded that "the time of great riots is over" and proposed instead to "execute actions in small groups of people who know each other" (Wietsma et al. 1982: 36). By 1985, such acts of sabotage had become so common that the West German squatter magazine *Radikal* jokingly published a standardized form with which activists could claim their actions; they only had to fill in the name of their group and their target and could subsequently check boxes for the reasons and ways they had struck (Manns and Treusch 1987). The "form" pointed to a central aspect of sabotage actions: communication. Acts of political violence can be interpreted as forms of communication (Bulst, Gilcher-Holtey, and Haupt 2008). Also, sabotage groups wanted to explain their actions and gather support, leading supporters and opponents within the movement to respond. Three cases show how squatters discussed sabotage actions, developed norms for this action form, and developed narrative strategies to delegitimize and limit violent escalation.

A central tenet of squatter sabotage actions was that they would incur property damage without risking human harm. If this failed, it often led activists to apologize extensively. When an Amsterdam group called RAM (Revolutionaire Afbraak Maatschappij: Revolutionary Demolition Society) claimed an arson attack with Molotov cocktails on a construction firm in July 1982, it stated that "under no circumstance, not even by accident" were they willing to "risk inflicting bodily harm to persons" (*Bluf!* 1982h; *Bluf!* 1982f).

In December 1986, a group placed incendiaries in twenty Hamburg warehouses to express their "practical solidarity with the people of the Hafenstraße" (*Tageszeitung* 1986; *Tageszeitung* 1987b). The incendiaries were set to go off on Sunday and cause smoldering fires that would

set off the sprinklers, which would, in turn, cause most of the damage. However, after seven places were hit, incendiaries continued to ignite on Monday and Tuesday. The group made a public apology, "because our sabotage must be so safe, that nobody can be brought to danger" (*Tageszeitung* 1987a).

When a group failed to adhere to these norms, criticism, denunciation, and even ridicule were employed to rein in fellow activists. In July 1982, the Militant Autonomen Front (MAF) in Amsterdam set off explosives in front of the Municipal Rehousing Agency and the national office of the Dutch Labor Party, declared "war" on the government, and stated that they would use firearms to protect the Lucky Luyk squat from eviction (*Bluf!* 1982l; *Bluf!* 1982k; *Bluf!* 1982j; *Bluf!* 1982g). The actions led to furious responses in Amsterdam's squatter weekly *Bluf!*, as well as from the Luyk squatters, who stated that MAF's actions had "completely delegitimized" their struggle (*Bluf!* 1982a; *Bluf!* 1982d; *Bluf!* 1982b; *Bluf!* 1982m). MAF, however, was not only criticized but also ridiculed. When a journalist from the respectable *Haagse Post* showed interest in MAF, *Bluf!* editors posed as members and gave a mock interview. The interview broke as a cover story, but that same week, *Bluf!* debunked the *Haagse Post*, ridiculing the magazine and the MAF (Duivenvoorden 2000). The group was not heard from again.

Narratives, however, could not always prevent or neutralize violent transgressions. The limits of the power of narratives to control violent escalation were revealed in March 1986, when a protest action near the Dutch city of Utrecht left an opponent maimed, and in November 1987, when during a demonstration near Frankfurt am Main an activist drew a gun and killed two policemen. The activists' inability to prevent such extreme transgressions of the movement's norms or to retroactively give meaning to these tragedies left activists frustrated, traumatized, or even caused them to disengage from the movement altogether.[8]

When autonomist squatters and militant antifascists heard that members of the anti-immigrant Centre movement would convene on March 29, 1986, in a hotel in Kedichem near Utrecht, they mobilized from various cities to disrupt the meeting. As in Hamburg, Dutch autonomist squatters were active in various movements, including the antifascist movement, and, as if to prove this point, they gathered in various Utrecht squats to prepare for their action. Upon their arrival in Kedichem, they surrounded the hotel, smashed windows, and threw smoke bombs inside. Autonomist squatters and antifascists had organized similar actions before, but this time, the hotel caught fire and burned down completely. In trying to escape, a female member of the Centre party jumped out of a window and was injured so seriously that her leg had to be amputated (de Vetten 2020; Adilkno 1994; Duivenvoorden 2000: ; Luchteling 1997). Activists were horrified. One of them remembers throwing away his helmet and club and fleeing the scene, thinking, "I want to have nothing to do with this" (de Vetten 2020: 52). In the following weeks, activists internally expressed their anger at the organizers, but only one group stated explicitly that "a line has been crossed" (de Vetten 2020: 61-64). Squatters feared that denouncing the action would play into the hands of the "fascists." Left without a narrative to capture, explain, and give meaning to this tragic incident, activists were faced with the choice to disengage or ignore and repress memories of the incident.

Similar dynamics unfolded in Frankfurt one and a half years later. There, a broad movement—including radical and autonomist groups—had protested the construction of a new runway at Frankfurt Airport. On November 2, 1987, during a large demonstration, an autonomist activist drew a gun and killed two policemen. Many autonomists recoiled in horror. They had developed scenarios in case a protestor was killed, but not if a fellow activist turned into a murderer. As the self-image of the autonomist movement was undermined, many disengaged and even cooperated in the police investigation, a very controversial step in a movement that considered itself anti-state (Wetzel 2008; Geronimo 2002; Schwarzmeier 2000). Remaining activists devised a narrative to dissuade others from making statements to the police, arguing that the goal of the police was not to investigate the murders but to suppress the movement altogether (Geronimo 2002; Bunte Hilfe Frankfurt 1989; Diederich 1987). This alternative narrative, however, gained only limited traction among the activist community.

While the cases of RAM, the Hamburg firebombings, and MAF show the power of narratives to regulate and even limit violent escalation, the cases from Kedichem and Frankfurt reveal their limits. Autonomist squatters had collectively ignored scenarios in which they or fellow activists turned into perpetrators of extreme violence. They had failed to discuss it extensively, let alone create narratives to prevent or deal with it. Facing unexpected situations without proper narratives left them with the options of hastily developing inadequate narratives, repressing painful memories, or disengaging altogether.

Although such cases of extreme violence remained the exception, and there are no other known cases of autonomist squatters shooting guns at police officers, they did mark the movement's decline. Violent transgressions and inadequate narratives marked the demise of the 1980s autonomist squatter movement. The Frankfurt movement never recovered from the police repression and mass disengagement that followed the shootings of November 2, 1987, while the Kedichem incident formed another step in increasing internal conflict in Amsterdam, which resulted in a "movement war" and the hospitalization of several leading squatters in 1987.

CONCLUSION

Militancy and violent confrontation played a central role in the rise, development, and decline of the 1980s autonomist squatter movement. Although activists acknowledged that the movement's strength depended on its ability to forcefully resist the authorities, there was also an acute awareness among many that violence could easily escalate into a lethal spiral. Violent escalation, however, was not something that activists had no control over. This article demonstrates how activists discussed violence and thus developed narratives that both enabled and limited violent escalation.

The ways in which activists discussed violent events and turned them into "stories" were not a speculative endeavor; rather, they had real-life consequences. As Benford has stated, narratives form "internal social control mechanisms" by establishing norms, scripting actions, correcting deviant behavior, and excluding transgressors (2002). Wahlström, additionally, has stated that narratives enable "ongoing learning processes" within social movements (2011). Narratives enabled activists to process past events, control present situations, and anticipate future clashes—to learn from the past and chart a path forward.

In the 1960s in West Germany, when protesters clashed heavily with police and a protester was even killed, some responded by creating narratives of violently avenging fallen comrades (Varon 2004). In the Netherlands, small radical groups emerging from the 1960s protest movements also attempted to form armed-struggle groups (Eikelenboom 2005). The same happened in the aftermath of the 1977 protest wave in Italy (Kraatz 1981; Weltz-Rombach and Pichler 2004). In West Germany and Italy, the decline of protest movements gave rise to radicalized and lethal armed factions (della Porta 1995). This, however, did not happen within the 1980s autonomist squatter movement. Interviews with Amsterdam squatters show that they actively reflected on past escalations in order to limit processes of violent radicalization. It illustrates how movements learn from predecessors, by reflecting (and talking) about past protests. Responding to research that has focused on the authorities' role in de-escalating conflicts and violent activism, this article demonstrates how social movement narratives can enable and limit violent escalation.

Movements are not monolithic. Their strategies and tactics are continuously questioned and debated by their various component groups and factions. This research has analyzed dominant movement narratives that enabled and limited violent escalation and revealed some instances where these worked to marginalize alternative narratives, as in the case of the Groote Keyser and the MAF. One of the things that we do not understand yet is how and why certain narratives become dominant within movements while others are marginalized (Owens 2009).

A possible explanation may be the extent to which narratives are drawn from or picked up by more mainstream media and thus validated.

Narratives assume a beginning, a conflict, and its resolution. They not only drive social movements but also offer source material for scholars reconstructing movement histories. They, however, also limit the number of stories that can be told and the ways in which they can be told. The Amsterdam and Hafenstraße squatters' actions are remembered as conflicts with "happy" (i.e., ultimately peaceful) endings in popular and most of the scholarly literature, while the history of the Frankfurt squatters is still to be written. In this way, narratives enable and confine the agency not only of activists but also of the scholars studying them.

NOTES

[1] The changing names also reflected changing political opportunities for the activists. In West Germany and Switzerland, squatting was effectively repressed after the early 1980s, while in Denmark and the Netherlands, squatting remained a viable action form. While West German activists assumed the name of autonomists, the term squatter (*besaetter* and *kraker*) remained dominant in Denmark and the Netherlands. Despite different names, the movements were linked by their political programs and action repertoires and maintained international ties. See Van der Steen, Katzeff, and Hoogenhuijze 2014a: 3; Katsiaficas 2006; Van der Steen 2015.

[2] Interviews and self-descriptions were taken from: (Borgstede, Küllmer, and Proemmel 2013; Herrmann 1987; *Hafenstrasse Bleibt! Pressespiegel* 1987; '"Wir Wollten Keine Toten Polizisten"' 2012; *Hamburger Morgenpost* 2012; *Der Spiegel* 2008; Nord Deutsche Rundfunk 2019; Deutschlandradio 2012)

[3] The ID-Archiv spans sixteen meters and is located at the International Institute for Social History in Amsterdam. Interviews and ego-documents on West German squatter history that have been used for this research include *(Der Stand der Bewegung* 1995; Grauwacke 2020; Langer 2004).

[4] Tarrow adds that the concept explains not only "what people do when they are engaged in conflict with others but what they know *how to do* and what others *expect* them to do." (Tarrow 1998: 30).

[5] A telling example stems from the Dutch city of Nijmegen, where squatters barricaded a street with squatted houses for a week before tanks were deployed to evict them. Squatters painted murals of riot police throughout the city. By 2006, only one remained and was dubbed a city monument. (Sligter 2006; van Zelst 2020). Dutch squatter posters can be viewed at: http://www.iisg.nl/staatsarchief/affiches/index.php. German squatter posters can be viewed at: http://plakat.nadir.org. See also: (HKS 13 1999; 2001; Duivenvoorden 2005b)

[6] The numbers of wounded are still contested. The Dutch national broadcasting association (Nationale Omroep Stichting, NOS). Recently spoke of "about" 100 wounded civilians and 93 police officers (Nationale Omroep Stichting 2010), while documentary makers (Willems 2011) counted 106 wounded officers and 163 civilians. Journalist (Marlet 2013) estimated the number of wounded at "200 officers and 400 civilians."

[7] Protesters died during confrontations with the police in Berlin (Klaus-Jürgen Rattay, September 1981) and Frankfurt am Main (Günther Sare, September 1985) and in police custody in Amsterdam (Hans Kok, October 1985). See: (Haberbusch 1981; Kallenbach and Ditfurth 1985; den Uyl 1991).

[8] Joel Busher, Donald Holbrook, and Graham Macklin have argued that when the boundaries of "acceptable" use of force are crossed, this can "undermine some activists" sense of their collective identity, leading to disappointment, disillusionment or even disgust."(Busher, Holbrook, and Macklin 2019).

REFERENCES

Antifaschistische Gruppen Göttingen, Eichsfeld, Bad Laufenberg. *1.10.83 Kampf gegen den NPD Parteitag in Fallingbostel: Einschätzung und Presse*. 1983.

Abels, Paul. 2008. '"Je wilt niet geloven dat zoiets in Nederland kan!': Het Nederlandse contra-terrorismebeleid sinds 1973." Pp. 121-28 in *Terroristen en hun Bestrijders: Vroeger en Nu*, edited by Beatrice de Graaf and Isabel Duyvesteyn. Amsterdam: Boom.

Adang, Otto. 1998. *Hooligans, autonomen, agenten: Geweld en politie-optreden in rel-situaties*. Alphen aan de Rijn: Samsom.

Adilkno (Foundation for Advancement of Illegal Knowledge). 1994. *Cracking the Movement: Squatting beyond the Media*. Brooklyn, NY: Autonomedia.

Anders, Freia, and Alexander Sedlmaier (eds.). 2018. *Public Goods versus Economic Interests: Global Perspectives on the History of Squatting*. London: Routledge.

Andresen, Knud. 2020. "Memories of Being Punk in West Germany: Personal and Shared Recollections in Life Stories." Pp. 197-214 in *Researching Subcultures, Myth and Memory*, edited by Bart van der Steen and Thierry P.F. Verburgh. Cham: Springer International Publishing.
Aust, Stefan 2008. *Der Baader Meinhof Komplex*. Hamburg: Goldmann.
Babeliowsky, Paul. 1980. *Het feest dat Wiegel wilde: 30 april 1980*. Wageningen: De Uitbuyt.
Babeliowsky, Paul, and Paul Bodoni. 1980. *Even geduld, deze straat is gekraakt: Vondelstraat februari, maart 1980*. Amsterdam: Lont.
Benford, Robert D. 2002. "Controlling Narratives and Narratives as Control within Social Movements." Pp. 53-75 in *Stories of Change: Narrative and Social Movements*, edited by Joseph E. Davis. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
Bluf! 1982a. "Aan MAF", July 1, 1982.
———. 1982b. "Autonomenfront sodemieter op", August 5, 1982.
———. 1982c. "Bommen in beweging", August 12, 1982.
———. 1982d. "De harde lijn ter discussie", July 15, 1982.
———. 1982e. "Geweld", July 15, 1982.
———. 1982f. "RAM aan Bluf!, Vrije Keizer en Stad", July 8, 1982.
———. 1982g. "Uitleg n.a.v. kritiek op voorgaande verklaringen", July 15, 1982.
———. 1982h. "Utoperatie No. 1", July 8, 1982.
———. 1982i. "Various Short Reactions", July 8, 1982.
———. 1982j. "Verklaring van het MAF [Bomb at Municipal Rehousing Agency]", July 8, 1982.
———. 1982k. "Verklaring van het MAF [Fake Bomb at Pan-Am Office Amsterdam]", June 25, 1982.
———. 1982l. "Verklaring van het Militant Autonomen Front", August 5, 1982.
———. 1982m. "Wees radicaal, verzet je tegen MAF-bom", August 5, 1982.
Borgstede, Simone, Hella Küllmer, and Erdmann Proemmel, eds. 2013. *Wir Wollen Alles: Hausbesetzungen in Hamburg*. Hamburg: Laika.
Bulst, Neithard, Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, eds. 2008. *Gewalt im politischen Raum: Fallanalysen vom Spätmittelalter bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*. Frankfurt: Campus.
Bunte Hilfe Frankfurt. 1989. *Startbahn-West, "... wir hatten ja zwei Morde aufzuklären..." Dokumentation zu den Folgen des 2.11.87*. Frankfurt am Main.
Bürgerinitiative Umweltschutz Unterelbe. 1981. *Brokdorf 28.2.81 Berichte - Bilanz - Perspektiven*.
Busher, Joel, Donald Holbrook, and Graham Macklin. 2019. "The Internal Brakes on Violent Escalation: A Typology." *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression* 11(1): 3–25. http://www.iisg.nl/staatsarchief/publicaties/destad/index.php.
da Silva, Raquel, and Anna Sofia Ferreira. 2020. "From the Armed Struggle against the Dictatorship to the Socialist Revolution: The Narrative Restraints to Lethal Violence among Radical Left Organisations in Portugal." *Perspectives on Terrorism (Lowell)* 14(6): 139–51.
de Gee, Jelle (dir.). *Vroeger in Mokum. De Slag Om de Blauwbrug*. 2008; Amsterdam: Parool. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=65icombpmdM.
De Stad Was van Ons. 1996. Directed by Joost, Seelen. Zuidenwind Filmproductions
de Graaf, Beatrice. 2013. *Evaluating Counterterrorism Performance: A Comparative Study*. London: Routledge.
de Liagre Böhl, Herman. 2010. *Amsterdam op de helling: De strijd om stadsvernieuwing*. Amsterdam: Boom.
de Ruyter, Dick. 1986a. *Een baksteen als bewustzijn: De geweldskultuur van de kraakbeweging*. Den Bosch.
———. 1986b. "Het onbehagen in de subcultuur." *Marge* 10(1): 1, 12-16.
de Vetten, Jan. 2020. *De aanslag van Kedichem: 29 maart 1986*. Leiden.
della Porta, Donatella. 1995. *Social Movements, Political Violence, and the State: A Comparative Analysis of Italy and Germany*. Cambridge: University Press.
Dekkers, Frans and Daan Dijksman. 1988. *'n Hollandse stadsguerilla. Terugblik op de Rode Jeugd*. Amsterdam: Balans.
den Uyl, Barbara. 1991. *In naam der wet: een gedetailleerde reconstructie van de gebeurtenissen rond de dood van Hans Kok*. Amsterdam: Van der Hoop Filmprodukties.
Der Stand der Bewegung: 18 Gespräche über linksradikale Politik: Lesebuch zum Autonomie-Kongress Ostern 1995. 1995. Berlin: Kongresslesebuch-Gruppe.
Deutschlandradio. 2012. "30 Jahre Hamburger Hafenstraße." (Thirty Years of Hamburg's Hafenstraße), 2012. https://web.archive.org/web/20131020183501/http:/www.dradio.de/download/155628.

Die Zeit. 1982a. "Bürgerkriegs-Justiz" May 21, 1982.
———. 1982b. "Enormes Strafmass" May 7, 1982.
Diederich, Axel (eds.). 1987. *2.11.87... : Berichte, Stellungnahmen, Diskussionen zu den Schüssen an der Startbahn West*. Amsterdam: ID Archiv.
Duivenvoorden, Eric. 2000. *Een voet tussen de deur: Geschiedenis van de kraakbeweging, 1964-1999*. Amsterdam: Arbeiderspers.
———. 2005a. *Het Kroningsoproer: (30 april 1980): Reconstructie van een historisch keerpunt*. Amsterdam: De Arbeiderspers.
———. 2005b. *Met emmer en kwast: Veertig jaar Nederlandse actieaffiches 1965-2005*. Amsterdam: Het Fort van Sjakoo.
Eikelenboom, Siem. 2005. *Niet bang om te sterven: Dertig jaar terrorisme in Nederland*. Amsterdam: Nieuw Amsterdam.
Figgou, Lia and Vassilis Pavlopoulos. 2015. "Social Psychology: Research Methods." Pp. 544-552 in *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, edited by James D. Wright. Amsterdam: Elsevier.
Fijnaut, Cyrille. 2008. *A History of the Dutch Police*. Amsterdam: Boom.
Fine, Gary A. 2002. "The Storied Group: Social Movements as 'Bundles of Narratives'" Pp. 229-45 in *Stories of Change: Narratives of Social Movements*, edited by Joseph E Davis. Albany: SUNY Press.
Friedrichs, Jan-Henrik. 2013. *Urban Spaces of Deviance and Rebellion: Youth, Squatted Houses and the Heroin Scene in West Germany and Switzerland in the 1970s and 1980s.* Vancouver: University of British Columbia.
Geronimo. 2002. *Feuer und Flamme. Zur Geschichte der Autonomen*. Berlin: ID Verlag.
Graef, Josefin, Raquel da Silva, and Nicolas Lemay-Hebert. 2020. "Narrative, Political Violence, and Social Change." *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 43(6): 431–43.
Grauwacke, A.G. 2020. *Autonome in Bewegung in den ersten 23 Jahren*. Berlin: Verlag Libertäre Assoziation.
Große Freiheit. 1980. "Beatrix is ook nix," June 1980.
Haagse Post. 1981. "De politie en de rellen," March 21, 1981.
Haberbusch, Kuno (eds.). 1981. *'Berliner Linie' gegen Instandbesetzer: die 'Vernunft' schlägt immer wieder zu!: Dokumentation der Ereignisse vom 3.2.'79 bis zum 11.8.'81*. Berlin.
Hafenstrasse Bleibt! Pressespiegel. 1987. Hamburg.
Hamburger Abendblatt. 1987a. "Hafenstraße: Gerüstet, Militant und Motiviert," October 31, 1987.
———. 1987b. "Kriegserklärung der Bewohner," November 12, 1987.
———. 1987c. '"Noch Einmal Alle Kräfte Konzentrieren,"' October 30, 1987.
Hamburger Morgenpost. 2012. '"Hier Spricht Ein Ehemaliger Hausbesetzer!,"' November 7, 2012.
Haunss, Sebastian. 2004. *Identität in Bewegung: Prozesse kollektiver Identität bei den Autonomen und in der Schwulenbewegung*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
Herrmann, Michael. 1987. *Hafenstrasse: Chronik und Analysen eines Konflikts*. Hamburg: Verlag am Galgenberg.
HKS 13. 1999. *Hoch die Kampf dem: 20 Jahre Plakate autonomer Bewegungen*. Hamburg: Verlag Libertäre Assoziation.
———. 2001. *Vorwärts bis zum nieder mit: 30 Jahre Plakate unkontrollierter Bewegungen*. Hamburg: Verlag Libertäre Assoziation.
Hobsbawm, Eric J. 2015. *Labouring Men: Studies in the History of Labour*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
Hofland, H. J. A. 1981. *De stadsoorlog: Amsterdam '80*. Alphen aan den Rijn: Sijthoff.
Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis**.** 1996. "De stad was van ons: 28 voormalige kraaksters en krakers aan het woord over de geschiedenis van de Amsterdamse kraakbeweging" . Amsterdam: International Insitute for Social History.
Kadir, Nazima. 2016. *The Autonomous Life?: Paradoxes of Hierarchy and Authority in the Squatters Movement in Amsterdam*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
Kallenbach, Klaus and Jutta Ditfurth, eds. 1985. *Günther Sare Ermordet in Frankfurt: Die Polizeistaat in Aktion: Pressespiegel Vom 30.9. - 3.10.1985*. Bonn.
Katsiaficas, George. 2006. *The Subversion of Politics. European Autonomous Social Movements and the Decolonization of Everyday Life*. Oakland: AK Press.
Koopmans, Ruud. 1995. *Democracy from below: New Social Movements and the Political System in West Germany*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

Kraatz, Birgit. 1981. “Der Traum vom Paradies. Über die Stadtindianer und Autonomia in Italien.” Pp. 35-47 in *Aussteigen oder Rebellieren: Jugendliche gegen Staat und Gesellschaft*, edited by Michael Haller, Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt.
Langer, Bernd. 2004. *Die Operation 1653: Stay Rude - Stay Rebell*. Berlin: Plättner.
Lehne, Werner. 1994. *Der Konflikt um die Hafenstrasse: Kriminalitätsdiskurse im Kontext symbolischer Politik*. Pfaffenweiler: Centaurus.
Lovink, Geert, and Jo van der Spek. 1986. “Buikdansen op de barrikade.” *Marge* 10(1): 22–29.
Luchteling, Victor. 1997. *Axie!: Herinneringen uit de Amsterdamse kraakbeweging*. Amsterdam: Contact.
Macklin, Graham David. 2020. “The Internal Brakes on Violent Escalation within the British Extreme Right in the 1990s.” *Perspectives on Terrorism (Lowell)* 14(6): 49–64.
Maines, David R. 1993. “Narrative’s moment and sociology’s phenomena: Toward a narrative sociology.” *The Sociological Quarterly* 34(1): 17–38.
Manns, Haide and Wolf-Sören. Treusch. 1987. ‘“Hau Weg die Scheiße.’ Autonomer Widerstand in der Bundesrepublik.” *Vorgänge* 26(1): 65–74.
Marlet, George. 2013. ‘“Dit is niet normaal: Dit is een oorlog.”’ *Trouw*, April 17, 2013.
Moussault, Paul and Jan Lust. 2009. *Rood Verzetsfront. Aanzetten tot stadsguerrilla in Nederland. Een reconstructive.* Breda: Papieren Tijger.
Nationale Omroep Stichting. 2010. “Inhuldiging en rellen op 30 april 1980.” October 14, 2010. https://nos.nl/artikel/192810-inhuldiging-en-rellen-op-30-april-1980.html.
Niemantsverdriet, Thijs. 2020. “Veertig jaar nadat de tanks door de straten rolden, blikken een kraker en agent terug,” *NRC Handelsblad*, March 2, 2020.
Nord Deutsche Rundfunk. 2019. “Der Kampf um die Hafenstraße.” December 5, 2019. Last accessed August 5, 2024 https://www.ndr.de/geschichte/schauplaetze/Hamburgs-Hafenstrasse-Chronologie-eines-Konflikts,hafenstrasse153.html
Owens, Lynn. 2008. “What We Talk about when We Talk about Decline: Competing Narratives in the Amsterdam Squatters’ Movement.” *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change* 28: 239-271.
———. 2009. *Cracking under Pressure: Narrating the Decline of the Amsterdam Squatters’ Movement*. Solidarity and Identity. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
Pekelder, Jacco. 2007. *Sympathie voor de RAF. De Rote Armee Fraktion in Nederland, 1970-1980.* Amsterdam: Mets en Schilt.
———. 2009 “Dynamiken des Terrorismus in Deutschland und den Niederlanden.” *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 35(3): 402-428.
Peters, Butz. 2004. *Tödlicher Irrtum: Die Geschichte der RAF*. Berlin: Fischer.
Polletta, Francesca, and Beth Gharrity Gardner. 2015. “Narrative and Social Movements.” Pp. 534-538 in *The Oxford Handbook of Social Movements,* edited by Donatella della Porta and Mario Diani. New York: Oxford University Press.
Poppe, Ine and Sandra Rottenberg 2000. *De kraakgeneratie: 18 portretten van krakers uit de lichting 1955-1965*. Amsterdam: De Balie.
Prozessinfo zu den Brokdorfprozessen no. 1-7 [1981-1982].
Pruijt, Hans. 2003. “Is the Institutionalization of Urban Movements Inevitable? A Comparison of the Opportunities for Sustained Squatting in New York City and Amsterdam.” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 27(1): 133–57.
———. 2013. “The Logic of Urban Squatting: The Logic of Urban Squatting in Europe” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 37(1): 19–45.
Regiekollektiv Medienwerkstatt Freiburg. 1980. *Freiburg—Polizeiburg*.
Schöppner, Horst. 2015. *Antifa heißt Angriff: Militanter Antifaschismus in den 80er Jahren*. Münster: Unrast.
Schwarzmeier, Jan. 2000. *Die Autonomen zwischen Subkultur und sozialer Bewegung.* Weitramsdorf: Books on Demand.
Sichtermann, Barbara, and Kai Sichtermann. 2017. *Das ist unser Haus: Eine Geschichte der Hausbesetzung.* Berlin: Aufbau.
‘“Sie Sind Das C in Der SPD.”’ *Der Spiegel*. November 23, 1987.
Sligter, Anja. 2006. “Oorsprong superlinks Nijmegen ligt bij Piersonrellen” *De Volkskrant*. February 24, 2006.
Sonnleitner, Martin. 2008. “Die Zebras aus der Hafenstraße,” *Der Spiegel*, January 2, 2008.
Strothman, Dierk. 1998. *Hamburg Im 20. Jahrhundert*. Hamburg: Kabel Die Hanse, Hamburger Abendblatt.

Tageszeitung. 1986. "Brandanschläge auf Hamburger Geschäfte." December 23, 1986.
———. 1987a. "Dokumentation: Hamburger Brandsätze." January 2, 1987.
———. 1987b. "Fahndung Nach Kaufhauszündlern" December 24, 1987.
Tarrow, Sidney G. 1989. *Democracy and Disorder: Protest and Politics in Italy, 1965-1975*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
———. 1998. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Tilly, Charles. 2003. *The Politics of Collective Violence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
———. 2005. *Popular Contention in Great Britain, 1758-1834.* Boulder, CO: Paradigm.
———. 2015. *Contentious Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press.
Tilly, Charles, Ernesto Castañeda, and Lesley J. Wood. 2020. *Social Movements, 1768-2018*. New York: Routledge.
Turpijn, Jouke. 2011. *80's Dilemma : Nederland in de Jaren Tachtig*. Amsterdam: Bert Bakker.
van der Raad, Jan Willem. 1982. *Kraken in Amsterdam*. Amsterdam: Roelof Keller Stichting.
van der Steen, Bart. 2015. "Die internationalen Verbindungen der Hausbesetzerbewegung in den 70er und 80er Jahren." Pp. 203-220 in *Deutsche Zeitgeschichte—transnational*, edited by Alexander Gallus, Axel Schildt and Detlef Siegfried. Göttingen: Wallstein.
van der Steen, Bart, Ask Katzeff, and Leendert van Hoogenhuijze. 2014a. "Squatting and Autonomous Action in Europe, 1980–2012" Pp. 1-19 in *The City is Ours: Squatting and Autonomous Movements in Europe from the 1970s to the Present*. Oakland, CA: PM Press.
———. eds. 2014b. *The City is Ours Squatting and Autonomous Movements in Europe from the 1970s to the Present*. Oakland, CA: PM Press.
van Riel, Maarten van. 2010. *Zaterdagmiddagrevolutie. Portret van de Rode Jeugd*. Amsterdam: Boom.
van Zelst, Mirjam. 2020. "Piersonstraat: 'Als ik oud genoeg was geweest, had ik vast meegedaan aan de rellen,"' *De Gelderlander*, May 3, 2020.
Varon, Jeremy. 2004. *Bringing the War Home: The Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction, and Revolutionary Violence in the Sixties and Seventies*. Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press.
Vasudevan, Alex. 2017. *The Autonomous City: A History of Urban Squatting*. London; New York: Verso.
von Appen, Kai. 2006. "Mythos Hafenstraße." *Tageszeitung*, September 15, 2006.
———. 2016. "Im Kessel Gar Gekocht." *Tageszeitung*, June 8, 2016.
Wahlström, Mattias. 2011. "Taking Control or Losing Control? Activist Narratives of Provocation and Collective Violence." *Social Movement Studies* 10(4): 367–85.
Weltz-Rombach, Alexandra, dir. *Antonio Negri: A Revolt That Never Ends*. 2004.
Wetzel, Wolf. 2008. *Tödliche Schüsse: eine dokumentarische Erzählung*. Münster: Unrast.
Wietsma, Annegriet, Jan Vonk, Fike van der Burght, and José Melo. 1982. *Als je leven je lief is: Vraaggesprekken met krakers en kraaksters*. Amsterdam: Lont.
Willems, Erik. *Chaos rond de koningin.* 2011 Hilversum, NL: Andere Tijden. Last accessed August 5, 2024. Video available at https://www.anderetijden.nl/aflevering/199/Chaos-rond-de-koningin.
'"Wir Wollten Keine Toten Polizisten."' *Hamburger Morgenpost*. November 8, 2012.
Zwaap, René. 1997. "Helden Waren We." *De Groene Amsterdammer*, 15 01 1997.