Article

#Polarized: Gauging Potential Policy Bargaining Ranges Between Opposing Social Movements of Black Lives Matter and Police Lives Matter

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Abstract: (1) Background: Since the death of George Floyd, the social movement Black Lives Matter continues to dominate the American political psyche, not only advancing a public dialogue but also escalating the polarization of supported solutions for policing and systemic discrimination. (2) Methods: Using a qualitative context analysis approach, we assessed over 350 sources related to social justice literature and policy-relevant documents to identify key policy solutions supported by the American Black Lives Matter movement compared to the Blue Lives Matter movement. We applied Fearon's bargaining range of war model to analyze the extent to which the policy recommendations of these two opposing movements may overlap. The purpose was to identify and categorize agreement alternatives across various sectors. This research presents top policy solutions, assessing their bargaining ranges. (3) Results: 32 of the 36 top policy reform alternatives at the national level have sufficient bargaining ranges. This analysis indicates the importance of supporting various sectors like mental health/psychosocial policies and programs, which can (1) serve as a focal point of agreement between contending movements, and (2) decrease racial injustice through strategic bargaining. (4) Conclusions: In a divisively political landscape, it is crucial to identify starting points for negotiation among contending actors. Identifying bargaining opportunities can help seed a dialogue that may benefit all parties involved.

Keywords: conflict resolution; negotiation; social movement theory; racial discrimination; justice; policing; policy reform; bargaining; socio-political polarization; United States

1. Introduction

On 25 May 2020, a white American police officer, Derek Chauvin, killed George Floyd, a Black man. The officer knelt on Floyd's neck for ten minutes. This incident sparked widescale national protests. Half a decade later, the policy implications of this injustice continue to vitally inform social science research and real-world solutions to improving advocacy, policing, justice, and social equity. The number of wrongful deaths of people of color (POCs), particularly African Americans, by law enforcement represents only one statistic that is symbolic of 21st-century racial inequity and systemic discrimination in the United States. Black Americans are about 20 percent more likely to be pulled over by police while driving than white drivers (Pierson et al. 2020), and they are nearly three times more likely to be killed by police than white citizens). However, police assaults in the line of duty increased between 2019 and 2020, with the number of police deaths doubling in

2020–2021 compared to previous years (NLEOMF 2022; Urbina and Chaumont 2022). As violence between police and POC continues to flame social media, the gap between the social movement Black Lives Matter and its countermovement, Blue Lives Matter (also referred to as Police Lives Matter), is slowly becoming a tinderbox for political unrest. In this study, we use the following abbreviations: BLM for Black Lives Matter and PLM for Blue Lives Matter/Police Lives Matter. The intent of this study is not to validate the worthiness of one movement over the other. Instead, the purpose is to explore the potential in estimating the bargaining range between the opposing movements in relation to specific policy alternatives using Fearon's model as applied to preventing war (or in this case, full-out public confrontation and political fighting, both of which are costly to both movements in terms of public safety, protests, organizational resourcing, public support, public clashes with police, property damage, jail time, and lives).

The growing tension between these two movements pierces into the heart of the American political psyche, making it difficult to identify and implement policy options to remedy the problem. Both sides are deeply entrenched in their policy demands, which are often at odds. BLM is often under the impression that if they agree on a policy with PLM, police representatives will not follow that policy but instead be corrupt. The fight between these movements has resulted in escalating political rhetoric assaults, physical attacks, and even the murders of activists and law enforcement. All these problems amalgamate into a socio-political battle in which the means of negotiating a way forward may become more improbable the more that tensions rise.

The social movement literature often considers interdisciplinary theories within social sciences that try to understand the reasons behind social mobilization, the diverse ways that it can take shape, as well as the possible social, political, or cultural outcomes that may happen as a result. For instance, applications of relative deprivation theory can help highlight why individuals feel driven to join BLM or PLM. In other words, members of BLM may join out of a sense of inequality or the deprivation of equal justice. Consequently, such experiences that are often shared by other members undergoing the same obstacles may result in help-seeking behaviors and policy change expectations. At an institutional level, some institutions may have outworn being useful, especially those that have begun to inhibit people's chances of living to their full potential. As such, this can serve as a catalyst for those in society to fight for change and, unfortunately, can even lead to violence (Davies 2020; Gurr 2000; Orbell and Shay 2011).

Alternatively, new social movements theory contends that contemporary movements are different from those in the past. In place of labor movements advocating for the rights of the working classes, new movements—like Black Lives Matter—are more broadly engaged in socio-political conflicts (Inglehart 2018; Melucci 1989). In addition, Habermas (1991) contended that movements today target the public sphere differently, steadily using social media for discourse, rhetoric, and even misinformation to instigate social and political tensions and power forces (Carney 2016; Green 2021). Comparatively, a literature synthesis conducted for this research indicates that various social movement theories pull from peace and conflict scholarship, as well as from international relations. Yet, although most contemporary studies explore how these movements came to be, and for what purpose, less research attention addresses how bridges can be mended between opposing movements. This is an important line of inquiry, as race, victimization, and the conflict between Black Lives Matter and Police Lives Matter are often perceived as zero-sum games, in which one side's gains directly cause losses for the other (Stefaniak et al. 2020; Solomon and Martin 2019; Thomas and Drinnon 2021). The conflict between these two movements has large social costs, including (but not limited to) violent clashes in protests that can result in injuries and/or death, political polarization, looting, police union strikes, and property damage (Holbrook et al. 2022; Stevens 2021). As this scenario involves a zero-sum game and there are costs associated with this socio-political conflict, Fearon's model of war may be especially applicable.

Given that there are not currently any recent publications linking the politics around BLM and PLM to Fearon's *bargaining theory*, this study explores the potential of this theory on war to map bargaining opportunities for policymakers trying to find a policy solution(s) that both BLM and PLM can agree upon, as well as to identify and discuss policy alternatives which may hold negative bargaining utility. By adapting Fearon's bargaining model to create a theoretical framework, the current study allows for analyses of opportunities to mitigate policy stalemates between competing socio-political movements. Because political stalemates can advance tensions, as well as impede healthy policy processes that relieve social burdens, identifying bargaining opportunities between two opposing social movements is especially important for policymakers. As such, this paper explores the growing disparity between Black Lives Matter and Blue Lives Matter, followed by a summary of Fearon's original bargaining model. An adapted framework of his original model is presented, which theoretically analyzes the potential bargaining range between competing movements in relation to specific policy alternatives. As a result, the literature synthesis identified 35 top policy options, each of which uniquely addresses racial discrimination and justice in the United States. Importantly, however, as the quantitative analysis and case studies imply, each policy option yields different levels of positive and even negative utility when facilitating negotiations between BLM and PLM. Given this backdrop, this analysis highlights why some alternatives may ironically create further discord, while others may be what Simon (1985) might term a *satisficing* starting point to bridge the divide between polarized movements engaged in a socio-political battle.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Historical Background

In the last decade, public scrutiny of policing allegations of excessive force and systemic racism in law enforcement has brought the issue of racial justice to the forefront of American politics. From Tamir Rice and Breonna Taylor to George Floyd, the list of citizens who have died at the hands of American police officers grows, and with it, louder public outcries for fundamental change. Hashtags like #BlackLivesMatter, #DefundPolice, and #CopsOutOfSchools spread over social media (Unger 2020). The rise of the modern social movement Black Lives Matter (BLM) is spurring awareness of contemporary issues of racism; yet, at the same time, it is also fueling increased tensions and even the politization of its countermovement, Blue Lives Matter (PLM).

The BLM movement is considered one of the largest social movements in history, with protests occurring in nations around the globe, starting in 2014 and growing exponentially after Floyd's murder in 2020 (Wirtschafter 2021). The top policy demands made by BLM tend to be major changes to policing, including mandating police body cameras, de-escalation training, and convicting police linked to racial abuse or murder incidents. Additional BLM demands include "defunding the police," which is defined as anything from fully stopping the public funding of police forces, especially in areas where policing inequalities are historically high, to reallocating partial funding from militarized police training and resourcing to racial equity programming, like the better funding of low-income schools (Baldwin 2018; Solomon and Martin 2019; Unger 2020). In contrast, stakeholders tied to PLM, like federations of police like the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), demand ongoing or increased funding for police forces, with unions asking for the expansion of any legal definitions of hate crime victims to be inclusive of police officers and first responders (Beck and Brook 2020; Newman et al. 2024).

Police unions promote constructs of *blue solidarity* as divisive responses to public calls to reform policing, often for the purpose of safeguarding the interests of their members in law enforcement. Ultimately, PLM regularly denounces BLM protesters as being subversive, extremists, and un-American, with rhetoric that with each year intensifies the political discord (Beck and Brook 2020; Roscigno and Preito-Hodge 2021; Shanahan and Wall 2021; Thomas and Tufts 2020). For instance, a federal lawsuit filed in 2022 reports that "[i]n a series of text messages, a white supervisor and other police officers in Montgomery County,

Md., talked about preparing for a "race war," and expressed hope that Black Lives Matter protesters would be killed" (Levenson 2022, para. 1).

Comparatively, Black Lives Matter frequently refers to contemporary racism in policing as the war on people of color (POCs) in the United States. From slavery, segregation, and the war on drugs by the Nixon administration and Reagan administration to violent police tactics, many BLM supporters view the problem as the historically ongoing oppression of Black Americans by an elite status quo consortium. They often paint law enforcement as oppressive, violent, prejudiced, and dangerous (Solomon and Martin 2019). Each side has its own takes on what the issue is, along with their own recommendations and political agendas. Yet, which side should policymakers back?

> No issue has been more controversial in the discussion of police unions responses to allegations of excessive force . . . Neither legal nor social sciences literature on policing and police reform has explored opportunities and constraints that labour law offers in thinking about organizational change. The scholarly deficit has substantial public policy consequences, as groups ranging like Black Lives Matter to the US Department of Justice are proposing legal changes that will require the cooperation of police labour organizations to implement (Fisk and Richardson 2017, p. 712).

Noting the dynamic shifts in public interest between the two movements is apparent when analyzing digital data on Google Trends. We can examine the volume of searches by users over time on Google Search related to Black Lives Matter compared to Blue Lives Matter. We note a large spike in public interest in Black Lives Matter just after the murder of George Floyd (see Figure 1). Comparatively, the popularity of Blue Lives Matter has remained consistently low over time. The relative search volumes between these two terms indicates that even after its spike in popularity, BLM continued to trend much higher than Blue Lives Matter. The issue of Black Lives Matter appears relatively new, with animate public digital attention, while the theme of Blue Lives Matter is older and garners much less interest. The more public attention that Black Lives Matter gains over time compared to its opponent threatens to diminish the Blue Lives Matter power base in the public sphere.
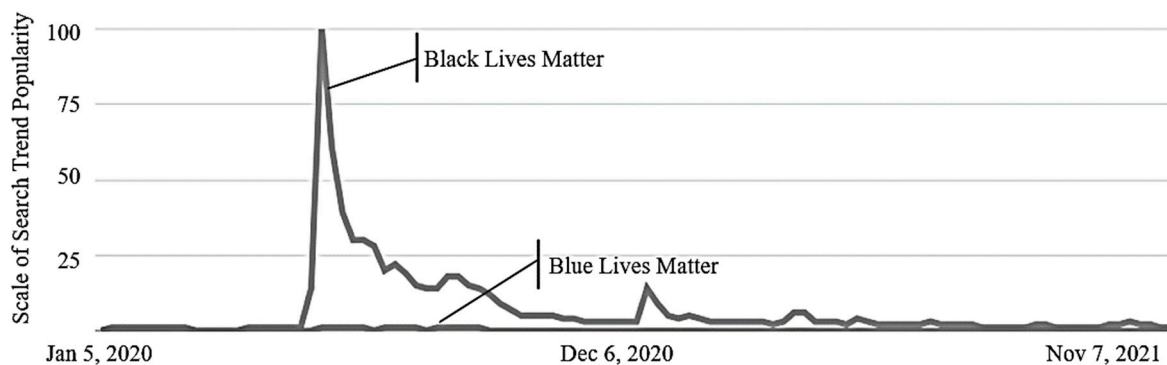

Figure 1. Volumes of searches over time for Google Search of Black Lives Matter compared to Blue Lives Matter.

For all intents and purposes, the polarization between the two movements can be portrayed as civil conflict when protests turn to looting, police clashes, and killing. BLM and PLM are battling over political geography influencing public policymaking, agenda setting, and policy selection (Steinberg 2022), the costs of which have social, financial, and political implications, and even have resulted in death (Smith 2019; Solomon and Martin 2019). Approximately 6 percent of pro-BLM protests became violent in 2020–21, but this rate nearly doubled when right-wing militias or militarized social movement members attended. Additionally, American police appear to use more force against pro-BLM demonstrators: 52 percent of the time compared to 26 percent of the time against all other U.S. protestors (ACLED 2022).

The extreme rhetoric between both movements incorporates *war-like* diction, including "Blue Life" as a battle cry for a police offensive in the pseudo "war on cops"; online propaganda promoted by ultra-right paramilitary groups like the Proud Boys; and incidences like Kyle Rittenhouse killing two Black Lives Matter protesters, as well as Ismaaiyl Brinsley murdering two police officers on duty (Shanahan and Wall 2021). The United States has entered a crisis, which is exacerbated by opposing views on solutions to improving policing and racial injustice). Much of the polarization between these two movements is reactive, with little room for finding policies that meet the needs of both sides. However, there is a vital need to begin bridging this rift. Most of the policy literature focuses on mediation. Yet, with the escalated political tensions between these warring movements, it may be helpful to further consider theories related to bargaining in disciplines that predominantly focus on international relations and peace resolutions in times of crisis.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

We propose, through this study, the potential of the application of Fearon (1995)'s *bargaining range of war*, theorizing under what conditions two rationally led states will both prefer negotiated settlements over war under a set of certain conditions (see Figure 2), to a consideration of the battle between social movement opponents. First, we present a comparison of the adapted model to the original (see Figure 3). While we estimate each movement's values for policy outcomes and policy results to calculate their bargaining ranges, the aim of this research is to evaluate the theoretical potential of Fearon's model in negotiating settlements between opposing social movements.
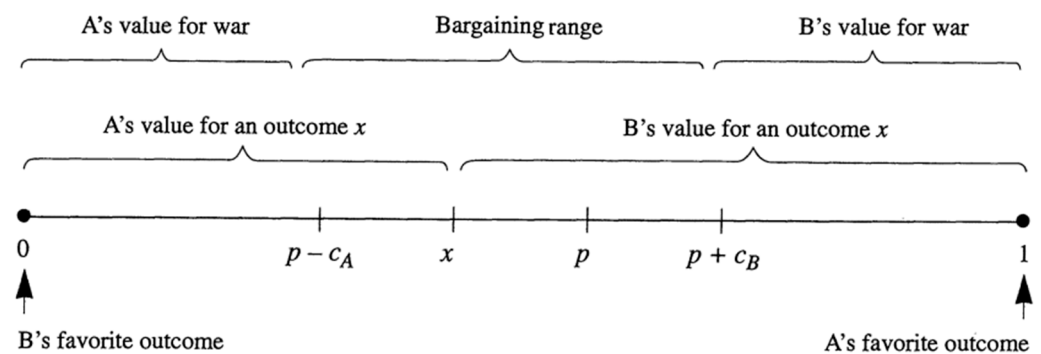

Figure 2. Bargaining range of war. Source: Lu (2022).

Fearon's original model builds on the standard international relations literature examining bargaining strategies of war. His model theoretically assesses the potential gains and losses, circumstances for impasse, and eventual outcome of war between two actors interacting through bargaining. Fearon's research offers a better understanding of the inefficiency of war and the potential for peace agreements, considering what is best for all parties (see Appendix A for a detailed summary of the Fearon model).

The Fearon model is a static model, and thus it has limitations. Yet, we posit that this model can be used to illustrate dynamic reasons for conflict, which will be elaborated on in the examples presented in the Results. Yet, we first justify and summarize the adaptation of the model.

Scholarship indicates that issues of racial disparity, victimization, and the conflict between the BLM movement and its countermovement, Blue Lives Matter, are often perceived as zero-sum games among specific actors (Stefaniak et al. 2020; Solomon and Martin 2019; Thomas and Drinnon 2021). For instance, if BLM gains a measurable level of political support through mass protests, then PLM will experience losses, like a decrease in federal or state funding, less public favorability, and an increased threat of violence against police. Additionally, as evidenced in the first year after George Floyd's death, the conflict between these two movements has real cost implications, for instance, violent clashes in protests that can result in injuries and/or death, chaotic political division, extremism, looting, worker

strikes, and property damage (Holbrook et al. 2022; Stevens 2021). In the next section, we explore how applying Fearon's bargaining modeling may help inform our understanding of and strategies to negotiate potential public policy reformation in domestic conflicts involving drastically opposing social movements.
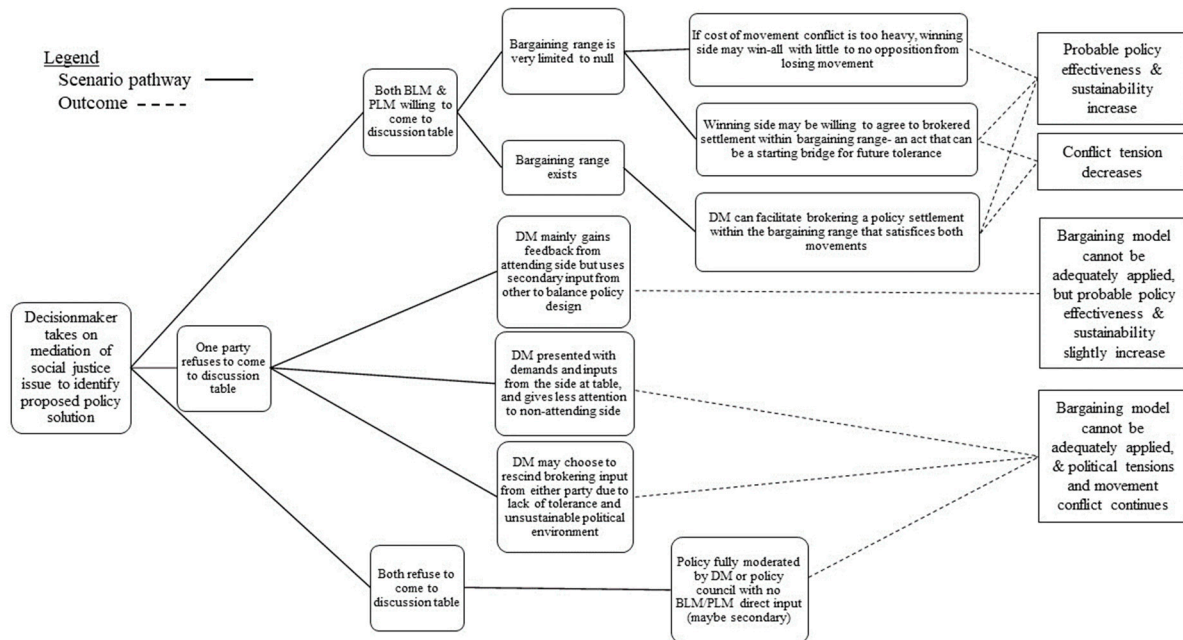

Figure 3. Decision tree model of decisionmaker engaging social movements.

In this adapted model, the bargaining range between competing social movements, instead of warring states, the two opposing actors are socio-political movements (see Figure 3). In this case analysis, Social Movement A is represented by Black Lives Matter, and Movement B represents Blue Lives Matter/PLM, often led by police unions/the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP). In this scenario, policy analysts predict what may be the bargaining range between these two opposing movements, which are frequently at odds on policy reform alternatives. Decisionmakers like mayors, senators, and district councils often convene negotiations or hold special committees as a way of identifying policy alternatives to social problems affecting people in their jurisdictions, inviting various stakeholders to the bargaining table (Jacobs and Skocpol 2015; Kraft and Furlong 2019). Yet, as Figure 3 illustrates, there are different decision pathways that can occur. Some scenarios may involve the willingness of only one of the opposing movements to work with decisionmakers, which can lead to moderate increases in the potential policy effectiveness. Yet, if both Movements A and B are not at the brokering table, Fearon's model is not applicable, as the key conditions are violated. If one side is fully favored by the decisionmaker, this leaves room for the opposing movement to feel slighted, thus fueling hostilities and discord at some level. The most optimal solution is to select a policy solution that has room for bargaining flexibility so that each movement can have the chance to broker their needs and consultatory points. In these circumstances, predicting the bargaining range can help policy analysts to avoid advising decisionmakers to take on policy options with little to no viability. In democratic systems, decisionmakers must often select a policy topic that can be negotiated as a *win-win* for all parties, including the opposing movements, as well as for any politicians currying constituency favor (Kuula and Stam 2008; Yang et al. 2012).

Fearon's model assumes that the rivaling actors are aware of the real probability (p) that one side could sweep the policy debate (estimated by how many U.S. states/territories have recently passed legislation reflecting the desired pro-BLM policy outcomes). The sudden public support for BLM in 2020 made this movement a real contender in the battle to gain political support for their policy demands. As iterated previously, shifts in the

balance of power can cause the probability of conflict to increase. Figure 1 depicts how public interest increased just after the death of George Floyd, which helped Black Lives Matter become more prominent and garner greater support as a social movement, making it one of the largest in American history. Floyd's murder changed the online perceptions of BLM. Before Floyd, digital interest in BLM only sparked small spikes (the total number of posts over time), often around key incidences like the death of Walter Scott and the acquittal of the officer who shot Philando Castillo. The sudden spike in the digital chatter around Black Lives Matter after Floyd's passing along with the growing number of protests further sparked increased reactive rhetoric from political conservative groups like the FOP and politicians like President Trump (Unger 2020; Wirtschafter 2021).

This shift in the balance of power acts as a catalyst for conflict. Moreover, both sides begin to advocate for policy options which will weaken their opponent in the near future, including BLM advocating for defunding the police or charging officers who kill people of color, compared to the PLM demands that anyone who attacks police be charged for hate crimes and that the federal government provide more military-like equipment for law enforcement (Holbrook et al. 2022; Thursi 2020).

In applying Fearon's model, we assume that both movements are rational actors as well as risk-averse to massive social conflict, or at least risk-neutral. We also assume that there is a continuous range of diplomatic settlement options (from 0 to 1). If both opponents are willing to sit down at the table to discuss policy reform options, there also may be the possibility of striking a bargain (see Figure 4). Both movements have a specific list of policy alternatives that they individually support, all within some scope of prioritization (alternative A before C, B before A, etc.). When a specific policy solution is brought to the political agenda, each side will support or resist its intended outcome to some extent (0—policy with no outcomes; 1—policy fully successful as designed). Movement A's prioritization for a policy outcome (X) can range between 0.0 and 1.0, while Movement B's prioritization is asserted as the opposite (1—Movement A's value). Some policy options are viewed as higher-priority topics to advocate for compared to others. PLM may prioritize stopping defunding the police more, willing to commit more of its attention and resources, than its interest in preventing housing regulations in low-income neighborhoods.
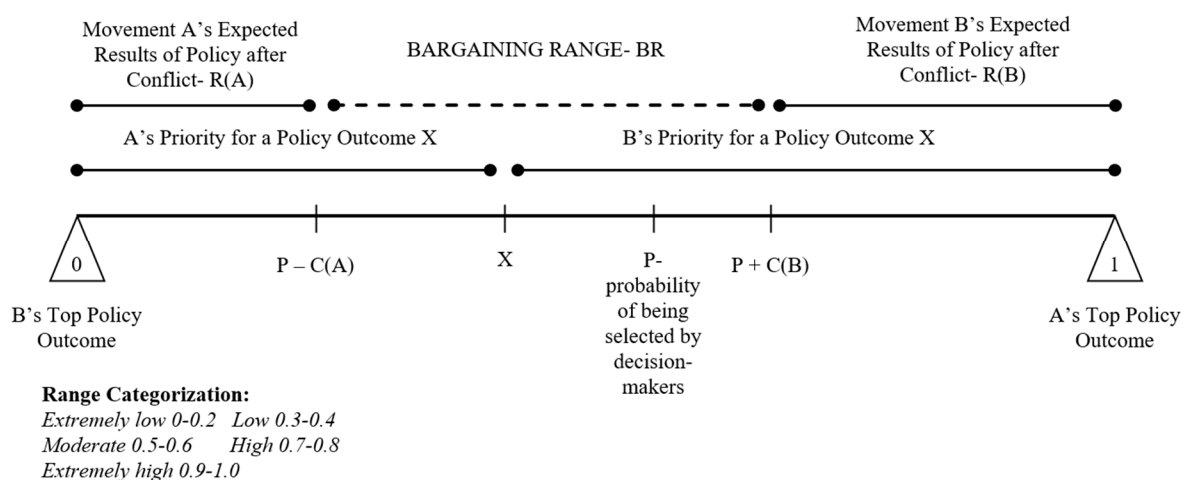

Figure 4. Bargaining range of competing socio-political movements.

Each movement's interest in or prioritization of a specific policy reform is represented as its Prioritization for a Specific Policy Outcome (estimated from extremely low to high based on the literature review). We also consider each side's expressed value for ensuring that specific relevant results are met, termed as the Expected Results of Policy after Conflict. These are the results for which a specific movement is unwilling to compromise (represented by R(A) and R(B)). This means, for example, that if offered less than the R(A), A would choose to engage in confrontation. For example, if willing to discuss modifying the police

budget, PLM may unyieldingly demand specific results, like a committed specific yearly budget and/or representation by the FOP in government budget discussions. In contrast, BLM might counterdemand with its results list, including ensuring that a percentage of the current budget is reallocated for more police body cameras.

For each policy reform alternative, we analyzed research and policy-relevant documents to qualitatively assess the level of each movement's individual value for result(s) related to individual policy reform alternatives. This non-bargaining range is, in other words, the line drawn in the sand:

$$(\text{Bargaining range} = 1.0 - R(A) - R(B))$$

Any alternatives within the spectrum of a movement's value for specific results that is fought for in the policy debate will lead to socio-political protests. For instance, some factions of PLM promote increased funding for militarizing law enforcement, including military equipment provision, which ramped up post-9/11. A federal program called 1033 permits the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) to provide state, local, and federal law enforcement agencies with military hardware. But Black Lives Matter is diametrically opposed to this policy because militarized police forces are more likely to be aggressive, target communities of color, and increase the potential for violent altercations (Lawrence and O'Brien 2021; Steidley and Ramey 2019). The selection by local, state, or national decisionmakers to implement a policy that falls within Movement B's value for the results will experience immediate protestation by Movement A.

These desired results often are policy needs that are highly desired and advocated for by most members within their individual movement. The magnitude of the political tension between the opposing movements increases the farther from X's center, as well as lowers the likelihood that the implemented policy (or policy set) will be efficacious in resolving the policy problem or be adequately sustained over time. In highly politicized democratic states with two-party systems, like the United States, elected representatives and political leaders on opposing sides will become staunchly resistant to passing any legislation or policies that are increasingly unpopular with their constituents.

As both actors are risk-adverse, they are open to bargaining over a range of policy options in place of engaging in social conflict (if their result demands are met). It is beneficial for both the movements and society for politicians and key stakeholders to engage in bargaining over these reform options. However, there is the potential for the R(A) to fall to zero if the probability of states/territories selecting to pass pro-BLM legislation on the specific policy topic (p) is low and the costs to BLM may be relatively high. Additionally, there is the potential for the bargaining range to fall to zero for Movement B if the value for specific policy results is high on the part of both movements. In this situation, there is *little to no utility* in engaging in negotiations on this policy option. One movement or both will be pressed and, in the end, engagement in talks around that policy reform option may even increase the conflict between the opposing actors.

2.3. Data Collection and Analysis

From September 2020 to May 2022, a research team comprising representatives of the University of Pittsburgh, the University of Texas at Dallas, Black Lives Matter, and the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) conducted a thorough policy analysis of alternatives that U.S. governmental representatives regularly consider for legislation to (a) minimize systemic racial discrimination and (b) improve policing and equitable justice. This research informed a literature database including over 350 research studies and policy-related documents. A synthesis of the information within this database identified 35 top policy options among various sectors, including housing, health, education, social welfare, and policing. The data collected on BLM represent the organizational agenda-setting goals at the national level between 2020 and 2021.

Throughout this research, BLM continued to be a multi-tier organization. In October 2020, the Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation publicly established the Black

Lives Matter Political Action Committee (BLM-PAC), responsible for political change, fundraising/grants, and an action-oriented thinktank, while BLM-Grassroots continued to manage the strategic action steps of its various local chapters. Each BLM chapter often cultivated unique agendas tailored to local priorities, with various chapters ranking as more radical than sister chapters (Linly 2020).

Each identified option uniquely addresses combating contemporary racial discrimination and inequitable policing in America.

Phase 1: We applied a *qualitative context analysis approach*, designed to condense data from published articles and documents into inferred and interpretable categories or themes (Cho and Lee 2014; Elo and Kyngäs 2008). Firstly, we inductively reviewed, examined, and compared the selected literature to identify key themes and categories. During September 2020–April 2021, the Principal Investigator (PI) led graduate student researchers to assess top-cited scholarship and grey literature (policing evaluations, policy memos, news articles, and government studies) to identify policy options applied in the last decade to address racial discrimination and systemic violence related to policing. They explored policy options related to social welfare, policing/criminal justice reform, education, and public administration. In total, 353 sources were assessed and recorded into a literature review database in Excel (v2019).

Phase 2: This research study first qualitatively assessed all of the sources to inform estimates of how much each side appears to rank. Kertzer (2016) stresses that, "[as] Satori argued, "concept formation stands prior to quantification," so before proposing of testing a theory of resolve, it is important to clearly specify" the concepts of resolve, cost, and valuation (p. 8). From January 2021 to January 2022, the research team members from the University of Pittsburgh worked with the PI to qualitatively assess the literature review database sources, identifying all policy options (in total, 36 individual policies). One policy was excluded as it was implemented in the 1980s, not meeting the eligibility requirements of being implemented in the last decade. Next, we examined the sources relating to each of the 35 policy options in terms of their prioritization (defined as the utility of the policy before the conflict) of a specific policy outcome:

- Their expected results of the policy after conflict;
- The probability that Movement A will win the policy conflict (measured by estimating what percentage of U.S. states and territories have recently implemented policy legislation reflecting BLM's top policy outcome, with Movement B as Police Lives Matter);
- The probability that a bargain can be struck which both sides are willing to support.

We qualitatively assessed each policy option set of documents to reference the potential costs, highlighting descriptive words to assess the concepts bargaining, resolve, level of political support and resourcing, and the costs/risks. Each researcher individually evaluated 5–9 policy options, first noting any qualitative descriptions related to utility, and then discussing the descriptive words to help inform the valuation based on Fearon's model of utility (see Table 1 below).

Table 1. Qualitative analysis of policy prioritization v costs to specific agents.

Item	Concept	Extremely High	High	Moderate	Low	Very Low
Policy prioritization for specific agent	To what extent does the documentation indicate how important the policy ask (policy reform outcome) is to their movement's agenda? What are the descriptions associated with prioritization? How much is mentioned in the literature or advertised as a priority/key policy demand? How unified are sub-units of the agent around the policy ask definition. or does it appear to vary place to place. sub-unit (like a regional group)?	Apparent as top priority with almost no room for negotiating details or unwillingness to compromise; details of the policy demand are clear and unvaried; fully dedicated to fighting until achieved; listed repeatedly as main issue or central to movement's purpose/mission	Is one of a handful (~3) of top priorities, frequently mentioned in literature and policy documents/advertisements; some apparent willingness to compromise but minimal; details of the policy demand are clear but with some variation in outcome based on location or membership	Is listed or mentioned several times in literature and gray materials, but often secondary to other top priorities; taken on by some sub-units around the nation but appears not a nationwide or top leadership priority; flexible in policy solution outcome definition; variation of importance among membership/regional or local chapters/unions	Mentioned a few times; noted as a policy demand or a policy solution in very few sub-regions or only for a period of time; appears a rarely mentioned or infrequent topic among members or leadership; little resourcing or political support provided or pledged; policy definition is loose and varied, as is solution outcomes; division among national consensus	Noted only once or never in documents and gray literature; mentioned offhandedly; proven ineffective; no indication of willingness to dedicate resources and political clout; internally divisive
	Description examples in qualitative analysis	"was unwilling to budge on its position"; "…most important issue to take on"; "Willing to devote all efforts until (policy) met"; "was a rally cry nationwide;" "members voted unanimously [for ask]"; "demanded rallies in cities nationwide"; "is a war-cry for (agent)"	"a constant demand at rallies"; "leadership concurs on the need [to prioritize]"; advertised on organization documents like policy memos, websites, etc.; "the solution was based on the legislation in Houston"; listed secondly or thirdly on advertisement material; "willing to commit needed resources [to achieve]"; "brought up regularly to politicians"	"is one of its asks (of many issues/policy alternatives]"; "willing to compromise"; "more relevant among the Pittsburgh chapter than other regional chapters"/listed among a longer list of policy demands (more than 5); "room for possible budging"	"BLM rarely mentions (it]"; "proposed by union representatives in Michigan but did not gain national traction"; "some members disagree with what should be evaluated"/"internal division"; "provided little funding"; "programming is proving less effective than anticipated"; "not enough funding"; "politically less favorable"; "faces some union opposition (among member)"	"is a non-starter"; "there is extreme opposition internally"; "division among chapters"; "is a vague concept"; "hard for people to see its importance"; "not backed by any politician"; "could receive huge public backlash"

Table 1. *Cont.*

Item	Concept	Extremely High	High	Moderate	Low	Very Low
Cost for specific agent	To what extent will the agent need to spend its political clout or financial resources? Will working to achieve policy goal require heavy financing and fundraising? How much political backing will they need?	Will require full commitment nationwide, high coordination among all members; risks could be detrimental; so costly that it will need additional political and public support or financing beyond what agent currently has	Will require full commitment nationwide, nearly all its efforts are coordinated, extremely costly, will require huge political and public support; political gamble that could result in large decreases in funding and support; politically or economically risky	Needs moderate level of commitment nationwide, some national coordinated effort; requires a budget but can be met using mostly internal resources; may need some more political and public support; not a large political or economically risk; potential opportunity/interest for external funding or support	Poor or little coordination; little costs associated with change; require little additional political and public support; politically and economically feasible given most available resources and support; little long-term risks; some external support or funding is necessary	Commitment can vary regionally or by sub-unit; no anticipated or documented political or economic risks; requires almost no internal funding or resourcing; no external resourcing is needed; proven highly effective and efficient
	Description examples in qualitative analysis	"seeking external support to help go over the line"; "significant expenditure"; "placing all its cards on the table;" "result was huge public backlash"; "nearly impossible to achieve unless all need resources are found"; "resolution could be in the millions of dollars, which means federal funding"	"devoted a large chunk of its annual budget"; "significant expenditure"; "very costly"; "is a nationwide effort among rally leaders"; "could cost a lot in terms of public support"; "will need extensive external funding [to achieve]"; "huge gamble."	"in many cities, protesters demanded"; "is politically viable in Colorado"; "met with senators to discuss possibility of"; "within its purview"; "financially feasible"; "a lot of public support behind"; "growing backing by retired officers"; "could be a political win"	"appears to provide an easy solution"; "already has financial backing from the State;" "training program was incorporated into already existing training;" "rallies throughout the state;" "proven to give sustainable results"; "politicians are open"; "builds on current funded model"; "large public backing"; "most voted for (policy change]"; "sufficient organizational funding"	"win-win for everyone;" "passed unanimously;" "massive public support"; "increased financial donations by Americans"; "news agencies nationwide picked up"; "minimal costs with social media"; "already funded"; "covered by federal grants"; "huge political backing"

The following rank codifications for each policy option and the items were then applied: extremely low utility (0.0–0.2), low utility (0.3–0.4), moderate utility (0.5–0.6), high utility (0.7–0.8), and extremely high utility (0.9–1.0). Utility was assessed as to whether the policy is desired/useful for a specific side, and the chance at which bringing the option to the table will result in a bargain agreement (e.g., "Policy X holds high utility and is high as a policy prioritization for BLM, yet it holds moderate utility for PLM, thus resulting in a limited but tangible probability of bargaining success if presented to both parties"; "BLM is strongly against Policy Y, with staunch advocacy against this policy, while PLM holds it as a must-have demand, thus, leaving little to no room for negotiation."). Lastly, as a team, we revisited each ranking to discuss the concurrence of the rankings for each policy option. This ranking system allowed us to tabulate the qualitative assessment using Fearon's model equation to assign a quantitative utility measure to each policy option based on the evidence of the literature review.

The third phase for verification: Each policy analysis was reviewed and discussed in detail among our research team, which included leadership representatives from BLM and former police officers. Any items that involved disagreement about the analysis were then revisited and assessed by the entire investigation team for concurrence. Lastly, the PI reached out to a leader or contact for several police units and BLM regional chapter offices. Three police representatives from different states responded along with four BLM leaders from two regional chapters. In March 2022, the final codification map, concepts, and analysis were digitally shared for their review and feedback. Each external reviewer agreed that our final assessment appeared accurate according to their experience and familiarity with the issues and the stance of their movement agent. No changes were recommended.

A summary of the 35 policy options' rankings is provided in the next section, along with a more detailed analysis of several purposely selected policy options meant both to explore the different types of bargaining ranges and to model the adaption of Fearon's bargaining theory to opposing social movements, in lieu of warring nation states. Lastly, the study conducted a pairwise correlation analysis of these variables against the state legislation range (how many U.S. states have recently passed legislation supporting BLM's top policy outcome, divided by the total states and relevant territories); whether the policy item requires a higher government budget (0—no; 1—some; 2—a lot); the level of community engagement (0—none; 1—some; 2—a lot); the involvement of direct police reforms (0—no; 1—yes); and/or the inclusion of changes to the standard allocated policing budget (0—none; 1—some; 2—a lot).

3. Results

A review of over 350 studies and policy-relevant documents identified 36 specific policy reform alternatives among various sectors that states have used to address social justice issues. A qualitative analysis of the data related to each policy reform alternative informed the ranges for how much BLM (represented at the national level) values policy outcome X and its value for the results (R(A)), compared to the R(B), or the value for the results for PLM (see Table 2). Using the formula introduced earlier, we can find the bargaining range (categorization: non-starter, extremely low utility: 0–0.2; low: 0.3–0.4; moderate: 0.5–0.6; high: 0.7–0.8; extremely high: 0.9–1.0). Lastly, the analysis also reviewed the documents to estimate the likelihood of states and territories adopting policy measures targeting each policy reform alternative (approximate total states that implemented policy/total states and territories).

Table 2 indicates that 32 of the 36 (89 percent) policy reform alternatives identified in the literature synthesis appear to have at least a low probability for bargaining, including 8 with elevated levels. PLM and BLM appear willing to come to the negotiation table around most policy talks, especially related to *mental health*, *police tactics*, and *housing*. Comparatively, there are four policy alternatives that have very low BRs (0.2), like the extracurricular program participation tax credit, offering little utility for facilitated negotiation. A correlation analysis of the data further indicates that the more a policy involves

direct police reforms (0—none; 1—some; 2—a lot), the lower the BR (r = −0.37, $p < 0.05$). However, policies reallocating police funds are highly correlated to a higher BR (biserial r = 0.45, $p < 0.01$), as well as the costs of conflict that Blue Lives Matter face (biserial r = 0.38, $p < 0.01$) (see Appendix B: Table A1).

Table 2. Bargaining ranges between Blue Lives Matter and Black Lives Matter for 35 policy alternatives.

	Policy Reform Alternative	Prioritization							
		BLM	PLM	P	C(A)	R(A)	C(B)	R(B)	BR
1	Restructure TANF and leverage public-private partnerships to increase internet access and reduce the unbanked	0.3	0.7	0.1	0.1	0	0.1	0.2	0.2
2	Decriminalize drug and alcohol abuse	0.7	0.3	0.7	0.5	0.2	0.3	1	0.8
	Decriminalize mental illness	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.3	1	0.6
3	Defund the police	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.3	0	0.5	0.8	0.8
4	Extracurricular program participation tax credit	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.1	0	0.1	0.2	0.2
	Promoting the importance of out-of-classroom	0.3	0.7	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.1	0.8	0.4
	Re-allocation of federal funds to state education systems	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.1	0.8	0.4
	Offer federal incentive programs for schools to remove zero-tolerance discipline policies	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.4	0.3	0.8	0.4
	Minority teachers pursuing administrative roles and provide funding to school districts that retain a set threshold of minority teachers	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.2
5	Successful reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.6	0.4
6	Rent stabilization	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.9	0.6
	Private sector incentivization of capital management groups	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.1	0.6	0.1	0.8	0.2
	Community Land Trusts (CLTs) to address the gentrification	0.7	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.8	0.6
	Reducing or freezing property taxes	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.3	0	0.5	0.8	0.8
	Mandatory inclusionary zoning	0.7	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.8	0.6
7	Body cameras on police & on-job compliance requirements	0.7	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.3	1.0	0.8
	Citizen police review board	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.3	0	0.3	0.6	0.6
	Accountability and transparency internal investigation	0.9	0.1	0.3	0.3	0	0.5	0.8	0.8
	Use of force investigation and prosecution	0.9	0.1	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.5	1	0.8
	Transparency tracking of use of force data	0.9	0.1	0.3	0.3	0	0.5	0.8	0.8
	Minimize doctrine of qualified immunity protects state and local officials, including law enforcement officers, from individual liability	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.3	0	0.5	0.8	0.8
	Requiring collection of data when an individual is stopped by law enforcement	0.7	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.8	0.6
	Review of "Law Enforcement Officer Bill of Rights"	0.7	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.6	0.4
8	Decertification for professional licenses	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.3	0	0.3	0.6	0.6
	Certification standards	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.3	1	0.6
9	Minimize law enforcement officers to collectively bargain	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.3	1	0.6
10	Police-community partnership, facilitating dialogue between law enforcement and residents	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.3	0	0.3	0.6	0.6
11	Ensure adequate training for police officers	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.9	0.5
	PBP adopting an officer wellness program	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.8	0.6
12	Community representation	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.1	0.8	0.4
	Increasing diversity in policing	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.6	0.4
13	Strengthening and emphasizing de-escalation tactics	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.3	0	0.3	0.6	0.6
	Ethics-based approach to educating and training police officers	0.7	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.3	1	0.6
	PBP implementing a peer intervention program	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.8	0.6
	Eliminate police presence in K-12 schools and replace with trauma-informed de-escalation	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.1	0	0.3	0.4	0.4
	Policy reform for recidivism	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.3	1	0.6

C(A): cost of fighting for actor A; C(B): the cost for actor B; P: true probability one side could win; R(A) = P − C(A) or total amount of the good/expected utility of war for actor A after the costs of war are considered; BR: bargaining range.

According to Fearon, it is best when the costs are equally shared by both PLM and BLM, as with the estimates of the citizen police review board. Yet, 16 of the policies have unequal costs, with most estimated to be higher for Blue Lives Matter if conflict erupts, like with the accountability and transparency of internal police investigations. A pairwise correlation analysis implies that the BR is highly correlated with BLM's prioritization for policy outcome X (r = 0.71, $p < 0.001$), the costs of conflict for Black Lives Matter (0.72, $p < 0.001$), and the costs of conflict for PLM (0.90, $p < 0.001$) (see Appendix B).

Moreover, some policy alternatives have such low expected policy results, including low selection probabilities and higher conflict costs, which can lower one side's benefits of sparking a public conflict. For instance, minimizing the doctrine of qualified immunity that protects state and local officials from individual liability, including law enforcement officers, has a low probability (p) and moderate predicted costs for BLM, which equates the R(A) to 0. This prediction model indicates that there is little value for BLM to resist bargaining with PLM, and yet the high PLM costs allow for a sizeable bargaining range for facilitators to moderate.

3.1. Case Study: A Negotiable Policy Solution Benefiting All

In this sub-section, we present a more detailed analysis of three purposely selected policy options from those presented above to explore the different types of bargaining ranges, and to model the application of Fearon's bargaining theory to opposing social movements. As Table 2 indicates, there are various policy sectors that hold potential for bargaining. One key policy option is mental health and wellness for police.

In 2019, more officers died by suicide (Lehmann 2020) than the number of those who lost their lives in the line of duty (Heyman et al. 2018). Officers face many mental health challenges (Strategic Applications International (SAI) 2018). Police stress on the job has only increased as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and BLM protests (Laufs and Waseem 2020). A lack of institutional attention on mental health and wellness in policing perpetuates a culture of silence around mental health issues, leading to fatalities and other health issues, such as substance abuse (Strategic Applications International (SAI) 2018; Stogner et al. 2020; Velazquez and Hernandez 2019). In an occupation valuing stoicism, officers can be ostracized and face potential job losses if they take steps to address their mental health concerns (Strategic Applications International (SAI) 2018). Police suffering from poor mental health and who have little psychosocial training often experience poor decision making, burnout, and higher rates of violent behavior towards others (Cáceda et al. 2014; de Tribolet-Hardy et al. 2015).

Offering training and services to police in mental and psychosocial health regularly offers benefits to officers, as well as to the citizens with whom they interact. Police mental health training models, such as Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training and Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) officers, increase police mental health knowledge, helping officers to better recognize and interact with persons with mental health issues. CIT training increases understanding and support and reduces the overall stigmatizing attitudes towards mental illness (Compton et al. 2011; Rogers et al. 2019). These programs also increase the likelihood that a police officer is able to identify warning signs and the effects of trauma in themselves and their fellow officers, with the added benefit of being better prepared to assist a person in crisis (Drew and Martin 2020; Stogner et al. 2020).

Figure 5 models the potential bargaining range as moderate (0.5) if a third-party facilitates a negotiation between BLM and PLM to identify a policy solution for mandated police officer mental health training and programming. The concession points may vary so long as each side's valued results are met (or not challenged). The literature synthesis indicates that BLM highly values the prioritization of the provision by government institutions and the police force of extended mental health training to officers (Campaign Zero 2022; Copple et al. 2019; Srikanth 2021). In recent years, over 30 of the 50 states have supported legislation for mental health training and services (NCSL 2022), indicating that its state selection range rates as high ($p = 0.7$). BLM's requirements for what kind of mental health services and

training that police receive can vary from state to state (Srikanth 2021), qualifying its value for the results as moderate. PLM's value likewise ranks as moderate (0.5), yet with no room for flexibility on the value. The literature indicates that the costs of conflict over police mental health (such as human resourcing, political leverage) tend to be slightly higher for BLM than PLM (Phelps et al. 2021; Srikanth 2021). Historically, the PLU has been willing to make some concessions related to mandated police mental health programs, yet the FOP can be strict as to what kinds of programs it will allow, as well as in protecting officer members from mandated evaluations or investigations that can risk their job status (Copple et al. 2019).
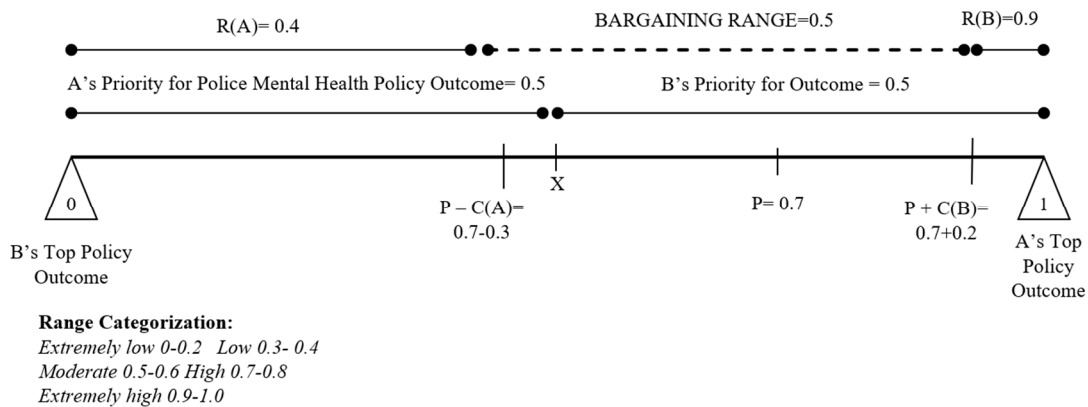
Figure 5. Bargaining range for mental health policy and programming for police.

3.2. Case Study A: When Probabilities and Costs Minimize Bargaining Incentives

There appear to be various policy options that may surprise policy analysts as holding very high policy utility. Deaths and violent confrontations involving police officers are driving the national dialogue about policies promoting the review of state and local laws mandating transparency in policing. Yet, only 15 of the 50 states' lawmakers have taken actions to specifically improve the transparency of internal police investigations (NCSL 2022); thus, the *p* is ranked as low at 0.3. PLU representative bodies strongly oppose policy reforms that increase the accountability and transparency of internal staff investigations, and particularly of officer misconduct (Archbold 2021; Lamboo 2010). Most police union contracts make provisions to protect officers' rights in investigations, including the payment of their legal fees, who specifically performs the investigation, having records of investigation and conviction expunged within a certain timeframe, and disclosing details of the investigation to outside parties (Hanson-DeFusco 2022; Harris and Sweeney 2021).

When adapting Fearon's model to policy options related to the sector of police accountability, many policy alternatives ironically have large bargaining ranges. It is vital that officers be held accountable for their negative actions while on the force. However, the reforms demanded by BLM for more police accountability and transparency in internal investigations have not been a priority for state lawmakers, as the state selection range is only 0.30 (see Figure 6). While BLM sets accountability for international police investigations as a top priority (0.9) for its policy demands (BLM 2022), the costs to BLM to advocate for such a policy outweigh the low probability of government decisionmakers selecting this policy for implementation, zeroing out BLM's expected results. There is almost no utility for BLM to fight PLM in the political arena over this issue; instead, they should settle for a brokered policy that includes PLM demands.
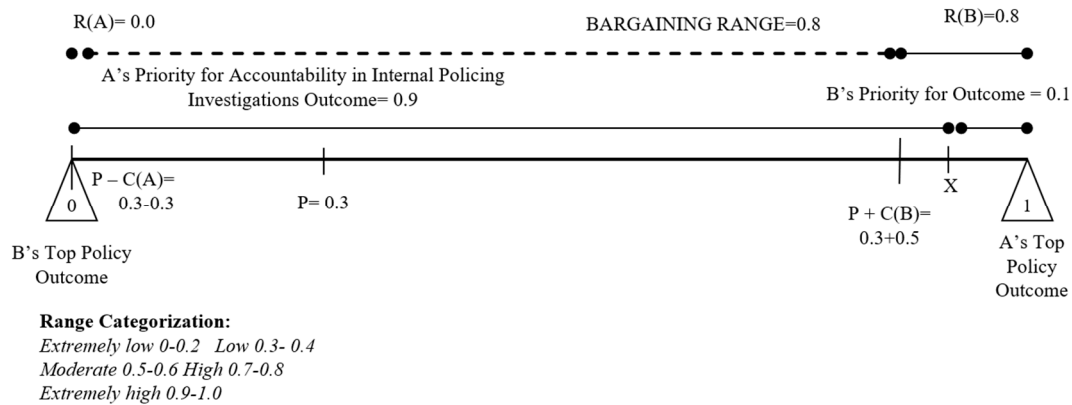
Figure 6. Bargaining range for police internal investigations.

In fact, with the odds in its favor, PLM looks to win all if a full confrontation arises against stricter internal investigation mandates and transparency reporting to the public. While the total costs of conflict are predictably high (0.08), there are strong incentives for PLM to fight instead of settle. This modeling reflects the historical reality. PLM frequently resists making many concessions when it comes to police accountability and reporting, which further results in less police being investigated and reprimanded for violent actions against POC civilians. Between 2015 and 2020, only 1 percent of officer investigations ended in termination from the force (Cummings 2021). Most police investigations result in little to no disciplinary action, as most are conducted by fellow peers who conclude there are no violations (Campaign Zero 2022; Harris and Sweeney 2021). Yet, public favor for police internal transparency and accountability has continued to rise since Floyd's murder, expanding the FOP willingness to adopt more rigorous procedures (Gullion et al. 2021; Thomas and Drinnon 2021). Thus, we stress a pragmatic lens in assessing bargaining ranges. The estimates projected in this model, and others just like it, can easily change over time and in different contexts.

3.3. Case Study B: When Probabilities and Costs Minimize Bargaining Incentives

There appear to be various policy options that may astonish some policy analysts as holding very high bargaining ranges. Yet, bargaining models can change, at the right opportunity, and the BR can be expansive, offering more opportunity to facilitate a policy agreement which both rivals support with concessions. As Figure 7 illustrates, the bargaining models for body-worn camera (BWC) legislation has changed over time, as more POCs have died at police hands. Before George Floyd's murder by police, the debate for states and districts to mandate BWC programs was still ongoing, often contingent on state funding and negotiations with unions (Wirtschafter 2021). In 2015, 20 states and the District of Columbia enacted new BWC laws. By May 2020, only South Carolina required the state-wide adoption of police body cameras (NCSL 2021; Nix et al. 2020).

Model B in this figure indicates that the BR is larger, with both BLM and PLM sharing equivalent expected results of the BWC policy after conflict. Early on, BLM placed BWCs as one of its top advocacy demands (priority = 0.9), with large pushback from representative police bodies. Yet, after the summer 2020 BLM protests sparked by the death of George Floyd, the landscape of BWC programs nationwide appears to have changed. Model A implies that the BR decreased by 25 percent, with the expected results after conflict favoring BLM and checking PLM's ability to resist growing state legislation.
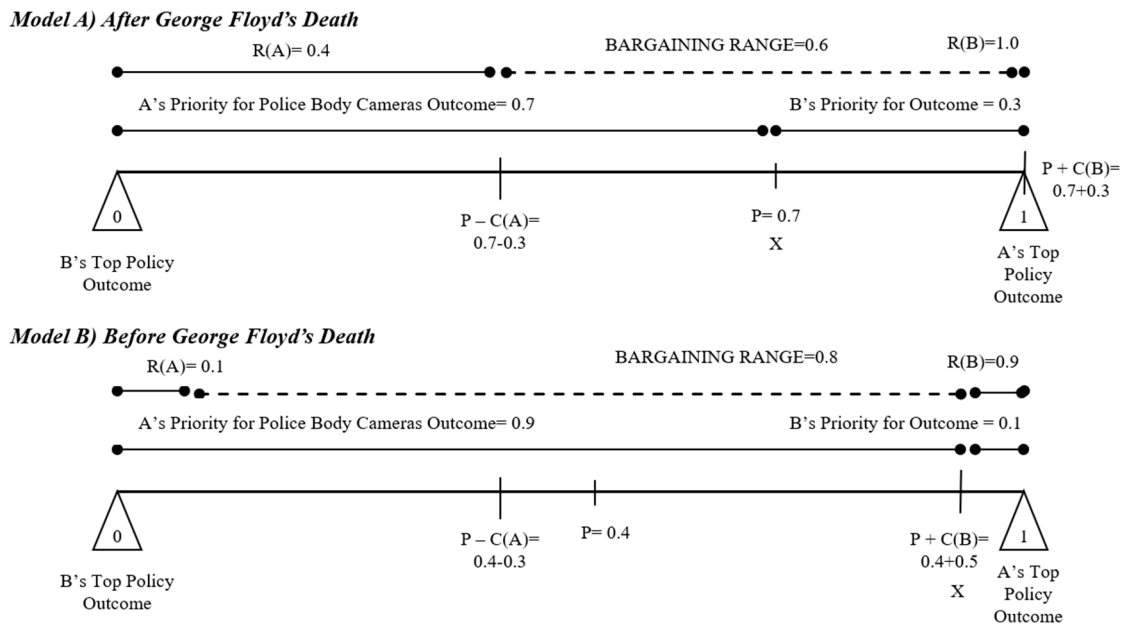
Model A) After George Floyd's Death

Model B) Before George Floyd's Death

Figure 7. Bargaining ranges for mandated police body-worn camera (BWC) programs.

3.4. Case Study: Bargaining Ranges as Static

We must recognize that Fearon's bargaining model is a *static model*, and thus it has noted limitations. Yet, the model can be used to illustrate dynamic reasons for conflict, even at the domestic level. For example, one can imagine a two-period conflict, where one side is expected to experience a large change in the cost of the conflict. After the change occurs, one expects the bargaining range to shift in the second period, making the conflict in the first period more likely. In this case, Floyd's death was a major catalyst for the BLM social movement to gain massive public support (as denoted in Figure 1).

This event changed how people viewed BLM as a movement, and as its public profile rose on public and political agendas, BLM could anticipate reaching its policy goals more readily than before Floyd's murder, including its most poignant call to *defund the police*.

While most Americans associate the call to defund the police as a rallying call that went viral hours after media showed Floyd's death, the policy ask of abolishing policing started as early as 2014. Yet, the "epicenter of the Defund the Police movement is Minneapolis. . .from a moonshot to mainstream" (King 2020, para. 1–3). Defunding can have various meanings, but, after Floyd, it often was most related to abolishment for most BLM supporters locally and nationally. Before Minneapolis, BLM rarely mentioned abolishing the police, allocating it a low priority with little to, at most, no expected payoff (this model estimates it around 0.1) as shown in Figure 8. Yet, after the surge in public support, BLM could anticipate the change in costs to the police if states and districts started defunding. The probability of BLM winning increased to 0.3, as the public questioning of police systems increased and politicians, especially Democrats, joined the bandwagon. Even after May 2020, the expected results for BLM remained extremely low to none, due to the increases in the costs of demonstrations and the public shock resulting from the defund the police call. This model examples the worst case for BLM, but the R(A) at times could be 0.1–0.2 at peaks of national public support. In contrast, the price to PLM was momentous, going from extremely low to moderate (0.5). It was not ranked as high, as the governmental defunding of the police rarely resulted in total abolishment but instead in large restructuring and personnel/resource cuts.
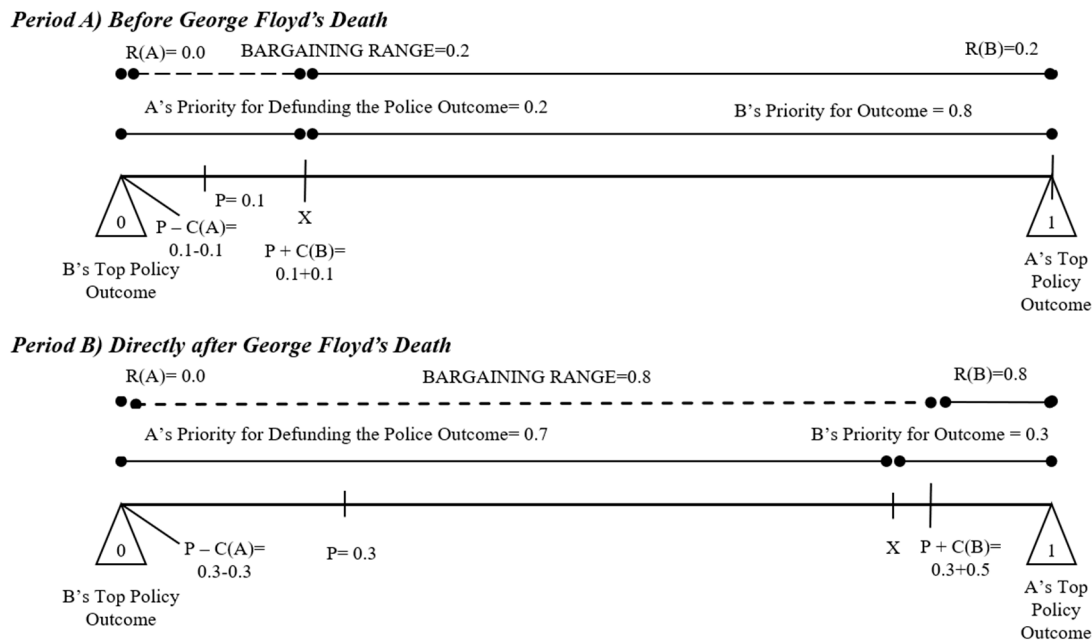
Period A) Before George Floyd's Death

Period B) Directly after George Floyd's Death

Figure 8. Bargaining ranges for defunding the police.

4. Discussion

The findings in this analysis indicate that the national policy battle for racial equality and justice reform is not necessarily binary, with one side as the loser and the other as the take-all winner. In the given scenario, in which BLM and PLM representatives are sitting together at the negotiation table, it behooves the third-party facilitating entity to carefully weigh which policy options hold positive utility, and which are too polarizing to be an efficient starting point for bridging the divide.

The first case study on mental health indicates that there is some potential, while moderately low, for bargaining between these warring social movements. The BLM requirements for what kind of mental health training and programs that police receive can vary by location and context (Loader 2020; Weine et al. 2020). While the FOP in specific states will make concessions on mandated mental health services for union members, leadership representatives often want to have considerable decision-making power over the details behind the policy. PLM is heavily weary of mandates that may hinder an officer's right to work, such as requiring psychological fitness-for-duty evaluations (NCSL 2022; Rostow and Davis 2014).

While there are various policy options that yield bargaining potential, the second case study on police accountability implies that there are some topics that may have large bargaining ranges but less incentives to broker a policy agreement between BLM and PLM. One of BLM's top policy demands is to increase police accountability, such as banning qualified immunity (BLM 2022). Most officers investigated for an on-duty killing are either not convicted or are even exonerated, while a handful receive a suspension or formal reprimand (Campaign Zero 2022; Srikanth 2021; Stinson et al. 2016). PLM representatives rarely if at all concede to changes in internal investigations, holding fast to police contracts and agreement documents. Often, police unions will strike down additions and, at times, historically roll back the authority of government and community accountability bodies to investigate and make public the details of investigations (Hanson-DeFusco 2022).

Yet, as in the third case study involving legislation promoting BWC programs for police, time and context can shift the political landscape, in turn impacting the chances for policy negotiations. Before Floyd's murder, BWC programming was still nascent as a policy reform and was highly prioritized by BLM, with backlash from PLM. By 2022, nearly 70 percent of U.S. states and districts had some form of BWC legislation, likely in large part due to the mounting public outrage over civilians dying in police-related incidences (Gaub

et al. 2022; Helfers et al. 2022; NCSL 2022). Police "departments with a higher severity of police-involved deaths of minority residents and a higher strength of social movements protesting police brutality are more likely to implement BWCs" (Pyo 2022, p. 258). The ACLU acknowledges the death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, as a shock that erupted in public protests and violence, with social reformers prioritizing body cameras as a way of holding police accountable for excessive force. Yet, the death of Floyd served as a second exogenous shock that spurred government officials to act (Stanley 2020, para. 2–5).

The fourth case study of defunding the police models to what extent Fearon's model is static. In the period before Floyd's death, BLM did not prioritize and saw almost no expected utility in advocating for the abolishment of policing. After the tragic event generated vast public recognition of BLM as an important social movement, BLM could anticipate a sudden change in support towards the police, making even the most seemingly outrageous policy call like defunding the police seem more readily achievable. As more public and political activity grew around policing abolishment, PLM found that its position was more at risk of losing the war to stay funded. Another reason for conflict, despite overlapping bargaining ranges, involves potential first-mover advantages. For example, one movement can secure a change in legislation that makes conflict for the opposing movement more costly in the future. BLM rapidly adopted the call for defunding the police in early summer 2020, making the first move before PLM could prepare (or even start taking it seriously). The blow was quick, to the advantage of BLM.

Yet, one limitation to a movement striking the first blow and gaining the advantage is that it can lead to escalating tensions, which can destabilize the potential for negotiations. While the bargaining range grew around defunding the police in the period after Floyd's murder, PLM typically only came to the table if talks did not involve abolishment but instead restructuring, reallocations, or reinvention. For this reason, policy alternatives like promoting mental health programs for police can be more advantageous for bargaining, as they come with less probability of destabilization.

Lastly, the correlation analysis of the data indicates that the bargaining range is significantly tied to the associated costs of conflict faced by both rival movements. The costs of conflict, such as violent protests, the excessive use of movement resources, and even public support for their cause, can have major implications for policy negotiations. For instance, PLM may be less willing to bargain if a policy involves higher levels of policy reforms, yet it may be willing to negotiate if the policy discussion only involves reallocating police funding (see Appendix B). Comparatively, the quantitative analysis further implies that pushing for policies that directly reform policing comes with higher costs of conflict for BLM. All these findings help triangulate the important potential that applying Fearon's bargaining model of war can have in predicting the bargaining potential between BLM and PLM.

This research began in 2021 and was inspired by the rise in the public debate over BLM and PLM. There are additional factors that new research is studying to inform our understanding of the agenda setting, policy definition, and advocacy for policy reform around criminal justice and systemic racial violence. For instance, Vaughn et al. (2022) utilize new survey and experimental data analyses to point to the importance that the mass public's interpretation of movements can have on policing reform, funding, and abolition. The results include "strong support for police reform, but efforts to defund or abolish generate opposition both in terms of slogan and substance" (para. 1). Additional research by Metcalfe and Pickett (2018) indicates that most of the American public perceives policing to be more cost-effective than incarcerating offenders. Moreover, the public tends to favor specific policy alternatives, such as sentinel patrols and crime hot spots, compared to reallocating resources toward policing (pp. 471–88).

Another potential consideration is that, historically, policy decisions involving facilitated bargaining around police reform typically did not involve coming around the table with one another. Instead, bargaining tended to involve government officials bargaining with each opposing agent separately. Government officials and offices may not take on

the role of facilitator, as they are often third actors with their own competing agenda priorities (re-election, budget constraints, avoiding litigation, etc.). The research on bargaining models indicates some theoretical limitations and even critiques of two-player models like Fearon's. For instance, three-party models can address issues like incomplete information and actor commitment. "Incomplete information can be ameliorated with repeated interaction, third-party mediation, or iterated bargaining... When war is driven by incommensurable state preferences, avoiding war becomes impossible unless peacekeepers seek to alter the domestic preferences and policy of the disputants or are willing to risk war themselves in the name of deterrence" (Gallop 2017, p. 379). Yet, specific events that catch national attention can bring a policy issue to the top of the political agenda. This reaction can drastically alter the issue's clout as a major political issue that can affect political favorability. Decisionmakers (like politicians) may then need to take on more active roles in addressing the issue, which previously they may have had less incentive to do. The BLM protests significantly affected public discourse and political engagement (Dunivin et al. 2022).

The public reaction to George Floyd's death, and the protests that ensued, led top politicians around the nation to help facilitate a discussion around policy reform, including various successful case studies. For instance, the BLM protests greatly affected mayoral and governor political favorability in parts of Pennsylvania (Vaugh 2021; Vaughn et al. 2022). In response, a taskforce was created by the City of Pittsburgh and facilitated by members of the County and Mayor's office. The Pittsburgh Community Taskforce for Policing Reform published policy recommendations in October 2020, which were developed in collaboration with representatives from stakeholders supporting BLM (e.g., the Black Political Empowerment Project, the Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh) and groups promoting the interests of PLU (e.g., the Analytics Unit for the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police; United Steelworkers Union (USW), which negotiates collective bargaining agreements with government committees on behalf of steel workers and police) (PCTPR 2020). Future research could explore additional factors affecting social movement bargaining power, like the influence of mass opinion, as well as the effect that third-party entities can have on police reform bargaining.

5. Limitations

There are limitations in applying international relations theories like Fearon's model to domestic movements. One of the commonly cited reasons for conflict is *issue indivisibility*. Yet, most conflicts are multi-dimensional; thus, arguably, the ability to negotiate different issues may alleviate this issue. A large part of the theory regarding conflict in international relations regards the lack of enforcement as a key contributor to the commitment problem. In the domestic sphere, federal (and even state) legislation should be able to enforce agreements. But, with the conflict between PLM and BLM in particular, the question of enforcement can be difficult, as PLM and policing bodies are the actors tasked with law enforcement. Even if the status quo is shifted toward one of the movements, it may be hard to ensure that the terms of the agreement will not be revised later if and when the conditions change.

There are various theoretical critiques of Fearon's model, including (a) cognitive factors involving agents not modifying their beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors with the arrival of new information; (b) domestic politics; (c) the equilibrium solution caused by multiple players; (d) the deviation of actors in their interpretations of the same information; (e) limitations in explaining a conflict's onset related to uncertainty (Gallop 2017; Öztürk 2020; Paine et al. 2020; Spaniel 2023). Another issue is when one or both sides have incentives to misreport their R(i), often leading to distrust in one another's statements or promises. Yet, "[d]istrust can be overcome by making a series of step-by-step agreements in which each side can test the other's good faith at limited cost, or through unilateral concessions as part of a consistent policy" (Larson 1997, p. 702). Thus, the estimation of bargaining ranges across different policy issues that two diametrically opposed social movements may fight

over may help identify dimensions in which the cost of concessions is limited but where good-faith actions are consistent and observable.

6. Conclusions

The year 2020 marked a drastic shift in American social movements. The tragic killing of George Floyd was the exogenous shock that catalyzed the public support around Black Lives Matter as a contending social movement for change. Yet, there is a dynamic and growing polarity between BLM and its countermovement, Blue Lives Matter, which is increasingly becoming a tense socio-political conflict. Researchers today can still learn from this tragedy, find solutions for justice, and improve our understanding of bargaining as we enter the 21st century using interdisciplinary approaches. Most contemporary social movement and policy scholarship considers how new and old movements form and for what purpose, yet less attention focuses on assessing the means to bridging opposing movements through negotiation strategies. The international relations and peace and conflict literature can offer insight into how competing social movements can come to an agreement on policies using bargaining strategies. The results of this mixed-method research indicate the beneficial insights that adapting Fearon's model of the bargaining range to social movements can help discern between policy alternatives by considering each opponent's value for specific policy outcomes, their value for results which are non-negotiable, and the extent to which U.S. government bodies support policy reform targeting systemic violence, unjust policing, and racial discrimination. The quantitative analysis and case studies indicate that each policy option yields different levels of utility. Most top policy alternatives identified in the literature synthesis appear to offer some level of bargaining between PLM and BLM. Yet, there are options that yield negative utility and that are, in other words, riskier and more divisive to bring to the negotiation table than helpful. This analysis helps us understand why some alternatives may ironically create further discord while others may be a *satisficing* starting point to bridging the divide between polarized movements engaged in a socio-political battle.

Fearon's model operates typically on one dimension at one point in time. While settling in one dimension can help to reach an agreement on other dimensions, we must recognize the multi-dimensionality and fluidity of social movement battles. To negotiate finding a policy that both parties will back, there needs to be trust and accountability. There is still much anger and frustration from the Black community, and it can be difficult for the two parties to come together on one term. Yesterday, BLM's policy demands focused on defunding the police and stopping police brutality, yet, today, its policy focus has shifted towards broader political systems, like opposing the Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act of 2021. The size and scale of BLM, as well as its work, continues to evolve. In contrast, PLM remains static in its policy demands, which mainly focus on upholding FOP/police union contracts and their voice, as well as protecting law enforcement rights and safety.

There is potential benefit in considering the *Folk Theorem* of repeated games, as it can indicate whether players with sufficient patience can obtain a cooperative equilibrium of the infinite repeated game. Bargaining itself can be used to isolate equilibrium in repeated games. Yet, as the correlation analysis indicates, the costs associated with policy reform options can influence an opponent's willingness to negotiate. If the costs are small, in terms of the social movement's resources, networks, and prioritized/valued results, there may be a chance for cooperative behavior. But if the costs include clashing levels of value for specific policy results (demands), which exceed the benefits, then not only will bargaining be ineffective but further stark division will also be stoked in a conflict that is already a powder keg.

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Appendix A

Fearon's original model states that actor A and actor B both have preferences for a set of issues, denoted by the interval $X = [0, 1]$ (see Figure 2). In this scenario, actor A's preference for a particular issue resolution increases closer to 1. Actor B instead prefers any outcome approaching 0. In the Fearon model, P is the predicted division of a good because of war. C(A) is the cost of fighting in the war for actor A, while C(B) is the cost of war for actor B. Thus, the total amount of the good/expected utility of war for actor A after the costs of war are considered is $P - C(A)$. Since the costs of war can be high in terms of funding, military resources, and lives lost, "there always exists a set of negotiated settlements that both sides prefer to fighting" (Fearon 1995, p. 387). These negotiation settlements lay between $P - C(A)$ and $P + C(B)$, termed the bargaining range. Any option within this middle range is mutually preferrable (pp. 385–89). There are key assumptions. War can be perceived as a zero-sum-game scenario. Firstly, the rivals recognize that there is a true probability (p) that one side could win the war. Both sides are rational and acknowledge that there are a set of agreements that can be made that all prefer over fighting. Secondly, we assume that both sides are risk-averse or risk-neutral, resistant to gambling with losing the war. The third assumption is that that there is a continuous range of peaceful settlements (from 0 to 1), in which case the "issues in dispute are perfectly divisible, so that there are always feasible bargains between the states' reservation levels $p - CA$ and $p + CB$" (Fearon 1995, p. 389). Assuming that the two actors split the cost of the conflict, it is a win-win. But, if one side gains more out of the agreement, it comes at a cost to the opponent.

Appendix B

Table A1. Correlation analysis of bargaining range and social movement variables.

	Bargaining Range [b]	State Legislation Range [b]	Increase in Govt. Funding [a]	Includes Direct Police Reforming [b]	Comm. Engage Level [a]	Reallocate Police Funds [a]
Aggregate bargaining range	1.00	0.11	−0.03	−0.37 *	−0.22	0.45 **
Sector type	0.11	0.11	−0.23	0.45 **	−0.06	0.22
BLM—priority of policy outcome [b]	0.71 ***	−0.16	0.12	0.33 *	−0.20	0.37 *
C(A) [b]	0.71 ***	−0.47 **	−0.17	0.44 **	−0.04	−0.27
C(B) [b]	0.90 ***	−0.14	0.08	0.23	0.15	0.38 **

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. [a] Scale range: 0—none; 1—some; 2—a lot. [b] Binary range: 0–1.

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