The Dogmatism of Dissent: How Open-Minded Cognition Influences Protest Attitudes

Chad Osteen

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Those who make peaceful revolution impossible make violent revolution inevitable.

-John F. Kennedy
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ABSTRACT

While protestors are often thought of and portrayed as dogmatic actors on the political stage, research has yet to empirically investigate the cognitive processes of protestors. While previous research has investigated how open-minded cognition relates to political party and ideology, its relationship to political activism has remained under studied. This study used a between subject’s design to determine how priming system rejection may affect open-minded cognition and protest attitudes. The sample of 450 participants recruited through Amazon’s Mechanical Turk is based off a power analysis with small to medium effect sizes ($r^2=0.25$) and a power of .95. Using SurveyGizmo software, participants were randomly assigned to either a system rejection or a control condition. Following this, participants completed measures of their political open-mindedness, willingness to participate in two forms of protest, anger towards the government, and demographics. The results explore the varying ways open-minded cognition affects models of political activism and provides early evidence for how open-mindedness may directly affect political activism.
Despite citizen’s activism largely shaping the cultural and political landscape of America as we know it, activism remains a controversial force. Juxtaposed with America’s history of vibrant citizen activism is its underlying culture of what is sometimes referred to as rugged individualism. This is the idea that if one works hard, one can become prosperous in society. These kinds’ meritocratic ideas and other aspects of the Protestant work ethic can be seen in America’s individualistic and laissez-faire capitalistic culture. It is these very forces that act as forces that discourage citizens from becoming politically active (e.g., Bartels, 2008; Jost, Blount, Pfeffer, & Hunyady, 2003; Jost, Pelham, Sheldon, & Sullivan, 2003; McCoy & Major, 2007). Factors such as these act as system justifying beliefs for citizens. These beliefs help defend, bolster, and justify the status quo. Political activism commonly acts in direct opposition to system justifying beliefs and often defined as explicit reactions to the status quo. Empirically tested models that can effectively explain the phenomena of political activism and its related factors remain relatively sparse. While social dominance theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) does provide a general explanation as to why may people may accept oppression, recent models proposed by Jost and his colleagues have been more directly applied to understand political activism (Jost, Chaikalis-Petritis, Abrams, Sidanius, van der Toorn, & Bratt, 2011). Jost and his colleagues have largely focused on the conceptual variables of system justification, affect, and group membership to understand political activism.

While these have been demonstrated to be important factors, there is an important gap in how we understand the cognitive styles of individuals who choose to become politically active. Specifically, how an individual’s level of open-mindedness, or its opposite dogmatism, may
affect the likelihood that the individual becomes politically active. It is the goal of this study to integrate the open-minded cognition literature with the system justification literature to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon of political activism.

Open-Minded Cognition

Open-minded cognition is a cognitive style marked by a willingness to consider and listen to varying viewpoints that may contradict your own. In direct contrast, dogmatism is a closed-minded cognitive style marked by an unwillingness to consider or listen to ideas that may contradict your own (Price, Ottati, Wilson, & Kim, 2015). In previous attempts to capture dogmatism, researchers have conflated it with concepts such as fascism or right-wing authoritarianism. While closed-minded cognition is correlated with intolerance and authoritarianism, it should be said that the political right does not monopolize dogmatic cognition. People on the political left and right can be equally dogmatic or open-minded (Rokeach, 1954; Price, Ottati, Wilson, & Kim, 2015). The Open-Minded Cognition Scale has been validated across general, religious, and political domains while removing the politically right-wing (or left-wing) biases previous scales have had. Furthermore, past scales of dogmatism (e.g. Rokeach, 1954) have typically measured ideological adherence, and have failed to capture how an individual perceives and interprets new information which are core elements of open-minded cognition (Price et al., 2015). Importantly, while open-minded cognition is correlated with trait variables (e.g. need for cognition), situational state factors like the content of the message and current social role of the person have a significant impact on open-minded cognition (Ottati, Price, Wilson, & Sumaktoyo, 2015; Price et al., 2015).

While dogmatism and cognitive rigidity has often been found to correlate with political right and conservatism (Price, Ottati, Wilson, & Kim, 2015), it is not restricted to these
ideologies. Individuals on the extreme left (e.g. communists) can also be dogmatic. This suggests that dogmatism is a distinct phenomenon conceptually separate from ideology.

Research regarding how mood may affect open-mindedness has remained relatively limited. Tentative results demonstrating how open-mindedness can be reciprocal in nature may illuminate how mood may influence open-mindedness. Findings suggest that if someone is rude and closed-minded to us, we are likely to reciprocate this behavior, and vice-versa (Ottati, Wilson, & Price, 2015). With this in mind, it may be hypothesized that this same effect may still exist between an individual, groups, and larger entities, such as the government. If an individual perceives the government as being closed-minded and hostile towards them, they may reciprocate this behavior. Of all the emotions, anger seems to be unique as past research suggests it is the biggest emotional factor in predicting political activism.

The Role of Emotion

Past research suggests that anger is a strong predictor of individuals taking part in collective protest, particularly anger against the perceived source of disadvantage (Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000; Martin, Scully, & Levitt, 1990; Montada & Schneider, 1989; Van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008; Van Zomeren, Spears, Fischer, & Leach, 2004). Anger also appears to be a significant mediator in relationships between measures of system justification, group identification, and different forms of political activism respectively (Jost, Becker, Osborne, & Badaan, 2017; Jost, Chaikalis-Petritsis, Abrams, Sidanius, van der Toorn, & Bratt, 2011; Jost, & Thompson, 2000).

The relationship between system justification and political activism is typically negative, and endorsement of system justifying beliefs is negatively correlated with moral outrage (Wakslak, Jost, Tyler, & Chen, 2007). This moral outrage emerges when citizens perceive that their moral
values (i.e. equality) are being broken or not met. When individuals perceive the government as violating moral values, moral outrage might manifest as anger towards the government. In addition, if the government is not perceived to be reciprocating the individual’s values, this could influence open-mindedness by making a person more dogmatic in response.

Anger towards the government has previously been collected using an adapted two-question measure that asks situation specific questions such as “Because of the governments positions on teachers, I feel angry” (Jost, Becker, Osborne, & Badaan, 2017; Jost, Chaikalis-Petritsis, Abrams, Sidanius, van der Toorn, & Bratt, 2011; Van Zomeren, Spears, Fischer, & Leach, 2004). Because this measure has been reliable across several studies at tapping situation specific anger, it is the best measure to use for the current study tapping into anger towards the government.

**Effect of System Justification**

System-justifying ideologies are often present to alleviate feelings of emotional distress (Jost, Wakslak, & Tyler, 2008). Low scores in system justification often correlate with higher levels of negative emotion. Particularly, anger towards the government tends to be higher for individuals who score low in system justification (Jost et al., 2012). System justification theory postulates that individuals do not act out against unfair or unjust social systems because many individuals have a largely unconscious motivation to defend, bolster, and justify the current status quo (Jost & Banaji, 1994). This motivation to uphold the status quo is inherently in opposition to the common ideas of protest, social change, and civil disobedience. It may not be surprising then that measures of protest and activism are inversely correlated with scores in system justification (Jost et al., 2012; Jost, Becker, Osborne, & Badaan, 2017).
While political elites hold system justifying beliefs in order to justify their higher status in society, poorer individuals often hold system justifying beliefs to reduce cognitive dissonance (Jost, J. T., Glaser, J., Kruglanski, A. W., & Sulloway, F., 2003). This dissonance is presumably created by economic disparities and oppression. System justification often correlates with measures of authoritarianism. When system justifying ideologies are reduced, the likelihood of political activism should increase.

**Background of Political Activism**

A way political protest has been conceptualized in the past is to break it into two subgroups; disruptive and nondisruptive. Disruptive protests are actions that disrupt daily routines and the social order, such as riots and sit-ins. Nondisruptive protests, like the name implies, are protests that are noninvasive to daily life and the social order. This can include petition signing and letter writing (Jost et al., 2012). Though it may be expected that anger (and group anger) would be associated with increased disruptive protest, nondisruptive actually tends to be more significantly associated with anger (Jost, Becker, Osborne, & Badaan, 2017; Jost, Chaikalis-Petrtsis, Abrams, Sidanius, van der Toorn, & Bratt, 2011; Tausch, Becker, Spears, Christ, Saab, Singh, & Siddiqui, 2011). It is for this reason that while this study will measure both types of protest, it is hypothesized that effects on nondisruptive protest will resemble previous data and be stronger than effects on disruptive protest.

**Integrated Models of Political Activism**

The current study suggests integrating the variables discussed above into a cohesive open-minded cognition-based model of political activism. Based upon the abovementioned literature and arguments, eleven total hypotheses will be posited to test the existence of such a model.
Previous studies have demonstrated that individuals who have been primed to reject system justifying beliefs through a writing task are more likely to protest relative to compared control groups (Jost, Becker, Osborne, & Badaan, 2017; Jost, Chaikalis-Petritsis, Abrams, Sidanius, van der Toorn, & Bratt, 2011). As such, Hypothesis 1 seeks to reaffirm these findings by positing that individuals put into a manipulated System Rejection condition will be more likely to protest (i.e. score higher on both measures of disruptive and nondisruptive protest) relative to a Control Condition. System justifying beliefs are often positively correlated with conservatism and Republican partisanship, while being negatively associated with liberalism and Democrat partisanship (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost et al., 2012; Jost, Becker, Osborne, & Badaan, 2017). Hypothesis 2 posits that Conservatism will be associated with a decrease in political protest. Similarly, Hypothesis 3 posits that partisan identification as a Republican will be associated with a decrease in political protest. Hypothesis 4 posits that anger at the government will increase political protest attitudes. Hypothesis 5 posits that higher scores in Political Open-Minded Cognition (POMC) will be associated with a decrease in political protest. In other words, dogmatic cognition will be associated with increases in protest.

Considering how system justification, ideology, part identification, and open-minded cognition have been demonstrated to influence protest in the past, Hypothesis 6 suggests that these variables may combine to have an additive effect on political protest (Price, Ottati, Wilson, & Kim, 2015). However, it is also possible that these variables will combine in an interactive manner. Hypothesis 7 suggests that the effect of manipulating system justification (control versus system rejection conditions) on political protest will be magnified for people low in POMC (i.e. POMC moderates the effect of system justification on political protest) (see Figure 1. And appendix).
Rather than POMC acting as a moderator, Hypothesis 8 posits that system justifications effect on political protest could be magnified for people who are relatively high in anger towards the government (see Figure 2).

Finally, Hypothesis 9 posits that the effect of system justification on political protest will be magnified only among people who are both low in POMC and high in anger towards the government (see Figure 3).
While Hypotheses 6 through 9 consider additive effects and moderation, they fail to consider possibility of mediation effects. Anger towards the government (and anger in general) has been demonstrated to be an important mediator in previous models of political activism and protest (Jost, Becker, Osborne, & Badaan, 2017; Jost, Chaikalis-Petritsis, Abrams, Sidanius, van der Toorn, & Bratt, 2011). The last two hypotheses consider the mediating role anger towards the government may have on political activism. Hypothesis 10 posits a simple mediation model where anger towards the government mediates the main effect of system justification on political protest (see Figure 4).

Hypothesis 11 suggests a more complex model of moderated-mediation. Specifically, this hypothesis predicts that the effect described in hypothesis 8 will be mediated by anger. That is, the two-way interaction between political open-minded cognition and system rejection will produce an effect on political activism that is mediated by anger toward the government. With
this model, it is predicted that individuals who are in the system rejection condition and score low in measures of POMC (i.e. are more dogmatic) will score higher on measures of anger towards the government, and thus will be more likely to engage in political protest (see Figure 5).

**Figure 5.**

![Diagram](image)

Finally, it should be stated that while these hypotheses have predicted effects for political protest in general, it is expected that effects will be more evident when predicting for nondisruptive protest than when predicting for disruptive protest.

Open-minded cognition has previously been demonstrated to correlate with constructs like system justification, political ideology, and party identification. Yet, no past research has sought to further explore their relationships or how open-minded cognition may influence an individual’s likelihood of becoming politically active. The current study seeks to expand the current literature by exploring that very topic. The current study suggests that self-report scores for both disruptive and nondisruptive protest will be highest for individuals with low system justification, high anger, and low scores in open-minded cognition.¹

---

¹ While the current study does suggest that dogmatism facilitates protest attitudes and behaviors, it should be stated that dogmatism does not have to be negative. For example, if someone encountered a politician who was suggesting ethnic cleansing as a solution to issues of overpopulation, it would be expected that the individual would be dogmatically opposed to such suggestions. This might increase the likelihood the individual will engage in protest. With this in mind, the current study does not seek to frame individuals who are politically active negatively, rather people who are dedicated to what they believe in.
Method

Sample

In order to have enough power to detect the smallest effects present in a mediated-moderation model, 475 participants were recruited to complete an online SurveyGizmo survey through Amazon’s Mechanical Turk (or M-Turk) (Fritz & MacKinnon, 2007) during the spring of 2017.

Procedure

Participants were randomly assigned to either a system rejection condition or a control condition. This involved a modified form of a writing task where participants were given a prompt asking them what parts of the American political system, they would suggest other countries not use. This task was used with the intention to lower participant’s system justifying beliefs, hence the condition name “system rejection”. The control condition contained an unrelated writing prompt where the participant was asked to write about their favorite television shows (Jost, Chaikalis-Petritsis, Abrams, Sidanius, van der Toorn, & Bratt, 2011).

After completing that, participants completed a measure of the participant’s willingness to protest on a 7-point scale (1 = not at all, 7 = very much so). This was then broken down into nondisruptive and disruptive forms of protest. The disruptive form indicated how willing the person would be to occupy a public space as a form of protest, while the nondisruptive form indicated how likely the participant would be to write a letter or email a government official as a sign of protest.

Next, participants completed a measure of open-mindedness. Because the domain of this study is political in nature, the Political Open-Minded Cognition, or POMC, was used (Price, Ottati, Wilson, & Kim, 2015). This includes a 6-question survey with a 7-point scale ranging
from 1= *Strongly Disagree*, to 7= *Strongly Agree*. An example question being “I have no patience for political arguments I disagree with” (reverse scored).

Anger towards government was then measured by adapting items from Van Zomeren et al. (2004). These items specifically tap anger towards the government (Jost et al., 2011). Responses were measured on a 7-point scale ranging from 1= *Strongly Disagree*, to 7= *Strongly Agree*.

Finally, the participant completed several demographic measures including questions regarding their age, ideological affiliation, party affiliation, gender identity, and level of education.

**Results**

Due to incomplete data, only 450 of the participant’s data were usable and all-incomplete data were excluded from final analyses. The sample was equally representative of men and women but did underrepresent transgender and gender non-conforming individuals (52% female, 47% male, >1% non-binary, >1% transgender). The sample mean age was approximately middle-aged ($M = 37.7$, $SD = 12.48$) with 79.1% of the sample reporting on having a 2-year college degree or higher. 53.8% of the population identified as at least slightly Liberal, 29.6% identified as at least slightly Conservative, and the remainder of the sample identified as “Middle Of The Road”. Party was similar to ideology as 54.2% of participants identified as at least slightly Democrat, 27.3% identified as at least slightly Republican, and the remainder identified as “Middle Of The Road”. Taken all together, the sample leaned slightly liberal in ideology ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 2.40$) and slightly Democratic in party identification ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 2.31$). As is common with Mturk samples, it is biased to more educated individuals and slightly left in both party and ideology. It is however, moderate in both political measures and balanced in its representation of men and women making it a decent generalizable sample.
A t-test analysis examined the effect condition had on the continuous measures of ideology, party identification, POMC, anger towards the government, non-disruptive and disruptive protest (see Table 1). Results indicated that condition failed to significantly affect any of the above-mentioned continuous measures. That is, the system-rejection manipulation condition was not associated with any significant differences from the control condition manipulation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Effect of System Justification (Control versus System Justification) on Continuous Measures.</th>
<th>M\textsubscript{Cont}</th>
<th>SD\textsubscript{Cont}</th>
<th>M\textsubscript{SJ}</th>
<th>SD\textsubscript{SJ}</th>
<th>T-Test</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>-0.595, df=448</td>
<td>0.552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party ID</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>-0.783, df=448</td>
<td>0.434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POMC</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>0.069, df=448</td>
<td>0.945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger towards the government</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>-1.328, df=448</td>
<td>0.185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Disruptive Protest</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>-1.069, df=448</td>
<td>0.286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disruptive Protest</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>-0.800, df=448</td>
<td>0.424</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The continuous measures of ideology, party identification, POMC, anger towards the government, non-disruptive protest, and disruptive protest were then tested to see the extent to which they correlated with one another. The correlation matrix is shown in Table 2.

Unsurprisingly, ideology positively correlated strongly with party identification ($r(450) = .87, p < .01$). Disruptive and non-disruptive protest were significantly positively correlated, however only moderately ($r(450) = .52, p < .01$). Ideology significantly correlated negatively with anger towards the government ($r(450) = -.33, p < .01$) and disruptive protest ($r(450) = -.30, p < .01$), though the relationship was weak. Similarly, party identification also had a significant but weak negative correlation with anger towards the government ($r(450) = -.28, p < .01$) and disruptive protest ($r(450) = -.27, p < .01$). Both Ideology and party identification failed to significantly correlate with POMC and non-disruptive protest. POMC negatively correlated with anger.
towards the government \( (r(450) = -0.16, p < .01) \) and correlated positively with both disruptive protest \( (r(450) = 0.15, p < .01) \) and non-disruptive \( (r(450) = 0.29, p < .01) \). Anger towards the government did significantly correlate positively with both disruptive and non-disruptive protest. Despite both being significant, only disruptive protest meets the threshold for even a weak relationship with anger towards the government. It is interesting to note that only POMC and anger towards the government were significant for non-disruptive protest and even then, the correlation values suggest the relationship does not even meet the traditional threshold for a weak relationship of \( r = 0.30 \). On the other hand, disruptive protest significantly had a weak to moderate relationship with all the measures, except party identification and POMC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Correlations Between Continuous Measures.</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ideology</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Party ID</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.874**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. POMC</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.038</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Anger towards the government</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.333**</td>
<td>-0.284**</td>
<td>-0.158**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Non-Disruptive Protest</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.054</td>
<td>-0.074</td>
<td>0.287**</td>
<td>0.202**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Disruptive Protest</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.301**</td>
<td>-0.268**</td>
<td>0.154**</td>
<td>0.301**</td>
<td>0.524**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(+=p<.10, *=p<.05, **p<.01\)

Predicting Disruptive Protest – Bivariate Analyses

From the t-test analyses and correlation matrixes, the validity of Hypotheses 1-5 can be addressed for disruptive protest. The system-rejection condition failed to significantly affect any continuous measures, finding no support for Hypothesis 1. That is, individuals in the system rejection condition were no more likely to score higher on measures of disruptive protest than those in the control condition. Support was found for Hypotheses 2 and 3 as both party identification and ideology significantly correlated negatively with disruptive protest. The more an individual identified as a conservative or with the Republican Party, the less likely they were
to score higher on measures of disruptive protest. Despite being a weak relationship, support for Hypothesis 4 was found as anger towards the government had a significant positive relationship with measures of disruptive protest. Hypothesis 5 was not supported as the opposite effect than what was posited was found. POMC was positively correlated with disruptive protest rather than negatively. This effect was however marginal despite its significance.

**Predicting Disruptive Protest – Regression Analyses**

Before any regression analyses were completed, the predictor independent variables of ideology, party identification, anger towards the government, POMC, and the system-rejection condition were recoded into centered variables. This was done by performing linear transformations on all the continuous predictors by first normalizing the variable and dividing the normalized variables by two. In other words, each independent variable was centered by subtracting independent variables value by the variables mean. This value was then divided by the variable’s standard deviation, and then this value was divided by two (E.g. Centered IV = ((IV – MIV) / (SDIV) / 2). The outcome of this ensures the following for every centered predictor; the mean is zero, the standard deviation is equal to 0.5, the unstandardized regression coefficient for the main effect model (see Model 1 of Table 3.) captures the change along the y-axis when moving from one standard deviation below the predictor mean to one standard deviation above the predictor mean on the x-axis.

Regression analyses used the new centered independent variable predictors of ideology, party identification, anger towards the government, POMC, and system-rejection condition to test if any significantly predicted participant’s ratings on disruptive protest. Analysis were broken down into three models. Model 1 tested for main and additive effects using single predictors and their impact on disruptive protest, Model 2 tested for two-way interactions
between all centered independent variables, and Model 3 tested for the existence of a possible three-way interaction between anger towards the government, POMC, and system-rejection condition (see Table 3.).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>1.248**</td>
<td>1.284**</td>
<td>1.243*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>-0.822*</td>
<td>-0.819*</td>
<td>-0.834*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party ID</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.017</td>
<td>0.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger Towards the Government (A)</td>
<td>0.355**</td>
<td>0.331**</td>
<td>0.330**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POMC (P)</td>
<td>0.315**</td>
<td>0.315**</td>
<td>0.325**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Rejection Condition (SR)</td>
<td>0.102</td>
<td>0.099</td>
<td>0.067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A * P</td>
<td>0.341</td>
<td>0.336</td>
<td>0.336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A * SJ</td>
<td>-0.668</td>
<td>-0.546</td>
<td>-0.467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P* SJ</td>
<td>-0.484</td>
<td>-0.331</td>
<td>-0.331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A * P * SJ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.174**</td>
<td>0.181**</td>
<td>0.184**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F for change in R²</td>
<td>14.812**</td>
<td>1.303</td>
<td>1.823</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results of the regression for Model 1 testing for main effects significantly predicted participant reports of disruptive protest. The model explained 17.4% of the variance for disruptive protest ($R^2 = 17.4$, $F(3, 444) = 18.65$, $p<.001$). The analysis indicated that the three predictors of ideology ($\beta = -0.82$, $p<.05$), anger towards the government ($\beta = .355$, $p<.01$), and POMC ($\beta = .32$, $p<.01$), significantly predicted responses on disruptive protest. This regression model was indicated a significant value of $F = 14.81$, $p<.01$ for the change in $r$-squared, suggesting additive effects as more variance was explained with the additional predictors. With system rejection condition and party identification both being non-significant, Hypotheses 1 and 3 continue to have no support. However, the results from the regression present further support for Hypotheses 2 and 4 as anger towards the government and ideology were both found to be
significant predictors of disruptive protest. Hypothesis 5 was not supported, despite political open-minded cognition being revealed to be a significant predictor of disruptive protest, due to the fact it once again demonstrated to be a positive association and not a negative as was predicted. In other words, open-mindedness and not dogmatism predicted disruptive protest responses.

Regression results for Model 2 testing for two-way interactions failed to find any such significant combinations between anger towards the government, system rejection condition, and POMC. Model 2 did remain significant due to the fact that ideology ($\beta = -.82, p<.05$), POMC ($\beta = .33, p<.01$), and anger towards the government ($\beta = .32, p<.01$) all remained significant predictors of disruptive protest. The amount of variance explained by this model related to disruptive protest did increase, but by a rather negligible amount of less than a percent to 18% ($R^2 = 18.1, F(3, 441) = 12.17, p<.001$). Unlike Model 1, the F value for the change in $R^2$ was not significant, suggesting the model did not significantly improve testing for two-way interactions. No evidence was found to support system justification had a significant influence on protest, nor that POMC or anger towards the government may influence this relationship in a significant manner. These findings fail to support hypotheses 7 or 8.

The results from the regression for Model 3 tested for a three-way interaction between anger towards the government, POMC, and system rejection condition. The results were similar to Model 2 as no interaction effects were found despite the model remaining significant due to ideology ($\beta = -.83, p<.05$), POMC ($\beta = .33, p<.01$), and anger towards the government ($\beta = .33, p<.01$) remained significant predictors of disruptive protest ($R^2 = 18.4, F(1, 440) = 11.04, p<.01$). This model explains three-tenths more of the variance than the previous Model 2, which is to say an insignificant greater amount of variance. Like Model 2, the F value for the change in $R^2$ was
not significant. None of the interactions tested through these regression analyses revealed any significant results. Low POMC and high anger towards the government did not predict any kind of magnification of the relationship between system rejection cognition and protest attitudes as this relationship and the three-way interaction was insignificant. This indicates that these data find no support for the interaction Hypotheses 7-9.

To test for the possible mediation effect, as posited in Hypothesis 10, a similar regression was run predicting Anger, instead of disruptive protest, and the interaction terms of anger towards the government, system-justification condition, and POMC. No interaction terms were found to be significant when predicting anger towards the government with system-rejection condition or political open-minded cognition. These results, in tandem with the null results found for effects of system rejection condition (Hypothesis 1), suggest that no mediational effect exist and thus Hypothesis 10 was not supported. Furthermore, this casts doubt on Hypothesis 11 as no support exists for the foundations of the hypothesis with no relationship between system justification and disruptive protest, and no support for a mediation effect existing. What these data do suggest is support for additive effects posited by Hypothesis 6. In this case, the additive Model 1 presents the best fit for the data to predict disruptive protest.

Predicting Nondisruptive Protest – Bivariate Analyses

The correlation and t-test findings shown in Tables 1 and 2 also address Hypotheses 1-5 as they pertain to non-disruptive protest. As was previously stated with disruptive protest, the system-rejection condition failed to significantly affect any continuous measures, therefor Hypothesis 1 was not supported. While ideology and party identification were both trending negatively in association with non-disruptive protest, the relationship failed to be significant. Based from this, Hypotheses 2 and 3 were not supported. Hypothesis 4 was supported, but the
relationship was weak. Anger towards the government significantly correlated positively with non-disruptive protest, though this too demonstrated a weak relationship. Hypothesis 5 was not supported and, like disruptive protest, was found to be significant with a positive relationship rather than the predicted negative relationship. In addition, the relationship for anger towards the government and non-disruptive protest was revealed to be almost twice as strong compared to its relationship with disruptive protest, though this still only amounted to the threshold of a typical weak relationship.

**Predicting Nondisruptive Protest – Regression Analyses**

As was discussed in the “Predicting Disruptive Protest – Regression Analysis” section, all predictor independent variables were centered before regression analyses were run. To review, before any regression analyses were completed, the predictor independent variables of ideology, party identification, anger towards the government, POMC, and system-rejection condition were recoded into centered variables. This was done by performing linear transformations on all the continuous predictors by first normalizing the variable and dividing the normalized variables by two. That is, each independent variable was centered by subtracting independent variables value by the variables mean. This value was then divided by the variable’s standard deviation, and then this value was divided by two (E.g. Centered IV = ((IV – MIV) / (SDIV) / 2). The outcome of this ensures the following for every centered predictor; the mean is zero, the standard deviation is equal to 0.5, the unstandardized regression coefficient for the main effect model (see Model 1 of Table 4.) captures the change along the y-axis when moving from one standard deviation below the predictor mean to one standard deviation above the predictor mean on the x-axis. Regression analyses used only the centered independent variable predictors of ideology, party identification, anger towards the government, POMC, and system-rejection
condition to test if any significantly predicted participants ratings on non-disruptive protest.

Analysis were broken down into three models. Model 1 tested for main and additive effects using single predictors and their impact on non-disruptive protest, Model 2 tested for two-way interactions between anger towards the government, POMC, and system rejection condition, and Model 3 tested for the existence of a possible three-way interaction between anger towards the government, POMC, and system-rejection condition (see Table 4.).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4. Non-Disruptive Protest Regression</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>1.005*</td>
<td>0.448</td>
<td>1.046*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>0.344</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party ID</td>
<td>-0.259</td>
<td>0.316</td>
<td>-0.256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger Towards the Government (A)</td>
<td>0.316**</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.313**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POMC (P)</td>
<td>0.488**</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>0.484**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Rejection Condition (SR)</td>
<td>0.115</td>
<td>0.153</td>
<td>0.114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A * P</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td>0.415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A * SJ</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.194</td>
<td>0.469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P* SJ</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.107</td>
<td>0.312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A * P * SJ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.149**</td>
<td>0.150**</td>
<td>0.153**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F for change in R²</td>
<td>24.823**</td>
<td>0.141</td>
<td>1.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results of the regression for Model 1 testing for main and additive effects significantly predicted participant reports of disruptive protest. The model explained approximately 15% of the variance for disruptive protest ($R^2 = .15, F(3, 444) = 15.52, p<.01$). The analysis indicated that the two predictors of anger towards the government ($\beta = .32, p<.01$), and POMC ($\beta = .49, p<.01$), significantly predicted responses on nondisruptive protest. This regression model was indicated a significant value of $F = 24.82, p<.01$ for the change in r-squared, suggesting more variance was explained with the additional predictors. Similar to what was found with disruptive protest, system rejection condition and party identification were both found to be non-significant.
Anger towards the government was found to be a significant predictor of non-disruptive protest like it was for disruptive protest. However, unlike disruptive protest, ideology was not found to be a significant predictor of nondisruptive protest. These results indicate no support for Hypothesis 1-3 but continued support for Hypothesis 4. POMC was found to be significantly positively associated with non-disruptive protest rather than negatively associated as was posited by Hypothesis 5. The beta-coefficient for POMC was higher here when predicting nondisruptive protest than it was in disruptive protest, but both results are equally significant.

Mirroring disruptive protest, regression results for Model 2 testing for two-way interactions failed to find any such significant combinations between anger towards the government, system rejection condition, and POMC when predicting for non-disruptive protest, though the model remained significant. Both anger towards the government ($\beta = .31, p<.01$) and political open-minded cognition ($\beta = .48, p<.01$) remained significant predictors. The amount of variance in non-disruptive protest did increase with this model, but by an extremely negligible amount ($R^2 = 15, F(3, 441) = 9.69, p<.001$). The F value for the change in r-squared was not significant, suggesting the model did not significantly improve by considering two-way interactions. These data fail to find that anger towards the government or POMC significantly affect the relationship between system justification and protest, thus there is no support for hypothesis 7 and 8.

The results from the regression for Model 3 tested for a three-way interaction between anger towards the government, POMC, and system rejection condition. The results were similar to Model 2 as no interaction effects were found despite the model remaining significant due to the main effects of anger towards the government ($\beta = .31, p<.01$) and POMC ($\beta = .49, p<.01$) remaining significant predictors ($R^2 = 18.4, F(1, 440) = 8.85, p<.001$). The F value for the
change in $R^2$ was not significant as it was in Model 2 and only explained three-tenths more of the variance overall. None of the interactions tested through these regression analyses revealed any significant results. POMC and anger towards the government failed to have any significant influence on the relationship between system-justification condition and protest. In sum, this indicates that these data find no support for Hypotheses 7-9 for non-disruptive protest as it did for disruptive protest interaction terms.

Mediation effects as predicted through Hypothesis 10 were investigated again running a similar regression as was used to predict nondisruptive protest, except Anger towards the government replaced non-disruptive protest as the dependent variable. Interaction terms of anger towards the government, system-justification condition, and POMC were ran to see if any mediational effects existed. No interaction terms were found to be significant when predicting anger towards the government with system-rejection condition or POMC. Taken in sum with the results from disruptive protest regressions and nondisruptive regressions finding no support for Hypothesis 3, Hypothesis 10 can be said to be thoroughly unsupported. This further suggests no support for moderated mediation as posited by Hypothesis 11 as no support for the foundations of the hypothesis were found. No relationship was found between system justification and non-disruptive protest, and no support for a mediation effect was found. Hypothesis 6 was once again supported, finding the additive Model 1 presents the best fit for the data in regard to both disruptive and non-disruptive protest.

Results of Exploratory Analyses

As part of an exploratory analysis, these data were additionally analyzed utilizing Hayes (2013) regression analysis software PROCESS version 3 software for SPSS to effectively test
hypothesized relationships of mediation, moderation, and moderated mediation respectively (Hypotheses 10 and 11). The parameters of all regression Process analyses conducted utilized a bootstrap estimation to approach with 5000 samples and a confidence interval of 99% to best reduce type 2 error.

Similar to what was found through the regression analyses, condition was consistently found to not significantly predict any outcome, but the PROCESS models themselves were found to still be significant. This was explained by similar findings as to what was discovered in the regression analysis. For disruptive protest, ideology, anger towards the government, and POMC were all significant predictors. For non-disruptive protest, only POMC and anger towards the government were found to be significant predictors. No interaction terms were found to be significant yet again. POMC consistently emerged as a significant predictor of both anger towards the government, and both forms of protest (disruptive and non-disruptive). In addition, and perhaps unsurprisingly, party identification and ideology were found to be significant and collinear in predicting protest responses. Even when controlling for the effect of party identification and ideology on activism, POMC remained significant in the first link of the mediation model. POMC significantly ($p < .001$) inversely predictive of anger towards the government accounting for about 13% of the variance predicting to government ($R^2 = .136$) ($b = -0.20, SE = .055$). Anger towards the government was then significantly positively predictive of willingness to protest ($b = 0.329, SE = .050, p < .001$). These findings are similar as to what can be seen in Table 2, as POMC negatively correlated with anger towards the government, and anger towards the government positively correlated with both disruptive and non-disruptive protest.
The predictability of POMC of anger towards the government is the same for both disruptive and non-disruptive protest but only accounted for about 2% of the variance ($R^2 = .0249, b = -0.196, SE = .0581, p < .001$). Anger towards the government significantly predicts about 14% of the variance for non-disruptive protest ($R^2 = .1453, b = 0.305, SE = .0663, p < .001$). Anger towards the government also significantly predicted willingness to become involved in disruptive protest to a similar degree ($R^2 = .1322, b = 0.335, SE = .0722, p < .001$). Though significant results were found for the model and individual factors, there still remains doubt on the existence of a mediation effect and a moderated-mediation effect as the regression models found no such evidence for interaction terms.

**Discussion**

The results of this experiment suggest that open-minded cognition, and specifically political open-minded cognition, is a valuable construct in predicting individual’s willingness to participate in both disruptive and non-disruptive protest. What is interesting about these results though is that rather than dogmatism being associated with greater willingness to protest, it is open-mindedness that seems to predict responses.

The role of condition using Jost and his colleague’s system rejection manipulation failed to significantly impact any form of protest in this research study (Jost, Becker, Osborne, & Badaan, 2017; Jost, Chaikalis-Petritsis, Abrams, Sidanius, van der Toorn, & Bratt, 2011). This null result came as an interesting finding as this manipulation has been used effectively multiple times by Jost and the association between low system justification and protest has been demonstrated by numerous other researchers. With these data findings, Hypothesis 1 could not be supported. This also meant that, without this initial link of the system rejection condition being associated with higher protest scores, Hypothesis 7-11 were at a great disadvantage for
finding any kind of support. The regression analyses also demonstrated no support hypotheses relating to moderation or mediation. The remaining Hypotheses of 2-5 however did all find support in some way shape or form.

Hypotheses 2 and 3 posited that Republican Partisan and Conservatism would be negatively associated with scores in both disruptive and non-disruptive protest. Though the results largely mirrored previous results demonstrating this trend (E.g. Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost et al., 2012; Jost, Becker, Osborne, & Badaan, 2017), the story is rather complicated, and ideology seemed to end up being the stronger predictor of protest responses. Results for disruptive protest followed this past trend exactly with both Republican partisanship and Conservatism negatively correlating with responses for disruptive protest. For non-disruptive protest, while results were trending in the negative direction, both Republican partisanship and Conservatism failed to significantly correlate with non-disruptive protest. Regressions revealed that Republican partisan was non-significant in predicting both disruptive and non-disruptive protest. Further, conservative ideology was only associated with predicting disruptive protest and not non-disruptive protest. Despite ideology and party identification being a bit hit and miss in their association with protest, anger towards the government and political open-minded cognition consistently demonstrated to significantly be associated with and predict both forms of protest.

Consistent support was found for Hypothesis 4 across correlation and regression results as anger towards the government was consistently found to be positively associated and predictive of both disruptive and non-disruptive protest. These findings validate past research that have found emotions of anger to be associated with varying measures of protest attitudes and outcomes (Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000; Martin, Scully, & Levitt, 1990; Montada & Schneider, 1989; Van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008; Van Zomeren, Spears, Fischer, &
Leach, 2004). It should be stated though that while anger does seem to be a significant factor for collective action and protest, it only provided a mostly weak effect in predicting protest. Anger was demonstrated to have a slightly higher association and predictive ability with disruptive protest over non-disruptive protest. As anger is commonly found to be an approach and confrontation motivating emotion, it makes sense that anger was found to be associated with a more confrontational, rather than passive, protest style.

Open-minded cognition has previously been demonstrated to negatively correlate with measures of system justification, conservatism, and republican partisanship (Price et al., 2015). Conversely, open-minded cognition has been demonstrated to positively correlate with liberalism. While Hypothesis 5 posited that open-minded cognition would be negatively associated with protest (i.e. dogmatism) and would manifest in a unique fashion apart from ideology or party, the opposite was found. If fact, political open-minded cognition was positively associated with both non-disruptive and disruptive protest. Political open-minded cognition was slightly more predictive and had a higher correlation with non-disruptive protest than disruptive protest, but it remained significant across the different analyses. These results are consistent with past research that suggests liberals (and the political left in general) are more open-minded than conservatives and the political right. The results do not suggest that open-mindedness in a unique construct in terms of protest because of this political association and additive effects. So, what do we make of these results? Are protest and protest attitudes more associated with the political left than the political right? Though this is one possibility, there is another possibility. Protest was measured as a willingness to protest, this study tapped political protest attitudes rather than protest behaviors. Open-minded cognition, in addition to being correlated with liberalism, is also correlated with openness to experience (Price et al., 2015). In this case, these data may be
expressing a more open-ness to the protest as a possibility rather than speaking to the fact that people who protest are open-minded. The key difference may be the context and situation in which the protest attitudes and responses are collected. That is, that measuring open-minded cognition during a protest event or other form of collective action may yet yield different results as performing an action and considering actions are very different concepts. While open-mindedness may be positively associated with considering protest behaviors, it may be negatively associated with actual participation in protest behaviors. Another take-away could be that is it really is that individuals who participate in protest behaviors really are more open-minded people rather than dogmatic individuals. Open-minded cognition was measured as a personality trait continuous measure and was not manipulated so this possibility would still be in line with the data as well.

In addition to POMC’s relationship with protest, its negative association with anger towards the government raises some interesting questions. While mediation models were not supported, the effect remains. Political views can often overlap and intertwine with an individual’s central moral views about the world (Haidt & Graham, 2007; Shweder, Much, Mahapatra, & Park, 1997; Rozin et al., 1999). Because violations of morals can often lead to emotional reactions, this may explain why people who are more dogmatic have higher anger towards the government. This may be rooted in perceptions of the government violating a moral value, thus eliciting anger. Motivations to face the violator, in this case the government, may then become conflated with the anger emotion itself leading to open-mind cognition significantly relating to both anger towards the government and the willingness to become active in protest activities. Though no interaction terms were found between anger towards the government and
political open-minded cognition, the two were significantly negatively correlated with one another and were found to be significant in additive models.

While no mediation or interaction effects were found, Hypothesis 6 was supported across non-disruptive and disruptive protest as evidence for additive effects including anger towards the government, political open-minded cognition, and ideology (for only disruptive protest.). It is unclear what this may mean but Model 1 for both disruptive and non-disruptive protest suggest significant additive effects with anger towards the government and POMC being the strongest predictors of protest.

**Limitations and Future Directions**

As this is the first study to this authors knowledge of open-minded cognition being used in a model of collective action and protest, many questions are left unanswered and will need to be addressed by future research. Political activism was measured as an attitude for both disruptive and non-disruptive protest. Behavioral attitudes and intentions do not always predict actual behavioral outcomes. Because there was no measure to capture behavioral outcomes, which does not always translate into actual behaviors. Future research should seek to further investigate open-minded cognitions role in collective action and activism by adding behavioral outcome measures such as petition as petition signing or attendance at a pertinent event. Investigating behavioral intention and actual behavioral outcomes in one study may serve to better understand the differences found in this study between disruptive and non-disruptive protest. Another avenue of study should include research how manipulating open-minded cognition may impact measures of political activism and collective action. If open-mindedness as a trait really is associated with greater willingness to participate in varying forms of protest, then this effect should be seen in studies manipulating individuals into high and low open-minded
cognition conditions and find high open-minded conditions score higher in measures of protest attitudes and behavior.

It should be noted that, due to the loss of 15 participants because of incomplete data, this puts the sample size for this study below the recommended 462 participants suggested by Fritz and Mackinnon (2007) to complete a properly powered bias-corrected bootstrap and test for moderated-mediation effects. Though there is only a 12-participant difference between the recommended sample size and the sample of this study, this could have impacted results when testing for mediation and moderated mediation as posited by Hypotheses 10 and 11. Furthermore, the sample biases of education, and left leaning ideology and party may impact the generalizability of these results. Claims and findings regarding conservatives and Republicans may not be as robust in their reproducibility and generalizability compared to the liberals and Democrats.

While no effect of system-rejection condition was found to be associated with protest in these data, it cannot be conclusively stated whether or not system justification is not associated with protest responses. With no measure of system-justification included in this study to serve as a manipulation check, it is unclear as to whether or not the manipulation simply was not strong enough, or if system justification was not related to willingness to protest in this instance.

This line of research presents many new possibilities for avenues of research considering open-mindedness as a facilitator of different forms of political activism and collective action. While just one study was presented, the fact political open-minded cognition was consistently found to be significantly associated with protest responses signifies the importance of further researching it as an important construct in the collective action literature.
APPENDIX A

GRAPHS OF HYPOTHOSIZED INTERACTIONS
Figure 6. Hypothesized moderation effects of POMC on the interaction of system rejection conditions and protest
APPENDIX B

MANIPULATION PROMPTS
On the following page you will be asked to write about a given prompt for 3 minutes. Please try to answer the prompt thoroughly as possible and write until time is up. Once time is up, the survey will automatically progress.

Please Click “Next”
WRITING PROMPT: Please use the space below to give your thoughts on the following prompt

What is your favorite television show? Why?
On the following page you will be asked to write about a given prompt for 3 minutes. Please try to answer the prompt thoroughly as possible and write until time is up. Once time is up, the survey will automatically progress.

Please Click “Next”
WRITING PROMPT: Please use the space below to give your thoughts on the following prompt

What aspect of the American political system would you suggest other countries *not use*?
APPENDIX C

ANGER TOWARDS THE GOVERNMENT MEASURE
Please indicate your disagreement or agreement with the following statements.

1. Because of the government’s positions on domestic affairs, I feel angry

   Strongly Disagree 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   Strongly Agree

2. Because of the government’s positions on foreign policy, I feel angry

   Strongly Disagree 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   Strongly Agree

3. Overall, I experience little anger towards the government

   Strongly Disagree 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   Strongly Agree
APPENDIX D

POLITICAL OPEN-MINDED COGNITION SCALE
Please indicate your disagreement or agreement with the following statements.

1. When thinking about a political issue, I consider as many different opinions as possible.
   Strongly Disagree 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Strongly Agree

2. I often “tune out” political messages I disagree with.
   Strongly Disagree 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Strongly Agree

3. I believe it is a waste of time to pay attention to certain political ideas.
   Strongly Disagree 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Strongly Agree

4. I try to reserve judgment until I have a chance to hear arguments from both sides of a political issue.
   Strongly Disagree 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Strongly Agree

5. I have no patience for political arguments I disagree with.
   Strongly Disagree 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Strongly Agree

6. When it comes to politics, I am open to considering other viewpoints.
   Strongly Disagree 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Strongly Agree
APPENDIX E

MEASURE OF PROTEST ATTITUDES
Please indicate your disagreement or agreement with the following statements.

1. I am willing to write my representatives regarding something I believe should change.
   Strongly Disagree 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Strongly Agree

2. I am willing to call my representatives regarding something the Government should change.
   Strongly Disagree 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Strongly Agree

3. I am willing to take part in a protest regarding something I believe should change.
   Strongly Disagree 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Strongly Agree

4. I would be willing to be involved in a sit-in pertaining to something I believe should be changed.
   Strongly Disagree 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Strongly Agree
APPENDIX F

DEMOGRAPHIC MEASURES
**Demographic measures**

What is your age? _____________

Please select your gender

[Male, Female, Transgender, Non-Binary, Other]

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

[some high school; high school or GED; some college; 2-year degree; 4-year degree; Master's degree; Doctoral degree; Professional degree (MD or JD); Other]

Where would you place yourself on this political spectrum?

[1=Strong liberal, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9=Strong conservative]

If you had to choose, where would you place yourself on this political spectrum?

[1=Strong Democrat, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9=Strong Republican]

Do you have any thoughts or guesses about what this study was about?

[open-ended] ____________________________
REFERENCE LIST


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VITA

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