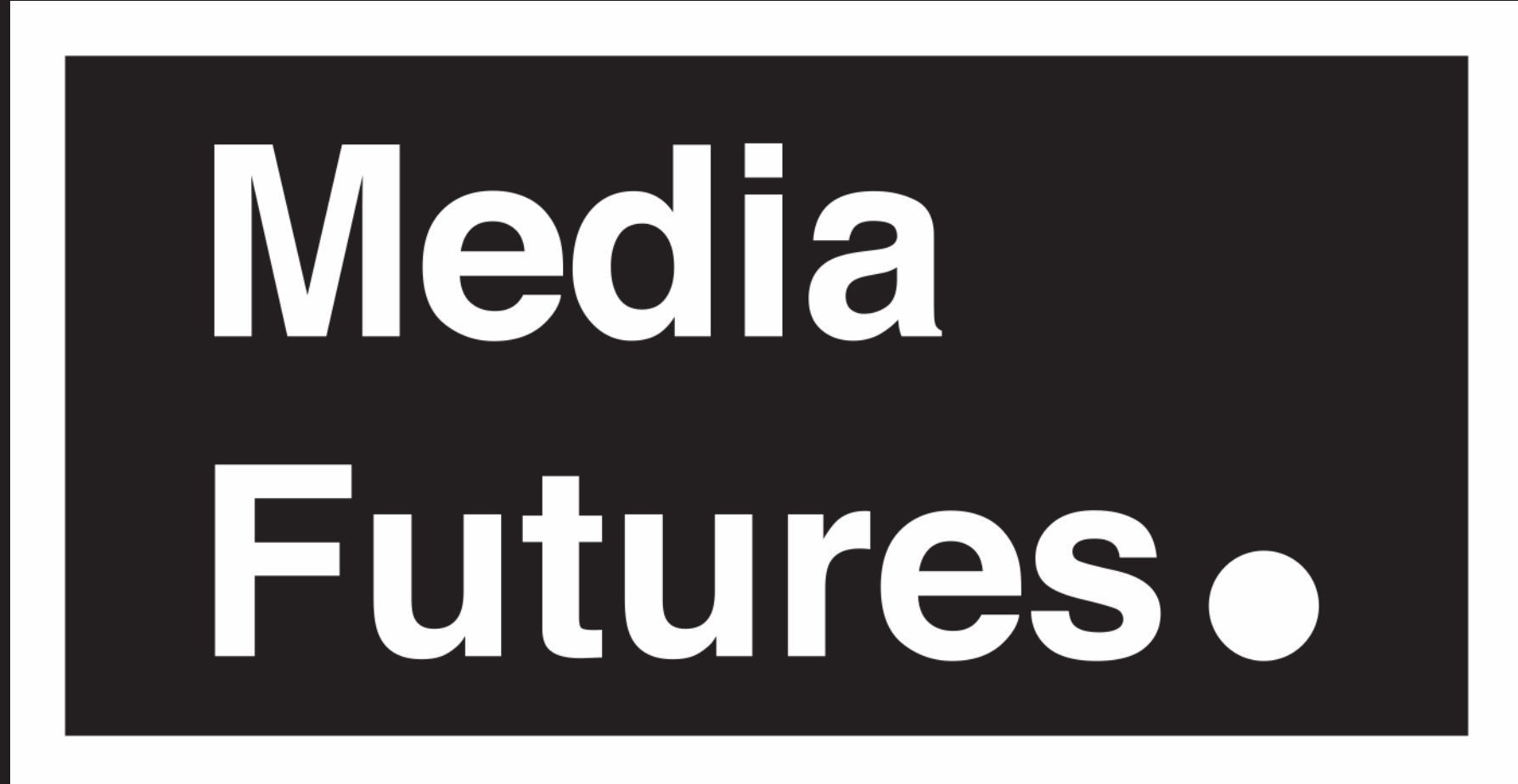


Picture this: How Image Filters Affect Trust in Online News

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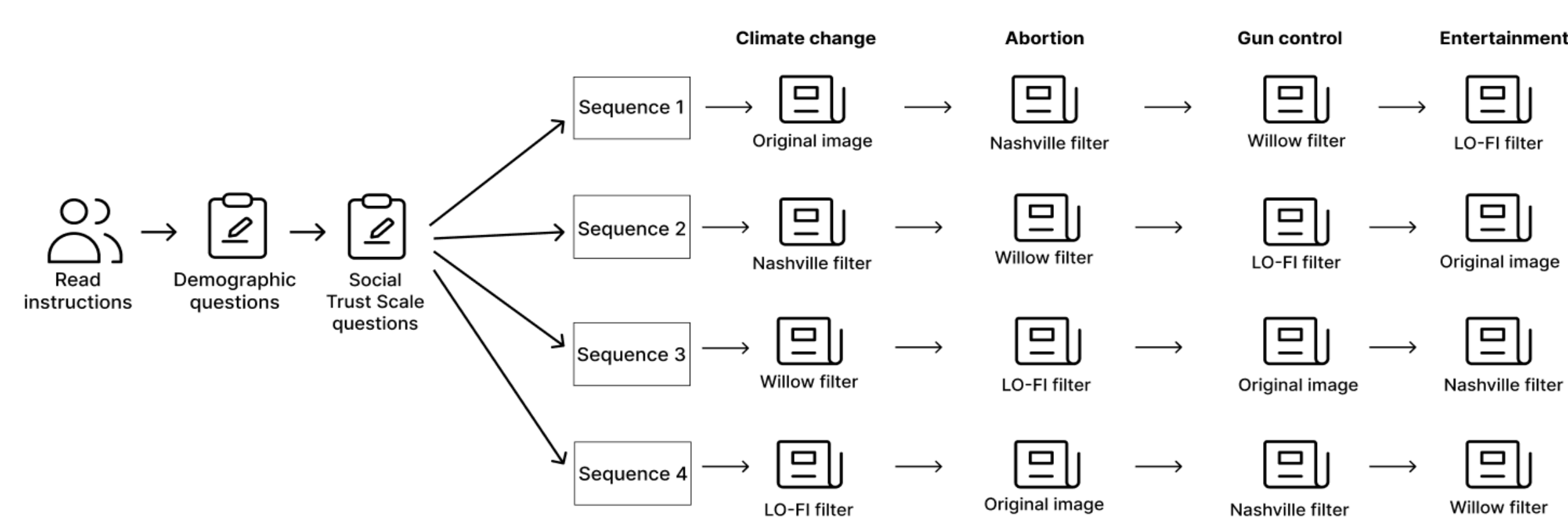
Abstract

Users of social media platforms face concerns about the accuracy and reliability of information shared on these platforms, including images often linked to news events. In an online user study (N = 200), we examined trust ratings for four different articles under four image filter conditions. We also inquired about each user's general trust levels and familiarity with the news topic. Our analysis revealed that while Instagram filters overall did not affect perceived trust, specific visual attributes of the filters, such as brightness and contrast, influenced trust levels. Individual differences in general trust and attitudes toward specific topics may also affect users' perception of trustworthiness.



Research question

1. To what extent does the use of Instagram filters in news content affect perceived trust in online social media?
2. Does an individual's general trust in media and attitude towards a specific news topic affect their perceived trust in that news post?
3. Is there a difference in the context of perceived trust across different topics, depending on whether they are generally perceived as polarized?



Methods

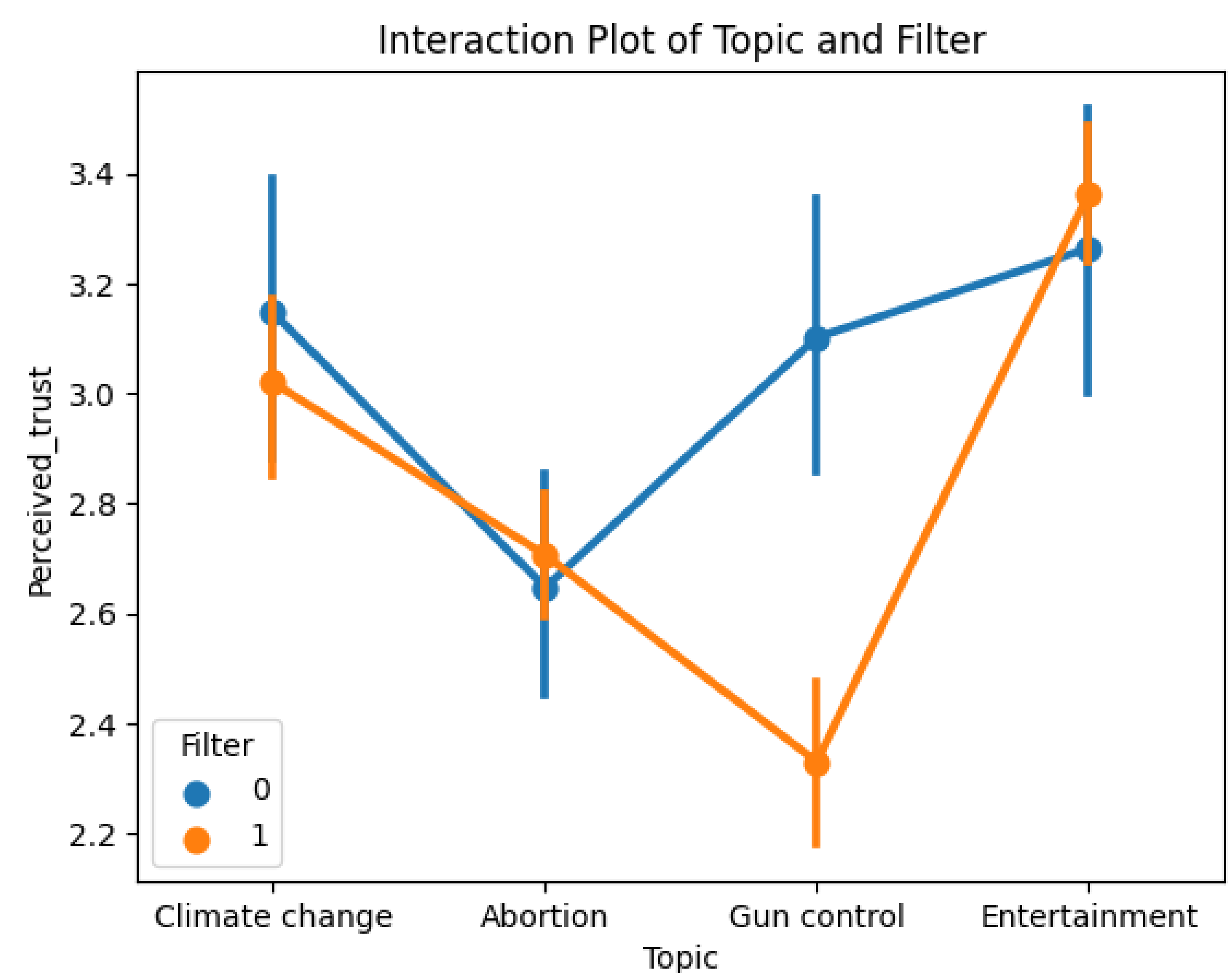
Dataset, Materials, and Measures – Four news articles were collected through web browsing.

Instagram Filters – Images were manipulated using three Instagram filters: Nashville, Willow, and Lo-Fi. Image features were extracted using the available OpenIMAJ Java Framework.

Social Trust Scale (STS) – This scale was used to assess the degree to which individuals expect fairness and trust from others.

Perceived Trust – This was measured using two items.

Attitude Toward News Topics – This was measured using three statements



Future Work

We recommend that future research further investigate the impact of filters across various contexts and settings. While Instagram may not be commonly used for news consumption, a study on that platform could be an interesting follow-up case.

As news consumption becomes more prevalent on video-based platforms such as TikTok, manipulated or filtered video footage may play a significant role in the media consumption habits of contemporary young adults.

PARTNERS



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