

Fatherhood and Desistance from Offending: The Role of Coresidency with Children

Background and Prior Research

- Many studies have shown that motherhood is a significant turning point in favor of desistance
- Few studies have provided quantitative analyses depicting how fathers fare in their attempts to desist
- Research on outcomes for fathers has been qualitative, focused on attitudes and beliefs about the fatherhood role
- Incarcerated fathers cited the need to “make it” for their children as the primary motivation to better their lives (Shannon and Abrams 2007)
- Fathers’ engagement decreases criminality and economic disadvantage in low SES families (Buston 2010)
- Highly disadvantaged younger men and women are not as likely to demonstrate desistance after becoming parents, especially with fewer years of education and lower occupation levels (Pears et al. 2005; Giordano et al. 2011)
- Cultural and historical factors contribute to racial differences in father engagement; those who have been incarcerated and less likely to establish paternity are more likely to be Black than White or Hispanic (Woldoff and Washington 2008; Castillo 2010)
- Those who cohabit with a significant other have higher levels of involvement (Visher 2013)

The Present Study

- Much speculation exists for the multitude of factors that might affect the degree of desistance for fathers
- This study aims to evaluate the importance of fatherhood on criminal desistance
- Residency status and fatherhood are predicted to have a significant impact on the degree to which male offenders desist

Data and Measures

- The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health)
- All four waves of Add Health are utilized (Waves I/II/III/IV)
- The sample consists of males who reported committing a criminal offense (violent, non-violent, or both) in either of Waves I and II (n = 7,235)
- Dependent variable: desistance
 - Criminal desistance is comprised of persisters, temporary desisters, and desisters
 - There are three different types of offending:
 - (1) violent, (2) nonviolent, and (3) both violent and nonviolent
- Focal independent variables: fatherhood and residency
 - (1) non-fathers, (2) non-resident fathers, and (3) resident fathers

Persistence and Desistance from Adolescence to Young Adulthood

Figure 1. Non-Violent Offending

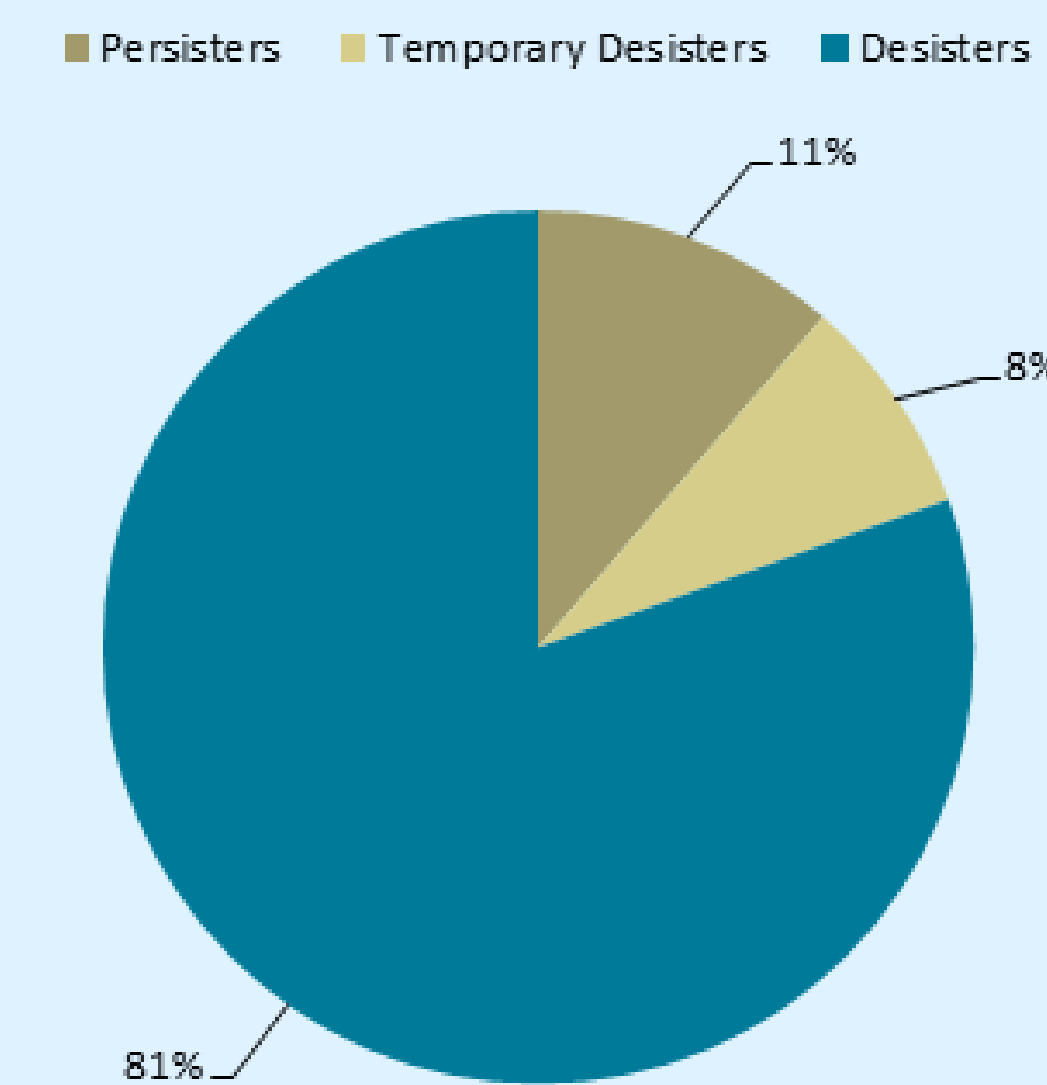


Figure 2. Violent Offending

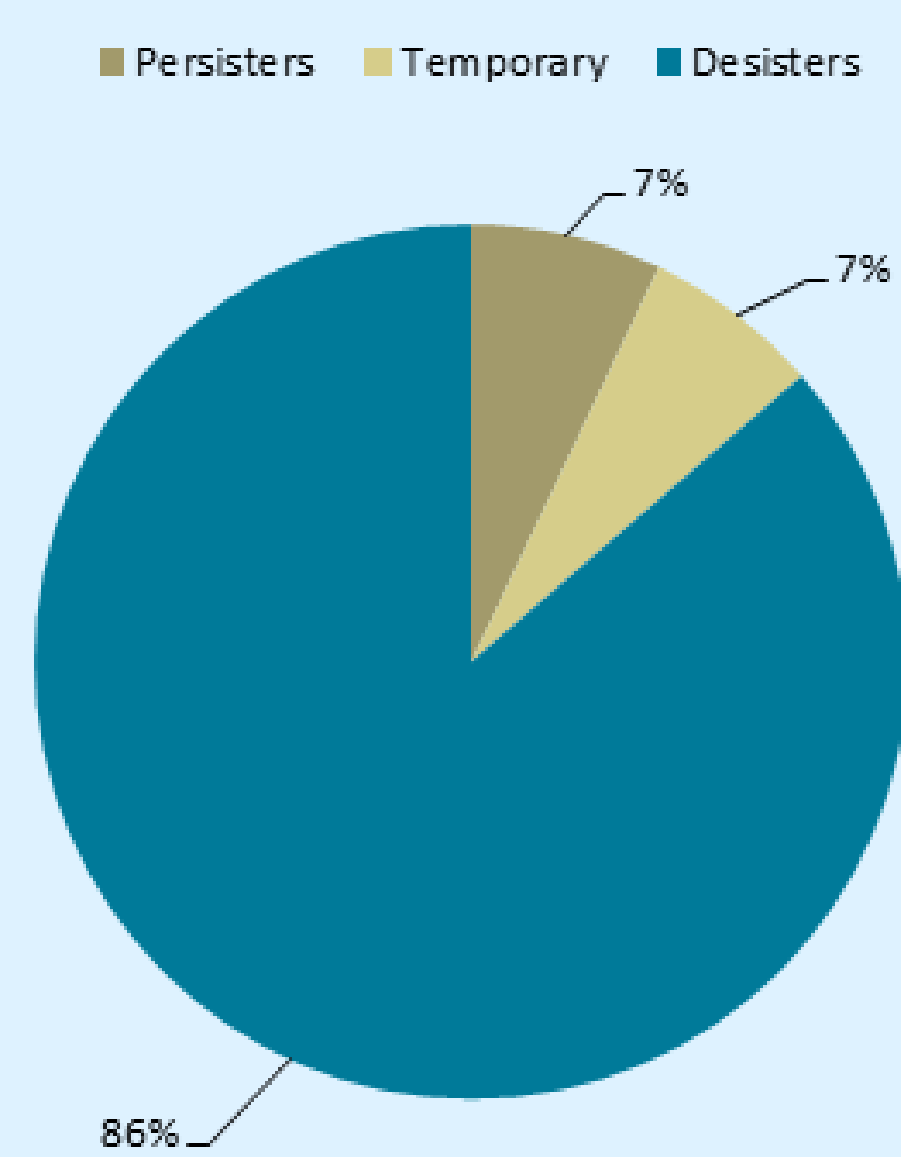
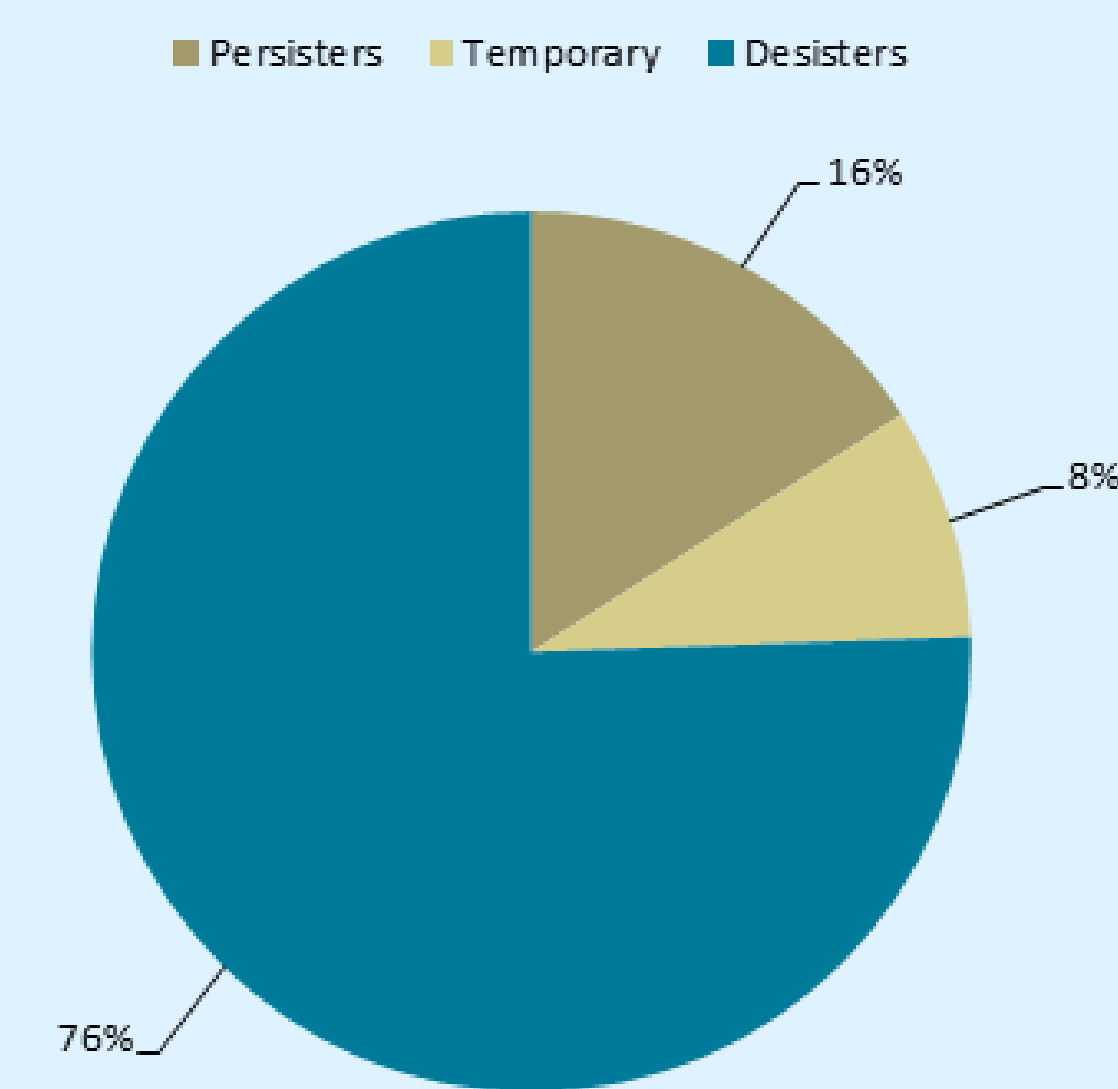


Figure 3. Non-Violent & Violent Offending



Descriptive Statistics

Figure 4. Persistence and Desistance by Fatherhood and Residency Status for Both Violent and Non-Violent Offending

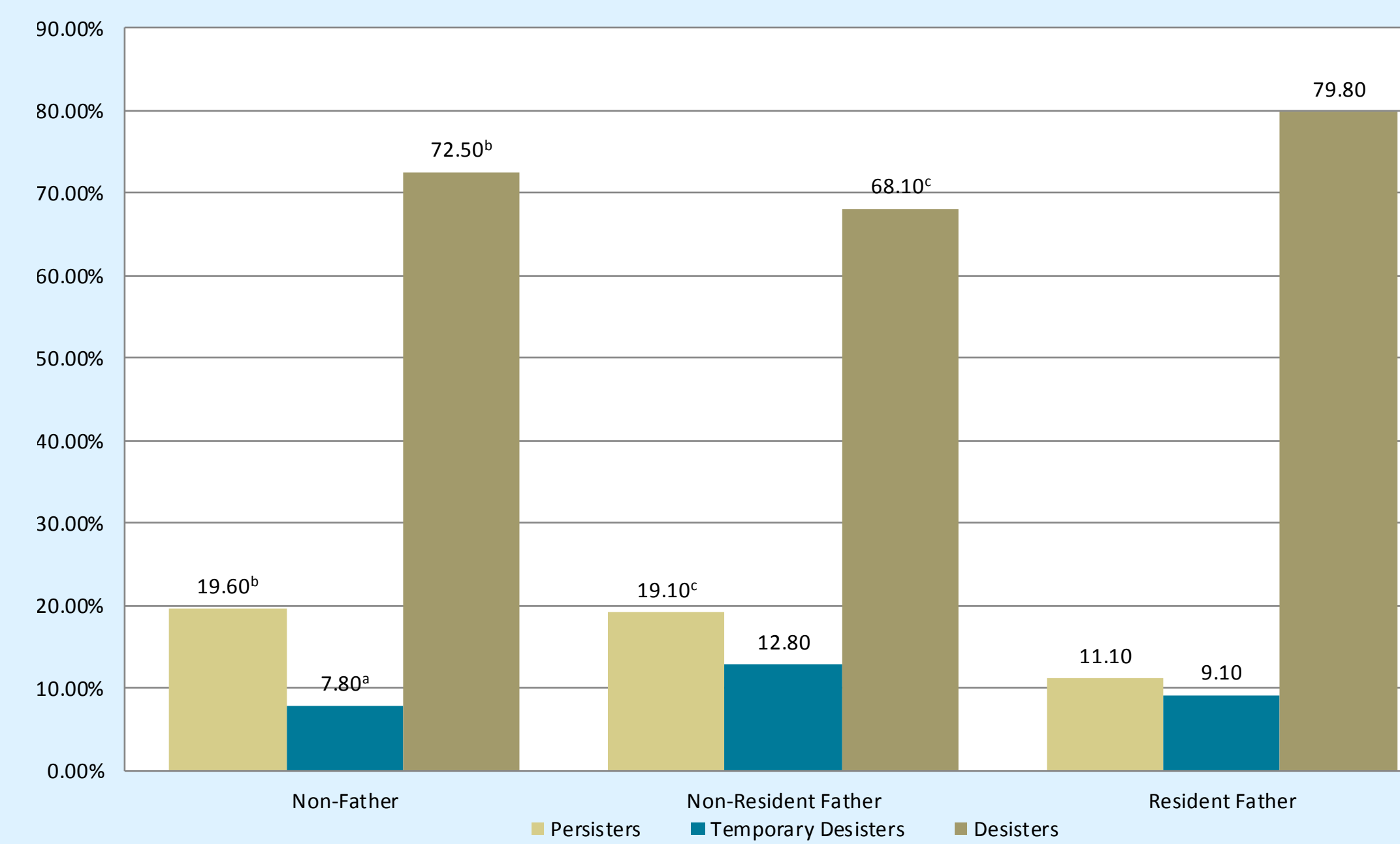


Table 1. Descriptive Statistics by Fatherhood Status for Men Who Self-Reported Offending at Wave 1 or Wave 2

	Non-Father	Non-Resident Father	Resident Father
Criminal Desistance			
Persisted	0.196 ^b	0.191 ^c	0.111
Temporarily Desisted	0.078 ^a	0.128	0.091
Desisted	0.725 ^b	0.681 ^c	0.798
Race/Ethnicity			
White	0.747 ^a	0.580 ^c	0.720
Black	0.128 ^a	0.316 ^c	0.142
Hispanic	0.125	0.104 ^c	0.138
Parent's Socioeconomic Status	6.593 ^{ab}	5.319 ^c	5.722
Family Structure			
Two Biological Parents	0.620 ^{ab}	0.406 ^c	0.579
Other Family Structure	0.380 ^{ab}	0.594 ^c	0.421
Age	28.177 ^{ab}	28.764	28.823
Educational Attainment			
No High School Degree	0.083 ^{ab}	0.226 ^c	0.134
High School Degree	0.763 ^b	0.726	0.712
Associate's Degree	0.050 ^a	0.018 ^c	0.064
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	0.104 ^a	0.030 ^c	0.090
Hours Worked per Week	27.164 ^a	29.442 ^a	34.708
Relationship Status			
Single	0.876 ^{ab}	0.601 ^c	0.528
Cohabiting	0.086 ^{ab}	0.247	0.181
Married	0.038 ^{ab}	0.152 ^c	0.291
N (Total = 7,235)	4,175	491	2,569

^aNon-Fathers significantly different (p<0.05) from Non-Resident Fathers
^bNon-Fathers significantly different (p<0.05) from Resident Fathers
^cNon-Resident Fathers significantly different (p<0.05) from Resident Fathers

^aNon-Fathers significantly different (p<0.05) from Non-Resident Fathers
^bNon-Fathers significantly different (p<0.05) from Resident Fathers
^cNon-Resident Fathers significantly different (p<0.05) from Resident Fathers

Summary of Findings

Non-fathers are significantly more likely to:

- Persist compared to resident fathers
- Have a higher SES than both resident and non-resident fathers
- Grow up with both biological parents than resident and non-resident fathers
- Be younger than both resident and non-resident fathers
- Have an Associate's Degree, Bachelor's Degree, or higher compared to non-resident fathers
- Have a high school degree compared to resident fathers
- Be single than both resident and non-resident fathers

Non-resident fathers are significantly more likely to:

- Temporarily desist compared to non-fathers
- Grow up in a family structure without both biological parents
- Have no degree compared to resident fathers

Resident fathers are significantly more likely to:

- Desist compared to non-resident fathers
- Have a higher SES than non-resident fathers
- Work more hours compared to both non-fathers and non-resident fathers
- Be married than both non-fathers and non-resident fathers

Conclusion and Next Steps

Resident fathers seem to have the advantage when it comes to desistance:

- Compared to both non-fathers and non-resident fathers, resident fathers are less likely to persist
- Non-resident fathers are more likely to desist temporarily
- Resident fathers are far more likely to desist than non-resident fathers

Multivariate regression analyses are in progress, which will show outcomes of various interactions between variables that might be favorable to desistance

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