Passion for a Cause, Passion for a Creed: On Ideological Passion, Identity Threat, and Extremism

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ABSTRACT   Passion energizes and directs both peaceful and violent ideologically inspired movements. The type of ideological passion that underlies people's political or religious commitment was proposed to moderate the effect of social identity–threatening circumstances on their choice of activist tactics. Ideological passion was defined as a strong inclination toward a loved, valued, and self-defining cause, ideology, or group in which people invest considerable time and energy. Harmonious ideological passion was expected to promote peaceful activism and nonviolence partly because it is anchored in a strong and secure sense of identity—one that facilitates nondefensiveness in identity-threatening circumstances. Obsessive ideological passion, in contrast, was expected to engender hatred and aggressive extremism in identity-threatening circumstances partly because it is anchored in a strong, but insecure, sense of identity. Results from 2 studies, conducted with nationalist activists ($N = 114$) and devout Muslims ($N = 111$), supported these hypotheses. Implications for the motivation/passion and intergroup literatures are discussed.

Passion appears to energize and direct both peaceful and extremist ideologically inspired movements. Quebec nationalists, environmentalists, and Islamists, for instance, all appear to share a passion for the particular cherished ideology, cause, or group they wish to advance in the public arena. Although the advancement of most 20th-century movements has led to the use of violence and aggression (Gray, 2007), the political and religious ideologies that inspired them contain justifications for both peaceful and violent actions (Appleby, 2000; Gray, 2007). Ideologically inclined people, such as activists and the devout, may thus presumably choose either peaceful or extremist activist tactics as legitimate means of advancing their particular vision. This raises an important question, namely, what personal and social factors lead such people to choose extremism and aggression over peaceful activism?

Ideological Passion

Ideological passion, defined here as a strong inclination toward a loved, valued, and self-defining cause, ideology, or group in which people invest considerable time and energy (based on Vallerand et al., 2003, as described below), is a motivational factor proposed to underlie people's choice of activist tactics. This is because ideological passion appears to have a dual character that merits empirical, in addition to philosophical, study (Krosnick, 1990; Sears, 1992; Walzer, 2002). The negative view of passion in public life holds that it is antithetical to reason and that it constitutes a risk to society, a threat to sociopolitical stability (see Holmes, 1995). In contrast, the positive view of passion in public life holds that it is a force that sustains and nourishes both reason and society, and that eliminating it from public life is neither desirable nor possible (Hall, 2005; Unger, 1984). After all, people's passion for specific ideologies, causes, and groups is a reflection of common values that serve to bind communities and motivate activism (Hall, 2002). But the specific character that such activism takes on in the public arena may depend on the type of ideological passion that motivates people and the social climate in which such people find themselves.

The Dualistic Model of Passion

The dualistic model of passion (DMP; Vallerand et al., 2003; Vallerand, 2008, 2010) posits that people may develop a passion for

enjoyable activities they have internalized into their identity due to their underlying need to grow psychologically (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000) and develop a sense of self and identity. Passion is defined in this framework as a strong inclination toward a self-defining *activity* that people like (love) and value, and in which they invest considerable time and energy. The DMP furthermore posits the existence of two distinct types of passion—harmonious (HP) and obsessive (OP)—thereby incorporating the dualism inherent in the philosophical literature on passion (e.g., Hall, 2002, 2005; Holmes, 1995; Rony, 1990).

Harmonious passion is proposed to evolve from an autonomous internalization (Deci & Ryan, 2000) of a cherished activity into the person's identity, which occurs in contexts where the person feels free to value the activity in question instead of feeling pressured, either internally or externally, to do so (Mageau et al., 2009; Vallerand et al., 2003). HP therefore promotes entirely volitional and flexible involvement in a cherished activity (e.g., Rip, Fortin, & Vallerand, 2006; Vallerand et al., 2003). Such a passion remains in harmony with the person's other life pursuits and may, over time, come to shape his or her sense of identity in ways that secure it against self- or social identity threat (Steele, 1988; Steele, Spencer, & Aronson, 2002).

Obsessive passion is proposed to evolve from a controlled internalization (Deci & Ryan, 2000) of a cherished activity into the person's identity, which occurs in contexts where perceptions of self-esteem, social acceptance, life satisfaction, or uncontrollable excitement become associated with the activity in question (Mageau et al., 2009; Vallerand et al., 2003). Because of these ego-invested self-structures (Hodgins & Knee, 2002), people motivated by obsessive passion feel they are controlled by, and dependent upon, their passionate activity. For example, a person's very sense of self-worth may become contingent on continued success in the passionate domain such that he or she may persist in the passionate activity in an extreme and rigid fashion in spite of experiencing negative affect and health problems (Carpentier, Mageau, & Vallerand, in press; Lafrenière et al., 2009; Lafrenière et al., 2011; Rip et al., 2006; Vallerand et al., 2003). Not surprisingly, OP is also associated with psychological conflict (between the passion and other life pursuits; Vallerand, Paquet, Philippe, & Charest, 2010) and may, over time, "crowd out" important alternative sources of identification, thus enabling the ego-invested self-structures (e.g., passion-related

self-esteem contingencies) with which it is associated to predominate and shape the person's identity in ways that render it insecure and vulnerable to threat.

Research on passion for various life activities has provided support for the dualistic conceptualization of passion (e.g., Amiot, Vallerand, & Blanchard, 2006; Carbonneau, Vallerand, Fernet, & Guay, 2008; Vallerand & Houlfort, 2003; Vallerand et al., 2003; Vallerand, Mageau, et al., 2008). That is, across studies, harmonious passion has been linked to indicators of both personal and interpersonal thriving. For instance, at the personal level, HP is associated with positive affect and related increases in psychological well-being over time, as well as concentration, flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1978), and temperate/flexible persistence in the passionate activity (e.g., Philippe, Vallerand, & Lavigne, 2009, Study 2; Rip et al., 2006; Vallerand et al., 2003; Vallerand et al., 2007, Studies 1 and 2; Vallerand, Mageau, et al., 2008, Study 2). At the interpersonal level, HP appears to promote relationship satisfaction and quality because it facilitates positive affect during interaction (Lafrenière et al., 2009; Philippe, Vallerand, Houlfort, Lavigne, & Donahue, 2010). Perhaps more importantly for the purposes of this article, HP for an activity is unrelated to interpersonal aggression (Donahue, Rip, & Vallerand, 2009; Philippe, Vallerand, Richer, Vallières, & Bergeron, 2009, Studies 2 and 3; Vallerand, Ntoumanis, et al., 2008, Study 2).

Obsessive passion has been just as consistently linked to indicators of personal and interpersonal strife. For instance, at the personal level, OP is associated with negative affect and related increases in psychological ill-being over time, as well as rigid and extreme persistence in the passionate activity, which itself is associated with health problems (e.g., Lafrenière et al., 2009; Mageau & Vallerand, 2007; Philippe, Vallerand, & Lavigne, 2009, Study 2; Rip et al., 2006; Vallerand et al., 2003; Vallerand et al., 2007, Studies 1 and 2). At the interpersonal level, OP is associated with negative relationship assessments because it engenders negative affect during interaction (Lafrenière et al., 2009; Philippe et al., 2010). Perhaps more importantly for the purposes of this article, OP for an activity is related to interpersonal aggression in contexts where the other may be perceived as a symbolic threat to the self or to one's passion-derived sense of identity (Donahue et al., 2009; Philippe, Vallerand, Richer, et al., 2009; Vallerand, Ntoumanis, et al., 2008, Study 2).

The Present Research

The present research tests the applicability of the dualistic model of passion (Vallerand et al., 2003; Vallerand, 2008, 2010) to the study of ideological passion—that is, the passion people harbor for causes, ideologies, and groups they wish to advance, both personally and collectively, in the public arena. In so doing, it seeks to contribute to the intergroup processes literature, which has typically focused on group/collective identification and behavior in nonpassionate or nonextreme samples. The main purpose of this research is thus to demonstrate that the specific type of ideological passion, harmonious or obsessive, that underlies people's political or religious commitment differentially motivates their choice of activist tactics in social identity–threatening (see Steele et al., 2002) times or circumstances.

The central idea behind social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978; also see Tajfel & Turner, 1986) is that a person's identity and behavior shift along a personal-collective continuum as a function of social context. Most people may thus be expected to identify with a nationalist or religious group (ideology) when it is contextually salient. In contrast, ideologically passionate people are proposed to typically identify with the object of their passion because to them it is accessible and salient at all times (albeit in qualitatively different ways for HP vs. OP). Importantly, ideologically passionate people are proposed to have internalized the cherished group, cause, or ideology into their identity in either an autonomous or a controlled manner (Deci & Ryan, 2000), resulting in a harmonious or an obsessive ideological passion, respectively. In short, people who harbor an ideological passion, whether harmonious or obsessive, may be expected to typically identify with its object, even if the underlying self/identity and motivational processes are qualitatively different for each type of passion, resulting in divergent social consequences.

That is, harmonious ideological passion is proposed to develop when the person feels free to personally endorse and value an already cherished cause, ideology, or group instead of feeling pressured to do so. The person motivated by this type of passion remains open to ongoing experience and shows a willingness to experience and integrate into the self/identity what is occurring in the present moment without distortion and/or defense (Hodgins & Knee, 2002). Over time, such an integrative self-process may lead to an increased sense

of self-harmony, as well as a strong and secure/stable sense of identity—one largely invulnerable to identity threats that target the passionate domain. Such an identity may be expected to enable people to pursue their cause or advance their cherished ideology in a nondefensive or nonreactionary, if not peaceful, manner. Harmonious ideological passion may, therefore, be typically associated with peaceful activism; but in identity-threatening situations, it may be expected to enable people to at least remain nonviolent. For example, a person motivated by an HP for Quebec nationalism or Islam feels free to embrace this political or religious ideology in his or her own way so that it ends up meshing well with other aspects of who he or she is, leaving him or her with a strong and secure sense of identity—all of which may protect the person from becoming extremist and aggressive in circumstances that symbolically threaten that cherished nationalist or religious identity.

Obsessive ideological passion is proposed to develop when the person feels pressured, either internally (e.g., uncontrollable excitement) or externally (e.g., social pressure), to personally endorse and value an already cherished cause, group, or ideology. In such controlling environments, the person develops passion-related self-contingencies, rendering him or her dependent on the passion. This is because both feelings of self-worth (Carpentier et al., in press) and life satisfaction (Lafrenière et al., 2011; Vallerand et al., 2010, Study 2) become contingent upon (success in) the passionate domain, leading the person to persist in it in an extreme, rigid, and/or aggressive fashion in circumstances that somehow symbolically threaten his or her passion-derived sense of self (-worth; e.g., Donahue et al., 2009; Rip et al., 2006). Over time, these ego-invested self-structures (Hodgins & Knee, 2002) may lead the person to neglect other important self/life aspects, thereby "progressively crowding out" important alternative sources of identification and leading the person to develop a strong, but insecure/unstable or predominantly ego-invested, sense of identity. Such an identity would render identity threats that target the passionate domain even more psychologically costly. Obsessive ideological passion may thus engender a readiness to defend against identity threats in an extreme and/or aggressive fashion (Baumeister, Bushman, & Campbell, 2000). For example, a person motivated by an OP for Quebec nationalism or Islam feels that his or her very sense of self-esteem and happiness depend on this cherished political or religious ideology, driving him or her to

neglect other important aspects of who he or she is and with time develop a strong, but insecure, sense of identity—all of which may render the person vulnerable to extremism and aggression in circumstances that symbolically threaten that cherished nationalist or religious identity.

To test these and related hypotheses, we propose to conduct two studies. The first study will examine whether ideological passion type (HP vs. OP) differentially predicts people's choice of activist tactics (democratic vs. radical) in a political intergroup context where social identity threat is already contextually salient. That is, Study 1 will be conducted with Quebec nationalists, who have been on a minority quest for the province's independence from Canada for over 40 years. Quebec nationalists have arguably been experiencing social identity threat for some time both from without (i.e., the federal government's two successful attempts at preventing Quebec's secession from Canada) and from within (i.e., their political party's divisiveness and failure to secure secession). That threat was contextually salient when the data for Study 1 were collected during the leadership race of the Parti Québécois (PQ), their long-standing sovereignist party, which has ultimately failed to produce an effective leader, one capable of uniting the party and leading it to secure Quebeckers' confidence and Quebec's secession from Canada. The second study will examine whether ideological passion type (HP vs. OP) moderates the effect of social identity threat on people's choice of activist tactics (peaceful vs. extremist) via the intermediary of outgroup-directed hatred. Study 2 will be conducted in a religious intergroup context with devout Muslims and the Pope by manipulating social identity threat.

STUDY 1

The purpose of Study 1 was to test whether in naturally occurring and contextually salient social identity–threatening circumstances harmonious ideological passion is associated with the endorsement of democratic and peaceful political activism tactics, whereas obsessive ideological passion is associated with the endorsement of radical and aggressive forms of political activism. This was accomplished in the context of Quebec nationalists' passionate—but four decades long and until now failed—quest for the province's secession from Canada.

Method

Participants and Procedure

A total of 114 Quebec Sovereignty activists (38 female, 75 male, and 1 unidentified), members of the PQ, the leading nationalist/separatist party in the province of Quebec, Canada, were recruited at political rallies during the party's leadership race. At the time of data collection, the Sovereignists had been out of power for some time, had failed in their 40-year-long minority struggle with the Canadian federal government, as well as failing in their quest for an effective leader, one who could unite the party (the PQ) and secure the people's confidence and Quebec's independence from Canada. The context of a leadership race was thus thought to be one in which the identity threat was naturally occurring and salient for Quebec Sovereignists.

The participants were given a survey, with the scales described in detail below and items assessing demographic information, to complete at home and mail back to us in a prestamped envelope. Their ages ranged from 18 to 80 years ($M = 33$ years), and their level of education was high (70% had a university degree). The participants were highly involved in the Sovereignty movement, as reflected in the average number of years they had dedicated to Sovereignty activism ($M = 8.5$ years) and the average number of hours per week they dedicate to the advancement of their nationalist cause ($M = 5.5$ hours).

Measures

Passion for Quebec sovereignty. The Passion Scale (Vallerand et al., 2003) was adapted to assess (political) ideological passion, specifically, passion for Quebec sovereignty. The Passion for Sovereignty scale was composed of two 6-item subscales, one assessing harmonious, and the other obsessive, passionate political involvement. The HP for Sovereignty subscale included items such as "My involvement in the Sovereignist cause reflects the qualities I like about myself" and "My involvement in the Sovereignist cause is in harmony with other parts of who I am." The OP for Sovereignty subscale included items such as "My involvement in the Sovereignist cause is the only thing that really turns me on" and "I feel that my involvement in the Sovereignist cause controls me." All items were rated on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*do not agree at all*) to 7 (*very strongly agree*). Results from a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of the Passion for Sovereignty scale, in which parcels were used to create six indicators by combining two items per subscale (see Kline, 2005), provided support for the scale's bifactorial structure, χ^2 ($df = 8$, $N = 114$) = 14.35, $p = .07$; CFI = .98, GFI = .96, SRMR = .04,

RMSEA = .09. These results are in line with past assessments of the Passion Scale as adapted to other life contexts (e.g., Mageau et al., 2009; Vallerand et al., 2003; Vallerand et al., 2006). In addition, the HP for Sovereignty (Cronbach's α = .86) and OP for Sovereignty (Cronbach's α = .85) subscales exhibited adequate levels of internal consistency reliability, as did the four items that refer to the definition of ideological passion (Cronbach's α = .87). These items assessed participants' liking (love) for their political involvement, the personal importance they attach to it, the time they invest in it, and the extent to which they perceive their political involvement to be a "passion." In line with the DMP and past research, we expected the HP for Sovereignty and OP for Sovereignty subscales to both be positively related to items that refer to the definition of ideological passion and thus to shared (ideological) "passion" variance.

Sovereignist identity. The extent to which participants incorporate the cherished cause, ideology, or group—in this case, the Quebec nationalist cause and ideology—into their identity and thereby derive a sense of identity from their political involvement is a final element related to the definition of ideological passion. To assess it, we used three Likert items (e.g., "The Sovereignist cause is part of who I am"), which were rated on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*do not agree at all*) to 7 (*very strongly agree*), and an adapted version of the Inclusion of the Other in the Self Scale (Aron, Aron, & Smollan, 1992). This single-item pictorial instrument was adapted to feature seven sets of Venn diagrams illustrating increasing degrees of overlap between two circles, the first representing the person's identity and the second representing the nationalist cause. Participants selected the diagram that best characterizes their relationship with sovereignty, ranging from no overlap (1) to nearly complete overlap between the two circles (7). Due to their high positive intercorrelations and adequate internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's α = .78), all items were grouped into a single index. Both types of ideological passion were expected to be positively related to this identification index.

Democratic and radical political activism. Participants were asked to what extent they deemed 14 politically motivated actions acceptable or legitimate in the aim of achieving Quebec's independence from Canada. Half of the items were designed to reflect peaceful and democratic political activist tactics (e.g., "Organize public discussion forums to inform Quebeckers about the ways in which Sovereignty may be achieved" and "Organize Sovereignty themed cultural activities, such as a rock concert; Cronbach's α = .72). The other half was designed to reflect radical and aggressive political activist tactics (e.g., "Have recourse to acts of sabotage" and "Be prepared to give one's life for Quebec Sovereignty";

Cronbach's $\alpha = .80$). In addition, we asked participants to assess the legitimacy of a relatively radical unilateral secession policy, which would obviate negotiations with the Canadian federal government, as well as legal and constitutional requirements for a referendum on the question of secession (see the Supreme Court of Canada "Secession Reference" and the Clarity Act). All items were rated on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*not at all acceptable*) to 7 (*completely acceptable*).

Results and Discussion

All reported statistical analyses were conducted with the total sample of 114 participants because nearly everyone met our criteria for "ideological passion" (i.e., a mean of at least 4 on the passion criterion items; also see Philippe, Vallerand, & Lavigne, 2009).[1] Means, standard deviations, reliability coefficients, and Pearson correlations for the study variables are presented in Table 1. In support of our conceptualization and definition of ideological passion, the HP and OP for Sovereignty subscales were both positively related to loving and personally valuing one's involvement in the Sovereignist cause, investing time in it, labeling it a "passion," and deriving a sense of Sovereignist identity from one's political involvement (all rs $\geq .28$, $p < .05$).

The HP and OP for Sovereignty subscales were positively correlated ($r = .31$, $p < .05$). Although "passion" variance is common to the two subscales, the magnitude of the average correlation between the two types of passion across studies suggests they are distinguishable constructs (e.g., Mageau et al., 2005; Rip et al., 2006; Vallerand et al., 2003). Due to this positive correlation, we controlled for the other passion in the multiple regression analyses.[2] The multiple regression analyses also controlled for three demographic variables, namely, gender, age, and education, which were weakly related to the variables under study.

Standardized beta coefficients obtained from multiple regression analyses testing the relationships between HP and OP for Quebec Sovereignty and diverging political activism tactics, while controlling for demographic variables and the other passion, are presented in Table 2. As expected, the overall pattern of results in Table 2 suggests that in naturally occurring and salient social

1. When the analyses were conducted without the few participants who did not meet our criteria for "passion," the results remained the same.
2. Due to the use of multiple statistical tests one spurious significant result could be expected by chance (Stevens, 2002).

Table 1

Study 1: Defining Ideological Passion: Means, Standard Deviations, Scale Reliabilities, and Correlations

Passion for sovereignty	M (SD)	α	Correlations								
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Harmonious passion	5.4 (1.2)	.86	—	.31	.72	.50	.64	.56	.32	.46	−.10
2. Obsessive passion	2.9 (1.4)	.85		—	.57	.55	.36	.67	.69	−.07	.58
3. Personal importance	5.7 (1.5)	—			—	.55	.65	.74	.51	.37	.31
4. Time investment	3.7 (1.9)	—				—	.60	.64	.28	.35	.26
5. Love for sovereignty	5.7 (1.4)	—					—	.58	.02	.38	.13
6. Sovereignty is a "passion"	4.7 (1.9)	—						—	.64	.28	.39
7. Sovereignist identity	5.2 (1.2)	.78							—	.05	.50
8. Democratic political activism	6.1 (.84)	.72								—	−.10
9. Radical political activism	2.9 (1.2)	.80									—

Note. $N = 114$. All correlations > .20 are significant at $p < .05$.

Table 2

Standardized Beta Coefficients for the Relationship Between Harmonious and Obsessive Passion for Quebec Sovereignty and Democratic and Radical Political Activism Tactics Aimed at Achieving Quebec's Independence from Canada

	HP	OP
Democratic Political Activism		
Make a financial contribution to the Parti Québécois[a] . . .	.37***	.03
Help subsidize sovereignty-related discussion forums in high schools . . .	.21*	.11
Engage in door-to-door activism spreading Sovereignist ideas . . .	.23**	.03
Convince people that Sovereignty will bring about a better life . . .	.36***	.13
Organize Sovereignty-themed cultural activities . . .	.26**	.02
Organize Sovereignty-themed public discussion forums . . .	.37***	−.19
Organize a strong Sovereignist popular movement . . .	.31**	.04
Radical Political Activism		
Quit one's job if employer's actions undermine Sovereignty . . .	−.03	.35**
End good friendships with people who do not share my opinion on S . . .	.00	.35**
Form a radical Sovereignist group . . .	−.06	.55***
Achieve Quebec Sovereignty through subversive acts . . .	−.16	.34**
Have recourse to acts of sabotage . . .	−.09	.39***
Give one's life for the Sovereignty of Quebec . . .	.08	.45***
Take all necessary actions to achieve the Sovereignty of Quebec . . .	−.09	.47***
Radical Policy Option		
Unilateral secession from Canada	−.15	.29**

Note. β coefficients control for gender, education, age, and the other passion.
[a]The Parti Québécois (PQ) is the leading nationalist party in the province of Quebec, Canada.
*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p ≤ .001.

identity–threatening circumstances, HP for Sovereignty is associated with the endorsement of peaceful and democratic political activism tactics, whereas OP for Sovereignty is associated with the endorsement of relatively radical and aggressive political activism tactics. That is, controlling for demographic variables and OP, the more sovereignty activists are motivated by harmonious ideological passion, the more they endorse peaceful and democratic political acts as legitimate means of fulfilling their ideological vision. These include, for instance, making a financial contribution to the leading nationalist party ($\beta = .37$, $p < .001$), trying to convince other Quebeckers that sovereignty will bring about a better life ($\beta = .36$, $p < .001$), and attempting to organize a strong nationalist popular movement ($\beta = .31$, $p < .01$). In contrast, controlling for demographic variables and HP, the more sovereignty activists are motivated by obsessive ideological passion, the more they endorse radical and aggressive political acts as legitimate means of fulfilling their ideological vision. These include, for instance, striving to attain sovereignty through acts of subversion ($\beta = .34$, $p < .01$) and sabotage ($\beta = .39$, $p < .001$), as well as being ready to give one's life for sovereignty ($\beta = .45$, $p < .001$). OP for Sovereignty was also positively related to the endorsement of a radical unilateral secession policy ($\beta = .29$, $p < .01$), which at present is unconstitutional from the perspective of the Supreme Court of Canada (the "Secession Reference") and illegal according to Canadian federal legislation (the Clarity Act).

In sum, these results suggest that in contextually salient social identity–threatening circumstances, people who are motivated by harmonious ideological passion appear capable of peacefully and democratically advancing their cherished cause, group, or ideology in the public arena. They also suggest that in these same circumstances, people who are motivated by obsessive ideological passion advance their cherished cause, group, or ideology in a radical and aggressive manner. At first glance, obsessive ideological passion appears to be a personal factor that in such circumstances predisposes people to choose extremism and aggression over peaceful activism.

STUDY 2

The purpose of Study 2 was to test, in a religious context and more controlled manner, whether ideological passion type (HP vs. OP)
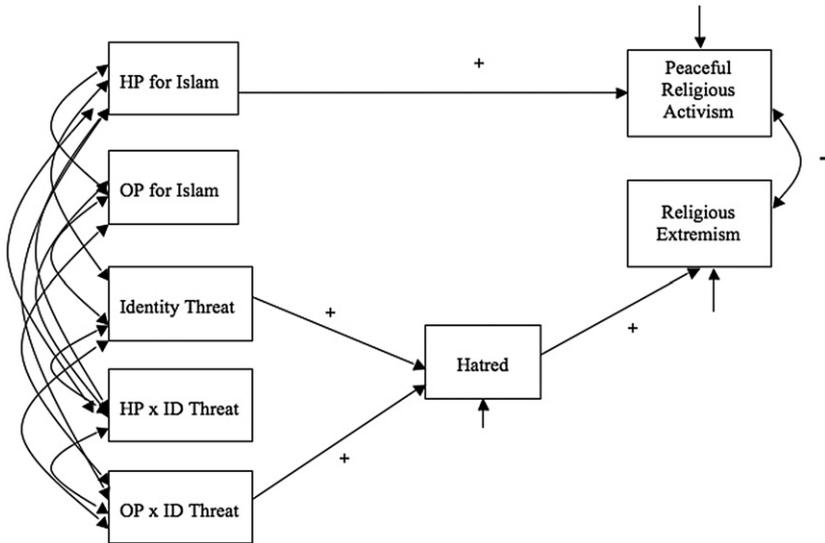
Figure 1
Proposed path model.

moderates the effect of social identity threat on people's choice of
activist tactics (peaceful vs. extremist) via the intermediary of a
strong and negative outgroup(s)-directed emotion—namely, hatred.
Based on research with passionate sports fans (Vallerand, Ntouma-
nis, et al., 2008, Study 2), people motivated by obsessive ideological
passion were expected to become hateful and aggressively extremist
in social identity-threatening intergroup circumstances, unlike their
harmoniously passionate counterparts, who were expected to remain
nonviolent.*

The following "moderated mediation" path model (see Figure 1;
see Muller, Judd, & Yzerbyt, 2005; also see Preacher, Rucker, &
Hayes, 2007) was thus proposed and tested in the context of devout
Muslims' passion for Islam and Pope Benedict's scathing public
remarks about their faith. As seen in Figure 1, OP for Islam was
proposed to predict hatred only in the social identity–threatening
condition (see Steele, 1988; Steele et al., 2002), where our Muslim
participants would be exposed to the pope's scathing remarks about

their faith. Hatred, in turn, was proposed to predict the endorsement of religious extremism and violence. The OP for Islam–religious extremism path was proposed to be mediated by people's experience of hatred only in the identity-threatening condition. HP for Islam, in contrast, was proposed to predict the endorsement of peaceful religious activism, while remaining unrelated to hatred and religious extremism in both the control and the identity-threatening conditions.

Method

Participants and Procedure

A total of 111 devout Muslims (36 females, 75 males) were recruited at moderate mosques and prayer rooms in Montreal, Canada, several months after the controversy regarding Pope Benedict's disparaging public remarks about Islam. They were given a survey to complete at home and mail back to us in a prestamped envelope. Participant ages ranged from 18 to 65 years ($M = 35$ years), and their level of education was high (71% had a university degree). The majority of participants were first-generation immigrants (i.e., 60% had been born in northern and western Africa; 20% had been born in the Middle East, India, and Pakistan). The remaining 20% of participants were second-generation (immigrants) Canadians, having been born in Canada. The participants were highly involved in Islam, as reflected in the average number of hours per week they dedicate to prayer (which is higher for Muslims than members of other world religions) and other forms of religious involvement ($M = 19.6$ hours).

Materials and Design

The study featured both correlational and experimental components. That is, ideological passion, hatred, and religious activism were measured, whereas social identity threat was manipulated. Ideological passion was assessed before exposing some of the participants to the identity threat manipulation. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions. In the experimental (i.e., identity threat) condition, they read the following quote, publicly expressed by Pope Benedict, which Muslims around the world found disrespectful and insulting to their faith at best:

> Show me just what Muhammad brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as the command to defend by the sword the faith he preached.

    A manipulation check demonstrated that our devout Muslim participants found the latter quote to be threatening, $t(104) = 2.63$, $p < .01$. That is, on average, they felt more threatened in the experimental ($M = 2.2/5.0$; *a little*) than in the control ($M = 1.2/5.0$; *not at all*) condition, where the quote was absent. Both the experimental and control versions of the questionnaire were composed of the following scales, in the order presented, except that in the experimental version of the questionnaire, the pope's negative remarks about Islam, which the participants were asked to read, appeared between the Muslim identification and situational hatred scales, whereas in the control version of the questionnaire, these remarks were absent.

Passion for Islam.   The Passion Scale (Vallerand et al., 2003) was adapted to assess (religious) ideological passion, specifically, passion for Islam. As in Study 1, the scale was composed of two 6-item subscales, but the Harmonious Passion and Obsessive Passion subscales referred to participants' religious involvement (in Islam). Results from a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of the Passion for Islam scale, in which parcels were used to create six indicators by combining two items per subscale (see Kline, 2005), provided support for the scale's bifactorial structure, $\chi^2(df = 8,\ N = 111) = 11.24$, $p = .18$; CFI = .98, GFI = .96, SRMR = .04, RMSEA = .07. In addition, the HP for Islam (Cronbach's $\alpha = .74$) and OP for Islam (Cronbach's $\alpha = .67$) subscales exhibited adequate levels of internal consistency reliability, as did the four items that refer to the definition of ideological passion (Cronbach's $\alpha = .82$). These items were expected to be positively related to both ideological passion subscales.

Muslim identity.   The four identification items used in Study 1 were also used in Study 2, but they were framed in relation to Islam. As in Study 1, due to their high positive intercorrelations and adequate internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .82$), all items were grouped into a single index. Both types of ideological passion were expected to be positively related to this identification index.

Hatred.   Situational hatred was assessed by asking participants, "To what extent do you feel hateful right now?" on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*). Hatred was assessed right after our Muslim participants had either been exposed to Pope Benedict's verbal attack on Islam (identity-threatening condition) or not (zero control condition). Hatred was isolated in the analyses because it has previously been found to predict verbal aggression in an intergroup context (Vallerand, Ntoumanis, et al., 2008, Study 2). In the present study, hatred inspired partly by the pope's public attack on Islam was proposed to predict the

endorsement of religious extremism and violence directed at or displaced toward believers of other world religions more generally, but including Catholics.

Peaceful religious activism and religious extremism. Participants were asked to what extent they deemed 12 "religiously motivated" actions acceptable or legitimate. Six of the items were designed to reflect peaceful religious activism, or the seeking of restorative justice (Zehr, 2002). These included religiously motivated acts that foster interfaith dialogue and engage people and their communities in a search for solutions that promote repair, reconciliation, and the rebuilding of relationships (e.g., "Participate in a peaceful discourse with believers of other world religions, denouncing all harms to sacred things" and "Collaborate with believers of other religions in order to restore good relations among all world religions"; Cronbach's $\alpha = .83$). The other six items were designed to reflect religious extremism and violence, or the seeking of retributive justice. These included religiously motivated acts of punishment and aggression that reflect an "eye for an eye" approach to justice (e.g., "Publicly and severely punish believers of other world religions who dare offend Islam" and "The condemnations are insufficient; it is necessary to respond with weapons and prepare for a *holy* war"; Cronbach's $\alpha = .76$). The religiously motivated action items were thus directed at or displaced toward believers of other world religions more generally, including Catholics, and were rated on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*not at all acceptable*) to 7 (*completely acceptable*).

Results and Discussion

Correlational Analyses

All reported statistical analyses were conducted with the total sample of 111 participants because all met our criteria for "ideological passion" (i.e., a mean of at least 4 on the passion criterion items). Means, standard deviations, reliability coefficients, and Pearson correlations for variables related to the definition of ideological passion are presented in Table 3. In support of our definition, the HP and OP for Islam subscales were both positively related to loving and personally valuing one's involvement in Islam, investing time in it, labeling it a "passion," and deriving a sense of Muslim identity from one's religious involvement (all $rs \geq .30$, $p < .05$).

Means, standard deviations, reliability coefficients, and Pearson correlations for the model variables are presented in Table 4. HP for Islam was positively related to the endorsement of peaceful religious

Table 3
Study 2: Defining Ideological Passion: Means, Standard Deviations, Scale Reliabilities, and Correlations

Passion for Islam	M (SD)	α	Correlations						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Harmonious passion	6.0 (.91)	.74	—	.15	.57	.39	.50	.45	.45
2. Obsessive passion	3.2 (1.2)	.67		—	.32	.41	.33	.55	.44
3. Personal importance	6.1 (1.3)	—			—	.41	.71	.64	.52
4. Time investment	3.7 (1.7)	—				—	.39	.43	.39
5. Love for Islam	5.9 (1.4)	—					—	.64	.60
6. Islam is a "passion"	5.2 (1.8)	—						—	.59
7. Muslim identity	6.1 (1.0)	.82							—

Note. $N = 111$. All correlations > .20 are significant at $p < .05$.

Table 4
Study 2: Means, Standard Deviations, Scale Reliabilities, and Correlations for the Model Variables

	M (SD)	α	Correlations					
			1	2	3	4	5	6
1. HP for Islam	6.0 (.91)	.74	—	.15	−.02	−.02	−.11	.21
2. OP for Islam	3.2 (1.2)	.67		—	.00	.23	.38	−.17
3. Identity threat manipulation*	—	—			—	.31	.01	.05
4. Hatred**	1.3 (.77)	—				—	.34	−.20
5. Religious extremism	1.9 (1.0)	.76					—	−.41
6. Peaceful religious activism	5.9 (1.1)	.83						—

Note. $N = 111$. *Manipulation coded 1 (experimental condition) and 0 (control condition); **hatred is measured on a 5-point scale.

activism ($r = .21$, $p < .05$), whereas OP for Islam was positively related to the endorsement of religious extremism and violence ($r = .38$, $p < .01$). The experimental condition of identity threat (coded 1; control coded 0) was positively related to hatred ($r = .31$, $p < .05$), which, in turn, was positively related to the endorsement of religious extremism and violence ($r = .34$, $p < .05$).

Path Analysis

The following hypothesized path model was tested, expecting a "moderated mediation" pattern of results (see Muller et al., 2005; Preacher et al., 2007). OP for Islam was proposed to predict hatred only in the social identity–threatening (experimental) condition. Hatred, in turn, was proposed to predict the endorsement of religious extremism and violence. The relationship between obsessive ideological passion and extremism was thus proposed to be mediated by people's experience of hatred following the identity threat. In contrast, HP for Islam was proposed to predict peaceful religious activism, while remaining unrelated to both hatred and religious extremism in the control and identity-threatening conditions.

To test the proposed model (Schumacker & Marcoulides, 1998; for an example, see Giguère & Lalonde, 2010), a path analysis was conducted with LISREL 8 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2003) using the covariance matrix and maximum likelihood estimation. Results revealed a satisfactory fit for the model, as illustrated by the following fit indices: $\chi^2(13) = 17.95$, $p = 0.16$, normed $\chi^2/df = 1.38$, CFI = .96, GFI = .96, SRMR = .07, RMSEA = .06. Absolute standardized correlation residuals were all smaller than .10. In addition, the residuals were relatively normally distributed. These results are generally favorable, indicating adequate fit for the hypothesized model.

The standardized solution is shown in Figure 2. All estimated paths were statistically significant. OP for Islam was associated with hatred in the identity-threatening condition, not in the control condition. Follow-up analyses of the moderation were conducted using simple slopes (Aiken & West, 1991; also see Giguère & Lalonde, 2010). The relationship between OP for Islam and hatred was estimated by fixing the condition at either 0 (control condition) or 1 (identity threat condition). As previously stated, in the control condition, OP for Islam was unrelated to hatred ($\beta = .15$, $p = .24$); however, OP for Islam was significantly related to hatred in the identity-threatening condition ($\beta = .37$, $p < .05$). Hatred, in turn, was positively related to the endorsement of religious extremism and violence. The direct path between OP for Islam and religious extremism ($r = .38$, $p < .05$) was mediated, or reduced to statistical insignificance, by people's experience of hatred only in the identity-threatening condition, as confirmed by modification indices. In
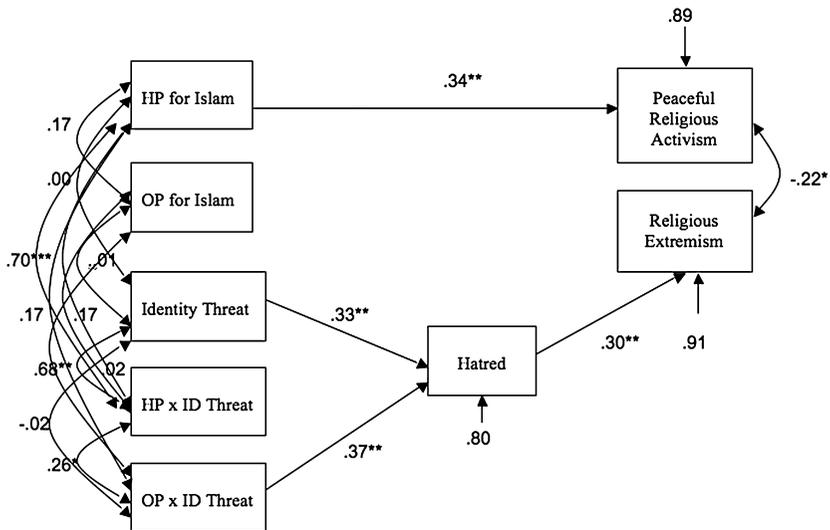
Figure 2
The role of harmonious and obsessive ideological passion, identity
threat, and hatred in the endorsement of religious extremism and
peaceful religious activism.

contrast, HP for Islam was positively related to the endorsement
of peaceful religious activism and remained unrelated to hatred
and religious extremism in both the control and identity-threatening
conditions.

In sum, these results provide support for the proposed model
and are in line with previous research and theoretical assumptions
derived from the dualistic model of passion. Specifically, people
motivated by obsessive ideological passion became extremist and
violent in social identity–threatening, intergroup circumstances,
whereas their harmoniously passionate counterparts remained non-
defensive and nonviolent (also see Donahue et al., 2009). In such
intergroup contexts, the relationship between OP and outgroup-
directed/-displaced extremism may involve the intermediary of
strong and negative out-group(s)-directed emotions, such as hatred
(also see Berkowitz, 1969). Not surprisingly, hatred has previously
been found to mediate the relationship between OP and aggressive
behavior in interpersonal contexts where the other person may be
perceived as a symbolic threat to the self (e.g., Philippe, Vallerand,
Richer, et al., 2009, Study 3).

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The present research tested the applicability of the Dualistic Model of Passion (DMP) to the study of ideological passion—the passion people harbor for the ideologies, causes, and groups they wish to advance, both personally and collectively, in the public arena. Its main purpose was to demonstrate that ideological passion type moderates the effect of social identity–threatening circumstances (Steele et al., 2002) on people's choice of activist tactics (peaceful vs. extremist). The present research therefore sought not only to contribute to the passion literature, but also to demonstrate how the passion perspective may be relevant to the intergroup processes literature.

Results from both the political (Study 1) and religious contexts (Study 2) supported our hypotheses. In contextually salient social identity–threatening circumstances for Quebec Sovereignty activists, obsessive ideological passion predicted the endorsement of political extremism, whereas harmonious ideological passion predicted the endorsement of democratic and peaceful political activism. Study 2 replicated and extended these findings with devout Muslims, but by manipulating identity threat. Obsessive ideological passion predicted the endorsement of religious extremism and aggression only in the identity–threatening condition, but it did so via the intermediary of hatred. Harmonious ideological passion, in contrast, predicted the endorsement of peaceful religious activism and remained unrelated to both hatred and religious extremism in the control and identity-threatening conditions, thereby suggesting that only harmonious ideological passion may be conducive to peaceful and incremental societal change.

Ideological Passion: On Passion for Causes, Ideologies, and Groups

The body of research that sprang out of the DMP focused on passion for various life activities. The present research extends this focus to *ideological* passion—people's passion for the causes, ideologies, and groups they wish to advance in the public arena. The results of the present research that pertain to the definition of ideological passion suggest that much like passion for the life activities previously studied, ideological passion, whether harmonious or obsessive, involves valuing and intensely liking (loving) the object of passion, whether it is political or religious, as well as dedicating significant time to it, and perhaps most importantly, internalizing it into one's identity.

On Ideological Passion and Identity Processes

Complementing the literature on group identification, the present research lends support to the idea that people may internalize a cherished cause, ideology, or group into their identity in either an autonomous or a controlled manner (Deci & Ryan, 2000), resulting in a harmonious or a obsessive ideological passion, respectively. Due to this divergent evolution, each passion type is associated with equally divergent identity/motivational processes, rendering people more or less vulnerable to circumstances that symbolically threaten their passion-derived sense of identity (see Baumeister et al., 2000; also see Hodgins & Knee, 2002).

For instance, people motivated by harmonious ideological passion reported feeling personally threatened in the social identity–threatening condition (Study 2) but nevertheless remained nondefensive and nonviolent, unlike their obsessively passionate counterparts, who also reported feeling personally threatened in this condition but who became hateful, extremist, and violent. These results provide indirect support for the notion that HP is associated with identity processes that promote a strong and secure sense of identity—one mostly invulnerable to threats that target the passionate domain. These results also provide indirect support for the notion that OP is associated with identity processes that engender a strong, but insecure, sense of identity—one rendering threats that target the passionate domain very psychologically costly and people's reaction to them extremist and violent (see Baumeister et al., 2000; also see Carpentier et al., in press; Lafrenière et al., 2011; Vallerand et al., 2010).

The passion/motivation framework may contribute both to social identity theory (SIT; Tajfel, 1978; also see Tajfel & Turner, 1986), which views group identification as a unidimensional construct, and to group processes research that distinguishes between (at least) two dimensions of identification (e.g., nationalism vs. patriotism; Koesterman & Feshbach, 1989; Schatz, Staub, & Lavine, 1999; also see Roccas, Sagiv, Schwartz, Halevy, & Eidelson, 2008). This is partly because intergroup perspectives do not address the development of identity as much as they do the consequences of group membership for intergroup conflict (see Huddy, 2001). The dualistic passion perspective sheds light on both issues, namely, by addressing the development of qualitatively different types of ideological passion, each associated with a strong, but either secure or insecure,

sense of identity, and divergent activism tactics in social identity–threatening situations. It suggests that different types of *internalization* (Deci & Ryan, 2000; also see Koestner, Losier, Vallerand, & Carducci, 1996; Losier & Koestner, 1999) of the cause, ideology, or group into one's identity (also see Vallerand, Ntoumanis, et al., 2008, Study 2) may account for previously identified divergent ways of identifying with one's group (e.g., constructive vs. blind patriotism; Schatz et al., 1999). Importantly, ideological passion, as opposed to mere identification (whatever the type), is expected to develop only when the other criteria for "passion" have been met—namely, personal importance, *love*, and time investment (see Mageau et al., 2009). The passion framework may, therefore, add to our understanding of intergroup processes beyond what is already known on identification not only by documenting, as we have done, how ideologically *passionate* (extreme) people can and do behave differently in threatening intergroup contexts depending on whether their passion is harmonious or obsessive in character, but also by elucidating how the development of previously studied divergent ways of identifying with one's group may be explained.

On Harmonious Ideological Passion, Peaceful Activism, and Nonviolence

The present research suggests two diverging pathways to socially transformative activism: one associated with harmonious, and the other with obsessive, ideological passion. Harmonious ideological passion appears to predispose people to typically choose peaceful activism over extremism and violence. In social identity–threatening, intergroup circumstances, such a passion enables people to remain nondefensive (Hodgins, Yacko, & Gottlieb, 2006) and nonviolent. These findings obtained in intergroup (i.e., political and religious) contexts are consistent with past research on passion for life activities, suggesting that HP is unrelated to aggression in interpersonal contexts where the other person may be perceived as a symbolic threat to the self (Donahue et al., 2009; Philippe, Vallerand, Richer, et al., 2009). In addition, these findings suggest that people with a harmonious ideological passion may be expected to fight to change their minority group's negative image in a social identity–threatening intergroup climate by engaging in social change and creativity strategies (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) peacefully and democratically.

On Obsessive Ideological Passion, Hatred, Extremism, and Violence

The second pathway to socially transformative activism appears to lead people with an obsessive ideological passion to experience hatred and endorse extremism and intergroup violence in circumstances that somehow symbolically threaten their passion-derived sense of identity. These findings obtained in intergroup (i.e., political and religious) contexts are consistent with past research on passion for various life activities, which suggests that OP is associated with aggression in interpersonal contexts where the other person may be perceived as a symbolic threat to the self (Donahue et al., 2009; Philippe, Vallerand, Richer, et al., 2009). These findings are also in line with past research suggesting that hatred may mediate the relationship between OP and aggression (Vallerand, Ntoumanis, et al., 2008, Study 2). Finally, the results of the present research suggest that people who harbor an obsessive ideological passion may be expected to fight to change their minority group's negative image in a social identity–threatening intergroup climate by engaging in social change (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) radically and violently. To the extent that publicly inciting (e.g., the Pope's negative stereotyped remarks about Islam), advocating, or engaging in intergroup violence reminds everyone involved of their own mortality (mortality salience; Greenberg, Solomon, & Pyszczynski, 1997), it may lead people on both sides of the intergroup divide to bolster their worldview (ideology) and have a decreased tolerance for people and ideas that challenge them, thereby further fueling the cycle of intergroup violence, intolerance, and misunderstanding and rendering conflict resolution more difficult.

Limitations

The present research has a number of limitations. First, the results of Study 1 are entirely correlational and causal inferences are unwarranted. Though the suggested direction of causality flows from ideological passion to activism tactics, it is equally plausible that the causality could be bidirectional. That is, reflecting on one's peaceful or extremist activist behavior may lead an ideologically inclined person to further internalize a particular (harmonious or obsessive) ideologically passionate orientation (self-perception theory; Bem, 1972). Second, the results of the tested path model in Study 2 suggest several causal directions that cannot be ascertained given the study's

design. This is because Study 2 featured both correlational and experimental components. Third, both studies assessed participants' endorsement of peaceful and extremist activist tactics, not their actual behavior.

Future Directions

The present research suggests several directions for future research. The first regards the possibility of bidirectional causality between ideological passion and activism tactics, which could be ascertained with a study employing a cross-lagged panel design. Such a study would explore whether engaging in a specific type of activism (peaceful or violent) leads people to further internalize a particular ideologically passionate orientation (harmonious or obsessive) and/or vice versa. A relatively recent cross-lagged panel design study of passion for teaching found that outcomes did not produce changes in passion; rather, passion predicted changes in the outcomes under study (see Carbonneau et al., 2008). Nevertheless, the outcomes under study were different from the ones presently examined. Second, future research may wish to bring ideologically passionate people into the laboratory to directly observe their behavior under more controlled conditions.

A third direction for future research concerns the role of "defensive zeal" (McGregor, 2006) in eliminating negative sentiment (e.g., anxiety, hatred) experienced by people with an obsessive ideological passion in circumstances that threaten their passion-derived sense of identity. This is because people motivated by such a passion appear ready to defend against identity threats in a violent and extremist fashion. Their extremism may, in fact, constitute a form of defensive zeal that relives the anxious concern emanating from the social identity threat, but this remains an empirical question.

A fourth and final avenue for future research concerns the process of self-affirmation (Steele, 1988) and how it may be optimally used to secure the identity of people who harbor an obsessive *ideological* passion. An important distinction needs to be made between "same-domain" affirmations (e.g., where the self-affirmation and the self-threat are on the same dimension) and "other-domain" affirmations (e.g., where they are on different dimensions), as the former type has been found to backfire in cases where people are led to affirm their *moral worth* in some way before it is threatened (see Sherman &

Cohen, 2006). In particular, same-domain affirmations of one's moral worth have been found to lead to a sense of personal impunity, where the person feels licensed to act in ways that violate important moral principles, especially to the extent that the "right" course of action is ambiguous (Brown, 2000). Because having an ideological passion clearly involves moral judgments and moral ambiguity, affirming the ideological domain may lead to increased extremism and aggression when the subsequent identity-threatening event targets the same ideological domain. This is why a self-affirmation manipulation may be expected to have appeasing effects on people with an obsessive ideological passion in times or circumstances that somehow pose a symbolic threat to the ideological dimension of their identity, only if they are led to affirm a dimension of their self *unrelated* to the ideological passion. This, however, remains an empirical question to be settled by future research, the results of which may have important practical implications for pluralistic societies.

CONCLUSION

Ideological passion—that is, people's passion for the causes, ideologies, and groups they wish to advance in the public arena—energizes and directs socially transformative movements. Harmonious ideological passion, in particular, appears to typically lead people down a peaceful activist path. In social identity–threatening times or circumstances, it appears to enable them to remain nondefensive and nonviolent. In contrast, obsessive ideological passion appears to lead people down an extremist and violent activist path in circumstances that symbolically threaten their passion-derived sense of identity, at times via the intermediary of strong and negative emotions, such as hatred. Much needed is research that seeks to gain a better understanding of how to optimally secure the identity of people who harbor an obsessive ideological passion, as is work attempting to further integrate the motivation/passion framework with intergroup perspectives.

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