Dear Professor Rule,

Enclosed please find a manuscript entitled “Registered Report - Space to Think: Testing the Effect of Distancing on Moral Dumbfounding” to be considered as registered report in *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*.

We propose a single high powered (N = 2,400) study to examine if rates of moral dumbfounding can be reduced using a manipulation of psychological distance. Moral dumbfounding is an apparent psychological anomaly, it is reliably elicited, yet poorly understood, and has implications for public discourse. This work builds on previous work examining a dual-process explanation of dumbfounding (where a cognitive load manipulation inhibits reason-giving and leads to increased rates of dumbfounding). We draw on construal level theory to hypothesize that increased psychological distance will lead to higher rates of reason giving (by facilitating deliberative responding). We propose to examine manipulations of two types of psychological distance across four moral scenarios.

We believe this manuscript is suitable for consideration is *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* because it examines a phenomenon that is of broad interest within moral and social psychology. The proposed study will provide novel insights into the cognitive mechanisms that underlie moral dumbfounding, advancing theory in moral psychology. Additionally, this work may offer practical solutions to mitigate the impact of moral dumbfounding on everyday discourse. The proposed study is high powered and employs well established methods for studying this phenomenon. Our proposed manipulations are informed by the results of 8 pilot studies where we examined the feasibility of this program of research (also enclosed).

With the submission of this manuscript, I would like to undertake that:

* All authors of this research paper have directly participated in the planning, execution, or analysis of this study;
* the contents of this manuscript have not been copyrighted or published previously;
* the contents of this manuscript are not now under consideration for publication elsewhere.
* The study is designed to detect adequate effects with 90% power
* Ethics has been provided for the proposed research, the research team has the resources to complete the data collection
* This research will be published regardless of the results of the study

Yours faithfully,

Cillian

On behalf of the research team

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