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## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Are immoral acts performed for an intelligible reason judged favorably compared to those done for seemingly no reason?
- Are predictable immoral actors perceived as more moral compared to unpredictable immoral actors, even when objectively doing more harm?

## INTRODUCTION

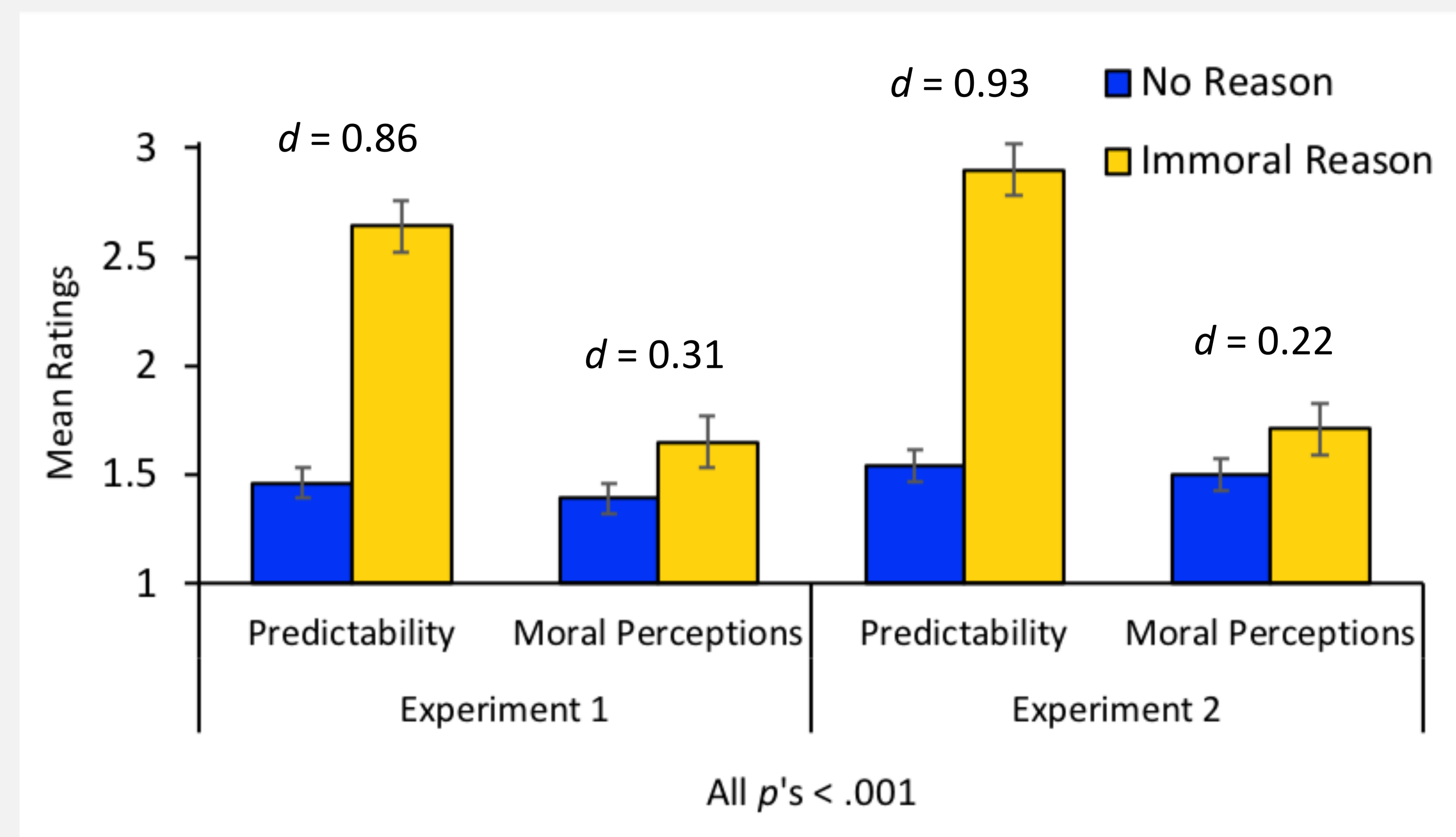
- People possess strong aversions to uncertainty.<sup>1, 2, 3</sup>
- We expect that this aversion to uncertainty will translate into the moral domain such that people will demonstrate a moral aversion to unpredictable immoral actors engaging in immoral acts for seemingly no reason.

## METHODS

- We recruited 400 participants across two experiments.
- Participants were asked to judge two people acting within a scenario on various moral dimensions (see Measures):
- **No Reason:** Gerald punches Robert for no reason (i.e., Gerald did not benefit in any way from punching Robert, who was unknown to him) breaking Robert's jaw.
- **Immoral Reason:** Richard punches Michael (breaking Michael's jaw) in order to escape a bank he had just robbed for \$50,000.

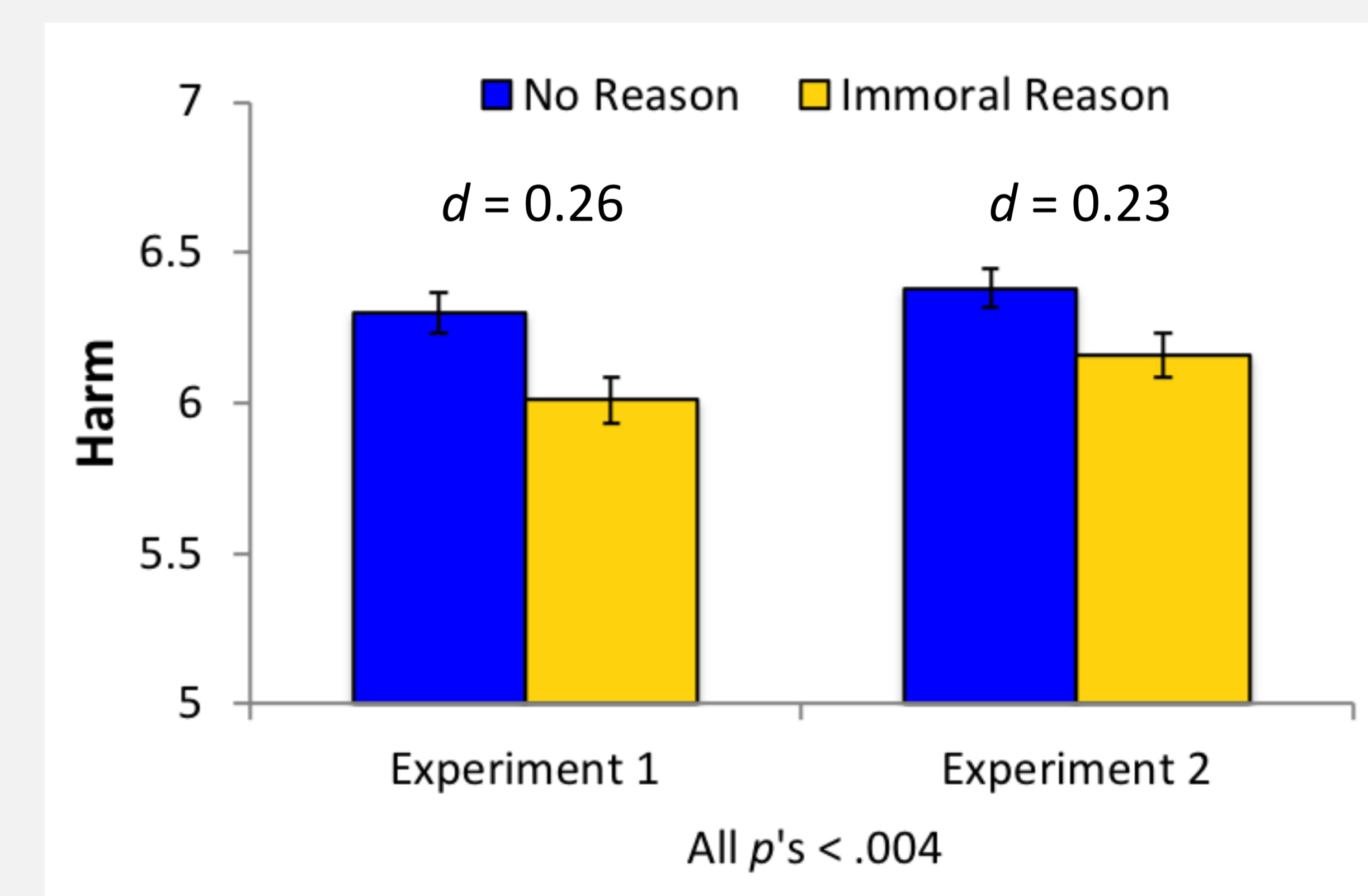
## MEASURES

<b>Predictability:</b>	Unpredictable	○○○○○○○○	Predictable
<b>Moral Perceptions:</b>	Bad	○○○○○○○○	Good
	Immoral	○○○○○○○○	Moral
	Violent	○○○○○○○○	Peaceful
	Merciless	○○○○○○○○	Empathetic
<b>Harm:</b>	Caused No Harm	○○○○○○○○	Caused a Great Deal of Harm



## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

- Participants perceived immoral actors performing an immoral act for an intelligible immoral reason as more predictable and more moral compared to immoral actors performing the same immoral act for seemingly no reason.
- Our findings conflict with both consequentialist and rule-based moral frameworks<sup>4, 5</sup> as actors described as causing more harm and as violating an additional moral rule (i.e., theft) were perceived as more moral.
- The intelligibility of immoral acts biased perceptions of harm, suggesting that immoral actions done for no reason are perceived as especially harmful.



## REFERENCES

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