**ERGO II Ethics application form – FELS Committee**

1. **Applicant Details**

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| **1.1 Applicant name** | **Luke Chandaman (lesc1g20@soton.ac.uk)** |
| **1.2 Supervisor** | **Dr Jacob Juhl (j.t.juhl@soton.ac.uk)** |
| **1.3 Other researchers / collaborators (if applicable):** *Name, address, email* |  |

1. **Study Details**

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| **2.1 Title of study** | Respect the Dead 1 (advertised as “Thoughts about Other People”) |
| **2.2 Type of project** (e.g. undergraduate, Masters, Doctorate, staff) | Doctorate / Staff |
| **2.4 Proposed start date** (must match date stated in ERGO) | **03/04/2022** |
| **2.5 Proposed end date** (must match date stated in ERGO) | **03/04/2024** |

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| **2.6 Briefly describe the rationale for carrying out this project and its specific aims and objectives.** |
| The ‘death positivity bias’ is a phenomenon that describes the long held cultural tradition of having respect for the dead and not speaking ill of dead people. Despite the pervasiveness of the bias and its acknowledgement in popular culture, research is relatively scant.  Studies have established the bias occurring for evaluations of dead leaders (CEO’s) and celebrities; however, no research has investigated whether death positivity bias occurs when evaluating ‘ordinary’ (i.e., non-famous) persons. This study will test whether the death positivity bias extends to evaluations of ordinary people. |

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| **2.7 Provide a brief outline of the basic study design. Outline what approach is being used and why.** |
| The study will be experimental. We will randomly assign participants to an ‘alive’ or ‘dead’. In the alive condition, participants will read a vignette describing the life of an ordinary person. In the dead condition, participants will read a vignette describing the life of an ordinary person (same person as the alive condition), but at the end of the vignette the person is described to “have passed away”. After reading the vignette, participants will complete questions evaluating the person describing in the vignette on number of domains: likability, competence, morality, respect, and big five personality traits. |

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| **2.8 What are the key research question(s)? Specify hypotheses if applicable.** |
| The primary hypothesis is that participants who believe the person in the vignette to be dead (dead condition) will have more respect for the person described in the vignette than participants who believe the person is alive (alive condition).  We will also explore the potential influence of death positivity bias on overall liking, competence appraisals, morality appraisals and big five personality traits. |

1. **Sample and setting**

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| **3.1 Who are the proposed participants and where are they from (e.g. fellow students, club members)? List inclusion / exclusion criteria if applicable.**  Participants will be undergraduate students (18 or older) enrolled in psychology modules at the University of Southampton. |
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| **3.2. How will the participants be identified and approached? Provide an indication of your sample size. If participants are under the responsibility of others (e.g., parents/carers, teachers) state if you have permission or how you will obtain permission from the third party).**  The study will be advertised online on the eFolio Participant Signup System to students enrolled in psychology courses at the University of Southampton. They can click on a link if they are interested in participating. We aim to recruit about 200 participants. |
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| **3.3 Describe the relationship between researcher and sample. Describe any relationship e.g., teacher, friend, boss, clinician, etc.** |
| Jacob Juhl may be the instructor of some participants. Luke Chandaman may be a teaching assistant on some of the modules participants have done or are doing. |

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| **3.4 How will you obtain the consent of participants? (***please upload a copy of the consent form if obtaining written consent***) NB. Consent form is not needed for studies collecting data online.** |
| Participants will complete the study on computers, and we’ll provide participants with the chance to give consent on the first page/screen of the study. Participants can tick a box if they decide to continue with the study or not tick the box if they decide to not participate. This will appear at the bottom of the Participant Information Sheet. Additionally, in the Participant Information Sheet, we provide participants with a link to the University’s Privacy Notice for Research Participants to read in conjunction with the Participant Information Sheet. |

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| **3.5 Is there any reason to believe participants may not be able to give full informed consent? If yes, what steps do you propose to take to safeguard their interests?** |
| No |

1. **Research procedures, interventions and measurements**

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| **4.1 Give a brief account of the procedure as experienced by the participant. Make it clear who does what, how many times and in what order. Make clear the role of all assistants and collaborators. Make clear the total demands made on participants, including time and travel.** *Upload copies of questionnaires and interview schedules to ERGO.* |
| Participants will first see the advertisement posted on the e-folio sign up system. If they are interested in participating, they can read the Participant Information Sheet. Once they have decided to participate, they will receive some brief instructions. Following this, participants will be randomly assigned to a condition where they either read a vignette describing the life of a person who is still alive or a vignette describing the life of a person who has now passed away.  After this, participants will answer several follow-up questionnaires about the person in the vignette they read. Specifically, they will rate the person in the vignette likability, competence, morality, respect, and the big five personality traits. They will also complete a demographics questionnaire. Following this, participants will be asked what they believe the purpose of the study was and whether they experienced any distractions during study participation.  Finally, participants will read a debriefing. The whole procedure should take 20 minutes or less. |

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| **4.2 Will the procedure involve deception of any sort? If yes, what is your justification?** |
| We wrote the vignettes (describing a person’s life) for the purpose of this study. However, we tell participants that the vignette was written by a participant from a previous study and, as such, the vignette describes a real person. We do this because, in order to test the death positivity bias, participants need to believe that the person described in the vignette is a real person. |
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| **4.3. Detail any possible (psychological or physical) discomfort, inconvenience, or distress that participants may experience, including after the study, and what precautions will be taken to minimise these risks.** |
| It is possible that participants in the dead condition may experience very mild sadness when they find out that the person described in the vignette is now dead. However, if this occurs for some participants, this is likely to be short lived, because the participants do not know the person in the vignette.  Although the risk of psychological discomfort is lowwe invite participants to contact the below resource if any discomfort and/or distress arises. We invite participants to do this both before and after the completion of the study.   * Find a counsellor at [www.bacp.org](http://www.bacp.org) * The Student Well-Being Team (<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/edusupport/mental_health_and_wellbeing/index.page>) * Nightline, on 023 8059 5236 (free from halls on (78)25236) or visit (<https://southampton.nightline.ac.uk/>) * Worldwide: [www.allaboutcounseling.com](http://www.allaboutcounseling.com)   Participants also complete a mood repair task at the end of the study in which they state two positive qualities about themselves and rate how much they like five cute/funny pictures. |

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| **4.4 Detail any possible (psychological or physical) discomfort, inconvenience, or distress that YOU as a researcher may experience, including after the study, and what precautions will be taken to minimise these risks.** |
| We cannot foresee experiencing any discomfort ourselves. |

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| **4.5 Explain how you will care for any participants in ‘special groups’ e.g., those in a dependent relationship, are vulnerable or are lacking mental capacity), if applicable:** |
| Not applicable. |

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| **4.6 Please give details of any payments or incentives being used to recruit participants, if applicable:** |
| Participants will receive 4 participation credits because this is a 20-minute online study. |

**5. Access and storage of data**

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| **5.1 How will participant confidentiality be maintained? Confidentiality is defined as non-disclosure of research information except to another authorised person. Confidential information can be shared with those already party to it and may also be disclosed where the person providing the information provides explicit consent. Consider whether it is truly possible to maintain a participant’s involvement in the study confidential, e.g. can people observe the participant taking part in the study?** |
| This study will be completely anonymous. No personally identifying information will be associated with the data collected for the study. |

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| **5.2 How will personal data and study results be stored securely during and after the study. Who will have access to these data?** |
| Raw data will be collected and stored on iSurvey, which is password protected. The downloaded anonymised data will be stored on the researcher’s personal computers and may be uploaded to the open science data repositories. |

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| **5.3 How will it be made clear to participants that they may withdraw consent to participate? Please note that anonymous data (e.g. anonymous questionnaires) cannot be withdrawn after they have been submitted. If there is a point up to which data can be withdrawn/destroyed e.g., up to interview data being transcribed please state this here.** |
| In the participant information sheet, we tell participants “You have the right to change your mind and withdraw at any time without giving a reason. Because the data is anonymous, however, we are unable to delete your responses once you have submitted them.” |

**6. Additional Ethical considerations**

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| **6.1. Are there any additional ethical considerations or other information you feel may be relevant to this study?**  No |