I must begin my review acknowledging that I am not an expert in the topic of the paper. I accepted to review the registered report on the assumption that the manipulations, dependent variables and analyses were unlikely to be complicated (and they aren’t!) but reading the manuscript I was soon overwhelmed by the number of manipulations and dependent variables and eventually lost track of what the experiment is really about, what are the crucial effects to be tested and why they are important. All this information is admittedly in the manuscript, but it is scattered in different places, making the reading of the proposal complicated for nonexperts like me. I do have suggestions for the next version of the manuscript, but this are mostly directed towards making it more accessible and focused.

The current pdf file is 73 pages long, and this doesn’t include the General Discussion, to be written when we have the results! I think the text is too long and this makes it easier to get lost at some point. I would suggest the authors to remove everything that is not essential and, most importantly, avoid repetitions. There are few places where it is easy to delete text without affecting the integrity of the ms. But I would urge the authors to apply this logic to the rest of the manuscript.

The introduction includes a lengthy presentation of contagion theory. But I didn’t think that this was important to understand the text. I think it can be deleted or reduced to no more than 4-5 lines, directing the reader towards recent reviews.

Table 2 includes all the main effects and interactions of the original experiments, but surely not all of these are crucial. Why not focusing just on the two crucial results? This is something that can be done in the text itself. In fact, right now this information is presented in the main text, in Table 1 and in Table 2. I think the text would become much clearer presenting this information just once, possibly in the main text, but more clearly (I miss more information about the original experiments and the interpretation of effects; see below).

On p. 15 there is first a 2-paragraph summary of the extensions and then two full sections explaining the two extensions in more detail. I think this can be summarized to a single paragraph. And if this is well explained in the text, Table is not needed.

The power and sensitivity analyses have been conducted for every effect in Table 2, but wouldn’t it make more sense to focus just on the crucial effects? The Supplementary Material for further information, but if the analysis is focused on just the crucial effects, maybe this explanation in the SM can be summarized as well and inserted in the main text. (Also, it is possibly easiest for the reader to provide the direct link to the RMarkdown file, instead of giving the name of the file in the OSF folder.)

Pre-registered protocols often include a section with the analysis plan. An alternative to this is to actually write the results section with random values in places where the numerical values will the reported. But I do not think it is necessary to do both. In other words, I think it would suffice to write either the “Data analysis strategy” or the “Results” section, but not both at this stage. And this extra space can be used to expand the explanations that will allow the reader to understand why each effect is important. When I got to the current Results section, I had already lost track of which results where important and why. Whatever section you decide to keep, I would urge you to remind the reader about which analyses are crucial and why and how they should be interpreted.

Figures S1 and S2 in the Supplementary Material can be replaced by very brief verbal descriptions or simply deleted with minor amendment in the text.

The previous changes would make a lot of space that the authors can then use to include information that right now can be missed, especially by non-expert readers. For instance, it takes a lot of time to understand what Newman did and why. On p. 7-8 we are told that Newman contrasted three explanations and found evidence supporting the contagion hypothesis. I would help a lot if, at this point, the manuscript presented an overview of what participants were asked to do in Newman’s experiments, what they did, and how those results lead to the conclusion that contagion was the main factor driving the effect. This general explanation of what Newman’s experiment was about is currently missing and it forces the reader to link the bits of information about Newman’s study scattered throughout the ms. Note also that if Newman’s experiments, results and discussion are presented with some detail here, this would allow the authors to simplify the explanation of their own experiments, because they will only need to remind the reader what’s the same as in Newman and what is new in the current experiments.

I think the justification of the RR can be improved. Pages 10-11 merely say that the contagion effect is important in the literature. But this doesn’t feel like a good reason to repeat the study. Is there anything that cast doubts on Newman’s original study? Any reason to assume that the results might not be robust or generalizable? Any measure/manipulation that the original study did not include but is worth including? The authors in fact extended Newman’s experiment. This would be an excellent place to explain why this was timely, relevant…

“Main hypotheses and key findings in the target article”. The reader gets to this point without knowing very well the procedure/design/results of Newman et al. Without this previous information, it is almost important to understand why the two interactions in Table 1 are important. Much more information about Newman et al. must be included before reaching this point. And perhaps it would be convenient to present these two crucial results themselves much earlier in the ms. For instance, before explaining why replicating Newman is important. I must confess I have not completely understood why these effects are crucial and why they mean. Possibly because when I got to this point, I still new nothing about Newman’s procedure/design/logic. Note also that pages 13 and Table 2 contain the same information.

The explanation of the procedure and design (pp. 20-30) can be summarized and simplified substantially. The text is complicated substantially by having different sections for procedure, design, manipulations, dependent variables… I think it would be much easier to simply present what participants were asked to do and in the same order in which they are asked to do it, presenting along the way the manipulations and dependent variables (not in a separate section). That is, when you explain that participants were asked to give the name of an individual, you can say that depending on the experimental condition they were asked to give the name of a positive, negative or mixed individual. And at that point you can say that this was manipulation X. Then you do not need to have a separate section with the manipulations. Otherwise, the reader is forced to go forward and backward in the text to unite the different pieces of information. The same applies to the dependent variables.

This is just a suggestion (like all the previous), but I wonder if it would be useful to report Experiment 1 and Experiment 2 independently. That is, having the Method section of Experiment 2 after the results of Experiment 1. This would reduce working-memory load a lot for the reader.

“Evaluation criteria for replication findings” Wouldn’t it make more sense to present this after the analysis plan? That is, once the reader knows what will be analyzed, at the very point where you explain what’s the crucial result, you can alert they that you will compare this to the results of the original study using method X.

In the results section it might be best to first report all the analyses that pertain to the suitability of data and then the crucial inferential analyses. In other words, we want to know if the basic requirements were met before interpreting the crucial results. This would imply mentioning first whether outliers will be removed or not and whether the manipulation checks were as intended. Here you also mentioned Cronbach’s alpha for some dependent measures, but until this point it was not clear to me that you would merge response to different items for different dependent variable. I must confess I got to this point with very little understanding of the procedure, manipulations and dependent variables.

p. 49 repeats much of the same information as p. 31. Surely these can be summarized/merged.

SM, “Materials and scales used in the replication + extension experiment” This section can be replaced by a simple link in the main text.