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## Friendship, FNE, and Confronting a Racist Remark

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**Examining how friendship and fear of negative evaluation impact confronting racist  
remarks**

A Thesis

Presented in

Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirement of the Degree of  
Master of Arts

By

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**Author's Note**

Dedicated to my dad, Javier Vazquez (1966-2021), whose love and support continue to guide me. May his memory continue to live on through this thesis. Miss you and love you, Dad. I would also like to thank members of the SIP Lab for providing feedback and advice on this thesis. I could not have done it without your help and support.



### **Abstract**

Targets of prejudice (e.g., women, racial/ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+-identified people) are often expected to confront—an active and direct expression of displeasure toward a person who has made prejudiced or offensive comments (Czopp et al., 2006)—a perpetrator of prejudice. However, the expectation that targets will confront their perpetrator comes with the barriers that their message will be ignored and that targets may experience social backlash (Czopp & Monteith, 2003), especially if the perpetrator has a different identity from the target (e.g., man, White, heterosexual). Glick (2014) highlights how this is where allies (nontargets) can be beneficial in confrontations of prejudice—allies break the expectation that targets confront prejudice, especially when the ally shares an identity with the perpetrator. But what hinders successful confrontations? How can allies be encouraged to confront prejudice? And what if the perpetrator of prejudice is a friend of the ally and how does that hinder a successful confrontation? This study examines the relationship between confrontation and the friendship between an ally and a coworker who makes an ambiguous, racial remark. Furthermore, the study examines how might fear of negative evaluation moderate the willingness to confront a racial remark.

### **Examining How Friendship and Fear of Negative Evaluation Impact Confronting Racism**

Prejudiced comments come in various forms. Some prejudiced comments are also more prototypical than other types, such as racism versus sexism. However, regardless of the manifestation of these prejudices, those who experience them (called here: *targets*) must come to decide how and if they should call out the person who caused the events in question (called here: *perpetrators*). This decision-making process and the consequences that follow are complex, often involving identity, social environments, and perceived backlash to calling out another on inappropriate behavior. People's inability or ability to stand up (confront) perpetrators of prejudice depends on both external and internal factors. Confrontation, while valuable and can push social agendas forward, is complex; it can be hindered in a multitude of ways.

#### **Confrontation**

Confrontation is defined here as an active and direct expression of displeasure toward a person who has made prejudiced or offensive comments (Czopp, Monteith, & Mark, 2006). Prejudiced and offensive comments include racist, sexist, homophobic/anti-gay, xenophobic/anti-immigrant, ageist, and/or comments that endorse stereotypical features of group membership (Allport, 1954; Crandall & Warner, 2005). When confrontations occur, there are often two to three actors involved: the confronter, the confronted, and, in some cases, a bystander. Finally, confrontations and their message effectiveness (i.e., how well the message is received by the confronted and bystanders) often hinges on the confronter's perception of who is doing the confronting.

Confrontations often occur in intergroup contexts but may also arise within groups (Dickter et al., 2012). Most confrontations happen between one person (often the target of prejudiced and offensive comments) and another (perpetrator) who makes those comments,

typically holding power in some way over these targeted individuals (e.g., Fiske, 1993). Furthermore, according to Czopp and Monteith (2003), confrontation is an effective medium for reducing prejudice and can serve as a reminder of egalitarian norms—the belief in equality and equity—making them salient and provoking “...people [to] become less likely to provide prejudiced responses” (p. 533). Essentially, confrontations raise awareness of prejudice and encourage decreasing its usage (Glick, 2014).

The response itself may be direct or indirect depending on the situation. Direct confrontations often involve the target of the prejudiced remark (the confronter) and the person who made the comment (the confronted), while indirect confrontation may involve a third-party individual such as a human resources manager or a supervisor (Ashburn-Nardo & Karim, 2019; Dickter et al., 2012). Nevertheless, no matter the method of confronting, the response is the same—voicing displeasure because of something that a person did that is prejudicial or biased (Czopp et al., 2006; Shelton & Stewart, 2004).

### **Targets of Prejudice Confronting Prejudice.**

To better understand how confronting prejudice works, I will first focus on targets and their experiences with confrontations of prejudice. Following, I will then explain how bystanders (allies) experience the confrontation process and how they have an upper hand compared to targets in their messaging and why it may be beneficial for allies to confront perpetrators of prejudice.

In American society, marginalized (target) groups such as women, racial/ethnic minorities, and/or LGBTQ+ individuals rely on confrontation to voice displeasure of offensive statements (Ashburn-Nardo & Karim, 2019; Dodd et al., 2001). These offensive statements can be viewed as stressful events; therefore, minority groups have come to use confrontation as a

coping strategy (Dodd et al., 2001; Kaiser & Miller, 2004). However, confrontations come with benefits and costs that may determine whether someone responds to a prejudiced remark.

Beneficially, confronting may result in changing prejudicial attitudes (Czopp & Monteith, 2003). As noted earlier, confrontations, when used correctly, can be an effective tool for change (Czopp et al., 2006). Furthermore, from a stress perspective, confrontation can be viewed as a beneficial coping skill (Kaiser & Miller, 2004). In addition to an opportunity for changing prejudicial attitudes, target groups can relieve their displeasure of the prejudice and promote their own well-being (Kaiser & Miller, 2004; Sanchez et al., 2016).

According to the self-discrepancy theory (Shelton et al., 2006), if a person who is normally committed to challenging bias chooses to ignore discrimination, it can lead to guilt and rumination, presumably because the identity of challenging bias is called into question (Mallet & Melchiori, 2019). Recall, confrontation can serve as a medium of social change (Czopp et al., 2006), which may make some targeted individuals feel responsible for improving the social condition of their fellow ingroup members—hence, the guilt (Czopp & Monteith, 2003). Further, ignoring or failing to challenge bias and attempting to repair the fractured target-perpetrator relationship requires the target to tax their mental and physical resources; this may include hiding their dissatisfaction and concealing negative emotions (e.g., sadness, hurt), controlling their facial expressions (e.g., features of hurt or sadness), and monitoring their own thoughts and behaviors (Mallet & Melchiori, 2019). Because of this, targeted individuals who ignore bias may also experience poor health behaviors such as poor sleep, distress, and rumination over painful memories associated with the biased event (Farrow, 2017).

Confrontation also carries risk. These risks can determine whether a targeted individual decides to confront a prejudicial remark (Good et al., 2012). Some of these risks include being

perceived as a complainer or “boat rocker” (Glick, 2014; Sanchez et al., 2016; Shelton & Stewart, 2004). Confrontation, especially in contexts where the targeted individual is maybe the only member of a marginalized group (e.g., the only woman or Black person), carries additional risks such as social isolation by others and the loss of respect. Such risks include the threat of job loss, potential opportunities (e.g., promotions), or even the loss of relationships (e.g., coworker relationships, networking, potential friendships; Keltner et al., 2003).

Despite the risks, marginalized group members may be more likely to respond to a prejudicial remark compared to majority group members (Rasinski & Czopp, 2010). Confrontations carry risks and benefits, and therefore not all people will confront others. What usually prevents someone from confronting? Aside from being perceived as a complainer or boat rocker (for minoritized groups) and the potential loss of respect and social backlash (Glick, 2014; Shelton & Stewart, 2004), confrontations can be hindered by several factors. One factor is power discrepancies between the target and perpetrator (Fiske, 1993): i.e., the perpetrator being in a position of higher social status (e.g., boss; White person) and the target having a lower social status (e.g., employee; minoritized person). Another factor is the fear of negative evaluation (FNE, e.g., Good et al., 2012; see also Herrera et al., 2018; Karakashian et al., 2006; Leary, 1983; Wei & Wu, 2017).

When a person decides to confront or not confront a prejudiced remark, that individual may have a multitude of responses that are often rational and designed to maximize their goals within a situation (Mallet & Melchiori, 2014, 2019). Generally, the target of the perceived slight must decide if the event was discriminatory, determining if the remark is even worth challenging. Challenging ambiguous statements can lead to social backlash, including scorn, rejection, anger, and retaliation (Ashburn-Nardo & Karim, 2019; Mallet & Melchiori, 2019). The individual must

also decide if the remark is rooted in a target's group membership or based on personal attributes. Specifically, Jetten and colleagues (2013) discuss that people's decision in deciding if something is discriminatory will be based on group membership (e.g., being rude because of age) rather than a personal attribute (e.g., being a rude person).

People can have a wide variety of emotional outcomes when responding to discrimination or prejudice (Rasinski & Czopp, 2010; Zou & Dickter, 2013). For example, anger and vulnerability can affect the way a person confronts prejudice and the goals of an interaction between the target and the perpetrator (Monteith et al., 2019). For example, in a study on confronting derogatory remarks of a gay male roommate, Hyers (2010) found that hostile forms of confrontation were often rated as less polite, and raters felt that less hostile confrontations were more sensitive compared to hostile confrontations.

Confrontations take skill and energy. Because of that, the confronter must decide if it is worth the time and energy to confront. Deciding to confront depends on whether the target believes that the perpetrator will be willing to change their prejudiced beliefs. But other reasons include communicating egalitarianism as an environmental norm (e.g., Czopp & Monteith, 2003). By communicating egalitarianism, targets can signal to others that it is okay to confront a perpetrator (i.e., a sense of solidarity). Through that sense of solidarity, confrontation could also empower other marginalized groups (e.g., persons of color, women) to confront their own perpetrators of prejudice (Herrera et al., 2018).

### ***Mindsets and Motivations***

One of the barriers to confronting a prejudiced person is deciding if it is worth the time to confront the perpetrator of prejudice. Determining if confrontation will be effective depends on if the confronter believes that the confronted will be willing to change their thoughts and

behaviors (Rattan & Dweck, 2010). It follows that if the confronter believes that the perpetrator holds a growth mindset (i.e., the perpetrator is open to new information and refrains from future, offensive behaviors) and becomes less prejudicial over time, the confronter will be more likely to confront bias later (Rattan & Dweck, 2010). On the other hand, if the confronter believes the perpetrator holds a fixed mindset (i.e., the perpetrator has a more rigid view and is less open to new information and changing thoughts) this may make the confronter less likely to confront prejudice and the perpetrator less receptive to changing their own thoughts over time.

Importantly, mindset matters for both the target and the perpetrator. Individuals with a growth mindset will be more likely to confront prejudice than those with a fixed mindset (Rattan & Dweck, 2010). Furthermore, those with a growth mindset are also less likely to stop confronting when encountering a singular, prejudiced interaction indicating that they believe that they will have future opportunities to correct prejudice down the road. On the other hand, holding a fixed mindset acts as a barrier to future discussion of change. This is because there is a fundamental belief that it is useless to engage in a conversation about change (Rattan & Dweck, 2010).

Similarly, motivation matters in believing in the effectiveness of confrontation. Typically, low-prejudiced people will be more likely to confront people who are high in prejudice, and low-prejudiced people (regardless of if they are the target, bystander, or perpetrator) will be more likely to have more motivation to change prejudiced thoughts compared to their high-prejudiced counterparts when they are confronted (Czopp et al., 2006). This might be because low-prejudiced people and high-prejudiced people are motivated differently in response to confrontation. Low-prejudiced people are often more responsive to confrontations that involve egalitarianism and feelings related to guilt and shame (Monteith,

1993); people with low prejudice are also more likely to have internal motivation to change their prejudices (Devine et al., 1991). Conversely, high-prejudiced people are more likely to be externally motivated (Plant & Devine, 1998); they are less likely to experience guilt and shame associated with violations of egalitarianism and will not be motivated to change their prejudiced behaviors (Blanchard et al., 1991). Instead, high-prejudiced people may be more responsive to a confrontation involving public shame and being labeled as a “bigot,” especially in contexts where egalitarianism is the norm (Czopp et al., 2006).

### ***Short-term and Long-term Consequences of Confrontation***

Challenging versus ignoring bias have different outcomes. By ignoring discrimination, the target may have positive short-term outcomes, but negative long-term outcomes. Positive short-term outcomes include preserving one’s sense of acceptance with the perpetrator and maintaining the goal of being liked by others (Mallet & Melchiori, 2019). Social backlash, especially if the remark is ambiguous or played as a joke, decreases if the target chooses to ignore it. Targets, by ignoring, can also avoid being labeled as complainers and avoid the stress of confronting (Mallet & Melchiori, 2019; Shelton & Stewart, 2004). The positives of ignoring bias are in the short-term, however. Targets are more likely to feel the negative consequences of not challenging bias for a longer period, especially if the bias is both chronic and there is minimal support beyond the target-perpetrator relationship (Mallet & Melchiori, 2019).

In the long-term, discrimination can be stressful for a targeted individual. From a stress perspective (e.g., Lazarus, 1990), discrimination can be considered a chronic stressor, and perceived as a rejection of the targeted individual. As a result, people experiencing discrimination often experience negative affect, such as sadness, hurt, loneliness, and anger (Mallet & Melchiori, 2019). People may also experience lower self-esteem and engage in



unhealthy behaviors such as smoking and using drugs and alcohol (Mallet & Melchiori, 2019).

Other long-term impacts can include increased risks of cardiovascular disease, risk of depression, and an increased risk of a compromised immune system. Pascoe and Smart Richman (2009), in a meta-analytic review, found that perceived discrimination had negative impacts on people's mental and physical health.

### ***Pros and Cons of Confrontation***

Challenging bias, although stressful in the short term, often has more positive, long-term consequences. In the short term, challenging bias is stressful because it requires rapidly moving through the stages of assessing and responding to a perceived discriminatory event (Ashburn-Nardo & Karim, 2019). Secondly, confronting bias may require the target to anticipate a biased event. For example, African American women must not only be aware of potential racial bias, but also gender bias that might occur (Rasinski & Czopp, 2010). By constantly anticipating and, consequently, experiencing discrimination and subsequent rejection based on confrontation, a target may have to manage additional mental, social, and physical outcomes (Czopp & Monteith, 2003). For example, a target continuously engaged in confrontation in response to chronic discrimination may also face continued social backlash, such as the loss of a relationship or ostracization (Mallet & Melchiori, 2019).

Despite these stressors, there are benefits to confrontations. Confrontations may lead to increased feelings of competence, feelings of empowerment, increased self-esteem, and an increased sense of closure involving the status of the relationship between perpetrator and target (Mallet & Melchiori, 2019). Targets may also feel a decrease in anger and resentment, and ideally, a decrease in negative behaviors from the perpetrator (Ashburn-Nardo & Karim, 2019; Mallet & Melchiori, 2014/2019). In fact, one of the most important and positive consequences of

confrontation is reducing negative behaviors from the perpetrator. Recall that a confrontation is an effective tool for social change (e.g., Czopp et al., 2006). By ignoring bias, discriminatory behaviors go unchecked (Glick, 2014). Importantly, how a person decides to confront prejudice is less relevant: both direct and assertive confrontations and more polite reminders about being egalitarian are equally persuasive in reducing future responses based on stereotypes from the perpetrator (Czopp et al., 2006). However, direct confrontations also carry the weight of an increase in self-directed negative affect toward the perpetrator versus the polite reminder of egalitarianism.

Successful confrontations are contingent on the receptiveness and motivation of the perpetrator. While confronting may essentially “shame” the perpetrator to avoid future stereotypical remarks, especially in front of the target and/or their allies, the perpetrator must be motivated to change (Czopp et al., 2006), especially if reducing prejudice and discrimination is the desired outcome. Typically, the perpetrator must be motivated to repair the fractured relationship between themselves and the target (Mallet & Melchiori, 2014/2019). Further, the target must also believe the perpetrator is willing to change (either their thoughts or behaviors); otherwise, the confrontation might be considered a waste of energy and time (Gulker et al., 2013; Rattan & Dweck, 2010). Therefore, failure to confront may stem from believing confrontation is not an effective tool for change (e.g., Czopp & Monteith, 2003). For example, Czopp and Monteith (2003) note that those salient and powerful reminders of egalitarian norms can help curb future stereotype-based remarks.

Who confronts also matters. Confrontations may not be successful simply because the perpetrator will not listen to the message of the target. In that case, it may fall on others to help reinforce egalitarian behavior and encourage the perpetrator to decrease their future prejudiced

behaviors (Glick, 2014). Bystanders or allies may have an advantage that not only facilitates the message of confrontation but also enables other targets to feel safer and confident in confronting perpetrators of prejudice.

### **Bystander (Ally) Confrontation**

Bystanders are individuals who are often third-party observers of a confrontation or a prejudiced act, but not all bystanders are allies who are willing to confront. Glick (2014) mentions that allies—“people who themselves are not targets of prejudice but are motivated to combat social injustice actively and support stigmatized groups [...] through confrontation” (pg. 62)—have a special ability to aid in the confrontation of prejudice. Specifically, they act as disruptors to the expectation that targets of prejudice (e.g., women, BIPOC) will be the ones to confront. Wu and Wu (2019) discuss that events of prejudice can be disturbing, which may motivate a bystander to act as an ally. Confronting may fulfill allyship goals for a bystander (Drury & Kaiser, 2014). However, much like target confrontations, bystanders must also go through a similar decision-making process of when to confront. Much like targets, bystander-allies need to be able to recognize when something is prejudiced or discriminatory. As noted earlier, some events are ambiguous, and it can be hard to tell if the event is prejudiced (e.g., Ashburn-Nardo & Karim, 2019; see also Ashburn-Nardo et al., 2008). Not all prejudices are prototypical, nor are the targets of those prejudices. For example, denying a benefit to an elderly person because of their age looks like ageism, but doing the same for a young person does not (Crandall & Warner, 2005).

Like the concerns of confrontation for minority group members, majority group members may also not confront because of the risks (e.g., social backlash; Glick, 2014). However, the literature indicates that confrontations from allies carry their own benefits versus when the

confrontation occurs by targets. Surprisingly, nontargets' confrontation is often perceived as more persuasive and can propel other nontargets to be allies for change (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Dury & Kaiser, 2014; Rasinski & Czopp, 2010).

***Encouraging Bystander (Ally) Confrontation.***

One of the key barriers to a successful confrontation by a bystander (ally) is being able to recognize prejudice and successfully understand an event as harmful to targets of prejudice (Ashburn-Nardo et al., 2008; Ashburn-Nardo & Karim, 2019). Other barriers to successful, ally confrontation include confronting prejudice much more quickly than a target; in other words, recognizing a comment as prejudiced and responding to it quickly (Ashburn-Nardo & Karim, 2019). Allies, especially with social activist or justice identities, may feel the added need to do it appropriately. Doing an incorrect or inappropriate confrontation is like not confronting at all—it may signal incompetency on the part of the ally and may make targets feel that confrontation is not worth it (Ashburn-Nardo et al., 2008). If the ally lacks knowledge of how to confront properly, the confrontational message may be perceived as a failure by both the target and perpetrator (Shelton et al., 2006). Having a lack of experience with specific prejudices, especially the more subtle forms (e.g., microaggressions; implicit biases), can create a sense of confusion that can be a critical barrier to confrontation because it hinders an appropriate response to confronting prejudice (Ashburn-Nardo et al., 2008; Ashburn-Nardo & Karim, 2019). For example, Wang and colleagues (2020) detail that White people (and some Asian people) have less experience with some types of discrimination and the forms of prejudice Black, Latine, and Indigenous people face because their parents are not socialized to deal with microaggressions. Black and Latine parents, however, not only understand microaggressions and more subtle forms

of prejudice, but they also teach their children the skills needed to cope and manage those situations.

Therefore, if people spend more time dealing with the confusion of whether a comment was prejudiced, bystanders/allies (and some targets) will fail at the most critical outcome of confrontation: reducing the perpetrator's future prejudiced behavior (Ashburn-Nardo et al., 2008). Moreover, allies can also face social backlash for confronting (as well as other potential costs (e.g., the threat of job loss)), influencing whether an ally confronts prejudice.

Nevertheless, a bystander-turned-ally can play a vital role in reducing prejudice (e.g., Dickter et al., 2012). Glick (2014) notes that the disruption allies can have on prejudice is key. For example, in a study on racist and heterosexist remarks, Dickter and colleagues (2012) found that, compared to target confronters, non-target confronters were better liked and more respected for confronting--regardless of if the confrontation was assertive. Participants also rated the non-target confronters as better liked and more respected compared to non-target bystanders who did not confront.

This is where confrontations are useful. In general, confrontations of prejudice can reduce prejudice, regardless of if it a target or ally confronting the perpetrator. However, allies, especially with similar identities as the perpetrator, may be more likely to be successful at decreasing future prejudiced behavior from the perpetrator (Drury & Kaiser, 2014). This is because allies with non-targeted identities "shatter" the expectancy of who will "complain" about prejudice (e.g., Glick, 2014). Minorities (e.g., women, BIPOC) are expected to be "complainers" when there are perceived events of prejudice (Fiske, 1993; Glick, 2014); White people and men are not expected to be confronters (Glick, 2014). Therefore, when these individuals do confront, it may signal to perpetrators that not only is their behavior or remark unacceptable, but it also

reinforces the social norm of egalitarianism and decreases the likelihood of future prejudiced events.

Being part of a cultural minority can prevent targets from wanting to confront, even if social norms dictate egalitarianism. The perpetrator may be a person who holds some cultural identity that makes the egalitarian message harder to convey. Furthermore, says Martorana and colleagues (2005), targets' messages may be ignored because they often do not hold the same amount of power in the perpetrator-target relationship. For example, Czopp et al (2006) found that messages of egalitarianism were often more persuasive when the message came from the perpetrator's ingroup versus an outgroup member. Therefore allies, especially allies who hold power, either in the form of being a supervisor or of being a member of a high-status group (e.g., Glick, 2014), can force perpetrators (who also often hold power) to pay attention and listen to a confrontation message (Fiske, 1993).

Littleford and Jones (2017) found that the racial identity of the messenger mattered. In the study, the researchers examined White college students' responses to Black racial inequity, comparing when the message was framed as Black disadvantage from a Black professor versus White privilege from a White professor in an imagined racial diversity class. The researchers found that while the students tended to rate the White professors with less expertise and lower levels of warmth/intelligence, they tended to rate the Black professors as more biased. However, despite the acknowledgement that White professors appeared to have less expertise, White professors were perceived as more persuasive than when the Black professors framed the same message as Black discrimination. The finding of Littleford and Jones's (2017) study demonstrates that racial identity may play a role in the reception of a racialized message.

### **Fear of Negative Evaluation**

One of the most significant barriers to confronting prejudice is fear of negative evaluation (FNE). Leary (1983) defines FNE as the “degree to which people experience apprehension at the prospect of being evaluated negatively” (p. 371). Leary (1983) notes that people with high FNE often avoid socially threatening comparisons or events and indicate feeling worse about receiving negative evaluations in social settings. Furthermore, people high in FNE typically have imbalanced, positive relationships with others, such that they often desire being liked even if the liking is not reciprocal. People high in FNE are characterized as being “people-pleasers,” highly concerned with good impressions, and are more socially anxious (Leary, 1983).

Cai and Wu (2017) also discuss how FNE can act as a barrier to confrontations for individuals (see also Karakashian et al., 2006). They note that FNE is a “key and common stress-related response” (Cai & Wu, 2017, p. 85) in social interactions. Within FNE, there are two parts: the negative emotion (e.g., fear) and the potential threat (e.g., social backlash). The negative emotions one experiences can affect the display of FNE and how one is influenced by others. According to Cai and Wu (2017), people high in FNE may be more likely to listen to, and comply with, powerful people to gain acceptance (see also Fiske, 1993; and Martorana et al., 2005). In contrast, low FNE people are less likely to be susceptible to outside influences and are better at concentrating on their goals. Therefore, low FNE people may be more likely to achieve their goals compared to high FNE people. Also, because low FNE people have more personal control and are less influenced by powerful people, they are also less likely to fear negative evaluation in difficult social interactions like confrontations (Cai & Wu, 2017).

FNE can also act as a barrier to successful confrontation if the perpetrator has power or control over others (Cai & Wu, 2017). Because some perpetrators hold power, there can be fear of negative judgment and more severe consequences when confronting on the part of allies—

even more so for targets. This is not to say that power cannot be used as tool to encourage confrontations. Cai and Wu (2017) note that power can enable individuals to care less about how others think of themselves. By having power, or even having the belief that one holds power, power can potentially negate the fears associated with negative evaluations (e.g., negative emotions; Galinsky et al., 2003). Furthermore, power, from a status perspective, may encourage confrontations because the need of being respected and liked are not necessarily a focus within the relationship (Schmid & Schmid Mast, 2013).

### **Closeness**

Mallet and Melchiori (2019) note that confrontations tend to be more successful when people value respect over liking goals in a target (or an ally)-perpetrator relationship. If an ally value being liked by the perpetrator, targets may be motivated not to confront because the perpetrator holds a social benefit that keeps the ally needing to be friendly and maintain a relationship with the perpetrator. This could be other social connections to others and being seen as a friendly, kind person (i.e., not a “boat-rocker” or complainer; Czopp et al., 2006; Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Glick, 2014; Shelton & Stewart, 2004). However, if an ally values respect, there may be less concern with maintaining a relationship with the perpetrator. Being liked, says Mallet and Melchiori (2019), may also come from outside the perpetrator relationship (i.e., having outside friends or social support) and, therefore, may be more likely to confront a perpetrator.

Confrontations can be stressful; thus, having social support might be a surprising aid in confronting prejudice (Czopp et al., 2006). From the stress and coping literature, constantly experiencing prejudiced and discriminatory events can be detrimental for individuals with targeted identities (Lazarus, 1985; Mallet & Melchiori, 2019). Having social support can be a



buffer against stress (Kim et al., 2008; Lazarus, 1985; Yoon & Farmer, 2018). When applied to the confrontation literature, social support may allow targets of prejudice to confront their perpetrator, especially when the perpetrator may have been a friend (Mallet & Melchiori, 2019; Palmer et al., 2018). Mallet and Melchiori (2019) detail that there may be psychological harms if a target tries to maintain a relationship with a perpetrator; this may include guilt, rumination, and psychological distress. For individuals who want to be liked, confrontation tends to be less likely (Mallet & Melchiori, 2019). However, if the goal of liking is met outside of the perpetrator-target relationship, it may not matter whether the target needs to maintain the relationship with the perpetrator (Mallet & Melchiori, 2019). Thus, a target may be more likely to confront if there is social support from outside the relationship with the perpetrator.

### **Purpose and Hypotheses**

The literature thus far does not address how bystanders (allies) might be influenced by the combination of FNE and closeness. Bystanders have advantages when confronting prejudice (e.g., Glick, 2014). The current study investigated the relationship between FNE, confrontation, and closeness. Specifically, this study examined the factors that impact the ability to confront prejudice when the prejudice comes from a coworker who is either a friend or simply an acquaintance. Specifically, the confrontation of a remark made by the coworker regarding the race of another coworker. In addition, I am interested in examining how much FNE moderates the relationship between confronting prejudice and closeness between the perpetrator and ally. The research questions that guide this study are the following: What is the impact of closeness between two individuals (relationship) on the willingness to confront the other when an offensive remark is made, and how does fear of negative evaluation (FNE) moderate that relationship?

I predict that there will be two main effects: (1) There will be a main effect of a racist remark, such that people will be more likely to confront their coworker when there is a racist remark compared to an ambiguous statement about prior work experience. (2) There will be a main effect of closeness, such that people who are closer to their coworker (i.e., the coworker is described as a friend) are more likely to confront their coworker over a racist remark compared to when the coworker is not close (i.e., not a friend).

Furthermore, I predict there will be an interaction between closeness and the racist remark, such that people are more likely to confront a racist remark than a nonracist remark, but especially when they are close.

Finally, in an exploratory analysis, I will explore how FNE impacts the relationship between email type and confrontation. I predict that there will be a dampening effect of FNE, such that when there is no racist remark, people will not confront; however, when there is a racist remark, people low in FNE will be more likely to confront the coworker than people high in FNE.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

An a priori G\*Power analysis (Faul et al., 2007) was used to determine the minimum sample size to test the hypotheses. Results demonstrated that a minimum sample size of 251 participants was required at medium effect size ( $d = .25$ ) and a power level of 95% ( $\alpha = .05$ ).

Before beginning the study, participants were explicitly informed that there were attention checks that required a correct answer to continue participating; failure to answer the checks correctly resulted in removal from the study. Participants who failed the attention checks were removed from the final sample ( $N = 88$ ). Furthermore, participants had to be 18 years or

older, speak English, be enrolled at DePaul University, and be in the Psychology Department's subject pool to participate and receive research credit. The Psychology Subject Pool was chosen as a sample because college students were likely to be familiar with a workplace or internship situation and dealing with a coworker. Participants who did not meet these criteria were removed from the final sample.

After data collection and cleaning, a final sample of  $N = 130$  participants was obtained. The age of the sample ranged from 18 years of age to 32, with about 35% of the sample identifying as 19 years old ( $N = 45$ ). Of the 130 participants,  $N = 94$  identified as female and  $N = 29$  as male. The final sample was predominantly White ( $N = 51$ ), followed by Hispanic/Latino/a/x/e,  $N = 28$ . While this final sample size was well below the needed sample size of 251, the final sample of  $N = 130$  meets the minimum requirement of power needed to run analyses. Please see Limitations for an in-depth discussion of the sample size.

## **Materials**

### ***Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale-Brief***

The Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale-Brief (FNE; Leary, 1983) is a shortened version of the FNE (Watson & Friend, 1969) that evaluates the degree to which one fears negative evaluation from others. The FNE is a 12-item scale that asked participants to rate on a 5-point Likert scale to what degree they believed statements were characteristic of them. On this scale, 1 = "Not at all characteristic of me," 2 = "Slightly characteristic of me," 3 = "Moderately characteristic of me," 4 = "Very characteristic of me," and 5 = "Extremely characteristic of me." An example statement includes: "I worry about what other people will think of me even when I know it doesn't make any difference." Items 2, 4, 7, and 10 (see Appendix A) were reversed-scored. An example of a reversed-scored item is: "If I know someone is judging me, it has little

*effect on me.*” The FNE had a Cronbach’s alpha = .753. Higher scores on the FNE indicated higher fears of negative evaluation from others. See Appendix A for the FNE.

### ***Email Scenario***

Email scenarios were randomly assigned based on four conditions: *Friend-Not Racist*; *Friend-Racist*; *Acquaintance-Not Racist*; and *Acquaintance-Racist*. In each condition, participants were told they had a coworker with whom they were working on a project together. Following the description of the context, the coworker was described as either a *close friend* or *acquaintance*. In the *Friend* conditions, participants were given a description of their coworker being their friend and some of the things they have done together as friends; in the *Acquaintance* conditions, participants were given a description of their coworker being their acquaintance whom they know only through tasks at work (see Appendix C). Next, participants were given an email concerning the project and the project’s leader, Jamal. The confrontation measure followed each condition. The email scenarios that participants read were as follows (note, manipulations detailed in bold text):

*You and your coworker are [close friends. The both of you work on your projects together, talk frequently, and hang out outside of work—you have met and hung out with their family and traveled on trips together.] [acquaintances. You are not close. You have worked with them on a couple of projects, but you do not really interact beyond work-related matters.]*

*While working on a project with your coworker, they send you an email. It reads:*

*Hi,*

*I’m reaching out about our project. Jamal asked to take the lead on the strategic reorganization component of the project. I am concerned about this because I*

*don't think he has the skills to do a good job. After all, [he's only worked in sales and has never done strategic organization.] [it's clear he's only here as an affirmative action hire]. Do you agree?*

### ***Confrontation Scale***

Confrontation was measured via a survey that followed the email. Items were constructed on face validity based on questions specific to the email scenario. Items were held constant across conditions. An initial reliability analysis determined a Cronbach's alpha of .844. An exploratory factor analysis revealed that the Confrontation Scale was composed of three subscales: Direct Confrontation,  $r = .553$ ; Public Confrontation,  $\alpha = .824$ ; and Confront with Authority Figure,  $\alpha = .888$  (see Exploratory Analyses).

Items 1 through 3 were manipulation check items. An example of a manipulation check item is "*Are you and your coworker friends?*" Participants responded "yes," "no," or "not sure" to these questions.

For Items 4 through 8 of the Confrontation Scale, all items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 = "*Very Strongly Disagree*," 2 = "*Strongly Disagree*," 3 = "*Mildly Disagree*," 4 = "*Neutral*," 5 = "*Mildly Agree*," 6 = "*Strongly Agree*," and 7 = "*Very Strongly Agree*."

Items 4 and 5 were manipulation check items. These items will determine if participants were aware of the manipulation. An example item is "*The concern raised by your coworker is racist.*"

Items 6 through 8 were attitudes toward confrontation. An example of an attitude item is: "*Your coworker should be reported to your supervisor for their concern about Jamal.*" Higher

scores indicated a more positive attitude about confronting. Items 6 through 8 were included in the overall confrontation score (see next paragraph).

Items 9 through 17 ask about confronting the coworker about the email. An example item includes: “*How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker directly with your coworker in front of your other coworkers?*” Participants then rated on a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 = “*Extremely Unlikely*,” 2 = “*Unlikely*,” 3 = “*Slightly Unlikely*,” 4 = “*Neutral*,” 5 = “*Slightly Likely*,” 6 = “*Likely*,” and 7 = “*Extremely Likely*”. Higher scores will indicate a higher likelihood of confrontation.

Item 18 is a confidence measure that asks participants, “*How confident do you feel confronting your coworker in person?*” Participants rated their responses on a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 = “*Extremely not confident*,” 2 = “*Not confident*,” 3 = “*Slightly not confident*,” 4 = “*Neutral*,” 5 = “*Slightly confident*,” 6 = “*Confident*,” and 7 = “*Extremely confident*.” Higher scores indicated greater confidence in confrontation. In addition to the confrontation items, participants will have the opportunity to confront the coworker in a self-constructed email response.

Items 6 through 18 were used as the confrontation scale, where higher scores indicated a higher likelihood of confrontation. All items were included in a factor analysis (see Exploratory Factor Analysis) to create a finalized version of the measure. For a full look at the items included in the Confrontation Scale, see Appendix C.

Following survey questions, participants were also given the opportunity to construct an email response to the coworker’s response. Participants were asked to explicitly address the concern of the coworker based on the condition they were randomly assigned (see Appendix C, item 19).

### ***Topic Discussion***

Participants were asked to rate their comfort in discussing different topics to establish baseline comfort. This measure will be known as “Topic Discussion.” To an extent, this measure will look at apprehension to more “controversial” topics and may indicate what participants might want to avoid in intrapersonal conversation. This scale is created to explore participants’ comfort with discussing controversial versus non-controversial topics in the workplace, acting as a baseline for understanding what participants are comfortable discussing in the workplace.

The question stem for all items in this measure was: “For each of the following, rate how comfortable or uncomfortable you would be discussing the topics listed below with coworkers in the workplace.” Participants then rated on a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 = “*Extremely uncomfortable*,” 2 = “*Uncomfortable*,” 3 = “*Somewhat uncomfortable*,” 4 = “*Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable*,” 5 = “*Somewhat comfortable*,” 6 = “*Comfortable*,” and 7 = “*Very comfortable*.” Higher scores on each item indicated more comfortability in discussing that topic. An example of a noncontroversial topic was “Math.” An example of a controversial topic was “The Trump presidency.” For a full look at “Topic Discussion,” see Appendix B. This scale was not used in final analyses and was included for future examination.

### ***Demographics***

Demographics came at the end of the survey. Demographics contained questions that asked participants to report their age, gender identity, race/ethnicity, year in school, socioeconomic status, and political orientation. Political orientation was asked on a Likert scale from one (1) to seven (7), where 1 = “*Extremely liberal*”; 2 = “*Liberal*”; 3 = “*Somewhat liberal*”; 4 = “*Moderate*”; 5 = “*Somewhat conservative*”; 6 = “*Conservative*”, and 7 = “*Extremely conservative*.” See Appendix D for the items included in the study.

## **Procedure**

After getting IRB approval, participants were recruited from DePaul University's online participant pool (SONA). Participants were given partial credit toward their psychology course requirement. The survey was expected to take no more than 30 minutes. Participants who took the survey were allowed to back out at any time with no penalty. Participants who did not complete the attention check questions correctly had their surveys discarded without receiving credit.

Surveys took place online via Qualtrics. Participants took the FNE-Brief followed by the comfortability of topic discussion. Then, participants were randomly assigned to one of the four email scenarios: *Friend-Not Racist*, *Friend-Racist*, *Acquaintance-Not Racist*, or *Acquaintance-Racist*. After reading the email scenario, participants were asked several questions about the email, including the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with statements concerning the email and coworker. There were also three attention check questions throughout the study that required *correct* responses—failure to answer any of the attention checks resulted in immediate removal. The email scenario concluded with an item that gave participants the opportunity to respond to the coworker's email, including that participants should address the concern of the coworker. After, participants completed the demographics questionnaire, which included questions about their year in school, socioeconomic status, racial/ethnic identity, and gender identity.

## **Results**

### **Preliminary Analyses**

#### ***Confrontation Scale***



To explore if the Confrontation scale psychometrically measures the phenomenon of “confrontation,” I conducted an exploratory factor analysis to determine if all items fell under one factor theoretically called “confrontation.” A couple of criteria were used to determine factorability and used for item deletion and scale development. Two such criteria were Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy. Indications of factorability by Bartlett’s are  $p < .05$  and a large  $\chi^2$ . Bartlett’s is heavily influenced by sampling size and should be interpreted with caution. Confrontation had a Bartlett’s of  $p < .05$  and a  $\chi^2 = 852.090$ . KMO uses the partial correlation between items, ranging from 0 to 1, where values closer to one are more desirable and indicate factorability. Pett et al. (2003) suggest that KMO values  $> .60$  are acceptable. Confrontation had a KMO of .783. Combined, Bartlett’s and KMO indicate that the Confrontation scale is factorable.

All thirteen items (see Methods for items included in scale) went through an exploratory factor analysis and reliability for scale development and item deletion. A reliability analysis revealed that all thirteen items were reliably measuring “confrontation,” with an  $\alpha = .830$ . However, one item, Item 18, “*How confident do you feel in confronting your coworker about their concern in person?*” indicated that if deleted, the alpha would be .844. After considering the increase in the alpha and that psychologically and theoretically confidence is different from likelihood, which is what the majority the scale asks participants to consider when asking about confrontation, Item 18 was deleted, and the factor analysis was re-done with 12 items (see Table 4).

### ***Manipulation Checks***

**Coworker Status Manipulation.** To evaluate whether the manipulation of coworker status (friend vs acquaintance) worked, a chi-square test of independence was conducted.

Observed frequencies demonstrated that among those in the *acquaintance* condition, 36 participants (out of 62 total) indicated that they were not friends with the coworker, while those in the *friend* condition 56 participants (out of 68 total) indicated that they were friends with the coworker. The chi-square test revealed significant result,  $\chi^2(2) = 64.139, p = .000, V = .702$ , indicating that the manipulation check appears to have worked on participants.

**Email Type Manipulation.** To evaluate whether the manipulation of email type (racist vs not racist) worked, a chi-square test of independence was conducted. Observed frequencies demonstrated that among those in the *Not Racist* condition, a total of 45 participants (out of 64 total in the condition) disagreed that their coworker's was racist; among those in the *Racist* condition, a total of 38 participants (out of 66 total in the condition) agreed that the coworker's email was racist. The chi-square test revealed a significant result,  $\chi^2(6) = 46.058, p = .000, V = .595$ , indicating that the manipulation by email type appears to have worked on participants.

### Analysis of Variance

To test the hypotheses of two main effects (ME)—the ME of a racist remark and the ME of closeness—and the interaction between the effect of a racist remark and of closeness, I conducted a two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). All means and standard deviations are in Table 1.

Results demonstrated a significant main effect of the racist remark (email type), such that when the email indicated the coworker was being racist, participants were more likely to confront the coworker compared to when the remark was not racist,  $F(1, 119) = 17.684, p = .000, \eta_p^2 = .129$ . Results also demonstrated that there was an insignificant effect of closeness (coworker status) such that it did not appear to matter if the coworker was a *friend* or *acquaintance* to confront the coworker,  $F(1, 119) = .745, p = .390, \eta_p^2 = .006$ . There was no

significant interaction effect of email type and coworker status (Table 2). The likelihood of confronting was not impacted by the combination of email type and coworker status,  $F(1, 119) = .324, p = .570, \eta_p^2 = .003$ . Upon further examination of the mean differences between email types, participants who received the racist email condition were at or just above the midpoint, especially compared to participants who were not in the racist email condition, who were below the midpoint; this indicated that it mattered that email was racist for participants to be more likely to confront compared to when the email was not racist (Figure 1).

### **Exploratory Analyses**

#### ***Fear of Negative Evaluation: Moderation Analysis***

To explore the Fear of Negative Evaluation's (FNE) relationship with confrontation and to test the prediction that FNE would dampen the relationship between email type (i.e., *Not Racist vs. Racist*) and confrontation—when there is no racist remark, people will not confront; however, when there is a racist remark, people low in FNE will be more likely to confront the coworker than people high in FNE—a moderation analysis was conducted using Hayes (2022) PROCESS Version 4.1. In the model, Confrontation was the outcome (Y) variable, while email type was the predictor (X) variable, and FNE was the moderator (W) variable. After performing a simple moderation analysis (Model 1 in PROCESS), FNE was found to not significantly impact the relationship between email type and confronting (Table 3). Because FNE had no significant impact on the variables of interest, it was left out of other exploratory analyses.

#### ***Exploratory Factor Analysis: Confrontation Scale***

The factor analysis with the final 12 items was re-conducted using a principal components analysis (PCA) with a direct oblimin rotation. Retaining items for scale development were determined via Eigenvalues greater than 1, factor loadings greater than  $\pm.50$ ,

and the structure matrix after rotation. The PCA with direct oblimin pulled three components from the scale. These three components revealed that participants were responding differently across the items, and that items had differences in audience (e.g., supervisor involved vs. just the coworker) and were increasing in severity. These three components would be subscales of the Confrontation scale: *Direct Confrontation*, *Public Confrontation*, and *Confront with Authority Figure* (Table 4). For all subscales, all items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale where 1 = “Extremely Unlikely,” 2 = “Unlikely,” 3 = “Slightly Unlikely,” 4 = “Neutral,” 5 = “Slightly Likely,” 6 = “Likely,” and 7 = “Extremely Likely,” unless otherwise noted.

**Direct Confrontation.** The Direct Confrontation subscale asks participants to rate the likelihood of them confronting their coworker if the participant is the only person to confront, with no audience nor anyone else involved besides the coworker. Items from this subscale loaded highly onto Component 3 of the factor analysis (Table 4). It is composed of two items: “*How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker directly in person, one-on-one?*” and, “*How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker direct with an email back?*” A Pearson’s correlation determined that the items were highly correlated,  $r = .553, p = .000$ , indicating the items reliably measured “Direct Confrontation.” Higher scores indicated a higher likelihood of direct confrontation of the coworker.

**Public Confrontation.** The Public Confrontation subscale asks participants to rate the likelihood of them confronting the coworker if there other watching or observing the confrontation. It is composed of five items. All of these items loaded highly onto Component 1 of the factor analysis (Table 4). An example item from this scale includes, “*How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker directly with your coworker in front of your other coworkers?*” A reliability analysis determined that the scale reliably measured public

confrontation,  $\alpha = .824$ . Higher scores indicated a higher likelihood of public confrontation of the coworker.

**Confront with Authority Figure.** The third subscale, the Confront with Authority Figure, measures the likelihood of confronting the coworker via a third party, such as a supervisor or Human Resources (HR). It is composed of five items. All of these items loaded highly and negatively onto Component 2 of the factor analysis, indicating that participants were responding to these items differently from the rest of the scale compared to the other items (Table 4). An example item from this subscale includes, “*How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker indirectly with an email to your supervisor or HR?*” On this subscale, items 1-3 were on a strongly disagree to strongly agree, where 1 = “*Very Strongly Disagree*,” 2 = “*Strongly Disagree*,” 3 = “*Mildly Disagree*,” 4 = “*Neutral*,” 5 = “*Mildly Agree*,” 6 = “*Strongly Agree*,” and 7 = “*Very Strongly Agree*.” A reliability analysis determined that the scale reliably measured confrontation with an authority figure,  $\alpha = .888$ . Higher scores indicated a higher likelihood of confronting the coworker with an authority figure.

### ***Multivariate Analysis of Variance: Coworker Status and Email Type on Confrontation***

#### ***Subscales***

The exploratory factor analysis revealed that the Confrontation scale was not unidimensional. Rather, it demonstrated that participants were psychologically responding to the questions differently in severity and type, which influenced the type of confrontation participants wanted to engage. To explore how these subscales were affected by coworker status (friend vs. acquaintance) and email type (racist vs. not racist), I conducted a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA).

The MANOVA was a 2 (coworker status) x 2 (email type) between-subjects x 3 (confrontation subscales) within-subjects design. The confrontation subscales were a within-subjects factor because participants were exposed to all the subscales while also being exposed to the different between-subject manipulations. All means and standard deviations of the MANOVA are in Table 8.

Results demonstrated a significant multivariate effect of the confrontation subscales,  $F(2, 118) = 105.398, p = .000, \lambda = .359$  and a significant multivariate interaction of confrontation subscales and email type,  $F(2, 118) = 11.116, p = .000, \lambda = .84$ . Taken together, these results indicate that not only were participants confronting differently depending on who else was involved in the confrontation, but that it also mattered that the email was racist. There was no significant multivariate interaction of confrontation subscales and coworker status and no significant multivariate interaction of confrontation subscales by coworker status and email type (the 3-way interaction term; Table 5).

Between-subjects effects demonstrated a significant main effect of email type on the three confrontation subscales,  $F(1, 119) = 16.783, p = .000$ . The main effect of email type demonstrated that participants were more likely to confront the coworker when the email was racist, regardless of the coworker's status across the three subscales (Figure 2). There was no significant main effect of coworker status and no significant interaction effect of email type and coworker status on the confrontation (Table 7). However, the main effect of email type was qualified by the within-subjects interaction. (see next paragraph).

Within-subjects effects demonstrated a significant main effect of the confrontation subscales,  $F(2, 238) = 111.138, p = .000$ , and significant interaction effect of the confrontation subscales by email type,  $F(2, 238) = 10.006, p = .000$ . The main effect of the confrontation

subscales indicated that participants' likelihood of confrontation depended on the type of confrontation of the coworker, such that participants were more likely to confront the worker when there was a direct confrontation of the coworker and when a supervisor or HR was involved in the confrontation. Participants were less likely to confront the coworker when there were others (i.e., Public Confrontation) involved, especially compared to the subscales of Direct Confrontation and Confront with Authority Figure. The significant interaction of the subscales and email type indicates that participants were more likely to confront across all the subscales when the email was racist versus not racist (Figure 3A; Figure 3B).

There was no significant interaction effect between the confrontation subscales and coworker status and no significant three-way interaction effect between the confrontation subscales by coworker status and email type (Table 6). The lack of interaction between the subscales and coworker status reaffirms the previous pattern that participants were more likely to confront the coworker, regardless of status, as long as the email was racist. Furthermore, the lack of a three-way interaction between coworker status, email type, and the subscales indicates that coworker status and email type did not impact the likelihood of confrontation across all the subscales (Figure 3A; Figure 3B).

### **Discussion**

The results of the ANOVA demonstrated that participants tended to confront the coworker when the email was racist, regardless of whether the coworker was described as a *friend* or an *acquaintance*. Exploratory analyses supported this pattern of results, demonstrating that people were more likely to confront when the email was racist. The exploratory analyses also demonstrated that people were more likely to confront the coworker either one-on-one or by making a person of authority (i.e., a supervisor or a Human Resources representative; see also

Dickter et al., 2012) aware of the issue. Analyses also revealed that people were not influenced by fears of negative evaluation (FNE) when confronting the coworker. These patterns of results indicate that people were more likely to confront when offensive, racist behavior occurred compared to when it did not regardless of friendship status and FNE.

The main effect of email type, the lack of a main effect of coworker status, and the lack of interaction also illustrate that participants were able to recognize that the email was racist and respond accordingly. This is vital because, for bystanders to confront, one of the key barriers to a successful confrontation is being able to recognize an event as prejudiced and harmful to the target (Jamal in the scenario; Ashburn-Nardo et al., 2008; Ashburn-Nardo & Karim, 2019). Furthermore, the participants seemed to acknowledge that the “affirmative action” phrase in the email was prejudiced and racist, as it hinted at Jamal’s race. The lack of interaction with FNE was interesting, though, as it will be discussed, may have been due to the setup of the study.

To review, confrontation is an active and direct expression of displeasure toward a person who has made prejudiced and offensive comments (Czopp et al., 2006). The main goal of confrontation is to reduce prejudice and serve as a reminder of egalitarian norms by making them salient and provoking (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Czopp et al., 2006; Glick, 2014; Shelton & Stewart, 2004). Confrontations are often used by marginalized (target) groups such as women, racial/ethnic minorities, and LGBTQ+-identified individuals to cope with offensive comments, microaggressions, and discrimination (Ashburn-Nardo & Karim, 2019; Dodd et al., 2001; Kaiser & Miller, 2004; Sanchez et al., 2016).

Confrontations, while typical of target groups, are often more effective when it comes from bystanders or allies (Dickter et al., 2012; Glick, 2014). Glick (2014) notes that this is because allies, especially allies with similar identities as the perpetrator of prejudice, shatter the



expectation (or stereotype) that members of a target group will confront (Dury & Kaiser, 2014; Fiske, 1993). Allies are useful confronters because they often hold a similar level of power as the perpetrator, which can make their message more persuasive compared to the target individual (Czopp et al., 2006; Fiske, 1993; Martorana et al., 2005; see also Littleford & Jones, 2017).

The current study investigated when bystanders become the confronters of prejudice by placing participants into a scenario where they must confront their coworker over a potentially racist statement about another coworker's race (i.e., "affirmative action hire"). The results demonstrated that participants were more likely to confront their coworker when the remark was racist, regardless of coworker status (i.e., *friend* or *acquaintance*). As discussed above, hindrances to effective confrontation for allies include having knowledge of when an event is prejudiced (racist in this regard) and responding to it in a timely manner (e.g., Ashburn-Nardo et al., 2008). In the context of this study, the results illustrated that participants understood the racist subtext of "affirmative action hire," and they were more likely to confront the coworker, especially directly.

Furthermore, the results seem to support the helping literature. Seemingly, to reaffirm Glick (2014)'s notion that allies can be surprising messengers for change and make confrontations more effective, we note that when emergencies occur, bystanders are often the critical first responders. Specifically, these emergencies depend on the bystander's actions and competency to save others (Fischer et al., 2011; Kirschenbaum & Rapaport, 2020). Additionally, when it comes to the bystander effect—a social psychological phenomenon where bystanders are less likely to assist someone in need when other bystanders are around (see Darley & Latane, 1968 for review)—it is less likely to occur when events are perceived as dangerous to both victims and bystanders (Fischer et al., 2011). It may be that allowing a racist event to continue is

seen as harmful or potentially dangerous that then requires a bystander's intervention—in other words, the event is perceived as something that could become chronic, requiring it to stop before becoming an ongoing issue (i.e., like bullying; Kirschenbaum & Rapaport, 2020). In the context of this study, the lack of an FNE effect on confrontation may indicate that participants were more likely to confront on behalf of Jamal when the racist event is perceived as dangerous and harmful not necessarily to them, but to Jamal and the work environment.

The exploratory analyses also demonstrated the effectiveness of a third party beyond the bystander. Participants were more likely to confront when the confrontation was a direct, one-on-one interaction with the coworker (e.g., Ashburn-Nardo & Karim, 2019) and when the confrontation was indirect and involved Human Resources (HR) or a supervisor (Dickter et al., 2012). Demonstratively, the exploratory analyses illustrate the importance of power in confrontations. The participants and the coworker are assumed to be of similar power statuses, which may ease fears and social consequences of confrontation that targets feel or participants may feel if the coworker was a boss or had higher status (Dury & Kaiser, 2014; Fiske, 1993; see also Czopp et al., 2006; Littleford & Jones, 2017; Martorana et al., 2005). Furthermore, participants indicating that they would be more likely to confront when involving HR or a supervisor also reaffirms that confrontations are often more effective if a powerful (status) person confronts the perpetrator versus a target or an ally (e.g., Fiske, 1993).

The exploratory analyses demonstrated that closeness (i.e., friend vs acquaintance, or coworker status), and more specifically, for the *friend* condition, was not significant in confronting the coworker. Recall, it was predicted that participants would be more likely to confront the coworker described as friend. There may be a couple of reasons for the lack of significance. It may be that sharing values matters as it relates to confrontation. Mallet and

Melchiori (2019) highlight that valuing being liked may result in a lower likelihood of confronting versus if respect is valued. People may also be more likely to confront if they believe that the perpetrator is willing to change or if it is fulfilling an allyship identity (Gulker et al., 2013; Rattan & Dweck, 2010). It matters that the person is also a low-prejudiced person to begin with; low-prejudiced people are more motivated to change their behaviors versus high-prejudiced people (Czopp et al., 2006; see also Devine et al., 1991; Monteith, 1993). If participants believed that the coworker, when described as friend, is perceived as high-prejudiced, it may limit the likelihood of confronting on the part of the participant.

Finally, the results also illustrated that while participants were more likely to confront the coworker when the email was racist, they were indicating likelihood to confront, albeit less likely, when the email was not racist. It may be that because Jamal is racially coded, and therefore, even the not racist reason for Jamal's inability to lead was interpreted as racist. This study took place post-Black Lives Matter movements, where there were calls for more racial awareness and knowledge on microaggressions (Tillery, 2019). Living in an era where understanding racial issue is more commonplace may have resulted in some participants interpreting the not racist remain as racist.

### *Limitations and Future Directions*

One of the biggest limitations of the study was the sample size. An a priori power analysis (see Methods) determined that a sample size of at least 251 participants would be needed to detect the effect of the manipulations of email type and coworker status. After data collection and data cleaning, the final N-size was 130. This was the minimal sample size required to have any power to experiment using a 2x2 design. In the future, studies may want to increase the sample size to not only increase power, but also explore other participant variables

that may influence participants responding to prejudiced events (e.g., age, gender, racial/ethnic identity). Future research should manipulate or control participant variables to examine how demographic and participant factors influence the likelihood of confrontation.

Additionally, the sample was composed of Psychology students from a large, urban, private, and social justice-oriented university. College students may not be the most appropriate sample to draw conclusions regarding workplace environments, especially if students have never worked in an environment like the one simulated in this study. In the future, if done on college students, researchers may want to consider only sampling students who have worked in a workplace environment like the one simulated in this study. Future research should include a more general sample with participants who may be more likely to work in permanent jobs where the potential of these types of confrontations may be more likely.

Furthermore, the current study design was completely online. Being completely online may have influenced FNE. Participants may not have had a fear of negative evaluation (FNE) due to the anonymity provided by the study. Participants may not have experienced FNE, nor the negative repercussions associated with confrontation (see Cai & Wu, 2017 for review) because the coworker was confronted via email. Future research should consider how to conduct this methodology in person or provide some sort of threat, which may be more likely to induce an FNE effect.

Future studies might also want to examine FNE at the same level of specificity as the other variables of interest. The FNE scale (Leary, 1983) is a more global degree of FNE—it is not situation-specific, so the question of if participants are feeling FNE as it relates to the confrontation is not known. It would be useful to either adapt the scale to fit the specific scenario or develop a situation-specific FNE scale.

Future research should also consider the psychometrics of the Confrontation scale. The scale, while initially designed to be a unidimensional scale, had three distinct subscales. As the exploratory analyses demonstrated, participants were confronting the coworker differently based on who was involved in the confrontation. Future work should separate the constructs of the perception of confrontation. It may be that while perceptions of confrontation may be related (e.g., effectiveness vs likelihood vs responsibility), they are distinctly different attitudes that could lead to confronting (or not).

Finally, it may have also mattered that the coworker is not described racially/ethnically nor as being a different gender than the participant. The coworker is presumed to be at the same power level as the participant. These both matter because, as established earlier, confrontations are perceived as more persuasive when they come from people who share similar identities as the perpetrator (versus the target, who often has differing and less powerful identities; Fiske, 1993; see also Levine & Crowther, 2008). If participants imagined a coworker who did not share similar demographic features as them, it could have made confrontation more likely or minimized the effect of FNE, which was not seen in this study. Future research should try keeping the coworker as ambiguous as possible to allow participants to think of people who share a similar identity as them or set up a study where the perpetrator and target matches in various demographic factors—it may impact confrontation.

### ***Conclusion***

Overall, the results of this study indicate that when faced with a racist remark, people are likely to confront it regardless of whether the coworker is a friend or acquaintance. The results reaffirm that people are more likely to help than ignore when the event is viewed as an emergency, contrary to what typically happens in bystander situations. What this study

contributes is that people may also be much more aware of racial issues, especially in the wake of mass racial protests, such as the Black Lives Matter movements of 2020. Calls for allies to be aware and proactive regarding racialized events became especially prevalent in the wake of these protests. Therefore, participants may have been primed to be aware of racially charged issues, which supports previous literature that knowledge and competency are key to successful confrontations for allies and bystanders.

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### Appendix A: Brief Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale

Read each of the following statements carefully and indicate how characteristic it is of you according to the following scale: 1 = Not at all characteristic of me, 2 = Slightly characteristic of me, 3 = Moderately characteristic of me, 4 = Very characteristic of me, 5 = Extremely characteristic of me.

1. I worry about what other people will think of me even when I know it doesn't make any difference.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all characteristic of me	Slightly characteristic of me	Moderately characteristic of me	Very characteristic of me	Extremely characteristic of me

2. I am unconcerned even if I know people are forming an unfavorable impression of me.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all characteristic of me	Slightly characteristic of me	Moderately characteristic of me	Very characteristic of me	Extremely characteristic of me

3. I am frequently afraid of other people noticing my shortcomings.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all characteristic of me	Slightly characteristic of me	Moderately characteristic of me	Very characteristic of me	Extremely characteristic of me



4. I rarely worry about what kind of impression I am making on someone.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all characteristic of me	Slightly characteristic of me	Moderately characteristic of me	Very characteristic of me	Extremely characteristic of me

5. I am afraid that others will not approve of me.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all characteristic of me	Slightly characteristic of me	Moderately characteristic of me	Very characteristic of me	Extremely characteristic of me

6. I am afraid that people will find fault with me.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all characteristic of me	Slightly characteristic of me	Moderately characteristic of me	Very characteristic of me	Extremely characteristic of me

7. Other people's opinions of me do not bother me.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all characteristic of me	Slightly characteristic of me	Moderately characteristic of me	Very characteristic of me	Extremely characteristic of me

8. When I am talking to someone, I worry about what they may be thinking about me.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all characteristic of me	Slightly characteristic of me	Moderately characteristic of me	Very characteristic of me	Extremely characteristic of me

9. I am usually worried about what kind of impression I make.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all characteristic of me	Slightly characteristic of me	Moderately characteristic of me	Very characteristic of me	Extremely characteristic of me

10. If I know someone is judging me, it has little effect on me.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all characteristic of me	Slightly characteristic of me	Moderately characteristic of me	Very characteristic of me	Extremely characteristic of me

11. Sometimes I think I am too concerned with what other people think of me.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all characteristic of me	Slightly characteristic of me	Moderately characteristic of me	Very characteristic of me	Extremely characteristic of me

12. I often worry that I will say or do the wrong things.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all characteristic of me	Slightly characteristic of me	Moderately characteristic of me	Very characteristic of me	Extremely characteristic of me

**Appendix B: Comfortability of Topic Discussion**

For each of the following, rate how comfortable you would be discussing the topics listed below in the workplace with coworkers.

1. How comfortable are you discussing:

a. Math

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Slightly Uncomfortable	Neither Comfortable or Uncomfortable	Slightly Comfortable	Comfortable	Extremely Comfortable

a. The weather

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Slightly Uncomfortable	Neither Comfortable or Uncomfortable	Slightly Comfortable	Comfortable	Extremely Comfortable

a. The Trump Presidency

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Slightly Uncomfortable	Neither Comfortable or Uncomfortable	Slightly Comfortable	Comfortable	Extremely Comfortable

a. Holidays

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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Extremely Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Slightly Uncomfortable	Neither Comfortable or Uncomfortable	Slightly Comfortable	Comfortable	Extremely Comfortable
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a. Coffee

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Slightly Uncomfortable	Neither Comfortable or Uncomfortable	Slightly Comfortable	Comfortable	Extremely Comfortable

a. The Biden Presidency

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Slightly Uncomfortable	Neither Comfortable or Uncomfortable	Slightly Comfortable	Comfortable	Extremely Comfortable

a. Building codes

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Slightly Uncomfortable	Neither Comfortable or Uncomfortable	Slightly Comfortable	Comfortable	Extremely Comfortable

a. Public transit

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Slightly Uncomfortable	Neither Comfortable or Uncomfortable	Slightly Comfortable	Comfortable	Extremely Comfortable

a. Racism

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Slightly Uncomfortable	Neither Comfortable or Uncomfortable	Slightly Comfortable	Comfortable	Extremely Comfortable

a. Affirmative Action

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Slightly Uncomfortable	Neither Comfortable or Uncomfortable	Slightly Comfortable	Comfortable	Extremely Comfortable

a. Black Lives Matter

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Slightly Uncomfortable	Neither Comfortable or Uncomfortable	Slightly Comfortable	Comfortable	Extremely Comfortable

a. Blue Lives Matter

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Slightly Uncomfortable	Neither Comfortable or Uncomfortable	Slightly Comfortable	Comfortable	Extremely Comfortable

a. Gentrification

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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Extremely Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Slightly Uncomfortable	Neither Comfortable or Uncomfortable	Slightly Comfortable	Comfortable	Extremely Comfortable
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a. Cars

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Slightly Uncomfortable	Neither Comfortable or Uncomfortable	Slightly Comfortable	Comfortable	Extremely Comfortable

a. Sports

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Slightly Uncomfortable	Neither Comfortable or Uncomfortable	Slightly Comfortable	Comfortable	Extremely Comfortable

a. Recipes

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable	Slightly Uncomfortable	Neither Comfortable or Uncomfortable	Slightly Comfortable	Comfortable	Extremely Comfortable

**Appendix C: Email Scenario and Confrontation Scale*****Friend-Not Racist Condition***

*You and your coworker are close friends. The both of you work on your projects together, talk frequently, and hang out outside of work—you have met and hung out with their family and traveled on trips together.*

*While working on a project with your coworker, they send you an email. It reads:*

*Hi,*

*I'm reaching out about our C project. Jamal asked to take the lead on the strategic reorganization component of the project. I am concerned about this because I don't think he has the skills to do a good job. After all, he's only worked in sales and has never done strategic organization. Do you agree?*

***Friend-Racist Condition***

*You and your coworker are close friends. The both of you work on your projects together, talk frequently, and hang out outside of work—you have met and hung out with their family and traveled on trips together.*

*While working on a project with your coworker, they send you an email. It reads:*

*Hi,*

*I'm reaching out about our project. Jamal asked to take the lead on the strategic reorganization component of the project. I am concerned about this because I don't think he has the skills to do a good job. After all, it's clear he's only here as an affirmative action hire. Do you agree?*

***Acquaintance-Not Racist Condition***



*You and your coworker are acquaintances. You are not close. You have worked with them on a couple of projects, but you do not really interact beyond work-related matters.*

*While working on a project with your coworker, they send you an email. It reads:*

*Hi,*

*I'm reaching out about our project. Jamal asked to take the lead on the strategic reorganization component of the project. I am concerned about this because I don't think he has the skills to do a good job. After all, he's only worked in sales and has never done strategic organization. Do you agree?*

***Acquaintance-Racist Condition***

*You and your coworker are acquaintances. You are not close. You have worked with them on a couple of projects, but you do not really interact beyond work-related matters.*

*While working on a project with your coworker, they send you an email. It reads:*

*Hi,*

*I'm reaching out about our project. Jamal asked to take the lead on the strategic reorganization component of the project. I am concerned about this because I don't think he has the skills to do a good job. After all, it's clear he's only here as an affirmative action hire. Do you agree?*

For each of the following statement, rate the degree to which you either agree or disagree with the statement. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. Are you and your coworker friends?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Not sure

2. Do you and your coworker hang out outside of work?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Not sure
  
3. What did your coworker ask you about Jamal and the project?
  - a. Jamal’s ability to lead the project
  - b. How Jamal’s day was
  - c. Jamal’s relationship to you
  - d. Jamal’s behavior
  
4. The concern raised by your coworker is a rational concern.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Neutral	Mildly Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree

5. The concern raised by your coworker is racist.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Neutral	Mildly Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree

6. Your coworker should be reported to your supervisor for their concern about Jamal.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Neutral	Mildly Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree

7. Your coworker should be reported to human resources for their concern about Jamal.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Neutral	Mildly Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree

8. Your coworker’s concern is disruptive to the work environment.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Neutral	Mildly Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree

9. How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker directly with an email back?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Unlikely	Unlikely	Slightly Unlikely	Neutral	Slightly Likely	Likely	Extremely Likely

10. How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker indirectly with an email to your supervisor or HR?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Unlikely	Unlikely	Slightly Unlikely	Neutral	Slightly Likely	Likely	Extremely Likely

11. How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker directly with an email back that includes Jamal in the email?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Unlikely	Unlikely	Slightly Unlikely	Neutral	Slightly Likely	Likely	Extremely Likely

12. How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker directly with an email back that includes all your other coworkers?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Unlikely	Unlikely	Slightly Unlikely	Neutral	Slightly Likely	Likely	Extremely Likely

13. How likely are you to raise concern about your email with your coworker directly with an email back that includes a supervisor or HR?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Unlikely	Unlikely	Slightly Unlikely	Neutral	Slightly Likely	Likely	Extremely Likely

14. How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker directly with coworker in-person, one-on-one?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Unlikely	Unlikely	Slightly Unlikely	Neutral	Slightly Likely	Likely	Extremely Likely

15. How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker directly with your coworker in front of your other coworkers?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Unlikely	Unlikely	Slightly Unlikely	Neutral	Slightly Likely	Likely	Extremely Likely

16. How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker directly with your coworker in front of Jamal?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Unlikely	Unlikely	Slightly Unlikely	Neutral	Slightly Likely	Likely	Extremely Likely

17. How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker directly with your coworker in front of your supervisor or HR?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Unlikely	Unlikely	Slightly Unlikely	Neutral	Slightly Likely	Likely	Extremely Likely

18. How confident do you feel in confronting your coworker about their concern in person?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely not confident	Not confident	Slightly not confident	Not sure/Neutral	Slightly confident	Confident	Extremely confident

19. In the space below, write the response email to your coworker, including addressing your coworker's concern about Jamal.

**Appendix D: Demographics**

1. How old are you?

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2. How do you identify?

- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Non-binary
- d. Prefer not to respond

3. What is your race/ethnicity?

- a. White
- b. Black
- c. Hispanic/Latino/a/x/e
- d. Asian-American
- e. Pacific Islander
- f. Native/Indigenous American/First Nations
- g. Prefer not to respond
- h. Mixed-race
  - i. If mixed-race, please give a little more about your race:  

---

4. What year are you in school?

- a. 1<sup>st</sup>
- b. 2<sup>nd</sup>
- c. 3<sup>rd</sup>

- d. 4<sup>th</sup>
  - e. 5<sup>th</sup>
  - f. 6<sup>th</sup> or higher
5. How would you characterize your annual income? (Choose the *most* approximate income range).
- a. Less than \$20,000
  - b. \$20,000-\$40,000
  - c. \$40,000-\$60,000
  - d. \$60,000-\$80,000
  - e. \$80,000-\$100,000
  - f. More than \$100,000
  - g. Don't know
6. What is your political orientation?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Liberal	Liberal	Somewhat Liberal	Moderate	Somewhat Conservative	Conservative	Extremely Conservative



**Table 1**

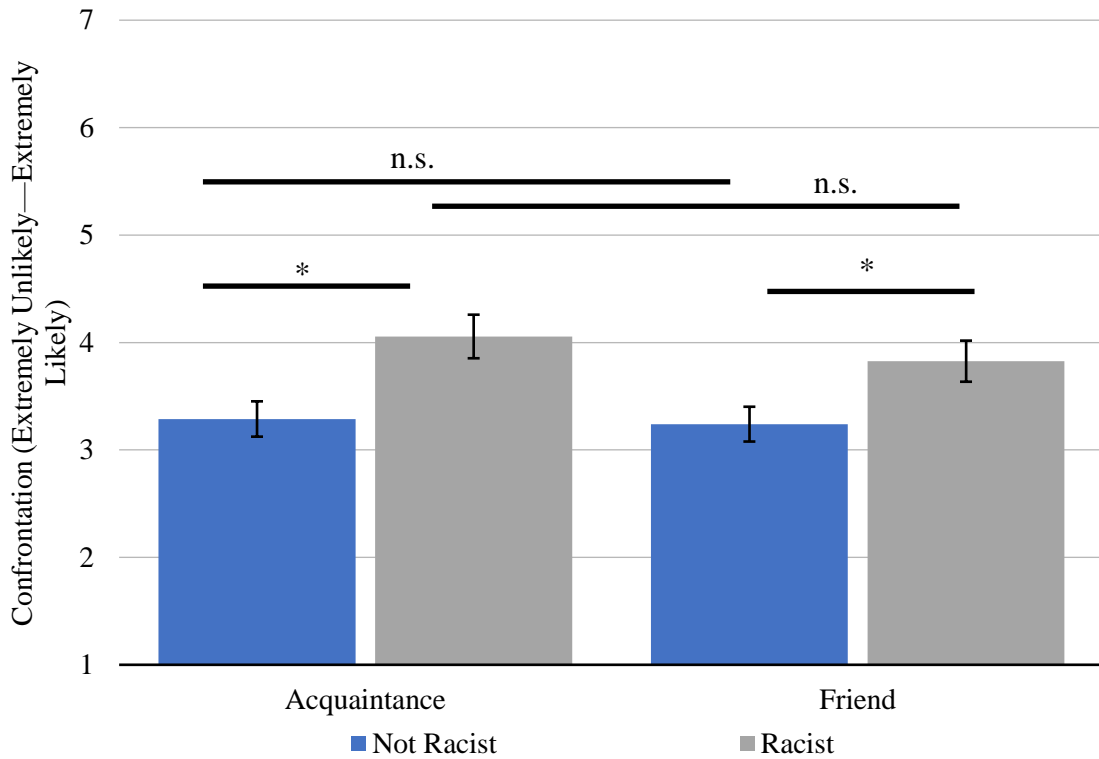
*Means, Standard Deviations, and N-sizes of Confrontation (all items) by Email Type and Coworker Status*

Email Type	Coworker Status	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Not Racist	Acquaintance	3.288	0.871	27
	Friend	3.240	0.944	32
Racist	Acquaintance	4.056	0.911	30
	Friend	3.826	0.830	34

*Note.* The table illustrates the mean confrontation score (all 13 items), standard deviations, and N-size by Email Type (Not Racist and Racist) by Coworker Status (Acquaintance and Friend).

**Figure 1**

*Mean Confrontation (all items) Score by Email Type (Not Racist vs. Racist) and Coworker Status (Acquaintance vs. Friend)*



*Note.* \* $p < .05$ . The graph depicts the mean Confrontation score (all 13 items) by Coworker Status (Acquaintance vs. Friend) and by Email Type (Not Racist vs. Racist). Black bars indicate mean differences between groups. Bars with an asterisk indicate that there is a significant mean difference between the groups at the 0.05 level. Bars with “n.s.” indicate there is no significant mean difference between the groups at the 0.05 level. Significant mean differences were determined by the 95% confidence interval. Error bars are the 95% confidence interval.

**Table 2**

*Main Effects and Interaction Effect Results from the Univariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)*

Variable	<i>F</i> (1, 119)	SE	$\eta_p^2$
Email Type	17.684***	0.161	0.129
Coworker Status	0.745	0.161	0.006
Email Type x Coworker Status	0.324		0.003

*Note.* \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ . The table depicts the main effect of Email Type (Not Racist vs. Racist), the main effect of Coworker Status (Acquaintance vs. Friend), the interaction effect (Email Type x Coworker Status), the standard errors for Email Type and Coworker Status, and the partial eta squared for all effects.

**Table 3**

*Exploratory Moderation Analysis: Fear of Negative Evaluation as a Moderator between Email Type and Confrontation (all items)*

Effect	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	95% CI		<i>p</i>
				<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>	
Constant	43.147	5.193	7.297	31.438	54.856	0.000
Email Type	17.0641	8.817	1.935	-0.396	34.525	0.055
FNE Scale	-0.277	1.751	-0.158	-3.745	3.189	0.874
Email Type x FNE Scale	-2.413	2.578	-0.936	-7.519	2.692	0.351

*Note.* The outcome (Y) variable for the model is Confrontation (all items). Email Type was the predictor (X) variable. The FNE (Fear of Negative Scale) was the moderator (W) variable.

**Table 4*****Factor Loading Table: Exploratory Factor Analysis of the Confrontation Scale***

Confrontation Item	Factor loading		
	1	2	3
<b>Factor 1: Public Confrontation</b>			
16. How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker directly with your coworker in front of Jamal?	<b>0.808</b>	0.011	0.195
15. How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker directly with your coworker in front of your other coworkers?	<b>0.793</b>	-0.175	0.131
12. How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker directly with an email back that includes all your other coworkers?	<b>0.776</b>	-0.207	-0.071
11. How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker directly with an email that includes Jamal in the email?	<b>0.741</b>	-0.146	0.232
17. How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker directly with your coworker in front of your supervisor or HR?	<b>0.721</b>	-0.495	0.269
<b>Factor 2: Confronting with Authority Figure</b>			
7. Your coworker should be reported to Human Resources for their concern about Jamal.	0.171	<b>-0.935</b>	0.088
6. Your coworker should be reported to your supervisor for their concern about Jamal.	0.182	<b>-0.915</b>	0.075
8. Your coworker's concern is disruptive to the work environment.	0.033	<b>-0.873</b>	0.139
10. How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker indirectly with an email to your supervisor or HR?	0.496	<b>-0.772</b>	0.240
13. How likely are you to raise concern about your email with your coworker directly with an email back that includes a supervisor or HR?	<b>0.603</b>	<b>-0.604</b>	0.299
<b>Factor 3: Direct Confrontation</b>			

14. How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker directly with coworker in person, one-on-one?	0.144	-0.059	<b>0.865</b>
9. How likely are you to raise concern about the email with your coworker directly with an email back?	0.138	-0.173	<b>0.849</b>

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*Note.* Numbers next to each item indicates the number on the Confrontation scale. Bolded factors loading indicate a loading of  $\pm 0.500$  or higher. Factor analysis was based on a principal components analysis with a direct oblimin rotation, and loadings were based on Eigenvalues greater than 1 and pulled from the structure matrix after rotation. After rotation, only 12 items were kept of the 13 original items.

**Table 5***Multivariate Effects of Confrontation (Subscales), Email Type, and Coworker Status*

Variable	$F(2, 118)$	$p$	$\lambda$
Confrontation	105.398	0.000	0.359
Confrontation x Coworker Status	0.211	0.810	0.996
Confrontation x Email Type	11.116	0.000	0.841
Confrontation x Coworker Status x Email Type	1.261	0.287	0.979

*Note.* The table depicts a multivariate effect of a 2 x 2 between-subjects x 3 within-subjects design. Confrontation is a within-subjects variable with three levels that all participants were exposed to: Direct Confrontation, Public Confrontation, and Confront with Authority Figure (see Table 4). Coworker Status is a between-subjects variable with two conditions: Acquaintance versus Friend. Email Type is a between-subjects variable with two conditions: Not Racist versus Racist.

**Table 6**

*Within-Subjects Main Effects and Interactions of Confrontation (Subscales), Email Type, and Coworker Status*

Variable	<i>F</i> (2, 238)	<i>p</i>
Confrontation	111.138	0.000
Confrontation x Coworker Status	0.265	0.767
Confrontation x Email Type	10.006	0.000
Confrontation x Coworker Status x Email Type	1.547	0.215

*Note.* Confrontation is a within-subjects variable with three levels in this table. Confrontation has three subscales: Direct Confrontation, Public Confrontation, and Confront with Authority Figure (see Table 4). Coworker Status is a between-subjects variable with two levels: Acquaintance vs. Friend. Email Type is a between-subjects variable with two levels: Not Racist vs. Racist.



**Table 7**

*Between-Subjects Main Effects and Interaction of Coworker Status and Email Type on Confrontation (Subscales)*

Variable	<i>F</i> (1, 119)	<i>p</i>
Coworker Status	0.797	0.374
Email Type	16.783	0.000
Coworker Status x Email Type	0.128	0.721

*Note.* Confrontation is the dependent variable in this table. This table depicts the main effect of coworker status, email type, and the interaction effect on Confrontation (all three subscales; see Table 4). Coworker Status is a two-level variable: Acquaintance vs. Friend. Email Type is a two-level variable: Not Racist vs. Racist.

**Table 8**

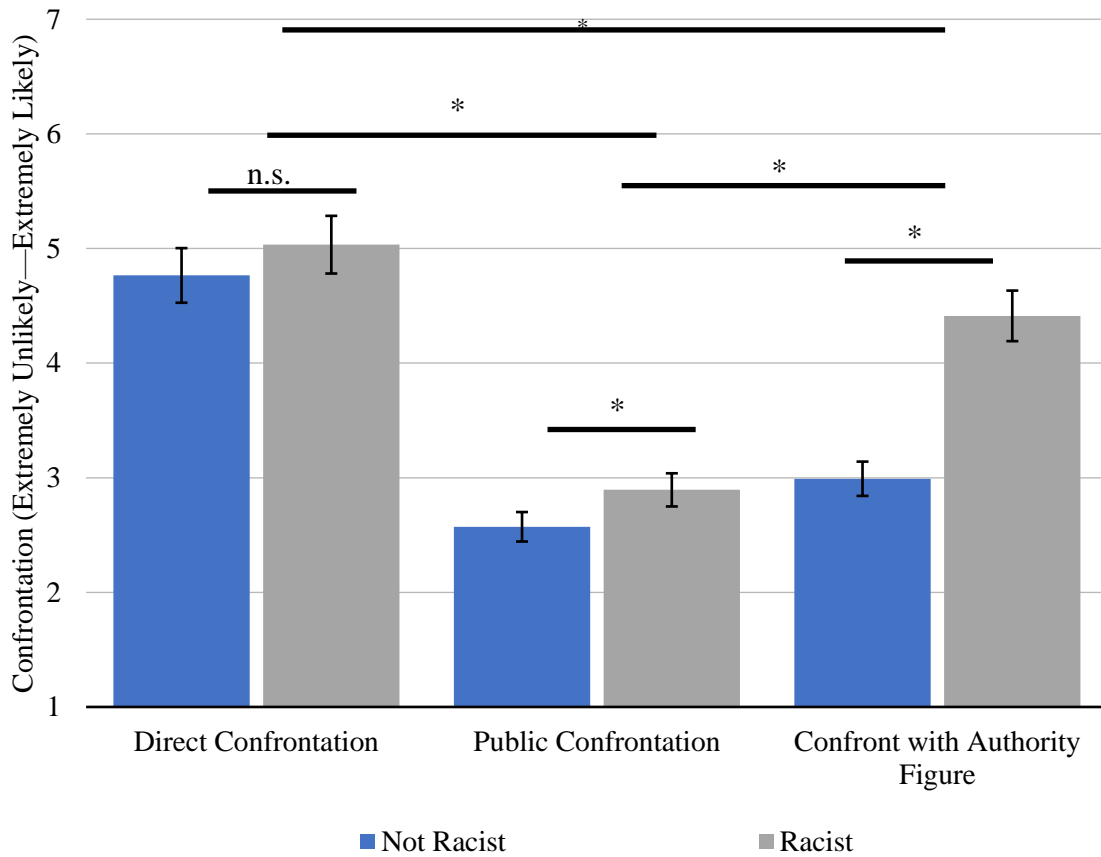
*Means, Standard Deviations, and N-sizes of Confrontation (Subscales) by Coworker Status and Email Type*

Confrontation Subscale	Coworker Status	Email Type	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Direct Confrontation	Acquaintance	Not Racist	4.889	1.227	27
		Racist	4.933	1.394	30
	Friend	Not Racist	4.641	1.592	32
		Racist	5.132	1.293	34
Public Confrontation	Acquaintance	Not Racist	2.607	1.275	27
		Racist	3.053	1.463	30
	Friend	Not Racist	2.538	1.024	32
		Racist	2.735	1.046	34
Confront with Authority Figure	Acquaintance	Not Racist	2.963	1.294	27
		Racist	4.660	1.225	30
	Friend	Not Racist	3.019	1.381	32
		Racist	4.165	1.244	34

*Note.* Confrontation has three subscales: Direct Confrontation, Public Confrontation, and Confront with Authority Figure. See Table 4 for the items included in the subscales.

**Figure 2**

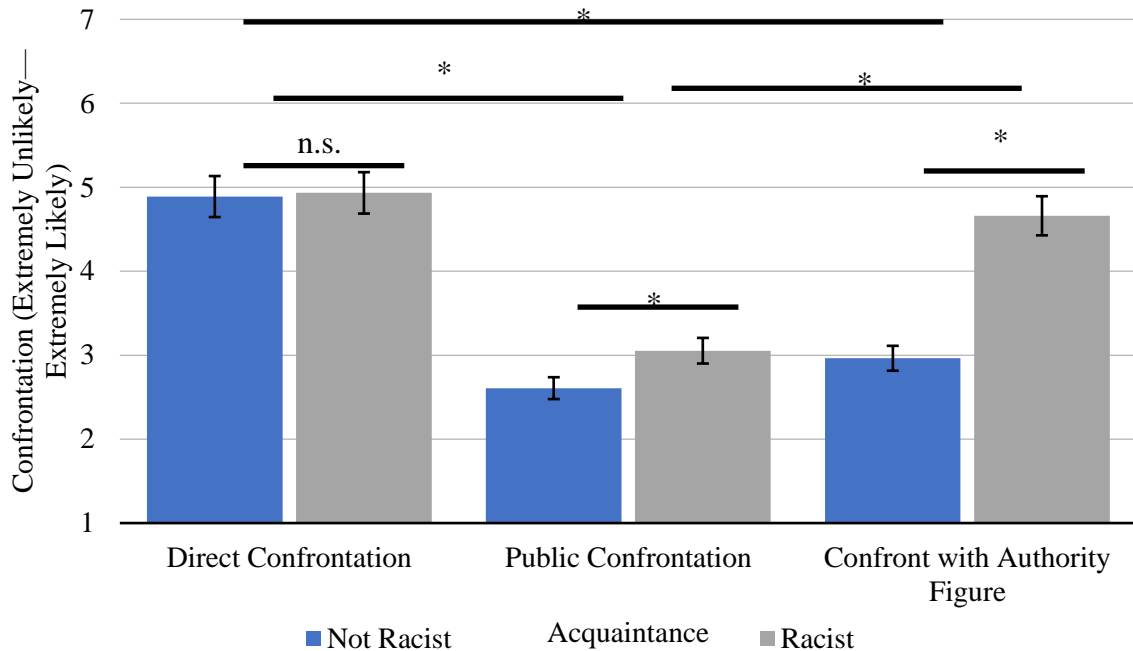
*Mean Differences of Confrontation Subscales by Email Type*



*Note.*  $*p < .05$ . The graph depicts the main effect of Email Type (Not Racist vs. Racist) on the three Confrontation subscales: Direct Confrontation, Public Confrontation, and Confront with Authority Figure. Black bars indicate mean differences. Bars with “n.s.” indicate no significant mean differences between the groups at the 0.05 level. Bars with an asterisk indicate that there is a significant mean difference between the groups at the 0.05 level. Error bars indicate the 95% confidence level.

**Figure 3A**

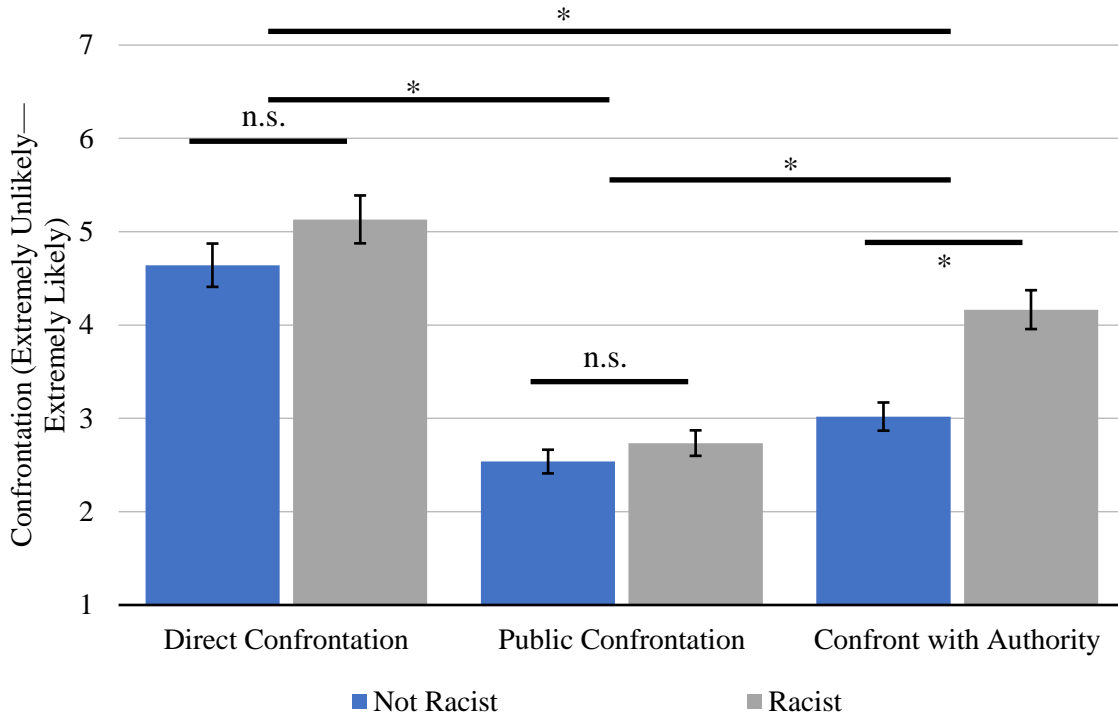
*Mean Differences of Confrontation Subscales by Coworker Status (Acquaintance only) and Email Type (Not Racist vs. Racist)*



*Note.* \* $p < .05$ . The graph depicts the mean differences in the Confrontation subscales for the Acquaintance condition only. Black bars indicate mean differences between groups. Black bars with an asterisk indicate that there is a significant mean difference between the groups at the 0.05 level. Black bars with “n.s.” indicate that there is no significant mean difference between the groups at the 0.05 level. Significant mean differences were determined by the 95% confidence interval. Error bars indicate the 95% confidence interval.

**Figure 3B**

*Mean Differences of Confrontation Subscales by Coworker Status (Friend only) and Email Type (Not Racist vs. Racist)*



*Note.* \* $p < .05$ . The graph depicts the mean differences in the Confrontation subscales for the Friend condition only. Black bars indicate mean differences between groups. Black bars with an asterisk indicate that there is a significant mean difference between the groups at the 0.05 level. Black bars with “n.s.” indicate that there is no significant mean difference between the groups at the 0.05 level. Significant mean differences were determined by the 95% confidence interval. Error bars indicate the 95% confidence interval.