

CONFRONTING PREJUDICE: IDENTIFYING FACTORS OF NONTARGET  
CONFRONTATION

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**Title**

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NONTARGET CONFRONTATION

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The Supervisory Committee certifies that this *disquisition* complies with North Dakota State  
University's regulations and meets the accepted standards for the degree of

**MASTER OF SCIENCE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The research question for this project sought to identify factors that encouraged people to stand up to people who were discriminating against others. Seventeen students who had previously stood up against other people participated in one of three semi-structured focus groups. The analysis produced four themes, each with multiple categories which highlight factors that encouraged the participants to confront prejudice and discrimination. Main findings include the importance of connection with the individual being discriminated against, being educated about systems of oppression, perceiving discrimination as potentially harmful, and emotions such as anger, guilt, and pride. Implications for clinical work and the development of bystander training programs are provided, as well as implications for previously existing models of bystander intervention are discussed.

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## INTRODUCTION

Although the social benefits of confronting prejudice have been widely studied in the scientific community (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Czopp, Monteith, & Mark, 2006, van Zomeren & Iyer, 2009), there are few studies suggesting methods to increase confrontation of prejudiced remarks, jokes or statements. There are at least two people needed for discrimination to occur: the perpetrator and the target. The perpetrator, or person acting in a prejudiced manner, could be a friend, acquaintance, or a stranger. Similarly, the target, or person/group who is vulnerable to prejudice (Crocker & Major, 1989), could be a classmate, coworker, professor, or a stranger.

In the case of discrimination occurring in front of other people, the person witnessing the discrimination is known as a nontarget, or a person who is a member of a group that is not vulnerable to the same stigmatization. For example, if a white perpetrator were to make a prejudiced comment about African Americans, any African American would be a target and people of any other race would be nontargets. However, a caveat is that a person's demographic information is not the only indicator of their target or nontarget identity. In other words, if a person is a member of a privileged group (e.g., white, male, heterosexual) but feels targeted by prejudice, that person might not identify as a nontarget. For example, a white person who feels that affirmative action is "reverse racism" would likely not identify as a nontarget of racism, since nontarget refers to a member of a nonstigmatized group. In this example, the white person would likely feel that white people are targeted by racism (i.e., "reverse racism") and would not identify as a nontarget in this context.

Confrontations of discrimination can occur in a variety of contexts, such as interpersonal interactions or at the system level through activism. Confronting in the interpersonal context is defined as an assertive response that "express[es] one's dissatisfaction with prejudicial and

discriminatory treatment to the person who is responsible for the remark or behavior” (Shelton, Richeson, Salvatore, & Hill, 2006, p. 67). Prejudice and discrimination at the system level, such as advocating for improved housing laws, hiring practices, and representation of marginalized groups in media, is not in the scope of this definition, and is not the focus of much of the prejudice confrontation research. For the purposes of this paper, confrontations will be limited to interpersonal interactions.

Confrontations of prejudiced interactions (e.g., jokes, statements, and actions) lead to a decrease in future prejudiced responses from the perpetrator (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Czopp, Monteith, & Mark, 2006; Dickter, 2012), and can be a significant tool for creating social change surrounding issues related to sexism, homophobia, racism, and other forms of prejudice.

The nature of the interpersonal confrontation of a perpetrator includes a variety of social implications. When people attribute actions to prejudice they risk social backlash (Kaiser & Miller, 2001). Examples of social backlash are ostracism, harassment, or criticism from the perpetrator or from others who witness the confrontation. For example, when a woman confronts a coworker after making a sexist joke, she might be told she is overreacting or to be excluded from future conversations at work. Another example could be a White person who, after confronting her uncle after he says something prejudiced about Latinos, is then ignored for the rest of the family gathering.

A related body of research has been developed by examining anti-bullying (Polanin, Espelage, & Pigott, 2012) and bystanders in schools. Bystanders are individuals who witness the bullying scenario, however they do not participate as either the bully (i.e., the perpetrator) or the victim (i.e., the target) (Twemlow, Fonagy, & Sacco 2004). Previous research reports that peer bystanders are able to successfully intervene in bullying scenarios on behalf of the target



(O'Connell, Pepler, & Craig, 1999), suggesting that those who are not being targeted by the perpetrator have some ability to reduce bullying. That is, nontargets have the potential to reduce the frequency of prejudiced interactions. Increasing bystander involvement in bullying could also have long-term protective factors for targets, as discriminatory bullying often leads targets to engage in risky behaviors (e.g., substance use and drunk driving), experience symptoms of depression, and receive lower grades and school attendance rates (Russel, Sinclair, Poteat, & Koenig, 2012). Importantly, these long-term effects of bullying were more likely to be reported by targets of prejudice-fueled bullying, such as racism and homophobia, than by targets of other kinds of bullying, suggesting that the experience of prejudice has long term negative effects for targets.

A second, related body of research is ally development models. Allies are members of dominant groups who work to end oppression in both their professional and personal lives (Washington & Evans, 1991). Allies could be conceptualized as nontargets that make a commitment to end oppression. Confrontation of perpetrators of prejudice is included within the context of ally identity (DiStafano, Croteau, Anderson, Kampa-Kokesch & Bullard, 2000). In other words, one component of ally development is choosing to confront perpetrators; however it is important to note that confronting is not a universal indicator of an ally identity. People may choose to confront perpetrators of prejudice and not identify as Allies. Many of these models include confronting perpetrators of prejudice as a stage or phase that continues throughout the rest of the model (e.g., Bishop, 2002; Broido, 2000).

There is a wide variety of research discussing prejudice confrontation towards a perpetrator (e.g., Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Czopp, et al., 2006; Dickter, 2012; Shelton, et al., 2006); however, much of this research is on confrontation by targets. The aim of the current

study is to examine nontarget confrontation of perpetrators of prejudice from a feminist perspective. Previous research typically focuses on the effects of hypothetical confrontations (e.g., Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Shelton, et al., 2006; Kaiser & Miller, 2001) or confrontations by target group members (e.g., Czopp, et al., 2006; Kaiser & Miller, 2003), resulting in a gap in the research regarding nontarget confrontations. My hope for the proposed study is to begin to fill in the gaps of research to explore why people who are not targeted by prejudiced interactions choose to confront perpetrators of discriminatory acts, with a long term hope of gathering information that will help increase prejudice confrontation by nontargets.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Factors Predicting Confrontation of Prejudice**

There are several factors that have been repeatedly shown to influence confrontation of prejudice: group identity (Good, Moss-Racusin, & Sanchez, 2012), personal commitment to challenging prejudice (Shelton, et al., 2006), communal relationship orientation (Clark & Mills, 1979), and feeling of competency (Clark & Mills, 1979; Gervais, Hillard, & Vescio, 2010), previous observations of prejudice (Dickter, 2012; Zitek & Hebl, 2007), and a relationship with a target group member (DiStafano, et al., 2000). An additional factor of empathy has been shown to influence prosocial behavior, which has been suggested to be a positive influence to understanding discrimination (King, 1995).

#### **Group Identity: Target or Nontarget**

One of the most researched factors predicting confrontation is one's identity as a member of the group being targeted by the perpetrator of prejudice (e.g., Ashburn-Nardo, Morris & Goodwin, 2008; Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Czopp, et al., 2006). When targets confront prejudice they are likely to feel more positive and agentic, whereas targets who do not confront are likely to feel anger, regret, and a desire to respond differently in the future (Hyers, 2007). In addition, targets who confront perpetrators of prejudice experience increased feelings of competence, self-esteem, and empowerment (Gervais et al., 2010). These studies support the idea that targets benefit from confronting perpetrators of prejudice due to their efforts to decrease discrimination against their own group. There are no known studies that explore why a nontarget might stand up to prejudice directed against another person.

## **Commitment to Confronting Prejudice**

The second influence on likelihood to confront a perpetrator is the confronter having a personal commitment to confronting prejudice (Gervais, et al., 2010; Shelton, et al., 2006, Swim & Hyers, 1999), which is conceptualized “commitment to ending discrimination ... and social activism” (Gervais, et al., 2010, pg. 456). Shelton, et al. (2006) examined how women felt they *should* and/or *would* respond in scenarios where sexism is present. They suggest the more a target is committed to confronting prejudice, the more she felt she should confront, and would follow through with the confrontation, when sexism occurred. However, women who were less committed to confronting prejudice reported feelings that they should confront but did not feel they would act on these feelings, resulting in the target woman experiencing guilt and shame. Overall, this research suggests that when targets feel a personal commitment to confronting prejudice they are more likely to put their values into action and confront the perpetrator of prejudice. Research has shown this effect to be present with targets (Shelton, et al., 2006) as well as with nontargets (Devine, Monteith, Zuwerink, & Elliot, 1991).

Additional research suggests that a personal commitment to confronting prejudice requires egalitarian values and dispositional optimism (Wellman, Czopp, & Geers, 2009). Scheier and Carver (1987) conceptualize dispositional optimism as a generalized positive outcome expectancy. In other words, when a person has a belief that a confrontation will be productive, helpful, or generally positive, they are more likely to have a personal commitment to confronting prejudice. In their work examining racial prejudice, Wellman and colleagues (2009) found that nontargets are more likely to confront a perpetrator of prejudice when they both value egalitarianism and have dispositional optimism than when they only value egalitarianism. This suggests that holding egalitarian values does not independently lead to a personal commitment to

confronting prejudice, but rather that dispositional optimism holds a key function in the commitment to confronting prejudice.

### **Communal Relationship Orientation**

The third predictor of the confrontation of a perpetrator is a communal relationship orientation (Gervais et al., 2010). Clark & Mills (1979) conceptualize communal relationship orientation as being focused on helping others without the expectation of help in return. Research has shown that communal relationship orientation is associated with feelings of social responsibility (Berkowitz & Lutterman, 1968), is a predictor of targets who confront perpetrators of prejudice, and is more common among women (Gervais, et al., 2010). The lattermost result is in concordance with research that suggests females are more likely to confront prejudice than males (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Wellman, et al., 2009).

### **Feeling of Competency**

Gervais and colleagues (2010) suggest that a confronter's sense of competence in his or her ability to confront is also a factor in whether or not confrontation occurs. Interestingly, men were more likely to report feelings of competence when confronting sexism. This could be influenced by gender roles that encourage men to report competence (Canter & Meyerowitz, 1984), or due to their position as a nontarget in instances of sexism. However, women were more likely to confront sexism when they felt competent than were men who felt competent (Gervais, et al., 2010). Women were also more likely to feel higher levels of self-esteem and empowerment after confronting, although it is not surprising that women felt empowered after confronting sexism as they were standing up for their own group. This suggests a sense of competence in one's ability to confront a perpetrator of prejudice increases the likelihood that a person will confront, however the type of prejudice involved may have an impact on a person's

feelings of competency. For example, it may be that a straight person will feel more competent to confront homophobia than will a lesbian, gay, or bisexual person, so they will be more likely to confront the perpetrator. More research is needed to explore the relationship between a feeling of competency and confronting prejudice.

### **Previous Observations of Prejudice**

The responses of other people witnessing an act of prejudice can predict confrontation in one of two ways: condemning or condoning (Dickter, 2012; Zitek & Hebl, 2007). Previous research suggests that when observers hear another person condone or condemn discrimination, they are more likely to do the same, suggesting a strong effect of social influence (Blanchard, Crandall, Bringham, & Vaughn, 1994). In other words, when two or more bystanders witness a prejudiced interaction and one person acts, the other bystanders are likely to act in the same way. For example, if a perpetrator makes a racist joke in a group of people and one person laughs, the others in the group are likely to do the same. On the other hand, if one person confronts the perpetrator, others are also likely to confront future instances of prejudice.

Similar results have been found in anti-bullying research focused on the role of the bystander (or nontarget) (e.g., Sherer & Nickerson, 2010; Paluck, 2010). O'Connell and colleagues (1999) found that bystanders learn to remain passive or to intervene based on how other bystanders behave in bullying situations. After bystanders hear at least one other person express anti-prejudiced opinions the bystanders are more likely to express more anti-prejudiced opinions themselves (Blanchard, Lilly, & Vaughn, 1991). Over time, this could lead to the creation of anti-prejudicial social norms in an environment (Wernick, Kulick, & Inglehart, 2012).

## **Relationship with Member of Target Group**

Research suggests that when people have supportive relationships with people who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB), they are more likely to stand up for LGB people (DiStafano, et al., 2000) especially when these relationships include open discussions about being a minority (Broido, 2000; Herek, 2007). Influential relationships can be co-workers, friends, roommates, and family. According to DiStafano and colleagues (2000), being a witness to the discrimination experienced by important people in the nontarget's life made the pain real for the nontarget. For example, listening to a friend talk about being called a derogatory word based on his sexual orientation is likely to make a nontarget better understand the pain of his experience. These relationships also increased the nontarget's awareness and knowledge of LGB issues. Similarly, Herek (2000) found that nontargets who know LGB people are more likely to express positive attitudes towards the LGB community than nontargets who do not know LGB people. Conversations between stigmatized and nonstigmatized groups have been found to be influential in nontargets' decision to confront prejudice (Zúñiga, Lopez, & Ford, 2012). This trend is seen in studies examining forms of prejudice other than homophobia, such as racism (Alimo, 2012), and sexism (Zúñiga, Mildred, Varghese, DeJong, & Keehn, 2012), suggesting that a relationship with a member of a stigmatized social group increases the likelihood of a nontarget confronting a perpetrator when the prejudice is against that group.

## **Empathy**

Finally, feelings of empathy toward others have been shown to be positively correlated with prosocial behavior in people who witness prejudice (Barr & Higgins, 2007). Empathy can be defined as “a process of joining in the feelings of another, of feeling how and what another person experiences” (Cournoyer, 2008, p. 5), while prosocial behavior is a “purposive action on

behalf of someone else that involves a net cost to the helper” (Hoffman, 1994). Nontarget confrontation is an act of prosocial behavior as the nontarget makes a decision to act on behalf of the target without any benefit to himself or herself. While many diversity training programs focus on the intellectual and cognitive aspects of confronting behavior, a focus on empathy as a way to encourage prosocial behavior in the workplace is encouraged (King, 1995). In the same study, participants who completed the empathy focused diversity training reported feeling “better prepared to learn and grow as they gain experience with diversity” as opposed to those who completed diversity trainings that did not focus on empathy (King, 1995, p. 49).

### **Effects of Confronting on Perpetrators**

The benefits of confronting are well documented (e.g., Ashburn-Nardo, et.al., 2008; Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Czopp, et al., 2006; Herek, 2007) . Confrontation by either a target or a nontarget can create a feeling of self-dissatisfaction in the perpetrator, and thus reduce the likelihood that he or she will make prejudiced comments and actions in the future (Czopp & Monteith, 2003), regardless of the tone and source of the confrontation (Czopp, et al., 2006). For example, when a person is confronted after making a prejudiced comment he or she is likely to dislike being labeled as a prejudiced person, and therefore make an effort to not appear prejudiced in the future. Additionally, perpetrators report negative self-directed feelings after being confronted, such as guilt, disgust, and disappointed with oneself (Czopp, et al., 2006; Monteith, 1993).

### **Cognitive Responses to Confrontation**

Previous research by Czopp and Monteith (2003) found that perpetrators experience negative self-directed affect, discomfort, feelings of annoyance, and feelings of amusement after they have been confronted. Perpetrators reported feeling amused only after being confronted of



sexist behavior, as opposed to racist or homophobic behaviors, suggesting perpetrators experience various kinds of affect depending on the type of prejudice for which they are being confronted. This data also suggests the perpetrator will be less likely to act in prejudiced ways in the future in order to eschew being identified as prejudiced by others. In addition to cognitive responses there are additional influences on how a perpetrator will respond to confrontation, such as the perpetrator's level of prejudice (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Monteith, 1993).

**High prejudice versus low prejudice.** While all perpetrators experience at least some feelings of negative self-directed affect, discomfort, annoyance, and amusement, the effects of confrontation differ by what kind of perpetrator is being confronted. Perpetrators of prejudice often fall into one of two categories based on levels of prejudice: high-level and low-level (Czopp, et al., 2006; Monteith, 1993; Monteith, Devine, Zuwerink, 1993). Perpetrators with high levels condone prejudiced attitudes and score highly on attitudinal measures of prejudice; conversely, perpetrators with low levels hold more egalitarian attitudes have low scores on attitudinal measures of prejudice (Monteith, 1993). For example, a high-level perpetrator might say a racist comment and genuinely believe the comment to be true. A low-level perpetrator might say "that's so gay" without recognizing the inherent homophobia in the phrase; he or she might only be saying it after hearing other people say it. It is important to note that the actions of a low-level perpetrator not are any less harmful than those of a high-level perpetrator, rather that the intentionality behind a comment is different for the two groups.

High-level perpetrators are likely to feel much more annoyed and irritated with the confronter than are low-level perpetrators (Czopp & Monteith, 2003). This is because high-level perpetrators are only externally motivated to change their behavior (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Monteith, et al., 1993); they are not bothered by their own feelings of bias, but of what people

think of them. These perpetrators are primarily concerned with being labeled a bigot as opposed to endorsing prejudice, so they still make an effort to avoid acting in prejudiced ways to avoid this socially undesirable label (Czopp, et al., 2006). This suggests that while confronting a high-level perpetrator will not likely change their prejudiced *attitudes*, it may decrease the chance of prejudiced *actions* in the future.

Conversely, when low-level perpetrators are confronted after making a prejudiced remark they most likely feel guilt, self-criticism, and shame (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Czopp, et al., 2006). This violation of the perpetrator's egalitarian values may lead to a reduction in future prejudiced thoughts and actions. According to Monteith (1993), these negative self-directed feelings create a self-regulatory cycle in low-level perpetrators. In other words, when a low-level perpetrator is confronted they feel guilty about their actions, and work to confront their own prejudiced thoughts in the future. This cycle is effective in prejudice reduction in that it can effectively inhibit future prejudiced attitudes *and* actions in low-prejudice perpetrators.

Essentially, a confrontation of either high-level or low-level perpetrators is likely to decrease the chance they will repeat their prejudiced actions; however the low-level perpetrator is more likely to also engage in the self-regulatory cycle that limits prejudiced thoughts. While the effects of a confrontation can be influenced by the perpetrator's attitude, they can also be affected by the group membership of the confronter, which will be discussed later.

### **Effects of Confronting on Targets and Nontargets**

#### **Targets**

A quick review of the literature surrounding stereotyping and prejudice will reveal which social groups are frequently targeted. For example, Crandall, Eshleman, and O'Brien (2002) noted that a majority of the research on prejudice has been on a narrow number of target groups

based on minority status via race, religion, and sexual orientation. In addition, many researchers have focused on prejudice based on gender (e.g., Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Eliezer & Major, 2012; Gervais, et al., 2010; Shelton, et al., 2006). These groups all share the characteristic of having less social power or privilege in society and their members have been studied more frequently in the research.

**Attributing interactions as prejudiced.** When members of a target group perceive and publicly attribute an action to prejudice, they are perceived as “hypersensitive, emotional, argumentative, irritating, trouble making ...complaining” (Kaiser & Miller, 2001, p. 261), and overreacting (Czopp & Monteith, 2003). For example, if an African American person receives a negative evaluation at work and publicly attributes this as prejudice, he or she is likely to be perceived as whining and complaining. Target group members may also experience future prejudice from the perpetrator after making public attributions of prejudice, such as when the perpetrator is a colleague, boss, or family member (Kaiser & Miller, 2003). Targets frequently predict these relationships will either remain the same or deteriorate after making these attributions, and are more likely to do so under private reporting conditions, possibly due to a desire to avoid relational backlash (Sechrist, Swim, & Stangor, 2004).

Targets may also suffer negative psychological consequences when they do not attribute prejudiced events as discrimination. A possible reason for this finding is that when targets attribute a negative interaction to prejudice, they are able to maintain self-esteem by identifying the cause of the negativity in the prejudice of others (Crocker & Major, 1989). For example, in the case of an African American receiving a negative evaluation at work, attributing the origin of the negativity to the prejudice of the evaluator relieves the target of blaming himself or herself

for the negative interaction. It is easier to maintain your self-esteem if you attribute your negative evaluation to a bias rather than to a flaw in yourself.

**When targets confront.** Targets can benefit as a member of their social group by feeling a sense of empowerment (Gervais, et al., 2010; Haslett & Lipman, 1997) and closure (Hyers, 2007) after confronting a perpetrator. This makes sense as confronting is likely to decrease the amount of future prejudice that the target experiences, as well as other members of the target group. For example, a Latina who confronts a perpetrator of racism has taken a stand to reduce racial prejudice for herself and other Latinos as well. There are a number of studies that suggest a decision-making process for targets regarding confrontation (Shelton, et al., 2006; Swim & Hyers, 1999). Swim and Hyers (1999) propose that targets consider factors regarding the possible positive and negative outcomes of attributing interactions as prejudiced and confronting, as well as the amount of cognitive energy necessary to confront the perpetrator. The Latina in the previous example might have asked herself questions in order to make the decision to confront: what is the best possible outcome, what is the worst outcome, how long will this confrontation take, will confronting damage my relationship with this person, and will saying something change her/his mind? These and other questions help the target decide if she is willing to take the risk of being labeled a whiner and complainer (Kaiser & Miller, 2001) to confront the perpetrator.

**When targets do not confront.** Events that follow target confrontation are discussed above; however, targets who do not confront prejudice often face a different set of problems. As previously discussed, when targets feel they should confront discrimination but do not act on these feelings they experience guilt and shame (Shelton, et al., 2006). Additionally, Shelton and colleagues (2006) found that a personal commitment to challenging prejudice acted as a

moderator between the discrepancy and the guilt and shame. In other words, targets who do not confront are more likely to experience guilt and shame when they have a personal commitment to confront prejudice than when they do not have this personal commitment.

When targets perceive the social costs of not confronting to be high, they are more committed to confronting (Shelton, et al., 2006). For example, when a woman overhears two male coworkers make a sexist comment about women in the workplace, she may feel that a confrontation needs to happen in order to protect herself and other women at work. Experiencing this need to protect other women is likely to increase her personal commitment to confronting.

Overall, the research suggests that targets risk social backlash when they choose to confront, and cognitive backlash when they do not. Either way, the target experiences prejudice and will experience some form of backlash. Alternatively, while nontargets are still likely to be labeled as complainers after confronting, they are less likely to receive the same severity of social backlash as targets (Czopp & Monteith, 2003).

### **Nontargets**

While members of groups characterized by having less social power or privilege in society are identified as targets, members of other groups are identified as nontargets. Previous research suggests that nontargets may be more effective in challenging prejudiced attitudes than targets (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Dickter, Kittel, & Gyurovski, 2012). One reason for this is that when nontargets confront perpetrators it is often unexpected since the confrontation would not benefit the nontarget directly (Czopp & Monteith, 2003).

**Unexpected message processing.** According to research by Petty (1997), unexpected messages, such as a confrontation by a nontarget, can increase message processing in the perpetrator. That is, a perpetrator is not expecting the nontarget to confront, so the confrontation

is seen as unexpected, leading the perpetrator to think about the confrontation more than if a target had confronted. For example, when a man confronts the perpetrator of a sexist comment, the perpetrator is likely to be surprised when he confronts since the perpetrator would most likely not expect a man to confront sexism. This surprise leads the perpetrator to think more about the interaction. In contrast, when a woman confronts a perpetrator of a sexist comment, the perpetrator is more likely to expect a confrontation, which leads the perpetrator to decrease processing of her confrontation, (Petty, Fleming, Priester, & Feinstein, 2001), thus making the confrontation less effective (Czopp & Monteith, 2003). This is supported by Kaiser and Miller's (2001) evidence that when targets attribute an interaction to prejudice they are viewed as complaining and being hypersensitive.

When the perpetrator experiences the surprise following the confrontation by a nontarget, the nontarget is seen as more trustworthy (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Petty, et al., 2001) since the nontarget is not acting in his or her group's interest. Not only are nontargets not improving their group's interest by confronting, but they are also risking social backlash from the perpetrator such as frustration and irritation (Czopp, et al., 2006), which could increase a feeling of surprise in the perpetrator and increase message processing. In addition, studies report that perpetrators would feel guilty and be more likely to apologize when confronted by a nontarget than when confronted by a target (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Czopp, et al., 2006). This suggests nontargets may be more effective in changing attitudes and behaviors of perpetrators of prejudice as well as in reducing the social backlash directed at targets. While this change in attitude and behaviors can be exceptionally helpful in reducing prejudice, nontargets influence other aspects of prejudice reduction as well.

**Verification of the presence of prejudice.** Many targets experience a phenomenon known as “everyday prejudice,” which is a major obstacle in their daily lives (Swim, Hyers, Cohen, & Ferguson, 2001). This everyday prejudice can manifest in many forms, such as being followed in a department store or a homophobic comment. Unfortunately, everyday prejudice is often overlooked by nontargets because it does not affect them in their daily lives (Ashburn-Nardo, et al., 2008). Furthermore, nontarget bystanders may be less likely to validate targets’ experiences of everyday prejudice as discrimination. For example, when an African American woman experiences racial discrimination at work and tells her white coworkers about her experience, they are not likely to identify her experience as prejudice since racial prejudice is not part of their own experiences. Nontargets have been found to be more effective than targets in increasing the awareness of prejudice in bystanders (Dickter, 2012). This provides further evidence that prejudice confrontations by nontargets are necessary to create social change in not only perpetrators, but in other nontargets as well. That is, bystanders may also be surprised when a nontarget confronts a perpetrator of prejudice, which may lead the bystander to think more about the confrontation.

**Possibility of social backlash.** Not only do perpetrators view targets as hypersensitive and complainers after confrontation (Kaiser & Miller, 2001), but they may not even view their own actions as prejudiced in the first place (Czopp, et al., 2006). Dickter (2012) summarizes previous research on nontarget confrontation in work examining heterosexuals’ confrontations of anti-gay comments. She states that nontargets are not acting in self or group-interest when confronting, which leads to others viewing them as overreacting less than targets. In other words, nontargets are less likely than targets to be viewed as hypersensitive after confronting. Nontargets are also more well-liked and respected when they confront (Dickter, 2012). Despite

the evidence that a nontarget is less likely than a target to experience social backlash after confronting, often times a nonarget will not confront when they have the opportunity (Cowie, 2000; Craig, Pepler, & Atlas, 2000). This may be because they do not know how to respond, fear social backlash from the perpetrator, or that they may make the situation worse.

One factor in nontargets' hesitancy to confront discrimination could be the dearth of discourse surrounding strategies to confront prejudice, specifically for nontargets. Available research exemplifies how many factors are related to confronting prejudice: group identity (Good, Moss-Racusin, & Sanchez, 2012), a commitment to confronting prejudice (Shelton, et al., 2006), a communal relationship orientation (Clark & Mills, 1979), a feeling of competency when confronting (Clark & Mills, 1979; Gervais, Hillard, & Vescio, 2010), previous witnessing of prejudice confrontations, a relationship with a member of the target group (DiStafano, et al., 2000), and empathy (Barr & Higgins, 2007; King, 1995). While the available literature is helpful in predicting when *targets* will confront prejudice, a gap emerges when exploring factors that encourage *nontargets* to confront a perpetrator.

Research illustrates how nontargets can effectively reduce the expression of prejudice (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Dickter, et al., 2012). There are a number of ways a nontarget can confront prejudice. For example, if a nontarget is confronting a perpetrator of homophobia, he or she could say "I don't appreciate homophobia" and ask the perpetrator to not say that phrase again. Since confrontation is any form of expression of dissatisfaction to the perpetrator (Shelton, et al., 2006), there are countless ways a nontarget could choose to confront in any number of situations. In order to encourage social change through nontarget confrontation, knowledge of what encourages these behaviors is necessary. In other words, these strategies are



only helpful if nontargets have decided to take action. Further research is needed to identify ways to counteract nontargets' hesitancy to confront perpetrators of prejudice in nontargets.

## **Rationale**

The reviewed research suggests that confrontation is useful for discouraging future prejudiced responses from the perpetrator (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Czopp, et al., 2006; Dickter, 2012), as well as for encouraging bystanders to confront when they witness future discrimination (Blanchard, Crandall, Bringham, & Vaughn, 1994). When targets confront prejudice, they are at a high risk for social backlash, including being viewed as hypersensitive, emotional, irritating, and complaining (Kaiser & Miller, 2001). If targets chose not to confront a perpetrator of prejudice in order to avoid these labels, they often feel cognitive backlash manifested by guilt and shame (Shelton, et al., 2006). In contrast, when nontargets confront perpetrators of prejudice they are less likely to receive social backlash and have more of an effect on the cognitive processes of the perpetrator (Dickter, 2012). These results suggest that understanding what internal and external factors encourage nontargets to confront prejudice is a necessary step to reduce prejudice through productive confronting.

Based on the research, I believe there are several possible factors that could encourage nontargets to confront: a strong personal commitment to confronting prejudice, high levels of empathy, a communal relationship orientation, previous experiences of witnessing prejudice confrontations, a feeling of competency when confronting, and a relationship with a member of the target group. Future research is needed to identify if these or other factors encourage nontargets to confront prejudice. The identification of such factors could result in a way to encourage nontarget confrontation, which has the potential to increase bias reduction in the larger culture.

Increased exploration of possible factors that encourage nontarget confrontation of prejudice can be applicable in therapeutic contexts in several ways. One possibility is when working with a client who is living with prejudice and discrimination. The therapist could focus on identifying key strengths that the client has, such as commitment to confronting prejudice or a communal relationship orientation, which could make confrontation less risky and more effective. Another therapeutic use is when a therapist is working with an individual, couple, or family where the clients are both targets and nontargets, such as with an interracial couple or a family where a child is straight and a parent is a member of the LGB community. The therapist could facilitate the nontarget client in identifying strengths to help him or her confront perpetrators, which could have positive implications for the relationship such as validating the target's experience of prejudice and reducing stress between clients.

In addition to clinical benefits, the current study could inform prejudice confrontation training programs and anti-bullying programs. By identifying factors that encourage bystanders to become nontarget confronters, schools, homes, places of work, and potentially entire communities, could experience decreased levels of discrimination due to an increase in prejudice confrontation by nontargets.

### **Feminist Theory**

Feminist theory places an importance on challenging sexism, racism, and other inequalities in the research process (Naples, 2003). With a focus on inequalities between groups, feminist theory is not limited to examining women and men; in contrast feminist theory is used to examine inequalities between many different groups, such as race, class, and sexual orientation (hooks, 2000). Furthermore, feminist theory encourages the examination of each individual's influence on others' life experiences (Baumgardner & Richards, 2000) and often

includes a focus on groups that have been overlooked by previous research (Leavy, 2006). These qualities of feminist theory allow an examination of how nontargets confront perpetrators of prejudice and create social change through interpersonal actions.

As previously discussed, nontargets experience fewer repercussions after confronting a perpetrator than do targets (Dickter, 2012). When targets confront prejudice, they are at a high risk for social backlash, including being viewed as hypersensitive, emotional, irritating, and complaining (Kaiser & Miller, 2000), whereas nontargets are more likely to be viewed as trustworthy (Petty, et al., 2001). The current study aimed to identify factors that encourage nontargets to confront perpetrators of prejudice to reduce future prejudiced interactions.

## **METHODOLOGY**

In the following chapter I will explore the study design, sample collection, data collection, and data analysis I used for the with the end goal of beginning to identify the factors that encourage nontarget confrontation of prejudice. Finally, I will discuss my own involvement in the research process through a statement of reflexivity.

### **Design**

The study operated in the philosophical assumptions of social constructionism and aimed to describe and understand the experiences of the participants. Since there is a limit to the amount of literature available to support any theories or hypotheses, I utilized grounded theory to explore the experiences of nontargets who have confronted prejudice to develop a theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1970). Grounded theory has also been established as complementary to feminist theory (Keddy, Sims, & Noerager Stern, 1996; Kushner & Morrow, 2003). Throughout the data collection process I conducted rudimentary analyses and continuously compared them to the original data, forming a theory framework for identifying what factors encourage nontargets to confront prejudice.

### **Sample Selection**

The study was conducted with open approach focus groups conducted in person (Merriam, 2009). Since the population of interest was very specific (nontargets who confront prejudice), participants were be recruited through purposeful sampling by inviting people who were active in social justice activities on their campus, such as Safe Zone Ally trainings and Violence Prevention Education (See Appendix A and Appendix B). Both of these groups encourage nontargets to confront in social emergencies. Recruitment fliers were posted on the North Dakota State University (NDSU) Announcement Listserv to invite students who may not

have been involved in these activities but were still eligible to participate. Some participants learned about the study directly from the recruitment materials while others were informed about the study by professors who had seen the materials themselves. Participants contacted the researchers via email after learning of the opportunity to be involved in the study. Many had learned about the opportunity through the recruitment handouts, email announcements, and social media announcements (see Appendix A and Appendix B). After contacting the researchers the potential participants were provided the opportunity to ask questions about the study and their potential involvement. The researcher offered a selection of dates and times to meet for the focus group via email. Once the participants confirmed for a specific time the researcher reserved a meeting space and sent a reminder email to the participants the day before their respective focus group. Before beginning the discussion the participants completed a demographic questionnaire and reviewed the informed consent with the researcher. Participants signed one copy for the researcher's records and kept a copy for themselves.

## **Data Collection**

### **Focus Groups**

Guided group interviews, or focus groups, were used to collect experiences of people who have confronted perpetrators of prejudice (Merriam, 2009). Feminist theory supports the use of focus groups due to the production of a “happening” (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006, p. 199), or a conversation that is directed by the researcher, yet still allows space for participants to express their experiences in a way that best suits them. Through the use of focus groups, participants were invited to provide their experiences as nontargets who have confronted prejudice and build from the input of others involved. Another important aspect of focus groups is the group dynamic that can be an integral important of the study (Leavy, 2006). This group dynamic can

open up space for conversations that might not happen in other situations. It was important for me, as the researcher, to pay attention to participants who may have differing viewpoints (Leavy, 2006), as participants who hold a dominant viewpoint might have talked over or ignored other participants with minority viewpoints. As a feminist researcher I moderated sessions to ensure each participant's experiences and viewpoints were heard.

Three focus groups were conducted and composed of five to seven participants each, totaling 17 participants in the sample. The focus groups took place on the NDSU campus and lasted up to 90 minutes. A semi-structured interview guide provided a guideline for the discussion with prompts to explore the experiences of the participants (See Appendix C). The questions were open ended and focused on when participants observed prejudice such as, "What told you that a situation was wrong or unfair?" and, "What was it like for you to see this happening?"

In lieu of the word, "confront" I often used the phrase, "speak up." This is due to the subjective interpretation of the meaning of the word confront, such as yelling, an argument, or simply "not nice". In addition, the study was conducted in a Midwest subculture that covertly values being "nice" (Marshall & Theoharis, 2007; Meadows & Lee, 2002). As such, I invited the participants to identify the word they felt fit their experience most appropriately. A practice interview was conducted with colleagues who had the opportunity to confront prejudice as a nontarget in order to identify questions that needed to be separated into multiple parts, clarified, or reworded.

### **Fieldwork Journal**

I recorded a fieldwork journal throughout the data collection and analyses processes. It included my ideas, concerns, and reactions to what was presented during the focus group

sessions. In accordance with grounded theory, I compared my preliminary analyses of the data to my fieldwork journal as I continued to collect further data (Merriam, 2009).

### **Data Analysis**

The data set consisted of transcripts from the three focus groups and corresponding fieldwork notes taken during and after the sessions. I analyzed the data as I collected it through the use of grounded theory by creating an analysis of the early data and consistently comparing the analysis to new data as it became available. After each focus group session, I transcribed the data and my fieldwork journal. Before beginning the next focus group I read through the first set of transcripts and took note of potentially significant data. I also took note of any topics that needed a thicker description of experiences in future focus groups. This process was repeated for the second third focus groups.

After all the focus groups have been completed, I identified the notations I created in the transcripts throughout the data collection process following a constant comparative method (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Strauss & Corbin, 2008), resulting in approximately 350 notations, or codes. If the codes were present throughout the data collection process, or significant in some other way, I grouped them together into categories. This was an inductive process, gathering data units that had similar qualities together. Since the amount of data was relatively small compared to larger qualitative studies, I analyzed the data by hand in lieu of a data analysis program. I color-coded the notations from the transcripts based on the focus-group from which it originated. I then spread out all 350 codes and grouped them together. As the categories were created I used a more deductive method to test them against the original data, comparing the categories I created inductively back to the transcripts to see if the categories still held true to the

participants' experiences. I continued to oscillate between the inductive and deductive processes, resulting in four main themes, which will be discussed later.

### **Trustworthiness**

Validity and reliability in qualitative research, or trustworthiness, revolve around the extent to which the researcher's interpretation of the data matches the experiences of the participants (Merriam, 2009). In order to ensure trustworthiness in this study, I included the processes of triangulation with multiple sources, member checks, and an awareness of my socially privileged group memberships, such as race and sexual orientation.

The process of triangulation with multiple sources involves interpreting more than one source of data surrounding an experience (Merriam, 2009). Through this process I collected data from both focus group transcripts and fieldwork journal entries. I then cross-checked the data collected from these sources against each other.

A second strategy I used to ensure trustworthiness is the use of member checks. Participants had the opportunity to view a copy of the transcripts. They were able to suggest edits to the transcripts and to clarify their explanations to capture the most accurate interpretation of their experiences. A critique of member checks regards participant confidentiality (e.g., Goldblat, Karnieli-Miller, & Neumann, 2010; Kaiser, 2009; Karnieli-Miller, Strier, & Pessach, 2009). Specifically, if the researcher sends transcripts to the participants after the study, it is possible that the transcripts will not be kept confidential after being dispersed. Kaiser (2009) suggests informing participants about the planned use of the data, such as publications or intended audiences. Furthermore, she suggests revising a traditional informed consent to encourage a dialogue with the participants about the use of their data. The informed consent "should include greater detail about the audience for one's research, be ongoing, and present



respondents with a wider range of confidentiality options” (Kaiser, 2009, p. 1638). Using these recommendations, I informed participants about the member check procedure before the onset of the focus group discussion. They were informed of the purposes of the member check procedure and had the opportunity to request that their data be cleaned to facilitate anonymity or omitted from the transcript that other participants read. In an effort to protect confidentiality, I conducted member checks by inviting participants to meet with me to review a hard copy of the transcript from their focus group.

The third strategy employed to ensure trustworthiness was the coding of data by multiple researchers. One transcript was coded independently by myself (LB) and Dr. Kristen Benson. We did not review each other’s coded transcript prior to their own coding process to ensure an independent analysis.

### **Statement of Reflexivity**

The final method of ensuring trustworthiness was an open awareness of my biases in regards to the research topic. I value confrontation of prejudice in the effort to improve the treatment of marginalized groups of people. I believe that prejudice and discrimination encourage people to treat others like they are less than human, not worthy of respect and equal opportunities in life. Furthermore, I believe that it is not the responsibility of oppressed groups to make social change toward equality; rather it is *everyone’s* responsibility. Before I learned about the scientific study of prejudice and discrimination I was uncomfortable and angry about social inequalities, however I lacked the words to bring meaning to my experience. Once I learned of social power structures such as patriarchy, racism, classism, and heteronormativity, I began learning how I could be a catalyst for social change through my nontarget identities. I identify as a nontarget in many ways: my race, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status as examples,

and I have used these identities to confront actions of prejudice in my own interpersonal experiences.

While I know that nontarget confrontation of prejudice is a value I hold, I do not know *why* I hold it. One reason I am drawn to studying nontargets and prejudice is that I see how powerful they can be, and I experience frustration when I see nontargets choose not to confront. I believe my bias of experiencing frustration could influence me to hold assumptions of the participants and the data. For example, I have an assumption that other nontargets experience the same frustration that I do when they witness others who choose not to confront. I may also assume that nontargets want to learn to confront more frequently, or they want to confront the same kinds of prejudices I want to confront. These are some of the assumptions I tried to be aware of during the focus group sessions as and the data analyses. The first step to being aware of these during the study was to hold myself accountable to these assumptions. As a researcher guided by feminist theory, I choose to be upfront and transparent about my values and assumptions.

## RESULTS

For the current study participants were asked to discuss their experiences of standing up for other people who were being discriminated against (See Appendix C). These questions led to discussions about feelings of anger, guilt, empathy, and sadness. Participants identified specific factors in their own lives that have encouraged them to defend other people, including values learned from their parents, experiences being bullied themselves, and watching loved ones experience discrimination in their daily lives. The demographic data, a depiction of the three focus groups, and brief review of the data analysis will be presented first. The results that follow are organized according to the four themes which emerged from the data when considering the research question: what factors encourage nontargets to confront prejudice directed at other people?

### Demographics

A total of 17 participants completed the study. The first and second focus groups included five participants each, while the third focus group included seven participants. The average age of the participants was 23.82, ranging from 18 to 32. Demographic information regarding gender, ethnicity, relationship status, the community experienced during childhood, sexual orientation, level of education, political identification, and religious identity is displayed in Table 1. This information was collected to better understand the participants' backgrounds and identities that may affect their experiences related to the research question.

As mentioned previously, demographic information alone does not determine group identity. Since a nontarget is a person who is not a member of a stigmatized group, it was necessary to know if the participants *identified themselves* as being in a marginalized group or not. When asked which marginalized groups they identified with, six said "women," six said

Table 1

*Frequencies and Percentages of Participant Demographics*

Descriptor	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Woman	10	58.8
Man	6	35.3
Genderqueer	1	5.9
Ethnicity		
White	15	88.2
Middle Eastern	1	5.9
Relationship Status		
Cohabiting	1	5.9
Legally Married	2	11.8
Dating	3	17.6
Single	11	64.7
Community during childhood		
Metropolitan area	6	35.3
Small city	6	35.3
Rural area	4	23.5
Other	1	5.9
Sexual orientation		
Heterosexual	13	76.5
Bisexual	1	5.9
Gay	1	5.9
Queer	1	5.9
Other	1	5.9
Highest level of education		
Some college	8	47.1
Bachelor's degree	7	41.2
Graduate school	2	11.8
Political identification		
Very liberal	3	17.6
Liberal	5	29.4
Moderate	8	47.1
Conservative	1	5.9
Religious Identity		
Protestant	4	23.5
Catholic	3	17.6
Muslim	1	5.9
Agnostic	1	5.9
No Preference	6	35.3
Atheist	1	5.9
Other	1	5.9

“LGBTQ,” one said “mental health,” one as “Muslim,” and one as a “first generation.” In addition to asking participants which marginalized groups they identified with, we asked them to identify which groups they believed were likely to be discriminated against. Thirteen identified women, 14 identified LGBTQ people, 15 identified people of color, 14 identified immigrants, 12 identified religious groups, 10 identified the elderly, 13 identified people who were poor, and 10 identified people with special needs. Overall this information suggests the participants did not necessarily identify with a marginalized group, even if they demographically fit the requirements of group membership. For example, only six of the 10 self-reported women in the sample specified that they were part of a marginalized group based on their gender. This is supported by research conducted by Crosby (1984) in which women stated that their group (i.e., women) had experienced discrimination but they personally had not. While this is an interesting find in the context of nontarget confronters not identifying as targets of discrimination against their own groups, it is not the focus of the current study and merits further research.

### **Data Collection Through the Use of Focus Groups**

The first focus group consisted of five participants, many of whom had at least a basic knowledge of systems of power and oppression through their undergraduate or graduate classes. These participants seemed to be the most willing to confront perpetrators of prejudice out of the three focus groups. One participant spoke about a time just the night before the study where she had confronted two men in front of a group of mutual friends before leaving in tears. Others shared vulnerable stories about themselves and their family members, and how these experiences encouraged them to stand up.

The second focus group was also comprised of five participants. This group was the most racially and ethnically diverse compared to the other two groups. These participants seemed to

have the desire to confront perpetrators; however they also discussed a concern of backlash from authority figures. This could be due to the fact that three of the five participants did not have an obvious white, Anglo-Saxon background like many of the other participants who experience the benefits of white privilege, and may be more likely to be aware of authority.

The third and final focus group was comprised of seven participants, most of whom were enrolled in mental health helping professions. Not surprisingly, these participants spoke most frequently about feelings of empathy; however this empathy was not only directed at the targets, but the perpetrators as well. The participants in this focus group were also the most aware of the social acceptability of initiating a public confrontation. As discussed later in the chapter, many participants in the final focus group preferred to confront the perpetrator one-on-one and in a more conversational manner.

### **Thematic Analysis**

After transcribing the three focus group interviews, the data was coded for subject matter via thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For example, one participant shared that she had seen her father make prejudicial comments when she was a child. This segment of data was coded as “witnessed parents perpetrate.” Approximately 350 codes, including “witnessed parents perpetrate”, were identified, some occurring multiple times in the same focus group, and some occurring in multiple transcripts. These 350 codes were color coded to identify the focus group from which they originated, and fastened to a clean surface in order to visualize all codes at the same time. These codes were grouped together by similarity, such that “witnessed parents perpetrate” would be grouped next to similar codes of “witnessed prejudice as a child” or “seen family perpetrate.” These 350 codes were eventually condensed into approximately 50 groups. Each group consisted of a range between one and 15 codes. Using thematic analysis, these codes

were grouped together by commonality, leading to approximately 50 categories. As mentioned previously, this was an inductive process, gathering data units that had similar qualities together. The same strategy was used to group these 50 categories together based on commonality, resulting in approximately one dozen sub-themes. As new groups were created I used a more deductive method to test them against the original data, comparing the categories I created inductively back to the transcripts to see if the categories still held true to the participants' experiences. I continued to oscillate between the inductive and deductive processes, resulting in four main themes.

The four themes were present in all three transcripts and consisted of: 1. The Confrontation, 2. Perception of Harm, 3. Education, and 4. Internal Processes. During the writing of the results and discussion chapters the data was consistently analyzed, leading to the later editing of categories. These edits resulted in the movement of specific codes from one category to another, or reconceptualizing the meaning of a group of codes and renaming a category to better fit the original data. Appendix D provides a diagrammatic representation of these themes.

### **The Confrontation**

This theme describes the confrontation as its own dynamic as well as the thought process of routine, nontarget confronters. This theme comprises of four subthemes, including discrimination identifiers, the types of perpetrators confronted, the steps taken before and during a confrontation, and the cognitive results of the confrontation. Data points pertaining to this theme were evident across the three focus groups, indicating that many participants experience similar processes before and during a confrontation.

## **Discrimination Identifiers**

When discussing what signaled that prejudice and discrimination were present, many participants spoke about using a multi-layered awareness to identify when prejudice was present, such as being aware of the words being used in the discrimination. These words targeted people based on gender, race, sexual orientation, and mental health. In addition, they also noticed the nonverbal behavior of the perpetrator and the perpetrator's intentions for the interaction. For example:

*It's not so much [slaps hand] seeing the reaction on the other individual, like the one being bullied, it's hearing it simultaneously with them, but hearing the disdain or the anger or the ignorance from the point of the bully. So it's like hitting you at the same time as it's hitting the person being bullied.*

This example shows how one participant focused on the sense of disdain, anger, or ignorance of the perpetrator, and how being aware of this level of interaction affected her emotionally in the moments before she confronted. Without this awareness of the perpetrator's intentionality and body language, she might not have attributed the event as discriminatory.

## **Types of Perpetrators Confronted**

A wide range of perpetrators were listed across the data set, including family members, close friends, strangers, and younger students. Some participants felt comfortable confronting in groups, either to one individual or the group as a whole. Others preferred confronting during a one-on-one discussion, and some felt more comfortable confronting online through social media. One participant spoke about his experiences being a Resident Assistant (RA) in one of the residence halls on campus and how students would regularly come out to him, but were not



comfortable being out to the rest of the hall. He shared an example of a time when one such resident was exposed to homophobic comments:

*“...and all of a sudden, ‘That’s so gay,’ [is] just thrown out there. Yeah it’s not cool. Like that shouldn’t even be used, even if he’s not here. I didn’t call him out or anything but it’s just like, ‘Really? What are we accomplishing?’ ...But I try and tone down [and] be like, ‘Hey, why are we saying this? ‘What did you mean by it?’ and most of the time they’re like, ‘Uhh s- s- uh, nothing.’*

In this specific example, the participant had a sense of authority over the other students due to his role as an RA, which most likely helped him to stand up to the perpetrators who were younger students on his floor. Another participant reflected about feeling more comfortable confronting prejudice when he was at work, due to his role as a security guard at a local hotel:

*“Just a couple of weekends ago I had to kick out a bunch of people for being extremely racist to another group at the bar. So that’s kind of nice because I can walk up and be like, “We don’t tolerate that here. You need to leave.” So I’m in a position to do so.”*

Authority will be discussed further as having an inhibitory effect on participants when deciding to confront or not.

### **Steps to Confronting**

Most of the participants prepared for a confrontation before they even witnessed discrimination occurring. Some learned strategies from watching other people confront, such as a participant who laughed as he shared how he learned to use humor from watching his friend, who identifies as gay, stand up for himself:

*“He uses humor and it’s great and people end up laughing. But at the same time you know that the person that he stood up to got the point. But yet everyone else around you*

*is like, 'Oh yeah. That's good. That's funny.' ... So it doesn't always have to be quite so serious."*

Many participants also paused to plan out the confrontation, which often helped to streamline the discussion, helped the confronter respond with logic rather than emotion, or decide their strategy. One participant hesitantly talked about planning out his confrontation based on the specific person he was standing up to, taking their personality and political beliefs into consideration:

*"It's one of those things where, sometimes trying to figure out the balancing act of—how forcefully do I confront this? And is there a way of confronting it so that they'll actually change as opposed to ... [getting] into huge battles with people. And, ultimately it's like, I don't know that I actually [hesitantly] changed them at all."*

The strategies used by confronters ranged from assertive, where the confronter physically stood up to express passion, to using humor and casual conversation to engage the perpetrator in a dialogue. Some confrontations occurred in public spaces, others in one-on-one discussions. This range of strategies between participants suggests that there is no "one way" to confront discrimination. The difference is particularly evident when comparing specific participants. For example, a participant spoke thoughtfully about preferring to confront gently and personably, away from other people to avoid embarrassing the perpetrator:

*"Maybe, you know if you're in say, a group, maybe that's not the time to call somebody out. Embarrassing them may make them shut down and be totally unreceptive to what one has to say...And I think that's important to keep in mind. Um, yeah, when it's appropriate to do what. And say something. I would be more inclined to have a one-on-one conversation with a person."*

On the other hand, other participants spoke about repeatedly confronting multiple people at once who tend to maintain their position. As mentioned previously, one participant came to the focus group the morning after assertively confronting two men in a group of mutual friends. She passionately spoke about her experiences confronting these two men even after they made personal attacks against her beliefs. In spite of these personal attacks, or perhaps to spite the perpetrators themselves, she asserted that even if people defend their opinions in a group, she observed a change in their behavior later:

*“Even if they keep going, because they can – a lot of people don’t want to give in, you know? ... But I’ve noticed that later on the remarks have stopped. Everyone looks at me when people start saying things because they know. They know what I have said. And everybody’s just kind of like, ‘[Participant 1] is here, so probably shouldn’t say this because she freaked out on me two nights ago.’”*

### **Reactions from Confronting**

When participants spoke about positive outcomes from confronting many spoke about feeling proud of themselves for standing up; however they usually did not experience these positive feelings until after the confrontation was over:

*“I don’t think I feel very positive while I’m doing it. I mean, like the positivity comes after the fact. Even when I’m in it, and I’m arguing or if they were even starting to listen to me, it’s this almost like, fight or flight response that I can’t control. I’m just so in it that I can’t really feel any other kinds of emotions. After it I’m like [sighs] alright. I did it. I feel great, really happy. I don’t really feel like positive things until after.”*

Other participants seemed to be very aware of the negative feelings they would have felt had they not done anything at all. For example, one participant spoke about how she still feels better after confronting prejudice even if the confrontation does not go as she planned:

*“...even if they totally annihilate me and make me want to go cry in a room somewhere, I’d still feel better that I said something than if I would have just sat there and pretended. Because I mean sometimes not saying anything makes it look like you agree. So I definitely feel better when I [confront].”*

Other participants spoke about the importance of having opportunities to socialize with other confronters, resulting in a sense of community with others who they perceived as valuing similar morals and acted on these morals in similar ways as the participant. For example, one participant spoke about having a social circle that was similar to the other people in the discussion (e.g., “...I hang out with people like, I don’t know, like you guys.” Others shared about feeling part of a community with other confronters, by witnessing other people confronting. For example, one participant shared an experience where she was walking on a college campus and witnessed a group of girls make prejudiced comments toward another student in a wheel-chair. Before she could get close enough to confront the girls herself she heard another group of girls stand up for the student in the wheel-chair. This led to a discussion between several participants about feeling proud of their community of confronters:

*Participant 1: “...And I felt proud. I felt really proud that I’m part of a community where people feel that they can stand up for those that are disadvantaged.”*

*Participant 2: I think that’s a good way to say it. Proud. Just good, like it just feels so good. And it’s validating because sometimes when I’m standing up for people or I’m*

*trying to promote equality I feel like [exasperated sigh] I feel like I'm the only one that does this sometimes, you know?*

*Participant 3: Agreed.*

*Participant 2: And so it's just so great to see other people doing it. And knowing that I'm not the only one who feels the same."*

Still others discussed noticing change in others, and feeling positive about being part of that change. Some talked about wanting to "*change the world*" while others focused on immediate dialog rather than needing to see large-scale changes:

*"...I don't even need someone necessarily to be agreeing with me for me to say it's a productive argument. ... Because I think if you're having a dialogue with someone, for me, that is empowering, and I feel very passionate about what I'm saying. But then if you have those people who are just stubbornly sticking to whatever they're going to believe, I don't have nearly as many positive emotions from that."*

While the previous participant felt positive outcomes from having a discussion, other participants shared feeling hopeful about the *possibility* of change at the global and interpersonal level:

*"It's knowing you did something right ... Just being able to tell myself, 'You possibly changed someone's opinion,' or, 'You're trying to make this world better for everyone else.' It just feels good."*

### **Perception of Harm**

The second theme encompasses the nontarget confronter's perception of harm for both the target and themselves. It is comprised of two subthemes: social backlash and response to a social emergency. Similar to the previous theme, participants from each focus group discussed

perceiving harm when they identified prejudice and discrimination being present, suggesting that most participants had similar experiences.

### **Social Backlash**

Participants discussed the possibility of social backlash by often choosing to not confront authority figures, feeling anxious and scared while confronting, having concern for their own safety, and feeling that other people should only confront when they feel safe doing so. For example, one participant spoke about her feelings after a professor who made inappropriate comments about a television news anchor who was overweight during a class discussion:

*“... And I was like, ‘Whoa, that’s completely inappropriate.’ But also in a group of thirty to forty students when it’s the professor in charge, like I wanted to say like, ‘No, you should not be saying that.’ But there was an interesting dynamic of I don’t know her, she’s teaching the class, like there were clearly people in the classroom who agreed with her. And so I didn’t really know exactly what to do.”*

The participant went to share that she wrote about the comment on a student evaluation at the end of the course and her discomfort with the authority differentials between herself as the nontarget and the professor as the perpetrator.

When discussing times participants did not stand up, one person shared a recent time she witnessed two Black women confronting an airline worker who discriminated against them at the airport. The airline worker had taken photos of the two women before allowing them on the plane, but had not photographed any other passengers. Similar to the previous participant who did not confront her professor, this participant did not stand up with the targeted women because of a fear of being targeted herself. While she was telling her story she seemed to feel ashamed, as her voice became quieter and her body language less assured than earlier in the discussion:

*“As I was passing through they came up to the desk and they were like, ‘Excuse me, why did you take our pictures and you’re just passing everybody else through the line? What was the reason for that?’ At this point I was already past the line and I actually had one extra item that I wasn’t necessarily supposed to have, like an extra carry-on. So I didn’t want to [laughs] call attention to myself. That’s why I didn’t say anything because I was just trying to sneak by. I didn’t want to get myself in trouble.”*

Interestingly, the same participant later discusses the role of privilege and how the privilege of the nontarget is an important factor in a confrontation of prejudice. Her reflection is included later in the chapter. In the previous example, the participant was benefitting from her own white privilege in that she was able to not stand up in that moment and “sneak by” the airline employees in the first place. This highlights the connection between a nontarget status and privileged group membership, a connection which merits additional research.

### **Responds to a Social Emergency**

The second subtheme of responding to a social emergency included discussion of feeling a rush of adrenaline during the confrontation, feeling anger towards the perpetrator, feeling a sense of urgency, and the confronter gauging her or his response to the discrimination based on the severity of the interaction. Many confronters shared examples of times they experienced a racing heart, shaky knees, twitching, feeling flushed, flinching, and raising their voice. One particular respondent became elevated during the focus group, raising his voice and using furious arm motions to express his reaction to witnessing discrimination: *“I get really amped up, to the point where I start, like, shaking and I’m like, [high volume] ‘Lets GO!! You did not just say that!’*

Another participant shared that she felt her heart rate increase from just talking about what it feels like to confront discrimination. Another participant shared an example of having an immediate response to discrimination when she was substitute teaching a group of 8<sup>th</sup> graders:

*“One of the students in the classroom, um, said, ‘Shut up, you – ’ and then used the three letter F-word. I just remember having, even thinking about it still, probably the most visceral reaction that I have ever had. It’s not that I hadn’t heard the term before but to hear a student calling another student that for no reason other than the other student had maybe done something that this kid didn’t like. But I was on him the second that he said it. And I told him he had to apologize. I said, ‘It’s not acceptable in any classroom, or anywhere, for that matter.’ And I told him that the principal would be waiting for him and I sent him down to the principal’s office and then I – teachable moment –told the rest of the class that I hoped to never hear anything like that from anyone again. And why it was unacceptable and rude. I just remember my heart was pounding and I just – it was so immediate for me. Which is probably why it sticks out nine years later.”*

Instances where the confronters responded as if the situation was an emergency were closely related to the impact of the prejudice and the number of people affected by the interaction. In the previous example, for instance, the participant was aware that it was not just the target who was affected by the discrimination, but the entire class. She went on to discuss that it was the use of the “three letter F-word” itself that led her to respond so quickly, as opposed to another word that was not as derogatory or potentially harmful.

### **Education**

The education theme is comprised of five categories including how participants conceptualize prejudice and discrimination, the use of education as a tool during a confrontation,



being taught by parents to confront, viewing college as an opportunity to learn to confront, and viewing education as a burden. Compared to the previous two themes, there was relatively less homogeneity among this theme, suggesting that participants had a variety of experiences in education.

### **Conceptualization of Prejudice**

Conceptualization of prejudice and discrimination entails the nontarget confronter's understanding of the social acceptabilities of prejudices, viewing discrimination as being worse than prejudice, being aware of prejudice at a systemic, process level, being aware of one's own privilege, and believing that prejudice is an attack on a person's identity. When asked how they defined prejudice and discrimination, there were a variety of answers provided. Some provided textbook answers to this question, one even referenced his standard definition by adding "Merriam Webster" to the end of his answer. These textbook answers seemed to center along prejudice being a preconceived set of ideas that were internal, whereas discrimination referred to external actions based on these internal ideas. A majority of the participants took these definitions of prejudice and discrimination a step further, and identified prejudice as "targeted hate" based on the identities of the target. In other words, many participants seemed to conceptualize prejudice as an attack on a person's identity rather than a preconceived set of ideas about a group of people. The passion with which these particular participants spoke about prejudice set them apart from the participants who provided a definition that seemed to come from an introductory level psychology textbook. For example:

*"I think, up, prejudice is the belief that a person is less than or lacking for something that they are, and not like, feelings or personality, but like, something that they are and they cannot change. Like race, gender, sexuality, all of that."*

When discussing how people respond to being confronted, one participant shared her observation of the response varying on the kind of prejudice she confronted, showing her awareness of prejudice and discrimination at a systemic level:

*“In our society, we obviously haven’t moved past racism. But racism is seen as bad. Most people will say racism is a bad thing. Whereas homophobia is still seen as an okay thing in some ways, you know? So if someone says something and uses the N-word. Then everyone is kinda like, ‘Whoa.’ And you’re like, ‘That was racist.’ ... You know it’s more acceptable to be against gay people than it is to be against Black people.”*

This awareness of the differences between confronting racism as opposed to homophobia suggests the participant has an awareness of the social acceptabilities of various prejudices; an awareness several participants shared.

In addition to the awareness of the impact of different kinds of prejudice, a small number of participants seemed to be aware of the role their own privileges played during the confrontation. The participant mentioned previously who did not stand up with two targeted Black women at an airport continued to explain why she felt her privilege could have played a role in confronting prejudice:

*“Because I think privilege ... matters. I think that if a white person stands up for a minority it, for some reason, and this is part of the problem, it means more than if, you know, the Black people say, ‘Hey, what, what the hell?’ And it’s the same thing for, you know, straight people standing up for LGBT [people].”*

### **Education as a Confrontation Tool**

Several participants shared times they had used their education during a confrontation. The focus of their education varied from child development, sociology, women and gender

studies, psychology, and more general discussions of power and oppression. One participant trained in human development spoke about using her educational background in eating disorders to stand up to body shaming prejudice:

*“...there was a girl who ... posted some article about how in order to get the obesity problem down we should use fat shaming. And I do eating disorder research so ... because that’s my field I was basically like, ‘What the hell are you talking about?’ And had this really long response citing all these articles and stuff like that.”*

Similar to the previous category, conceptualization of prejudice, many participants who used their education during a confrontation appeared to be taught in a systemic perspective rather than with a focus on the individual. Additionally, many participants insisted that their education lead them to confront prejudice and shared examples of sharing their education with other people. For example, one participant spoke about confronting acquaintances who were referencing a t-shirt worn by university students with racist messages regarding Native people. She appeared to be speaking from a place of righteous anger on behalf of the targeted group as she shared her online response to the hate:

*“I commented then I made my own status. And I was like, ‘It’s not what the big deal is, or who the people are, whatever. It’s the fact that there’s a history here. You need to inform yourself and you need to know the reasons why it’s not okay to be making fun of this symbol and this name and this Nation.’”*

### **Parents Taught to Confront**

Only two participants spoke about their parents encouraging them to confront, either directly or inadvertently; however the impact of these lessons from their parents was clearly a key factor in why they choose to confront. The same participant who had confronted two men in

front of a group of friends the night before spoke of being taught to stand up by her parents after her sister was born with a physical disability. During the discussion it was apparent that her parent's lessons greatly impacted her actions as an adult:

*"I don't like seeing other people discriminated against. Just kind of how I was brought up. It's how my parents were too. Especially after my sister was born, we all just got a reality check. So that's how I was always brought up: that I wasn't to discriminate against anybody regardless. I think it's just kind of become part of who I am, trying to include everyone I guess."*

Later in the conversation the same participant went on to share about her mother modeling the same behavior and the effect it had on her relationship with her mother later in life:

*"It's really cool to hear about like her experiences ... She's a pharmacist so she dispenses people's medications so she knows things about people that are private. And she has the opportunity to stand up to other people she works with who may discriminate against disabled people or someone who needs depression medication or something like that. It just makes me feel really proud I guess, and [uplifted]. It's like, other people understand, you're not alone. It's just a good feeling."*

While the previous statement shows how the participant's parents directly taught her to stand up for others, the other participant shared learning to confront in a more general lesson about thinking before acting:

*"I was raised from my dad, 'Think before you act.' [He] said that to me like every day in my childhood. Like the main like quote he ever said to me. 'Know what you're gonna do before you actually do it. Just think about it. Use your head. God gave you a head, or a brain, so just think about it.'"*

## **College as Opportunity to Learn**

Several participants discussed the value of confrontations being discussed in college; however this sub-theme was only discussed in the second focus-group. This could be due to the education levels of specific participants or their specific experiences of learning a commitment to confront during their college years. Specifically, two participants explicitly stated that their own views on oppression and discrimination had changed while they were in college, while the third person directly involved in the conversation was a doctoral student. For example, when asked about personal beliefs regarding having a personal commitment to confront prejudice, the doctoral student immediately answered with an emphasis of college as an opportunity to foster a commitment to confront in new students:

*“I wish that was something that they would discuss with you your first year of college, to be honest. In a time where you kind of have everybody together to kind of reinforce, ‘Alright. You’re going to do this on your own. You’re away from your home life. This is a time to start fresh.’”*

The discussion continued to include the importance of college as a time to learn more about yourself and how interactions with other groups of people influence self-concept:

*“It either changes you for the better or it changes you for the worse ... There’s a lot of minorities there are a lot of white people. You have to be engaged with everyone. You just have to learn to befriend other people. And then you’re going to soon stand up for them. You have other people’s respect, you know?”*

## **Education as a Burden**

One much unexpected category was the feeling that education was a burden. During the conversation and subsequent reviews of the transcripts it seemed that these particular participants

who discussed this feeling of burden felt an unmanageable responsibility to confront as many instances of discrimination as possible. The two primary contributors to the discussion (see participants 1 and 2 below) were also the only two participants in the entire sample to discuss a knowledge of their own privilege. It appeared that their education on privilege led them to feel such a responsibility to confront prejudice that they felt alone in their mission to reduce bias. The conversation began after the participants were asked what emotional responses they had after witnessing discrimination:

*1: “Almost – I almost want to say like, jealousy. ... It’s hard to explain but it’s just like this person – they’re not thinking about what’s offending them. I’m always thinking about stuff that could possibly offend someone.*

*2: I really understand that envy of people that are blissfully ignorant. Because it just seems almost like a burden to be educated. And to understand how all these things impact social justice and populations of people that are oppressed and it just – it gets to be where it’s almost a burden because it’s so common and you feel like you have to put so much energy into standing up for people and trying to insight change. And when you see somebody say, ‘That’s so gay,’ just so ignorant and unaware – I can understand feeling envious. Just like, why can’t I just be more like –*

*3: Like how could they say that?*

*2: Yeah – How can you say that and not feel awful? You know? And that sounds – it almost sounds like it would be nice. But then, obviously it doesn’t.*

*3: It’s not. Yeah. I know what you mean.*

*1: It’s almost a jealousy of like, not – I’m at a loss for how to explain it.”*

## **Internal Processes**

The final theme that emerged from the data consisted of internal processes that encouraged confrontation of prejudice directed at targets. While all of the other themes required input from others, such as confronting another person, perceiving harm from others, and learning from others, the internal motivator theme involves the emotions or cognition of the nontarget confronter. This theme is comprised of five subthemes: emotions that encourage confrontation, a desire to be different than other bystanders, an identity as a person who connects with others, care-oriented moral development, and feeling a sense of responsibility to the target. This theme was perhaps the most complex out of the four themes, suggesting that the participants experienced a range of internal experiences.

### **Emotions Encourage Confrontation**

This subtheme was one of the most diverse and complex concepts that emerged from the data. It included early confusion regarding prejudice and emotional experiences after witnessing prejudice. Many participants experienced confusion regarding prejudice and discrimination at an early age. Some witnessed their parents perpetrate, others witnessed examples of segregation and ostracization among their peers. During these discussions the participants reflected upon feeling confused as to why others were acting in prejudiced ways. While none of the participants stated it directly, it seemed that the participants were primarily confused at the change in other's behaviors around specific people and having no knowledge as to why these changes occurred. Furthermore, it appeared this confusion was not limited to the behaviors observed by the participant, but of the moral basis for these behaviors. The participants appeared to be confused as to how other people could treat certain people in such a hurtful way. Many of these experiences left a lasting impression and influenced how the participants framed future

experiences with prejudice. For example, one participant shared her first experience with gender creativity, and how she witnessed family members treating gender creative people differently:

*“...but like my mom was like, stone cold, like, ‘Don’t look at [that] person’ ... Um, like I kept staring because it was like cool to me, because I was a little kid. I remember that my mom was whispering things to me and other people whisper[ed] things, that were not very nice. And I was a kid [and] I didn’t really know to stand up. But I just remember like no one really like stood up for him.”*

Several participants had similar experiences, where they witnessed prejudice and discrimination being perpetrated by others but they did not feel able to confront it as children. One participant reflected on a time in middle school when she stood up to her friends who were teasing another girl because she had special needs and was overweight:

*“... I remember being on the playground and two people that I had thought were my friends [were] picking on her. I don’t even remember what they were saying but no thought process had to go into it. I walked up and asked them what they thought they were doing and why they were being so mean to her. And they were not my friends after that day.”*

After experiencing confusion and skepticism regarding prejudice at an early age, many participants also discussed feeling guilty for times in the past where they did not confront prejudice in their pasts. For example,

*“...for me, I think I kind of, it’s kind of almost like a guilt thing? Or like, um, a kind of making up for my past, when I never said anything before. Or when I didn’t know better, or when I just kind of went along with it, before I knew better. Before I realized, ‘Oh my God. What is happening?’*



When asked to discuss emotional experiences after witnessing prejudice, participants reflected on the past and the present occurrences. In every example the participants discussed that included past experiences of prejudice, their emotion seemed to stem from *not* standing up to prejudice. In other words, the participants continued to feel negative self-directed affect due to instances when they did not stand up for others in the past. Later in the same discussion, a different participant added to this idea: “...*now I’m at the point where it’s like, ‘No more. This can’t happen to anyone else.’ So I [try to] make up for the past.*” This desire to make up for the past could be due to several factors. One possibility is the development of a sense of responsibility to stand up after seeing the impact prejudice has on others. Another possibility is the participants have a desire to compensate for previous instances when they did not stand up.

When discussing emotions after witnessing recent prejudice a large majority of the participants expressed feeling powerful emotions. The frequency of these experiences being reported in the data was relatively large compared to most other categories, suggesting that many participants had these experiences in common. Many participants shared that immediately following a prejudicial comment or action they felt anger, which indicated a sense of injustice for some participations. This feeling of anger was so intense for one participant that it became easier to confront even though she was uncomfortable with confrontation:

*“...I’ve seen myself [accessing the] anger part of me. Just knowing the affect it has on other people and people that experienced it in the past. [There’s] this whole part of you just being angry that people could still have these feelings, kind of overtakes that cowardly lion in me. And so that kind of overrides so I can be more confrontational.”*

For some participants, this anger begins to affect them physically:

*“I just have to start taking deep breaths. Because I just feel like I want to start saying things that aren’t going to help the cause. So I start shaking a little bit. I just kind of get upset.”*

For these participants, anger acted as a catalyst to encourage them to confront the perpetrator, suggesting the powerful role that anger can play when it is a response to an injustice. Without this anger, and the physical symptoms associated with anger, these participants might not have stood up to the perpetrator.

While many participants shared a feeling of anger, other experiences seemed to reflect a feeling of sadness and exasperation with the bigger picture of prejudice occurring in general. For example:

*“I think for me personally that I might feel like, ‘Hey I did something good today in my tiny little corner of the world.’ And at the same time I feel sad because I feel like I shouldn’t have to. I shouldn’t have to stand up for somebody because nobody should be treating other people in that manner in the first place.”*

### **Desire to be Different than Other Bystanders**

Many participants discussed what separated them from other people who do not confront prejudice. For example, one participant spoke about being proud of herself for not giving in to negative peer pressure when others were treating someone unfairly. Others talked about picking up slack from bystanders who chose to not confront: *“If I don’t do it ... I don’t know that anyone else will. And for me that’s something that I personally feel I should do ... I don’t know that anyone else will and I feel that I should.”*

Other participants talked about learning to not care about others thinking negatively about them because they confront prejudice. For example: *“Yeah I’ve become okay with like, people*

*thinking I'm a bitch for standing up. I'm like, 'I don't care...' I mean that's obviously its own issue."*

### **Identity as a Person who Connects with Others**

For many participants, the decision to confront spoke to more than just the context of a specific decision. Instead, their actions seemed to reflect how they saw themselves. Their repeated confrontations stemmed from an identity as a person who connects with others in need. One participant directly shared how her knowing of herself suffers when she thinks back to times before she knew the impact of prejudice on others:

*"I think it's tied a lot to my self-concept. Like if I were not to stand up for somebody I would personally suffer. But I have personally suffered, you know? I still think about times back when I was a kid when I was doing the discriminating, or you know, before I knew any better, where I'm like, [sighs] I still regret that. I still feel bad about that. I almost look at it as like a personal reflection of me."*

Another participant spoke about being proud of being vocal about who she is as a person, and how she uses opportunities to confront prejudice to show others how she views herself:

*"I pride myself on being a pretty outspoken person. And I hope that it's in an educated light, and I'm not just spewing words out of nowhere. So when a situation happens and somebody needs help, if I don't help, I feel like a phony. I feel like I need to stay true to that and by doing and helping those that need the help I feel like I'm being true to that person that I portray, or that I'm trying to portray."*

Several participants spoke about being empathetic people, and how this personality characteristic lead them to stand up for others. Some participants directly identified as an

empathetic person and felt that their empathy was a primary reason for them to stand up for others:

*“I personally think of myself as a very empathetic and very open minded person, so I feel like, because of that, I do need to stand up for others more than if I didn’t. Just because I feel like it’s a part of me to be open to everyone. It should also be part of me to be open to standing up for everyone then.”*

Another participant seemed to feel so strongly that her self-concept as an empathetic person encourages her to confront that she became tearful during the focus group. She expressed her awareness of her own prejudices, but that she would never broadcast her prejudiced beliefs at the expense of others due to her view of herself as empathetic:

*“... but certainly I would never share my feelings or beliefs at the expense of somebody else. And I would not ever find it okay for someone else to do that. [Becoming emotional; tearful] So I think just because empathy is such a big part of who I am, I don’t know. I think that’s just where it comes from. Like that’s who I am.”*

One participant shared that he confronts using social media in the hope of not only reducing prejudice in the perpetrator, but as an act of responsibility to potential targets as well:

*“... I want to put it out there that I’m not okay with it. Just so I’m not having the bystander effect for the people who are reading that [will] know that at least somebody cares enough to say, ‘Hey, this isn’t cool.’”*

Interestingly, this connection to others was not always limited to the target, but extended to the perpetrator as well. For example, one participant spoke about making an effort to notice similarities between himself and the perpetrator in order to make the confrontation more effective:

*“... We all do have prejudice. And I think when being an advocate that’s really important to keep in mind. And I think that helps advocates relate more easily or readily to someone, let’s say we’re trying to educate. To point out that, ‘Hey, you know, I too have maybe struggled with this issue or other issues.’ I think that can bring some barriers down and help people become more likely to soak some different ideas up.”*

In addition to feeling a capacity for connection with the target, many participants referenced specific relationships with target group members that helped them stand up to prejudice. For example one participant shared her experience of witnessing the serious long-term effects that prejudice and discrimination have had on her sister. She went on to discuss how her relationship with her sister helps her stand up to others, even their father:

*“...my sister is bisexual but when my dad says things she still gets quiet, because that’s just kind of her personality and how she grew up. Whenever he said anything she just internalized it. Versus I saw that and she’s 12 years older than me so I grew up watching her act like that. And I, as a result, stand up to my dad way more often.”*

While this connection with specific target group members certainly influenced some participants to stand up to prejudice, others did so due to their own experiences of being treated unfairly. One participant spoke passionately about her experiences being bullied as a teenager and how that encouraged her to connect with targets later in life:

*“I used to be bullied and whatnot [and] no one ever stood up for me, in that sense. And I never stood up for myself. ... So once I got older and realized that it’s not okay ... I started to realize that I felt bad that people didn’t help me or want to step in and say that and they just let it slide or let them do that to me. I don’t want other people to feel that*

*way. I want them to know that people are there for them. And there's always someone that's gonna stand by your side and support you."*

Another participant shared how his identity as Middle Eastern influenced the way he was impacted by witnessing racial prejudice against a friend who was Asian:

*"... and I was just like, 'You gotta stop that. You know we're in the year 2014? You shouldn't be [discriminatory] to people by now. Racial slurs shouldn't be a part of what we do around here.' And he was just like, 'It's just a joke.' And I was like, 'No. It's not just a joke. You know, it hurts a lot of people when you say stuff like that and it hurts me because –any person of a different race – it hurts you down deep when you hear stuff like that cause it's like they're saying that to you in a way as well."*

### **Care-Oriented Moral Development**

While participants did not directly discuss their own moral development, or the moral development of other nontarget confronters, they did reflect on noticing that often times women confront due to their concern for the target. While the examples provided by the participants involved women standing up for others, the main factor encouraging the confrontation was the sense of moral development:

*1: "More women are like pushing for more equality [whereas] all the guys just kinda stand back and are just like, whatever. You're cool. But it seems like the girls are more [likely to] hit hard.*

*2: Yeah. I guess what I've noticed is that a lot of the guys just ... feel like, 'Okay that's their views. I'll let them have their views and I'll have mine.' But I've noticed that women will just more so be like, 'No that's wrong. It doesn't matter what their views are. I should let them know that I feel like that's wrong and it could hurt people."*

The process of interpreting this data with a relational lens will be discussed in the next chapter.

### **Responsibility to the Target**

An important concept in the data was that participants felt a sense of responsibility to the target. Interestingly, this subtheme was largely found in the first two focus groups which suggests a difference in the nontarget confronters who were in the last focus group compared to the first two. This difference will be discussed in the next chapter. This responsibility to the target manifested in participants practicing a confrontation, repeatedly confronting, feeling a responsibility to notice prejudice, and believing others should confront as well.

When discussing their responsibility to the target, participants spoke with passion and intensity that was not as present when discussing other topics. For example, one participant spoke about not thinking about possible negative outcomes from confronting. Instead, her sense of responsibility to the target encouraged her to stand up regardless of the context:

*“I feel in a sense glad that I’m doing something about it, but I don’t wonder what’s going to happen afterwards. Really what goes through my head is, ‘Okay, I’m gonna do something and that’s going to be that.’ I don’t know what’s going to happen next, but whatever happens next, is probably for a good reason. Maybe a reason I don’t know at the time, but all I care about is that I did help that person.”*

A different participant reflected on the similarities between preparing to confront to his experiences in the military, and how these together and stated that he made a choice to stand up to help him stand up more in times of pressure:

*“I think making a personal commitment to standing up helps you stand up. In the military, the reason why we do exercises and things like that, and play things out is so you can make a [smacks hand] commitment to do what you’re going to do before you get*

*in the heat of the moment. And then it's less likely you'll do it because you're under pressure. So I think by making that commitment and saying, 'Every time I see this, you know, if it is safe, I'm going to stand up.' I think that makes you more likely to stand up in the end. So I think it's very important."*

It seemed that many participants had repeated experiences of confronting prejudice rather than it being a one-time event. Their discussions likened confronting prejudice as a process of development rather than a series of independent events. One participant shared his thought process after confronting that helped him confront better in the future:

*"... cause everyone has those scenarios where it's like, 'Oh I should have said this' or, 'Oh I should have done this differently.' And it's when you get it and you're like 'Nailed it! I couldn't have done anything better.' That's what I feel we should all strive for whether it be [confronting prejudice] or just anything in your personal life. And it just helps yourself grow."*

When asked if they felt a personal responsibility to notice prejudice when it occurred, many quickly responded in the affirmative. It appeared that there was little hesitation when the participants answered, suggesting they felt strongly about their responsibility.

Finally, when participants were asked if other people should feel a responsibility to confront, most answered that they should. However; this belief that others *should* confront did not extend to a belief that others were somehow failing if they did not confront. For example:

*"Do I expect everybody to act on it? No. But I do feel like I have the expectation that people would feel that responsibility. Or would at least notice that it's happening... Ideally I would expect people... to feel the responsibility that they should do something. I*



*wouldn't necessarily expect them to do something. But at least feel inside, like, 'Oh that was wrong.'"*

## DISCUSSION

### Main Findings of the Study

Results of the thematic analysis will be discussed and related to previous research. This section will be organized by themes and subthemes.

#### **What Encourages Nontargets to Confront Prejudice That is Directed at Others?**

The current study sought to identify factors that encourage nontargets to confront other-directed prejudice. As discussed in the previous chapter, the participants were asked to identify which social groups they felt were most likely to experience discrimination. In descending order, the participants identified: people of color, immigrants, LGBTQ people, women, people who are poor, religious groups, people with special needs, and the elderly. This suggests that participants were more likely able to identify racism, ethnocentrism, homophobia, and sexism than they were able to identify ageism, ableism, religious-based prejudice, or classism. The ability to identify prejudice and discrimination has the potential to greatly impact participants' experiences of confronting, such that some participants may not be aware of certain kinds of prejudice in order to confront them. This should be considered when interpreting the data, as the exact impact on the participants is unknown. While many studies have explored the effects of a confrontation, relatively few studies have examined specifically nontarget confrontations (Dickter & Newton, 2013). This study began to identify specific details of nontarget confronter's experiences and personal qualities that encouraged them to stand up for other people, resulting in four main themes: the confrontation, perception of harm, education, and internal processes.

**The confrontation.** Several steps needed to occur before participants took action and stood up for others when prejudice was present in an interaction. The first was being able to accurately identify prejudice and discrimination when it was present in an interaction.

Participants spoke about being aware of the content of a conversation, specifically the words used to describe the target, such as “slut” or “faggot.” In addition to focusing on the vocabulary used by perpetrators, participants paid specific attention to the perpetrator’s nonverbal communication and intentionality suggesting nontarget confronters have a multi-level awareness during interactions with others. Since the participants were not necessarily looking for prejudice or expecting it to occur, it appears they noticed prejudice during common, everyday interactions.

This relates to the Confronting Prejudice Response (CPR) Model proposed by Ashburn-Nardo and colleagues (2008), which is based on the heavily cited bystander intervention model created by Latané & Darley (1970). The CPR Model consists of five steps to confronting discrimination: 1. The observer interprets an event as discrimination, 2. The event is interpreted as an emergency, 3. The observer takes responsibility to act, 4. The observer identifies a response, and 5. The observer takes action. This model will be discussed throughout this chapter, as it relates to various themes. As mentioned previously, this model relates to the current research in that participants used the perpetrator’s verbal and nonverbal communication to identify an event as discrimination, fulfilling step one of the CPR Model. The CPR Model does not specify how the nontargets come to identify an event as discrimination; however the current findings suggest nontargets rely on the perpetrator’s tone of voice, word use, perceived intention of harm, and the response from other bystanders to signal discrimination is present. Using the CPR Model to highlight the importance of accurately attributing interactions to discrimination, the current study suggests that facilitating people with privileged identities to be aware of the presence of discrimination via verbal and nonverbal cues would increase the frequency of accurate prejudice identification.

After identifying that prejudice or discrimination were present in an interaction, the participants discussed several kinds of people they had stood up against. This appeared to vary from participant to participant, suggesting that personal preferences or comfort levels influenced who each person confronted. One recurring theme throughout the data was that the third and final focus group included more participants who preferred to confront perpetrators one-on-one or anonymously, suggesting these participants place more value on the social acceptability of their own actions. In contrast, many of the participants in the first and second focus group spoke about confronting people in front of others, raising their voice, and getting into long-winded arguments with the perpetrator. This difference between focus groups will be discussed in greater detail in the strengths section. There is limited research available on the kinds of perpetrators nontargets tend to confront. Most of the available research focuses on how specifically targets base their decision to confront on the social costs of making attributions to discrimination (e.g., Shelton & Stewart, 2004), suggesting more research is needed on kinds of perpetrators confronted by both targets and nontargets.

Many participants reported planning out a confrontation before they even witnessed prejudice or discrimination occurring. This seemed to be done to make the confrontation more efficient, aid the confronter to focus on logic rather than emotion, and have a strategy prepared before initiating a confrontation. Participants' affect during a confrontation appeared to vary based on the participant and the context of the confrontation. This affect ranged from using casual humor to point out a prejudiced comment to physically standing to assert passion and intensity. Research by Czopp, Montieth, and Mark (2006) suggests a variety of approaches to confronting prejudice are effective in reducing future prejudiced actions in the perpetrator, suggesting there may not be a "right way" to confront, but rather there is room for flexibility for

how each person feels comfortable taking steps to reduce prejudice. Some participants were more comfortable confronting in one-on-one conversations, anonymously, or on social media. Furthermore, these less assertive participants seemed physically uncomfortable with the idea of confronting a large group of people or showing assertiveness during a confrontation, suggesting that some may choose to not confront at all without having more passive strategies at their disposal. In other words, the results from the present study highlight the importance of nontargets having a confrontation strategy they feel comfortable or they may not confront at all.

The focus on the nontarget's comfort with their confrontation strategy relates to Broido's (2001) model of ally development in college students. This model is one of the most widely cited models of ally development available, and the only model to examine Ally development of members of a variety of dominant groups (i.e., white, straight men) as "social justice" allies who are in college. This is in contrast to some other models that examine allies for specific oppressed groups, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) groups (e.g., DiStefano, et al., 2000) or racial and ethnic minorities (e.g., Alimo, 2012). Broido's (2000) model contains three main components: increased information, meaning-making, and confidence. The first two components will be discussed later in the chapter, as they relate to other findings from the current study. Broido's (2000) emphasis of the role of self-confidence in one's ability to stand up for others relates to the current study in that participants sought out confrontation strategies they were comfortable using. In addition, previous research suggests that a sense of competence in one's ability to confront a perpetrator of prejudice increases the likelihood that a person will confront (Gervais, Hillard, & Vescio, 2010), supporting the notion that one way to encourage nontargets to confront perpetrators of prejudice is facilitating nontargets to find confrontation strategies they are comfortable using.

After the confrontation was complete, many participants spoke about feeling proud of themselves, even if they did not enjoy the process of standing up to a perpetrator of prejudice. This could be due to the participants responding in a way that aligns with their values and beliefs. Research by Shelton and colleagues (2006) suggests that when targets believe they should confront discrimination but feel they would not actually confront, they feel negative affective consequences such as guilt and shame. In contrast, the participants in the current study both believed they should confront discrimination directed at others and have acted in concordance with this belief in the past. This alignment between the participants' beliefs about what they should do and what they have already done may account for their positive affective outcomes from confronting on behalf of the target.

**Perception of harm.** A vast majority of the participants discussed perceiving harm in situations where discrimination was present. This perceived harm was either directed at the participant via social backlash from confronting or directed at the target due to a social emergency. As mentioned previously, some participants identified preferring to confront in less assertive manners, and a few even appeared physically uncomfortable with the idea of an assertive confrontation. This could be due to the participants' perception of the possibility of suffering social penalties, or backlash, for confronting a perpetrator of prejudice. As discussed previously, when people attribute actions to prejudice they are at risk for social backlash (Kaiser & Miller, 2001), which supports the data from the previous study in that participants sensed the possibility of this backlash occurring.

Not surprisingly, the data presented a strong relationship between the presence of authority on the part of the perpetrator and a perception of social backlash. That is, participants perceived an increased risk of social backlash when the perpetrator had some form of authority

over the participant. This was expressed by the participants when they shared examples of not standing up when the perpetrator was their professor, a parent, or had the power to take something away from the participant. All this suggests there is risk in confronting perpetrators of prejudice; that somehow standing up for another person being treated unfairly is hazardous and could harm the nontarget who is trying to do the right thing. With this assumption one could argue that reducing the possibility for social backlash would increase the likelihood of nontargets standing up against perpetrators of prejudice. While this would be extremely difficult on a wider societal level, specific places of business, schools, households could adopt policies that support people in standing up for the rights of others.

In addition to discussing the possibility of social backlash, participants discussing harm also shared their belief that the prejudicial comments they had witnessed were extremely offensive and likely harmful to the target. While this belief could be due to the participants recalling the situation as more harmful after the fact (e.g., Dickter & Newton, 2013), most likely the participants accurately identified discrimination as being harmful to the target. This perception of harm for another person suggests the participants identify prejudice and discrimination as a social emergency, and then respond to that emergency. Participants reported feeling an increased heart rate, a sense of adrenaline, visceral reactions, such as flinching, a sense of urgency, and an immediate surge of negative feelings towards the perpetrator. Many of these physiological experiences are similar to those included in Ashburn-Nardo and colleague's (2008) definition of a social emergency. As mentioned previously, the first step of the CPR model (Ashburn-Nardo, et al., 2008), identifying an interaction as discrimination, closely relates to the data presented in the current study as the participants identified several ways they identify prejudice and discrimination. The second step of the CPR Model is when an observer interprets

the discrimination as an emergency. Again, the CPR Model closely relates to the current data, as many participants discussed experiences that signal an emergency. This provides support for Ashburn-Nardo and colleagues' (2008) model as being appropriate for both targets and nontargets, and suggests that the facilitation of nontargets to interpret discrimination as a social emergency will encourage more nontargets to confront prejudice directed at others. To date, there is little research on how nontargets come to identify a situation as an emergency or the factors that influence the process of deciding if a specific interaction is an emergency. As mentioned above, Ashburn-Nardo and colleagues (2008) and the present study provide suggestions for how nontargets identify an emergency; however more research is needed to know for sure if these experiences influence the process of identifying an interaction as an emergency.

**Education.** When coding the transcripts, conversations about the importance of the role of education in nontarget confrontation occurred surprisingly often. The participants spoke about their own conceptualization of prejudice, using their formal education as a tool during a confrontation, having parents teach them to confront, college as an opportunity to learn, and interestingly, feeling that education led to feeling burdened.

Participants were explicitly asked how they conceptualize prejudice and discrimination during each focus group. As discussed previously, some participants provided standard, textbook definitions while others seemed to speak from a place of passion and intensity. Furthermore, some participants spoke about being aware of the social acceptability of various prejudices, suggesting these participants used a critical lens when observing social interactions or were formally educated on stereotyping and prejudice topics. This data relates to Crandall, Eshleman, and O'Brien's (2002) work which suggests that people are aware of a range of acceptability of



prejudices in their culture, for example homophobic attitudes were found to be more socially acceptable than racist attitudes. As mentioned previously, some participants in the current study identified the same observations in their own interactions, suggesting nontargets respond to different prejudices based on the social acceptability of that prejudice.

As a whole the participants seemed to agree that the locus of prejudice was internal while discrimination consisted of actions based off prejudice, suggesting many participants had received basic education on stereotyping and prejudice, most likely through an introductory psychology or sociology class. In addition, many participants seemed to think some degree of prejudice was natural, but acting on that prejudice was unacceptable. In other words, they believed that having some prejudiced thoughts was uncontrollable, whereas acting in a discriminatory way was a choice. There is very little research on this topic; however the data from the current study suggest the participants felt validated in confronting discrimination when they believed the perpetrator made the *choice* to act in a prejudiced way.

Finally, many participants seemed aware of their own privileges, an awareness that typically requires some kind of outside education to attain (Johnson, 2006). This finding is supported by previous research which suggests nontargets may be more effective in challenging prejudiced attitudes than are targets (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Dickter, Kittel, & Gyurovski, 2012). One reason for this could be that when nontargets confront perpetrators it is often unexpected since the confrontation would not benefit the nontarget directly (Czopp & Monteith, 2003). In addition, according to Petty (1997), unexpected messages, such as a confrontation by a nontarget, increase message processing in the perpetrator, making confrontations by privileged individuals more effective than a confrontation from the target (Czopp & Monteith, 2003). The idea that nontargets can use their privilege to confront perpetrators of discrimination more

effectively than targets suggests privilege education would greatly increase the frequency of nontarget confrontations.

The way many participants spoke about prejudice and discrimination suggests they had some kind of formal education or training regarding the injustices associated with prejudice, discrimination, and privilege. This formal education influenced how the participants interpret social interactions, conceptualize prejudice and discrimination as being more purposeful or harmful, and are aware of their own privilege as a factor in the usefulness of their confrontation. For those participants who had been educated, either formally or informally, many insisted their education lead them to confront discrimination. These findings suggest receiving education on and awareness about power, prejudice, and oppression could encourage nontargets to confront prejudice more frequently.

Many participants spoke about using their education as a tool during a confrontation; however this education was not specific to the topics of prejudice and discrimination. As previously stated, many participants used education in their specific fields to stand up to prejudice, such as the participant who used her knowledge of research on eating disorders to stand up to body shaming prejudice. The findings from the current study regarding education as a confrontation tool relate to the first component of Broido's (2000) model (increased information) supporting the idea that increased education could increase nontarget confrontation of prejudice. This suggests nontargets do not necessarily have to be trained in prejudice and discrimination topics to be able to use their education to stand up for others, rather that nontargets need to be confident in their ability to use their education to confront a perpetrator of discrimination.

As stated previously, the only time college was discussed as an opportunity to learn prejudice confrontation was in the second focus group. This could be due to the participant's

individual experiences of personal growth during their college years or particular social interactions with diverse groups of people in specific educational programs. The focus this particular focus group placed on college as an opportunity to learn the importance of confronting prejudice closely relates to Broido's (2000) model of ally development in college, specifically the second component: meaning-making. Participants in the current study who discussed college as an opportunity to learn seemed to place an importance on the meaning of their experiences in college and of their confrontations. This finding, paired with Broido's (2000) model, suggests the college years are a particularly lucrative time to educate nontargets and increase confrontation of prejudice.

The final aspect of the education theme is education leading to a sense of burden for some participants. As mentioned previously, this sub-theme was unexpected. The few participants who discussed this experience were not quite sure how to explain the feeling; as if it were a feeling that had been previously unknown until the unique context of the focus group allowed the participants to explore the emotion. It appears that participants felt a sense of responsibility once they were educated and better understood the effects of discrimination. That is, education about social oppression leads to a sense of responsibility to create change. During the discussion regarding the burden of education, I could not help but wonder how the role isolation played in the participants' experience. They appeared emotionally fatigued, as if they felt alone as they repeatedly confronted prejudice. At first glance this finding may discourage nontargets from confronting prejudice; however this finding also points out an area of growth for encouraging nontargets to confront.

While the data suggests participants felt isolated and fatigued in their positions as nontarget confronters, a feminist critique of the data highlights the privilege experienced by the

participants who reported this isolation and fatigue. As presented in the previous chapter, one participant spoke about her experience of feeling a sense of responsibility due to her education about social oppression in comparison to people who live with privilege yet are uninformed:

*I really understand that envy of people that are blissfully ignorant. Because it seems almost a burden to be educated, and to understand how all these things impact social justice and populations of people that are oppressed and it just gets to be where it's almost a burden because it's so common and you feel like you have to put so much energy into standing up for people and trying to incite change. And when you see somebody say, 'That's so gay,' just so ignorant and unaware – I can understand feeling envious.*

The participants who discussed knowledge of their own privilege were the only participants who shared feeling that learning of social oppression was a burden. In other words, the participants who did not discuss an awareness of their own privilege did not express feeling burdened by confronting. This is ironic, as the ability to feel that burden in standing up for others is in and of itself a privileged experience. That is, people who do not have privileged identities, (i.e., targets) do not have the privilege of being “blissfully ignorant” of systems of oppression to begin with. In this instance, becoming educated on systems of oppression provides privileged nontargets with a window into the lived experiences of targets who live with daily oppression. It appears the participants who discussed being aware of their own privilege were not aware of the privilege they had in saying they were envious of those who were not shown this window. This suggests that conversations about privilege should not stop at checking one's own privilege. Instead, the conversation should be extended to include a meta-level prejudice discussion; that

feeling burdened by your privilege is another level of the effects of privilege. The implications of this meta-level privilege will be discussed later in the chapter.

Specifically this data suggests formal education on topics such as prejudice, discrimination, and privilege should also focus on encouraging the learners to collaborate and support each other in their confrontations to avoid burnout. In addition, the data suggests that when teaching nontargets to check their own privilege, particular focus should be spent on how ignoring prejudice and not confronting prejudice is an option only available to privileged individuals.

Overall, the results from the current study suggest that education encourages participants to confront prejudice, college can be used as a catalyst for nontarget confrontation, and that conversations about privilege should continue to explore how not confronting prejudice is a privileged action. In the effort of encouraging more bystanders to become confronters, education focused on systems of oppression, prejudice and discrimination, human development, the importance of confronting prejudice, and learner collaboration and support should be provided in the college years. This will be discussed in greater detail in the implications section.

**Internal processes.** As discussed previously, the internal processes theme is comprised of five subthemes: emotions that encourage confrontation, a desire to be different than other bystanders, an identity as a person who connects with others, and feeling a sense of responsibility to the target, and a care-oriented sense of morality.

A common emotion discussed was confusion. The participants who shared experiences of early confusion at adults' prejudiced responses to people different from themselves seemed to be deeply impacted later in life. There is little research on children's cognitive responses to perceptions of discrimination; however Brown and Bigler (2005) suggest that perceiving other-

directed discrimination as children could impact “identity formation, peer relations, academic achievement, occupational goals, and mental and physical well-being” (p. 533), suggesting early experiences of attributing interactions to discrimination greatly impacts the individual later in life. This suggests that encouraging children to notice discrimination early on may encourage them to confront discrimination later in life.

In addition to confusion, many participants reflected on feeling negatively when they witnessed prejudice. As discussed previously, many participants felt proud of themselves after confronting this prejudice; however none of the participants talked about feeling positive after choosing to not confront, creating a divide between emotional outcomes. These experiences of witnessing prejudice included here either occurred in the past, such as experiences of guilt from not confronting discrimination at an earlier age, or in the present, such as anger, frustration, and sadness when exposed to prejudice. There is little research exploring the cognitive effects of not confronting for nontargets; however Schmitt (1996) suggests people who have a high sensitivity to injustice experience a negative effect on positive emotions after witnessing someone being treated unfairly. In other words, nontargets may experience less positive feelings after witnessing prejudice, which also occurred in the present study. In addition, previous research suggests that when targets do not confront prejudice they experience feelings such as guilt and shame (Shelton, Richeson, Salvatore, & Hill, 2006). These feelings resulted from the targets’ actions not matching how they felt they should have responded after being discriminated against. It is likely the participants in the current study also felt guilt due to believing they should have confronted when they chose to not speak up in the past. In addition, previous research supports the finding that experiencing anger after witnessing prejudice could encourage a bystander to take action when another person has been treated unfairly (Matheson, Raspopow, & Anisman,

2012). Overall, encouraging nontargets to put their beliefs into action and to be aware of their own emotional response to discrimination would facilitate nontargets to confront in the future.

Many participants described how they viewed themselves during discussions of standing up for others. Phrases like, “That’s just who I am,” “I’m an empathetic person,” and “I’m a pretty outspoken person” were very common throughout all three focus groups. The findings that confrontation is linked to one’s sense of identity is supported by Hardiman and Jackson’s (1997) Social Identity Development Theory. There are five stages of the model: naivety of social rules, acceptance of social rules, resistance to systems of oppression, redefinition of a new social identity, and the internalization of the new social identity into other areas of life. The findings from the current study relate to the final two stages of Hardiman and Jackson’s (1997) model in several ways. For example, many participants spoke about being different than the way they were before they “knew any better,” suggesting their identity shifted over time, eventually leading to a social identity as a confronter. In addition, the data regarding confrontation being linked to the participants’ identity manifested in discussions of being different than bystanders who do not confront, suggesting the participants notice a difference in themselves when compared to bystanders who do not stand up for others, suggesting nontargets who confront may eventually develop an identity that encourages them to continue confronting prejudice.

A responsibility to the target was discussed in great detail by all three focus groups. Participants frequently spoke about their sense of responsibility to the target as a commitment to confront prejudice. A commitment to confront prejudice is defined as a “commitment to ending discrimination...and social activism” (Gervais, et al., 2010, pg. 456). Similar to the interpretation of empathy as a sense of connection with the target, this commitment to confronting was framed in a relational orientation rather than an individual orientation. That is, a relational lens led us to

interpret participants' commitment to confronting prejudice as a sense of responsibility to the target. Some participants reflected on times they made an unconscious decision to stand up for the target regardless of the context. Others felt responsible to practicing confrontations to better prepare to stand up in the heat of the moment, such as the participant who reflected on his training in the military, and the similarities he felt between practicing a drill to prepare for combat and practicing a strategy to prepare for confrontation. Shelton, et al., (2006) found that when a target is committed to confronting prejudice they are more likely to feel they would stand up to discrimination, whereas targets who were less committed to confronting prejudice did not feel they would confront. Again, a relational lens would suggest that feeling a sense of responsibility to the target increases the chance that a target would stand up to discrimination. In his quote relating practicing confrontation to military drills, one participant reflected about how this practice helps prepare him for the heat of the moment so he is less likely to not stand up for the target. Shelton and colleagues (2006) also found that when targets perceive the social costs of not confronting to be high, they are more committed to confronting. This matches findings in the current study, as many participants reflected being more determined to stand up for the target when they perceived higher levels of harm. Participants experienced this responsibility to the target by feeling responsible to notice discrimination, choosing to confront, confronting repeatedly, and believing others ought to feel the responsibility to confront. This relational view relates closely to step three of Ashburn-Nardo and colleagues' (2008) CPR Model, which assesses the observer's sense of responsibility to take action, suggesting that encouraging nontargets to feel a responsibility to the target will increase the likelihood of the nontarget confronting prejudice in the future.



There were times when participants did not confront, even when they felt the need to, such as the participant who did not stand up to a man because she had no hope that he would change. Swim and Hyers (1999) found that targets consider factors regarding the possible positive and negative outcomes of attributing interactions as prejudiced and confronting, as well as the amount of cognitive energy necessary to confront the perpetrator. Participants in the current study reported weighing out the cost and rewards of confronting and if change was possible, relating to research which suggests a personal commitment to confronting prejudice requires not only egalitarian values, but dispositional optimism as well (Wellman, Czopp, & Geers, 2009). Dispositional optimism is conceptualized as a generalized positive outcome expectancy (Scheier & Carver, 1987). In other words, when a person has a belief that a confrontation will be productive, helpful, or generally positive, they are more likely to have a personal commitment to confronting prejudice. Wellman and colleagues (2009) found that nontargets are more likely to confront a perpetrator of prejudice when they both value egalitarianism and have dispositional optimism than when they only value egalitarianism. The data from the current study support this finding, as many participants reported not confronting perpetrators when they did not believe any positive change would occur, even if they valued egalitarianism.

Two participants had a discussion regarding their experience of women standing up for others more frequently than men. This data is supported by Hyers (2007), where female participants reported that their confrontations were driven by a need to express their values, specifically anger, disapproval, and defiance. However, a closer examination of this conversation revealed that the catalyst to confrontation was not the nontarget's gender, but their moral development. Gilligan and Attanucci (1988) examined the distinction between Kohlberg's

(1984) work on moral development, specifically focusing on the justice and care perspectives, where justice refers to equality and care refers to an attachment to others. They found that both men and women used justice and care perspectives; however men were more likely to use the justice perspective and women more likely to use the care perspective. The participants who engaged in the discussion of gender differences in confronting seemed to believe that women were less tolerant of others' opinions when the opinions were disparaging of others, whereas men were more likely to feel each person has the right to her or his own opinion regardless of the opinion itself. Gilligan and Attanucci's (1998) work supports this finding, suggesting women focus more on their attachment to the targeted person whereas men focus on people having equal right to their own opinions.

This gender difference in responding to discrimination may begin in childhood, as girls have been found to perceive more gender discrimination than boys (Brown & Bigler, 2004). This may be due to gendered socialization differences in relationship orientation, in that women are more likely to have a communal relationship orientation (Gervais, et al., 2010), which is defined as being focused on others without the expectation of help in return (Clark & Mills, 1979). A communal relationship orientation is associated with feelings of social responsibility (Berkowitz & Lutterman, 1968) and is a predictive factor in targets who confront prejudice (Gervais, et al., 2010). Gervais and colleague's (2010) work on communal relationship orientation shares very similar language with that of Gilligan and Attanucci's (1988) work on gender differences in moral development, further supporting the idea that women tend to focus more on the target of discrimination than in people having the right to share their opinions.

## **Implications**

The current study provides general implications for the available body of literature exploring the confrontation of prejudice, as well as new perspectives on clinical implications and prejudice confrontation training programs.

### **General Implications**

The findings from the current study not only provide support for existing models such as the CPR Model (Ashburn-Nardo, et al., 2008) and Broido's (2000) model for ally development, they also begin to fill in the gaps of information not previously addressed. We are in the beginning stages of creating a model which explains the connections between the four themes provided here, with the purpose of contributing to the study of confronting prejudice.

One such gap in the research relates to the idea of privilege being used as a tool for good. Prejudice is frequently discussed in the literature as something to be aware of in order to see the oppression experienced by others and to reduce the chances of using one's privilege to hurt others (e.g., Johnson, 2006). The present study suggests that people born into privilege offer more than maintaining the status quo by being aware of privilege and oppression as they are currently; on the contrary, the present study suggests that privileged individuals can create social change using that privilege to help others. Previous research supports the idea that nontargets, or people with at least some degree of privilege, can be more effective in confronting prejudice, and thus creating social change, than targets (e.g., Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Dickter, Kittel, & Gyurovski, 2012). The present study takes this concept a step further, and suggests that privilege can be used by nontargets to reduce discrimination and decrease the negative effects that discrimination has on targets.

As previously discussed, the results from the current study were critically reviewed using a relational orientation as opposed to an individual orientation, leading the authors to interpret the participant's language from an attachment perspective. This perspective specifically influenced the interpretation of empathy, privilege, gender differences, and commitment as examples of connection. From this perspective, the facilitation of nontargets to create deeper, more meaningful connections with others, specifically target group members, would encourage these nontargets to stand up for others more frequently. The current study highlights the importance of connecting with other people and using one's privilege to tend to this connection.

As mentioned previously, the present study supports most of the steps included in the CPR Model (Ashburn-Nardo, et al., 2008). One strength of the qualitative design of the current study is the data comes from the lived experiences of the participants themselves. This can supplement previously available models, such as the CPR Model (Ashburn-Nardo, et al., 2008). In addition, the present study can be used to provide suggestions for alterations to the model as it relates to nontargets. For example, the participants in the current study frequently discussed how previous experiences of confronting discrimination directed at others impacted their decision to confront new instances of discrimination. That is, feelings of guilt from not confronting in the past encouraged the participants to stand up in the future. This suggests that the CPR Model (Ashburn-Nardo, et al., 2008) could include a step including an emotional response to witnessing the discrimination, such as guilt if no action is taken and pride if the observer takes action. Additional research would need to be conducted exploring the relationship of these emotions as they relate to the CPR Model (Ashburn-Nardo, et al., 2008).

Another question raised by the current study is how nontargets determine if a discriminatory act qualifies as a social emergency? According to the CPR Model (Ashburn-

Nardo, et al., 2008), after observers identify an event as discrimination they then identify the event as an emergency or not as an emergency. Ashburn-Nardo and colleagues (2008) define emergency as an observer perceiving “sufficient harm, injustice, or malevolent intent to call for a response” (p. 335) and provide several possible factors that may influence why an observer may or may not identify an event as an emergency, such as the target not confronting the discrimination, the discrimination appears unintentional, and if the target and perpetrator seem to have an established relationship. The data from the present study suggest that this threshold of identifying an event as an emergency differs from person to another. If an individual’s threshold for identifying an event as an emergency could be lowered, then, according to the CPR Model (Ashburn-Nardo, et al., 2008) that person may be more likely to confront other-directed prejudice more frequently. The present study can be used to offer preliminary suggestions for encouraging nontargets to identify discrimination as an emergency, such as fostering a feeling of connection with others and educating nontargets on the negative impact of discrimination. These suggestions require further research to be able to explore the real implications for nontargets. While the CPR Model (Ashburn-Nardo, et al., 2008) is meant to explain what steps observers take to decide to intervene or not, it could also be used to inform training programs to be more effective, which will be discussed additionally later in the chapter.

### **Clinical Implications**

In addition to the general implications to the literature as a whole, the current findings provide suggestions for clinical therapists working with individuals, couples, and families. Topics such as interpersonal conflict, discrimination, oppression, privilege, connection, and responsibility occur in therapy sessions quite frequently. In addition, couple and family therapists

hold the unique role of having meaningful conversations with clients with the purpose of facilitating change in the clients' lives.

One way the current study can be applicable in a therapeutic context is when a couple and family therapist working with an individual client who is living with prejudice and discrimination. For example, a client could be an individual who struggles being near family members who make sexist comments, parents who are learning to stand up for their gender creative child, or an interracial couple trying to navigate the daily discrimination that one partner receives while the other does not. The therapist could facilitate a nontarget client in finding confrontation strategies she or he is comfortable using or explore ways of reducing the possibility of social backlash through activism and policy change in the environment where a confrontation is likely to occur. The therapist could also provide psychoeducation for a nontarget client regarding systems of prejudice, discrimination, and oppression and facilitate the client in feeling confident in their knowledge by applying it to her or his life. Finally, the therapist could engage clients in discussions highlighting the positive outcomes of confronting, connecting with the client's sense of connection to their loved ones experiencing discrimination, and encourage the client to create an identity for themselves as a person who stands up for their friends, children, parents, partners, and other significant relationships.

Narrative theory would be particularly useful in this work, as it heavily relies on discussion of client values and creates space to have thorough discussions regarding the impact of systems of oppression on client lives (White & Epston, 1990). For example, a therapist could guide a client through the exploration of what prejudice and oppression would want for their lives, and the lives of people whom the client cares about. The therapist could use the information from the current study to be looking for evidence that the client values confidence,

connection, relationships, equality, positivity, education, fairness, or helping others. The participants in the current study discussed these values either directly or indirectly, and many spoke about how these values related to their self-concept. This mirrors the idea of the creation of a preferred story of the self for the client, and could help the client live their preferred ethics when interacting with others.

### **Implications for Training Programs**

Prejudice confrontation training programs have successfully been used to encourage the reduction of work-place discrimination (e.g., King, 1995) and school bullying (Polanin, Espelage, & Pigott, 2012). The current study provides support for previously existing models of prejudice confrontation and suggests additions to training programs. Several aspects of the results from the present study directly supported Ashburn-Nardo and colleagues' (2008) CPR Model as well as Broido's (2000) model of ally development in college. Not every step or stage of these models were supported; however given that the questions asked of the participants were not based off any preexisting models, the positive correlation between these two models and the results from the current study was surprising. There are several bystander intervention programs available, many focused in the school setting, such as Green Dot (Coker, et al., 2011), Take Care (Kleinsasser, Jouriles, McDonald, & Rosenfield, 2014), and Expect Respect (Nese, Horner, Dickey, Stiller, & Tomlanovich, 2014). The data from the current study support the use of CPR Model (Ashburn-Nardo, et al., 2008) and Broido's (2000) model of ally development in college in the creation and implementation of bystander intervention programs to reduce prejudice.

The CPR Model (Ashburn-Nardo, et al., 2008) consists of five steps to confronting discrimination: 1. The observer interprets an event as discrimination, 2. The event is interpreted as an emergency, 3. The observer takes responsibility to act, 4. The observer identifies a

response, and 5. The observer takes action. The Broido (2001) model of ally development in college students, on the other hand, could be used in collaboration with the findings from the current study and the CPR Model (Ashburn-Nardo, et al., 2008) to educate college students to identify discrimination effectively and interpret the event as an emergency. Participants could then be led to understand the meaning of a confrontation as well as a sense of personal responsibility to confront prejudice. Programs could also facilitate nontargets in identifying a confrontation strategy that they feel comfortable using, and allow them to practice using the intervention until they feel confident in their ability to confront when discrimination occurs. Furthermore, using Broido's (2000) model, training programs should focus on helping their participants develop an identity as a nontarget confronter, or a "defender of the defenseless," to quote one of the participants from the present study. These training programs could even meet with the participants longitudinally to encourage the integration of this confronter identity with other parts of the participants' lives.

As discussed previously, the present study suggests that when nontargets become aware of their own privilege, they may feel that their education leads them to experience a sense of responsibility, in that they consistently notice examples of prejudice and discrimination and feel a need to stand up for those targeted. Our analysis suggests education and awareness leads to a responsibility to stand up to systems of oppression in an effort to create change. A critical lens of this data suggests a shift in the education of nontargets regarding privilege could facilitate nontargets to feel empowered by their newfound responsibility to act on behalf of targets. Specifically, when nontarget training programs include the exploration of one's own privilege, multiple layers of privilege should be explored, such that nontarget participants should be trained to see that this education provides the opportunity to better connect with and support targets,



rather than isolate from other nontargets. In other words, learning about systems of oppression and recognizing one's privilege does not segregate from other privileged individuals, but rather it creates an opportunity to better connect with targets and introduces a sense of responsibility to stand with them.

As discussed previously, the present study highlights the importance of building connection with others rather than teaching nontargets to be empathetic to the target's experiences. Building the capacity for connection would look differently than teaching empathy, as previous trainings have done (e.g., King, 1995). As mentioned before a feminist lens would show that nontargets can never be truly empathetic to a target experiencing discrimination due to different experiences of privilege. Instead of teaching people to feel what the other is feeling, teaching connection with others would focus more on the formation of relationships and openness with others than attempting to feel what another feels.

In addition to Asburn-Nardo and colleagues' (2008) CPR Model and Broido's (2001) model of social justice allies, other areas should be addressed in training programs to more effectively encourage nontarget confrontations, such as connection with others, being comfortable in confrontation strategies, reduction of the possibility of social backlash through system-level policy change, and education about prejudice, discrimination, and oppression. Furthermore, to account for the possibility of social backlash, specifically when confronting an authority figure, training programs should include strategies for standing up to people with authority, such as parents, teachers, and other professionals. These aspects could be included in various stages of education and practice discussed previously.

Additionally, training programs could extend the training past the confrontation itself, and support nontargets in experiencing the positive experiences after confronting, such as feeling

proud and noticing change in others, encourage relationships with target members, support the development of an identity as a confronter of prejudice, and support the nontargets in collaborating with other confronters to avoid feeling the burden of repeatedly confronting alone.

As mentioned previously, using the CPR Model (Ashburn-Nardo, et al., 2008) to interpret the results from the current study, the lower the threshold for identifying an interaction as an emergency, the more likely a nontarget is to confront. Participants in the current study identified an awareness of nonverbal and nonverbal cues as identifiers that an event was potentially harmful and required urgent action, or an emergency. Training programs could encourage participants to pay close attention to these cues to be able to more accurately perceive an event as an emergency. Additionally, as discussed in Ashburn-Nardo and colleagues (2008) work, nontargets might not identify discrimination as an emergency if they do not perceive the discrimination to have been intentional on the part of the perpetrator. Nontarget training programs should include a discussion of intentionality as it relates to the end result of discrimination. That is, a lack of intentionality does not negate the harmful social and emotional outcomes experienced by the target following discrimination. Therefore, nontargets should be trained to focus more on the effects of discrimination for the target rather than the intentionality of the perpetrator. Finally, training programs could provide strategies for nontargets to use when intervening in difficult situations, such as with authority figures or family members.

### **Limitations**

The limitations of the current study include self-selection bias as the participants were recruited by the use of materials that specifically requested students who had experience standing up for other people and felt comfortable discussing their experiences in a group setting. This necessarily eliminates potential participants who have experience standing up for others but who

do not feel comfortable discussing their experiences in groups. Another limitation is the homogeneity of the sample. As discussed previously, 16 of the 17 participants identified as white, all were students at the same university, all were between the ages of 18 and 32, and all participants lived in the northern Midwest at some point in their lives. Given that two participants who originated in other parts of the United States discussed experiencing regional differences in confronting prejudice, it is likely that the results of the current study would have been different if it had been conducted in another region, such as the East or West Coasts.

### **Strengths**

A strength of the study was the feminist informed qualitative methodology. A majority of literature available on confronting prejudice consists of quantitative based data (e.g., Kaiser & Miller, 2001; Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Shelton, et al., 2006). While quantitative research is helpful in exploring specific aspects of the confrontation process, such as levels of a specific construct (e.g., anger, guilt, annoyance) during a confrontation, it does not provide the detailed experience of a participant. In order to explore the process of nontarget confrontation of prejudice holistically, both quantitative and qualitative methodologies should be employed in the research. Target confrontations also tend to be more heavily researched than nontarget confrontations, leading to a less systemic understanding of prejudice confrontation as a whole. As such, the inclusion of a qualitative study exploring nontarget's experiences of confronting prejudice begins to fill a gap in the available research. A specific strength within the qualitative design was the use of focus groups, which encourages a relational orientation rather than an individual experience. That is, the participants are influenced by each other throughout the discussion, encouraging a sense of collaboration and community.

The inclusion of a feminist lens aims to not only explore what encourages nontargets to confront perpetrators of prejudice, but create social change through interpersonal actions as well. In other words, the current study was designed not only to identify what factors encourage a specific human interaction, but to identify how nontargets can be agents of social change through their confrontations of prejudice.

Finally, as mentioned previously, the participants in the third and final focus group seemed to have different preferences in confronting perpetrators of prejudice than the first two focus groups. Specifically, the participants who contacted the researcher at the beginning of the recruitment period may have been more assertive than the participants who agreed to join the last focus group. This inadvertent assortment of participants greatly diversified the results, specifically within the confrontation theme, which included participants' strategies, types of perpetrators confronted, and discrimination identifiers.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

Due to the dearth of literature regarding many of the findings of the current study, there are several suggestions for future research. One suggestion would be to recreate the focus groups in other regions. Since the location of the current study and the discussion of regional differences in nontarget confrontations, it would be helpful to explore the experience of nontarget confronters who do not live in the northern Midwest. Specifically, it would be interesting to conduct the study in cultures or regions where assertiveness is more commonplace. As previously discussed, another opportunity for research would be to further explore the kinds of perpetrators who are confronted by both targets and nontargets to possibly identify types of perpetrators who are the most successfully confronted. Additionally, exploring the experiences of people younger or older than the range of the current sample would be helpful in identifying

factors that encourage confrontation at different stages of the life cycle. As many participants talked about noticing prejudice at an early age it may be helpful to interview children and adolescents. Similarly, it may be helpful to explore the experiences of people in older age groups to begin to identify any trends in lifespan development or ages where nontargets are most likely to confront.

While exploring the data from the current study, I became intrigued as to how participating in the study itself could have impacted the participants after the focus groups were concluded. Specifically, I wondered about the repeated discussion of the value of a community of confronters and the sense of isolation felt by the participants who felt burdened by their education. I became curious about the participants' experiences meeting for a focus group, which inherently utilizes a relational orientation by encouraging participants to be influenced by each other rather than providing their individual thoughts. I wondered if participants felt an increased sense of community, learned new strategies for confronting, or felt rejuvenated in their sense of identity as confronters. Part of this curiosity came from my own experiences: I noticed that I felt a responsibility to my participants when I observed discrimination after the transcription of the data. For example, when on a social media site I noticed a derogatory comment about people with mental disabilities made by a former coworker. While in the past I might have simply unfriended the person or took a deep breath and moved on, I thought of my participants and felt a responsibility to say something to the perpetrator. The confrontation did not end as I had intended, which led me to remove the perpetrator from my site. In order to explore the possible effects of participating in the focus groups, I would like to re-interview the same participants at a later date. This would most likely occur online and assess what it was like to participate in the

focus group, how they felt about the other participants in their group, and how the experience impacted them after leaving the study.

### **Conclusion**

Several studies suggest that confrontation is useful for discouraging future prejudiced responses from the perpetrator (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Czopp, et al., 2006; Dickter, 2012), as well as for encouraging bystanders to confront when they witness future discrimination (Blanchard, Crandall, Bringham, & Vaughn, 1994). While there is a wide variety of research exploring the confrontation of perpetrators of prejudice (e.g., Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Czopp, et al., 2006; Dickter, 2012; Shelton, et al., 2006), much of this research focuses on targets as the confronters. A growing body of research on nontarget confrontations of prejudice suggests that nontargets are particularly effective in reducing future discrimination through confrontation (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Dickter, et al., 2012).

The current study is unique in that it explored the lived experiences of nontarget confronters rather than relying on hypothetical scenarios presented in a laboratory setting. The participants' experiences seemed to closely relate to past literature in many ways; however there are several gaps in the existing literature, suggesting many areas for future research. Participants were able to identify strategies they felt comfortable using during a confrontation and reviewed their interactions after the fact in the hopes of finding ways to improve. Confirming previous literature, many participants perceived discrimination as a social emergency and responded as such, many using their education from various fields to help them during the confrontation.

The present study provides a unique perspective on the confrontation of prejudice by nontargets, in that the critical analysis employed a relational orientation, leading to a focus on connection with others. Potentially, the most important factor in facilitating nontargets to

confront prejudice is to encourage the continued development of connection with others, specifically members of targeted social groups.

With this information, therapists should be better prepared to help nontarget clients navigate hostile environments and support those they care about. In addition, prejudice confrontation training programs can utilize the suggestions provided to make their trainings more systemic and effective.

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## APPENDIX A. RECRUITMENT FLIER

**Have you ever stood up for someone who was being picked on?**

**Would you like to have a conversation about standing up for other people?**

If so, you could be eligible to participate in a research study.



We are looking for volunteers to take part in a group conversation about standing up for other people who are being discriminated against.

**You may be eligible to participate if you:**

- Are over the age of 18
- Have ever stood up to someone who was discriminating against another person
- Are willing to participate in a group conversation/focus group

As a participant in this study, you would be asked to participate in a group discussion about times you have stood up to someone. The discussion will last approximately 60-90 minutes. The information from this discussion may increase understanding of what helps people to stand up for other people.

For more information about this study, or to volunteer for this study, please contact Lindsey Boes or Kristen Benson at

**Lindsey.Boes@ndsu.edu**

or

**Kristen.Benson@ndsu.edu**

Department of Human Development & Family Science  
North Dakota State University



## **APPENDIX B. SOCIAL MEDIA AND EMAIL RECRUITMENT SCRIPTS**

### **Social Media Script**

Have you ever stood up for someone who was being picked on? If so, you could be eligible to participate in a research study. For more information about this study, or to volunteer, please contact Lindsey Boes or Kristen Benson at [Lindsey.Boes@ndsu.edu](mailto:Lindsey.Boes@ndsu.edu) or [Kristen.Benson@ndsu.edu](mailto:Kristen.Benson@ndsu.edu).

### **Email Script**

Hello,

My name is Lindsey Boes, and I am a master's student in the Couple and Family Therapy program here at North Dakota State University working with Dr. Kristen Benson. I am currently recruiting participants for my IRB-approved study (IRB Protocol # HE14187) exploring the experiences of people who have stood up for others. Specifically, this study is looking at factors that encourage people who are not being targeted by prejudice to stand up for the people who are being targeted.

To be eligible for the study, you must be over the age of 18, have stood up to someone who was discriminating against another person, and be willing to participate in a group discussion about your experience standing up for others. The discussion will last approximately 60-90 minutes. The study is completely voluntary and your names and information will be kept confidential. For more information about this study, or to volunteer for this study, please contact Lindsey Boes or Kristen Benson at [Lindsey.Boes@ndsu.edu](mailto:Lindsey.Boes@ndsu.edu) or [Kristen.Benson@ndsu.edu](mailto:Kristen.Benson@ndsu.edu).

## APPENDIX C. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

### What motivates people to confront?

*Hello and thank you for being willing to speak with me today. I would like to remind you that I will keep your information confidential, which is further explained in the informed consent. Our conversation will be recorded and then I will transcribe the recording. I would like to point out that your informed consent includes a statement about what I plan to do with the transcripts today. Do you have any questions about this project? We can begin today by going around the room and saying your name...*

Setting the stage:

Can you think of an experience you have had when someone around you was being treated unfairly due to their identity and/or social position? It might have been a friend you saw being picked on because they are gay or a racist joke said by a family member. Would you be willing to briefly tell me about it?

What was going on for you in this moment?

What made you think the situation was wrong or unfair? How do you make sense of the prejudice that you witnessed?

How did this influence your decision to do something?

What was it like for you to see this happening?

What did you do?

Speak up? Do anything? (nonverbal)

What led you to do this?

How did you feel?

How did other people respond when you stood up?

The person you stood up to?

Other people around?

Didn't speak up

Other

Can you think of a time when you witnessed an unfair or discriminatory act against someone but you did not stand up or say anything?

Can you say more about that experience?

How do you define prejudice and discrimination? Do you have a sense of personal responsibility to notice when it is happening? Say something or stand up?

Do you feel someone should be responsible to say something when they see discrimination?

How you feel when you stand up to people? What is that like for you personally?

What is going on for you physically? Do you notice anything different? Hands, stomach, etc.?

How did you feel emotionally?

Were there positive feelings you can describe?  
Negative feelings?

What are your beliefs about having a personal commitment to confronting prejudice?  
How might standing up to people for others fit with your understanding of yourself as a person?

Can you think of a time when you have seen or witnessed other people stand up to prejudice?  
Can you tell me about it? What was it like for you to witness?  
What was going on for you in this moment?  
What made you think the situation was wrong or unfair? How do you make sense of the prejudice that you witnessed?  
How did this influence your decision to do something?  
What did you take from that experience?  
Did it influence you in your later decisions to confront or not confront prejudice?

## APPENDIX D. ORGANIZATION OF THEMES AND SUB-THEMES

Themes	Sub-Themes
Confrontation	Types of Perpetrators that are Confronted
	Discrimination Identifiers
	Steps to Confronting
	Positive Outcomes of Confronting
Perception of Harm	Social Backlash
	Responds to Social Emergency
Education	Conceptualization of Prejudice
	Education as Confrontation Tool
	Parents Taught to Confront
	College as Opportunity to Learn
	Education Leads to Responsibility
Internal Processes	Emotions Encourage Confrontation
	Identity as a Person who Connects with Target
	Sense of Responsibility to the Target
	Care-Oriented Morality