Perceptions of Ally Confrontations

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Perceptions of Ally Confrontations: Confrontations of Racial Bias as an
Identity-Safe Cue for Target-Group Members

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Abstract

Research related to interpersonal confrontations, where one person points out a way in which another person had engaged in stereotypical or prejudicial bias, has provided a wealth of knowledge about factors that influence the extent to which confrontations reduce bias (e.g., Czopp, Monteith, & Mark, 2006; Chaney & Sanchez, 2017; Mallet & Wagner, 2011; Parker, Monteith, Moss-Racusin, & Van Camp, 2018). However, how do minority-group members perceive confrontations on behalf of their social/ethnic group, and does group membership of the confronter matter? The present experiment investigates how Asian women perceive confrontations of prejudice against their group when performed by an Asian woman, White woman, or Black woman. We are especially interested in testing whether confrontations provide contextual cues to safety (Wout, Murphy, & Sabrica, 2014) signaling that Asian women are valued and belong in a given setting. We examine whether the greater the amount of social identity overlap between the Asian women participants and the confronter, the greater safety and belonging participants will feel in the setting in which the confrontation took place. Results indicate that biased remarks without confrontation significantly lower participants’ sense of belonging within a group along with other dependent variables compared to a condition in which no biased remark is made. Confrontations do not significantly heighten these results and serve as a safety cue, but White confronters show a tendency to be marginally effective at increasing these dependent variables.

*Keywords:* confrontation, bias, stereotyping, race, belonging, safety, prejudice
Perceptions of Ally Confrontations

Imagine that you have recently moved into a new area. As you begin to settle in, you look for new social circles within your local area with people who share your interests, hobbies, and values. As you begin to interact within these social circles, one particular social group catches your interest. One day you notice a member of this group express a prejudiced statement about your own racial group. Witnessing this expression of prejudice may affect your desire to join this social group, and someone within the group speaking out against it – explaining why it is biased and wrong to share that view-- may change your perspective of this group yet again. In addition, how might you feel if the person confronting the prejudiced statement was a member of that same targeted social group as you? Or if they had no personal stakes in the confrontation?

Current literature within social psychology thus far has focused on perceptions of bias confrontations from the perspectives of dominant-group members, who do not share a social identity being targeted by the actual prejudice. In this study we focus on the perceptions of racial-minority members who are bystanders to a group, and their perceptions of confrontations of prejudice that occur within that group. Concerns about being rejected within a social group, especially because of one’s racial identity, make it significantly less likely for one to develop interracial friendships and participate within the group (Wout, Murphy, & Barnett, 2014). While witnessing a prejudiced statement about one’s racial identity may trigger these concerns and make you less likely to consider being a part of the group, another group member confronting the bias may serve as a safety intervention, alleviating this threat. The present research studies ally confrontations and seeks to understand the potentially positive outcomes of these confrontations of target-group members.

Confrontation of Bias
While there are prevalent norms in society condemning the expression of bias such as racial or gender stereotypes, it is not uncommon to hear these assumptions or biases in everyday conversation. These biased remarks may have negative consequences for the members of the target group for which the stereotype applies. However, one can chose to speak up against these prejudiced remarks, an act known as confrontation. Confrontations of prejudice, which occur when someone makes a prejudiced or biased statement and another person calls attention to the prejudice within the remark, have been shown to effectively reduce subsequent bias immediately following the intervention (Czopp, Monteith, & Mark, 2006). This has been established across a wide array of studies (Gulker, Mark, & Monteith, 2013; Mallett & Wagner, 2011; Parker, Monteith, Moss-Racusin, & Van Camp, 2017; Rasinski & Czopp, 2010). Moreover, interpersonal confrontations of prejudice have also been shown to have enduring effects on self-regulation of such biases across longer periods of time, including one week after a confrontation (Chaney & Sanchez, 2017). Across these confrontation studies, a variety of variables have been manipulated to examine the moderators of successful confrontations, sometimes with a focus on the social identity of the confronter (Czopp & Monteith, 2003). For example, Whites are more efficacious when confronting racial bias and discrimination than racial minority-group members—an effect that occurs because racial minority-group members are perceived as oversensitive and complainers when they confront bias (Gulker, Mark, & Monteith, 2013; Kaiser & Miller, 2001). This literature has also focused on the type of bias being confronted, and the efficacy of the confrontation as a result (Parker et al., 2017).

To date, confrontation research has investigated the consequences of confrontation for dominant-group members (e.g., whether bias is subsequently reduced), who are not the subject of the bias themselves. For example, Rasinski & Czopp (2010) had White participants watch a
video debate between a White and Black speaker, during which the White speaker expressed prejudiced racial views about Blacks. These comments were confronted by either another White or Black speaker. Results indicated that the White confronter was perceived as more persuasive as compared to the Black confronter. Additionally, participants rated the degree of bias within the confronted comments as significantly lower when a White speaker confronted than when a Black speaker confronted the statements. It remains unclear how people who belong to a subordinate social group on a particular identity dimension such as race (e.g., a Chinese woman) perceive confrontations of prejudice related to their social identity (e.g., Chinese people) when that confrontation is made by someone else on their behalf.

Minority bystanders facing explicit prejudice may perceive a confronter who shares the same stigmatized social identity (e.g. another Chinese woman confronting the prejudice) differently than other allies who do not share the stigmatized social identity. For the purposes of this study, we refer to these confronters as target confronters (e.g. a Chinese woman confronting racial bias against Chinese people). Target group members are bystanders and individuals whose social group is being targeted by the stereotype or prejudice. Allies may also be found in people who are part of the dominant social group with respect to social power and the dimension of identity, and in this case are referred to as dominant confronters (e.g., a White person confronting racial bias against Chinese individuals). It remains unknown how ally confrontations affect minorities who are bystanders. This study aims to fill this gap by assessing target-group members’ perceptions of confrontations on their behalf.

**Confrontation as an Identity-Safe Cue**

Based on the social identity literature, we expect that a threat cue such as a prejudiced comment will trigger social identity threat, a psychological response experienced by individuals
who feel devalued or discriminated against because of their social group membership (Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey 1999; Steele, Spencer & Aronson, 2002). Vulnerability to this threat may be affected by the environment and can lead to decreased interest in the group, as well as decreased feelings of belonging (Murphy, Steele, & Gross, 2007). Murphy and colleagues (2007) found that situational cues which primed social identity threat, such as gender imbalances, led women to have decreased desire to participate in a conference for math, science, and engineering domains. These women also expressed anticipated decreased feelings of belonging if they were to join the conference.

However, confrontations in such settings may provide an identity-safe cue, thereby signaling safety and belonging within the group. Confrontations of prejudiced behavior reduce subsequent bias, such as the expression of stereotypes and prejudiced attitudes (Czopp, Monteith, & Mark, 2006). The confrontation of prejudice, in addition, establishes that prejudice and bias will not be tolerated within the group setting. Because of these consequences, confrontations may also act as a safety cue that one’s social identity will be valued and respected within the group. Furthermore, safety cues lead to increased perceptions of warmth and trust with outgroup members, which promotes positive perceptions and increases the likelihood of interaction (Wout, Murphy, & Barnett, 2014). Therefore, we hypothesized that confrontation of a prejudiced comment would lead a target group bystander to experience more belonging and feelings of safety within the group, relative to when the prejudiced comment was not confronted.

However, the confronter’s social group membership may also affect the perceptions of a target-group member watching them confront on their behalf and, consequently, the extent to which the confrontation provides an identity-safe cue. We propose two competing hypotheses.
that explain how the social identity of the confronter may affect the efficacy of the confrontation as an identity-safe cue. These alternative hypotheses are addressed below.

**Social Identity Overlap Hypothesis**

One hypothesis, the social-identity overlap hypothesis, posits that a minority bystander will experience the greatest amount of belonging and safety within a group when an ingroup member performs the confrontation. They will also experience an increased desire to join the group as a function of social-identity overlap or similarity. Thus, as the social identity of the confronter and the minority bystander become more similar, positive outcomes of confrontation may increase.

More specifically, same-race confronters may signal the greatest amount of belonging and safety within a group. We know that people identify more with those of the same, or a similar social identity, and this increased social-identity overlap may cause them to experience an increased belonging following confrontation (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Pietri, Johnson, and Ozgumus (2018) found that Black women high on stigma-consciousness identified more with a fictitious STEM company when it was represented by another Black woman recruiter, as opposed to a White woman recruiter, White woman ally, and White woman who expressed pro-diversity values. This gives us reason to believe that outgroup allies and their support may not be as effective as sharing a social identity with someone within a potential group when attempting to signal belonging or safety within the group.

We predicted that, for our Chinese participants, another Chinese woman confronting stereotyping would signal the most safety and foster more positive reactions to the group. We also predicted that a Black confronter would create more positive reactions to the group, relative
to no confrontation. Priming racial discrimination results in greater perceived similarity, positivity, and coalitional attitudes with one’s own group as well as with other groups who also experience discrimination (Craig & Richeson, 2016). Latinos and Asians who were primed with racial discrimination against their own group feel more similar to, experience more warmth towards, and have more coalitional attitudes with Blacks as opposed to those not primed with racial prejudice (Craig & Richeson, 2012). This social identity threat may facilitate a perceived common identity by increasing perceived similarities between these racial minority groups, who were made aware of the disadvantages the other groups face on a similar dimension (e.g. race). Hearing a prejudiced comment about one’s own group is likely to increase their identification with a common subordinate identity (racial minority). Thus, our social identity overlap hypothesis predicts that the safety and belonging felt by our participants will be greater when the Black woman confronts than when the White woman confronts, because the Black woman also shares a subordinate racial identity with participants.

**Dominant-Group Member Hypothesis**

A competing hypothesis is that dominant group members (in the present case, a White confronter) will be able to create the most safety and belonging within a group. From previous literature, we know that confrontations from racial minorities about racial discrimination and prejudice are less persuasive, at least in the eyes of dominant group participants, compared to dominant-group confronters. Specifically, minority confronters are more likely to be seen as complainers instead of signaling serious transgressions (Drury & Kaiser, 2014; Gulker et. al., 2013). Even when obvious discrimination takes place, racial minority confronters are perceived as hypersensitive, irritating, and unreasonable (Kaiser & Miller, 2001; Czopp & Monteith, 2003). Target-group members may be aware of this fact and feel better supported within a group if a
dominant-group member confronts on their behalf. When dominant-group members confront, they are more likely to be supported by their group, and more effectively reduce subsequent bias (Gulker et. al., 2013). This expectation of reduced subsequent bias may act as a safety cue and make the confrontations by dominant-group members more efficacious at signaling perceived belonging and safety than confrontations by minority group members.

Overview of the Present Research and Hypotheses

Chinese American women read a group interaction between four women, one of which made a stereotypic comment about Asian individuals. We manipulate the confronter race, so that the confronter was a White, Black, or Chinese woman in the group. We also included a no confrontation condition, and a condition in which the participants read about the interaction but the stereotypic comment was not made. We predict that participants who report less safety and positive attitudes toward the group when the stereotypic comment was made than when it was not. Furthermore, according to the social identity overlap hypothesis, participants will experience the highest levels of belonging, feelings of safety, and desire to join the group, followed by the Black confronter condition, and lastly the White confronter condition. In contrast, the dominant-group member hypothesis predicts that the White confronter will result in greater feelings of belonging, safety, and desire to join the group, relative to the Chinese and White confronter conditions.

Methods

Participants

Participants were Chinese American women between the ages of 25-35 ($M = 30.13$, $SD = 3.25$) recruited through a Qualtrics Panel. Qualtics applied our inclusion criteria and provided
data only for participants who were Chinese women, and who took at least 12 minutes to complete the study, passed 2/3 of our attention checks, and passed our manipulation checks (correctly reported which condition they were in at the end of the study). Qualtrics recruited 214 participants who met these criteria. The study was completed online and participants were compensated $4.95 for their participation.

Design

Participants were randomly assigned to one of five experimental conditions (Chinese confronter, N = 47; Black confronter, N = 46); White confronter, N = 47; No Confrontation, N = 33; No Prejudiced Comment, N = 40).

Procedure

The study was titled “Thin Slices of Group Behavior” and lasted approximately 15-20 minutes. Participants read a cover story in which they were led to believe that they were answering questions about their perceptions of groups based on reading shorter excerpts of an interaction between the group members. They then fill out demographic questions, including race and gender, which were told would be used to “autofill” a survey later in the study. Next, participants read a control filler script of a group interaction and completed dependent measures. Following, participants read our experimental script, consisting of a group interaction of four women, two White, one African American, and one Chinese American. Participants were given their occupations, age, gender, and race in a description, as well as instructions and an overview of what the script will be about. They were told to pay close attention to who says what within the group, as we wanted them to notice the race of each speaker. Next participants completed dependent measures. Upon the completion of the dependent measures, participants completed a
funnel debriefing to probe for any suspicion of our cover story. They then signed a post-session consent form and were given the contact details of the researchers should they have any questions before they were dismissed.

Materials and Manipulation.

Participants viewed one control script involving a brief interaction between two siblings and a mutual friend discussing a previous relationship. They also viewed the critical script including four women, ages 33, 32, 33, 31, two of whom are White, one who is Chinese American, and one who is African American. They were given brief descriptions of the women and of the scenario (they had recently met and are chatting over coffee). Depending on random assignment to our No Comment condition, or one of four Confrontation conditions, participants read different endings to this script. In the No Comment condition, no biased remark is made, and the lines with the remark and confrontation were minimally modified from the other scripts to exclude them. All scripts otherwise were exactly the same with the names and pictures of the speaker being rotated between scripts for each condition. In the Confrontation conditions, a biased remark towards Asians was made by a White woman “Asians aren’t really good drivers typically, so I’m just worried”. Depending on their condition, the stereotypic remark was either left unconfronted or confronted by a Black, White, or Asian confronter, and stated “Hey, that’s just a stereotype. Some Asians are bad drivers, some aren’t. Just like other people. You can’t assume she’s/I’m going to be a bad driver just because she’s/I’m Asian!” The script of the interaction ended immediately after the confrontation or neutral filler lines for the No Comment condition, so that participants couldn’t see any of the group members’ reactions to the confrontation. The full scripts are found in Appendix A.

Dependent Variables.
Participants’ attitude toward the group was assessed with a standard feeling thermometer ranging from 0 (cold) to 100 (warm). Participants moved a bar on the thermometer to reflect how warm/cold they felt toward the group. Feelings of Belonging ($\alpha=.92$) were assessed with seven items adapted from Walton and Cohen (2007), such as “I would fit in well with this group” and “I would feel like an outsider within this group” (reverse-scored). Feelings of Safety items ($\alpha=.88$) were assessed with six items adapted from Purdie-Vaughns et al. (2008) and Good et al. (2001) such as “I think that I could trust this group to treat me fairly” and “I think that I could ‘be myself’ around this group”. Desire to Join ($\alpha=.95$) was assessed with seven items adapted from Purdie-Vaughns et al. (2008) such as “If I could, I would like to get to know the individuals in this group more” and “I think it would be pleasant to be a part of this group.” All Belonging, Safety, and Desire to Join items were rated on a scale of 1-7, from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree, with appropriate items being reverse-coded. The order that participants saw each dependent variable was randomized. A full list of measures is included in Appendix B. Participants additionally rate each individual group member on seventeen traits such as “friendly”, “helpful”, and “hypersensitive” aimed at assessing perceptions of the confronter and confrontee from a scale of 1-7, Strongly Disagree–Strongly Agree. The last set of measures included four items adapted from Luhtanen and Crocker’s (1992) Collective Self-Esteem measure and assessed participants’ identification with being an Asian Woman (Identity) ($\alpha=.76$) on a scale of 1-7 from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. This included items such as “Being an Asian Woman is an important reflection of who I am”.

**Results**

**Descriptive Information**
Descriptive statistics for the critical script dependent variables are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1
Descriptives and correlations among dependent variables for the experimental (critical) script.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Identity</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Attitude</td>
<td>62.91</td>
<td>23.62</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Belonging</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Safety</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Desire to Join</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p ≤ .05, **p ≤ .01

The correlations between Belonging, Safety, and Desire to Join were higher than expected given the items are from pre-validated scales to measure distinct constructs. The magnitude of these correlations speaks to the strong relations between feeling safe in a group and one’s sense of belonging, and desire to become part of the group.

Effects of Condition on Dependent Variables

Each dependent variable was predicted using experimental condition (no comment, Asian confronter, White confronter, Black confronter, and no confrontation) in a between-participant Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). In each case, participants’ scores on the corresponding measure from the control script was used as a covariate. For instance, in the case of predicting attitude toward the group for the critical script, control script attitude scores were used as a covariate. This serves to control for potential individual differences in how people feel about and react to possible membership in groups. The covariates were significant in all analyses (ps < .001). Also,
in all analyses, when the main effect for condition was significant, follow-up comparisons were performed with Bonferroni corrections.

**Attitude toward Group.** The ANOVA performed on the attitude measure revealed a significant main effect for condition, $F(4, 207) = 4.53, p = .002, \eta^2_p = .08$. As shown in Table 2, a confrontation performed by either an Asian or Black confronter did not elicit a more favorable attitude toward the group compared to the No Confrontation condition. White confronters were marginally but not significantly better, with No Comment conditions eliciting the greatest amount of warmth in attitudes.

**Feelings of Belonging within the Group.** The ANOVA performed on Belonging revealed a significant main effect for condition, $F(4, 208) = 3.73, p = .006, \eta^2_p = .07$. As shown in Table 2, participants reported significantly lower belonging when the stereotypic comment was made but not confronted, relative to when the comment was not made. However, did confrontation serve as a safety cue signaling greater belonging? Belonging was not increased significantly with confrontation, regardless of who was confronting the stereotypic comment. Nevertheless, there was some tendency for the White confronter to heighten belonging, as this condition also did not differ significantly from the No Comment condition.

**Feelings of Safety within the Group.** The ANOVA performed on Safety revealed a significant main effect for condition, $F(4, 208) = 7.31, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .12$. As shown in Table 2, participants reported significantly lower safety when the stereotypic comment was made but not confronted, compared to the No Comment condition. Like belonging, safety was not increased significantly with confrontation, regardless of who was confronting the stereotypic comment.
However, White confronters indicated a slight tendency to heighten participants’ feelings of safety, as this condition did not differ significantly from the No Comment condition.

**Desire to Join the Group.** The ANOVA performed on Desire to Join also revealed a significant main effect for condition, $F(4, 208) = 3.01, p = .02, \eta^2_p = .05$. As shown in Table 2, the No Comment condition led to the most desire to join the group compared to all other conditions, including No Confrontation. Confrontations did not serve as a safety cue for this measure and desire to join was not heightened with confrontation, regardless of the identity of the confronter. However, the White confrontation remained non-significantly different to our No Comment condition indicating a slight tendency to heighten our dependent variables.

### Table 2
Dependent variables as a function of experimental conditions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>No Confrontation</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>No Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>57.85&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>58.97&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>62.96&lt;sub&gt;ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>59.38&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>75.73&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belonging</td>
<td>3.80&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>3.86&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>4.10&lt;sub&gt;ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>3.80&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>4.69&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>3.75&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>3.91&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>4.16&lt;sub&gt;ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>3.74&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>4.98&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to Join</td>
<td>3.93&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>4.22&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>4.22&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>3.96&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>4.84&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Means not sharing a subscript within each dependent variable differ significantly; all comparisons were made with Bonferroni corrections.

**Identity.** An ANOVA performed on the Identity measures showed no significant differences across conditions, $F(4, 209) = 1.35, p = .25, \eta^2_p = .02$. Thus, the experimental manipulation did not influence the extent to which participants’ identity as Chinese women was
important to them, as expected. We explored whether identity might interact with experimental condition to influence participants’ perceptions of the critical script group. For instance, perhaps the confrontation would serve as a stronger safety cue as participants’ identity scores decreased. Relevant analyses found no support for this possibility.

Discussion

Our study revealed that confrontations of racial bias, specifically towards Chinese women, were not effective at increasing bystanders’ positive feelings towards a group, such as belongingness and safety within it. The confrontations within our paradigm were unable to significantly bolster Chinese American participants’ attitudes towards a group, or feelings of belonging, safety, and desire to join the group comparable to levels observed when no biased remark was made, showing the negative consequences of bias expression on members of the target group. However, White confronters showed marginally better effects for all of our dependent variables, supporting our Dominant Confronter Hypothesis. White confronters elicited greater warm attitudes, feelings of belonging, feelings of safety, and desire to join than our Black or Asian confronters, though these comparisons did not reach statistical significance. White confronters were also nonsignificantly different than having No Biased Comment for our dependent variables, for which participants felt the most positive towards the group. Our Black and Asian confrontations were always nonsignificantly different than having No Confrontation across our dependent measures. Contrary to our hypotheses, our confrontations were unable to provide a significant safety cue signaling a status quo of egalitarian norms and safety to our participants (Wout, Murphy, & Barnett 2014). This may be due to the paradigm that was used.

In this study, after a biased remark towards Asians was made and confronted, participants were unable to watch the group’s reactions to the confrontation. They were unable to tell whether
the individual being confronted was receptive to the feedback or the reactions of other bystanders. This may have affected their sense of security of future interactions within the group and may help to explain confrontation overall did not appear to be effective at signaling safety and other positive outcomes. Also, our confrontation referenced the use of stereotypes and mentioned colloquial evidence that it did not apply to every member of the target group. We believed that this made it a strong enough confrontation. However, participants may not have taken the stereotype (Asians are bad drivers) very seriously which would affect their reactions to the confrontation.

An unexpectedly high number of participants were discarded for failing our attention and manipulation checks. Our paradigm was likely not strong enough for the race and identities of the group members to be memorable and could be improved. Perhaps it was not immersive enough or participants did not find the subjects relevant. This was also the lab’s first time using a Qualtrics Panel, and we did not know the quality of participants we would be receiving. Although Quatric provided us with only data for participants who met our inclusion criteria, we did discover through iterations of data collection and communication with Qualtric that many people failed our attention and manipulation checks and were filtered out. Thus, the data that we analyzed may be coming from participants who are especially high in conscientiousness or deviate in some way from the general population.

**Future Directions**

Additional research is needed to examine whether confrontations ease bystanders’ concerns about group membership and to test the competing hypotheses driving this research. Procedural improvements may yield stronger evidence on confrontations producing positive outcomes. However, utterances of biased remarks and other triggers for social identity threat
may be too strong to be overcome by confrontation, and they may not signal a safety cue beyond reducing people’s expressions of bias. Future studies should improve upon the “Short Excerpts of Group Behavior” paradigm by using more memorable scripts, or foregoing participants reading group interactions at all. Perhaps videos filmed from a first-person perspective will be more effective. Future studies may also study different target groups and perhaps different contexts and stereotypes which may be judged as more “harmful.” Studies may also study how gender affects these hypotheses to examine multiple dimensions of marginalization.

**Conclusions**

The present results do not provide strong support for the idea that confronters can provide a safety cue to target-group members when confronting racial bias. Marginal support is shown for White confronters, supporting our Dominant Group Hypothesis. However, without significant differences in participants’ dependent variables of Attitude, Belonging, Safety, and Desire to Join a group they witnessed interacting with the confrontation, more follow-up studies are needed to test these ideas further.
Appendix A

Control Script

Page 1
You will now read your first short script of a group interaction. Consider the the three individuals below as part of the group. For this script, we would like you to pay special attention to the content of the conversation.

Setting: Two siblings, John, and Julie are visiting their parents during the holidays at the home where they grew up. Julie’s good friend Christine is also visiting. At one point John, Julie, and Christine were hanging out on the patio for about an hour.

John is a 27-year-old White man who lives and works in the East Coast and enjoys hiking and outdoor activities.

Julie is a 24-year-old White woman who lives with a couple of roommates and a cat, and enjoys painting and visiting the beach.
Christine is a 24-year-old Korean American finishing her Master's in public health, and enjoys dancing and jazz.

You will read only a short snippet of their interaction. Remember that we are interested in your perceptions of these people and of the group as a whole based on their interactions, so try to visualize the scene as if you were actually there. For this script, pay special attention to the content of the group's conversation.

Page 2

JULIE: Oh my goodness. I’m all grown up and my mom still talks to me like I’m 10. It’s good to be home though.

CHRISTINE: What was she asking now?

JULIE: I have to make plans for tomorrow night with her. Nothing urgent.

JOHN: You know Julie, that last boyfriend of yours was so annoying. I am so glad that he’s gone.

JULIE: Oh, you think so? You seemed to get along with him pretty well last Christmas.

JOHN: Are you KIDDING me? Maybe while he was sober. After a few beers he showed his true self and was really annoying.
CHRISTINE: Ah, you hated Max too?

JOHN: Yeah, definitely.

JULIE: Okay, I know you guys think he wasn’t -

JOHN: He wasn’t anything but a rotten bum. I was so glad when you finally left him.

CHRISTINE: I mean, he cheated, so -

JOHN: HE WHAT? That low-life! Julie, you never told me that!

JULIE: I just didn’t feel like telling you at the time. I already knew you hated him.

JOHN: You could’ve told me, still. That’s huge!

JULIE: Well it wasn’t easy for me. I still loved him!
CHRISTINE: I know. I hear you. I know that it isn’t comforting yet to hear good riddance, but one of these days... you’ll be okay.

JOHN: You guys can keep chatting. I’m going to go grab something to drink. Anyone need anything while I’m up?

CHRISTINE: No thanks.

JULIE: It's really weird not having Max around this Winter. It feels like just the other day we were still together.

CHRISTINE: It's been months.

JULIE: You don't have to rub it in.

CHRISTINE: Come on, you don’t have to focus on that right now. You’re home with your family, John’s even home, and you just got promoted at work. Everyone in your department is really proud of you. Let’s go out and do something fun tonight to celebrate. Maybe dinner and a movie?
JULIE: Thanks, Christine. That sounds good. I’m glad that you came to visit and keep me sane. It’s just-

CHRISTINE: What is it?

Page 3

JULIE: It’s nothing. I know my brother didn’t like Max, and that’s perfectly okay, I just wish he were a little more understanding of the whole situation.

CHRISTINE: You guys have always been close, right?

JULIE: Yeah! Our whole lives. I mean we used to talk on the phone pretty often.

CHRISTINE: If you don’t feel as close anymore, you know that’s okay.

JULIE: I really don't feel like we're close anymore. It's just so frustrating. Maybe it's because I've been with Max, but I just feel so disconnected from John nowadays. John's never been the warmest older brother, but still.
CHRISTINE: Have you guys talked about it?

JULIE: No, I don't know. It's only been a few days since he got back and we've been spending time with our parents. He just doesn't seem approachable quite yet. My mom is really empathetic, but every time I express that I'm still a little upset about it, he feels the need to give his two cents.

CHRISTINE: Maybe you could tell him that you're just looking for a listener? Or for comfort?

JULIE: I wish. Yeah I - oh hey John.

JOHN: Hey, do you guys have any plans for tonight?

JULIE: We were thinking of going out and celebrating my promotion, maybe dinner and a movie.

JOHN: Is this just a ladies thing or...?

CHRISTINE: Um, I mean...
JULIE: Don't you have plans with Dad or something?

JOHN: I can always reschedule to spend time with you guys. Besides, Christine won't be here for long.

JULIE: I'm not sure. We might go get sushi and I know how much you hate that.

JOHN: Oh come on Julie, you know there's other things that I like at the sushi restaurant.

JULIE: Christine, could you get me some water, actually?

(after Christine leaves) JOHN: Julie, I've missed you, but if you don't want to hang out with me tonight that's totally okay. I don't get why you're still so hung over this stupid Max dude, anyways, it's like, what was so great about him anyways?

JULIE: That's not the point. I really don't want to talk about it with you right now, John.

JOHN: Okay then. Point taken. I'll leave, see you guys tomorrow.
JULIE: *takes a deep breath*

CHRISTINE (returning): Well that was tense. Everything alright?

JULIE: You think? I just can't be around him right now. I'm not ready to talk yet.

CHRISTINE: Don't you and John miss each other? Even a little bit? Have fun together outside of talking about family, work, relationships?

JULIE: Yeah, I guess. I'll admit when I started dating Max I called John less and less, too.

CHRISTINE: Who has John dated in the past? Have you liked any of his girlfriends?

JULIE: Actually, no. He was really serious about one, and nearly proposed to her – we argued nonstop about it. I don’t know why we think it’s our place to comment on the other’s relationship, but I really hated her. She was so fake. It ended up being good that he didn’t propose though, because they broke up shortly after. He hasn’t dated anyone seriously after that.
CHRISTINE: That’s a lot to unpack. Is he okay about it? How recent?

JULIE: I don’t know. Early this year.

CHRISTINE: Could he still be hurt?

JULIE: He could be, but I doubt it. At least I hope. He doesn’t talk about her much anymore.

CHRISTINE: I mean, maybe he relates to you a lot more than you think, and he’s just trying to save you from the same mistakes and trying to help you move on. It sounds like he was broken up really badly about this.

JULIE: But it’s not fair of him to project his frustrations and hurt out on me!!

CHRISTINE: I know, I know.

JULIE: You’re right, I know he means well and I guess he is just trying to remedy my heartbreak. John never talks about this but he got so depressed when she ended it, it was like he was an entirely different person.
CHRISTINE: May I say... a little like you?

JULIE: Yeah.

CHRISTINE: Sounded tough for the both of you.

JULIE: Mhm.

CHRISTINE: I think that talking would be good. Just tell him how you feel – everything you told me! You guys have more in common than you think, and perhaps more empathy for each other than you let show.

Experimental (Critical) Script (Asian Confrontation)

You will now read the second short script of a group interaction. Consider the four individuals below as part of the group. For this script, we would like you to pay attention to who says what during the conversation. This means noticing the individual people who are a part of this group.

Setting: Four women meet when dropping children off for the first day of school and decide to go for coffee together. Their conversation lasted about an hour.
Karen is a 33-year-old White woman who has recently moved into the area and works in a pediatrics office.

Mei is a 32-year-old Chinese American woman who has been living in the area and runs a youth theater program.

Nia is a 33-year-old African American woman who just moved to the area and works as a tax accountant.

Laura is a 31-year-old White woman who has been living in the area for a while and is in graduate school.

You will read only a short snippet of their interaction. Remember that we are interested in your perceptions of these people and of the group as a whole based on
their interactions, so try to visualize the scene as if you were actually there. Please pay special attention to **which people say what** by **attending to the names and pictures of the characters in the script**. You will be **quizzed** on your memory for who said certain things later in the study.

**Page 2**

NIA: Thanks for suggesting coffee Mei, I really needed some. It’s been such a busy morning!

MEI: Oh no problem! I’m glad that you guys are free.

LAURA: Could I ask you all what brought you to this area? I’m here because of family and for graduate school. Actually my school schedule is really flexible in the mornings, which lets me take care of my sister’s kids and take them to school, you know, giving her a break.

KAREN: I know that I really wanted to move here for the school district, I mean, how could you beat the value? They’re like private schools, but without all the cost.

MEI: I know! I’ve been living here for a few years as well. If you’re new, it’s just one of the many perks of the area. You’ll find lots of things to love about this city.

NIA: I just moved to the area a month ago – my husband and I relocated for our jobs. Do you guys have any recommendations for what’s around here? Any good cafes, local eateries that I should check out?
LAURA: My favorite Thai restaurant is just down the block. It’s Thai Essence. There are a lot of other good restaurants on the east end of town. Pretty much any type of food you want can be found there. Authentic Italian, Indian, Mexican, and lots of the standard all American places. And Cocola Bakery has these gorgeous cakes and pastries you should try. They’re a hit at birthday parties.

MEI: There’s a few good running trails behind the local library, and the farmer’s market goes down all of Main Street on Saturdays. The Grand Theater downtown, which has been around for ages, sometimes has concerts. I think you chose a great place to relocate.

NIA: Thanks for the suggestions! I'm always looking for new things to try. That’s one of the fun things about moving to a new area. Finding out what it has to offer.

KAREN: Yes, thank you. At first I was worried that I was going to be bored when I first moved here over the summer - the town didn't seem to have too much to it, you know?

LAURA: I wouldn't worry about that too much. Summer is slow because of people vacationing, but there are lots of events and shows the rest of the year!

KAREN: Yes, I hope so. I can't stand a boring town.

MEI: You could always get involved with the city or university. Like there are some local theater groups or arts programs you could volunteer for, and they’re pretty flexible and give back to the community. I've loved acting since I was a kid so I help run a dance and short play program for youth every Fall and Spring.
NIA: That sounds so cool! Please let us know when the shows are. I love dance, and any kinds of creative arts and performances.

KAREN: I just don't think I have time with work during the day. I'm a receptionist for a pediatrician's office, and our office has been so full of parents and kids trying to get their annual checkups for the school year. It's so annoying that people wait until last minute.

LAURA: I'm part of a book club that meets every Wednesday night, if that interests you. We mainly read national bestsellers, so, never a bad book, and it’s a good way to branch out with minimal time commitments.

KAREN: Hm, maybe.

NIA: I’d be interested in a book club. I’m reading “Educated” right now, which is a memoir that brings up a lot of issues that would be interesting to talk about with others. I’ve never been in a book club, but I’d love to give one a try.

MEI: So what do you two do, Laura and Nia? Laura you’re in grad school right now?
LAURA: Yes. I’m working on my physical therapy degree. I really just needed to branch out from the academic world and meet new circles, get a change of pace and try new things.

MEI: That’s wonderful! I know you’re probably busy, but I’m part of a pilates class on Wednesday and Friday mornings if you wanted to come with. It’s mostly women in the class, but there’s people of all ages and someone from just about any career field you can imagine! All of you might find something you’d like in the program.

NIA: Pilates. Sounds hard. But no pain no gain. I used to do a lot of aerobic exercises and jog pretty regularly, but I’ve let it slip with the move and all. Having a structured class would probably be a good way to get back into some sort of routine.

LAURA: I’d love to check it out! I should try to keep in better shape. As long as I can get to the university by around 11:00.

MEI: Yes of course! I work part-time programming events for a local youth center, which has really flexible hours, so I can take mornings off if I want to. It’s nice to branch out and find people with other interests.

KAREN: Nia what was it that you do?

NIA: I’m a tax accountant and have worked for a good number of years, but right now I’m taking a break to deal with some family stuff.
MEI: Oh, I hope that everything's alright.

NIA: Thank you, I appreciate it. Eldercare things. Speaking of the family, look at the kids in their first day of school outfits. Aren't they adorable?

LAURA: Aww, they're such handsome boys.

KAREN: So do you think they'll enjoy school? Brandon was so excited, but my poor Katie was so nervous. She always gets nervous about meeting new people.

MEI: I'm sure they'll be fine and have lots of fun! I told my kids to just relax, and be themselves. The teachers there are very caring as well.

NIA: That's good advice. I always tells my kids too, if they have nothing nice to say, better say nothing at all. And to remember their 'please' and 'thank you's'!

LAURA: I've heard that the kids at the school are great, and that the school's very proactive about health and teaching cooperation skills. or so my sister tells me.
KAREN: That's good to hear. I hope they'll grow to be a little more independent from me. Katie is especially clingy.

MEI: I'm sure they will. It's only the first day but I'm sure the class will be very welcoming. You can always talk it through with them after school. Are they involved in any sports or activities after school?

KAREN: Not yet, though Katie’s been wanting to give soccer a try.

NIA: My daughter plays on a team run by parks and recreation! The coaches are excellent, very patient and good with kids. I think she’ll love it.

MEI: I agree. My kids have been involved with various sports sponsored by parks and recreation, and the staff is very, very supportive. I can give you more information if you’d like. My husband volunteers as a referee through parks and rec so he knows a lot about the operation.

KAREN: That would be great! Thanks so much.

LAURA: Hey, would you guys like to set up a carpool for getting kids to school in the morning?
NIA: That’d be great! I know for sure that I'm unavailable some mornings, and my husband is out of town a lot!

MEI: I could take the kids for the rest of this week. I have a huge SUV, and an extremely flexible schedule too.

NIA: And I could take next week if that works for you guys.

KAREN: Umm, well you know, the whole Asian driving thing. I’m just not sure I’d be comfortable with this arrangement.

MEI: What do you mean?

KAREN: I just mean that like, Asians aren’t really good drivers typically, so, I’m just worried. I mean I’m sure that you’re okay, but…

MEI: Hey, that’s just a stereotype. Some Asians are bad drivers, some aren’t. Just like other people. You can’t assume I’m going to be a bad driver just because I’m Asian!

No Confrontation Script Ending
LAURA: Hey, would you guys like to set up a carpool for getting kids to school in the morning?

NIA: That’d be great! I know for sure that I have to be at work super early some meetings, and my husband is out of town a lot!

MEI: I could take the kids for the rest of this week. I have a huge SUV, and an extremely flexible schedule too.

NIA: And I could take next week if that works for you guys.

KAREN: Umm, well you know, the whole Asian driving thing. I’m just not sure I’d be comfortable with this arrangement.

MEI: What do you mean?

KAREN: I just mean that like, Asians aren’t really good drivers typically, so, I’m just worried. I mean I’m sure that you’re okay, but…

Black Confrontation Script Ending
MEI: Hey, would you guys like to set up a carpool for getting kids to school in the morning?

LAURA: That’d be great! I know for sure that I'm unavailable some mornings, and my husband is out of town a lot!

NIA: I could take the kids for the rest of this week. I have a huge SUV, and an extremely flexible schedule too.

LAURA: And I could take next week if that works for you guys.

KAREN: Umm, well you know, the whole Asian driving thing. I’m just not sure I’d be comfortable with this arrangement.

NIA: What do you mean?

KAREN: I just mean that like, Asians aren’t really good drivers typically, so, I’m just worried. I mean I’m sure that you’re okay, but…

NIA: Hey, that’s just a stereotype. Some Asians are bad drivers, some aren’t. Just like other people. You can’t assume someone is going to be a bad driver just because they’re Asian!
NIA: Hey, would you guys like to set up a carpool for getting kids to school in the morning?

MEI: That’d be great! I know for sure that I'm unavailable some mornings, and my husband is out of town a lot!

LAURA: I could take the kids for the rest of this week. I have a huge SUV, and an extremely flexible schedule too.

MEI: And I could take next week if that works for you guys.

KAREN: Umm, well you know, the whole Asian driving thing. I’m just not sure I’d be comfortable with this arrangement.

LAURA: What do you mean?

KAREN: I just mean that like, Asians aren’t really good drivers typically, so, I’m just worried. I mean I’m sure that you’re okay, but…
LAURA: Hey, that’s just a stereotype. Some Asians are bad drivers, some aren’t. Just like other people. You can’t assume someone is going to be a bad driver just because they’re Asian!

No Comment Script Ending

LAURA: Hey, would you guys like to set up a carpool for getting kids to school in the morning?

NIA: That’d be great! I know for sure that I’m unavailable some mornings, and my husband is out of town a lot!

MEI: I could take the kids for the rest of this week. I have a huge SUV, and an extremely flexible schedule too.

NIA: And I could take next week if that works for you guys.

KAREN: Sounds great! Mei and I could probably split picking them up.

Appendix B – Dependent Measures

Attitude

From a scale of 0 to 100, with 0 being very negative or cold, and 100 feeling very positive or warm about this group, what number would you use to describe your feelings toward this group? Please move the slider to the number that would describe your feelings toward this group.
Belonging (Walton & Cohen 2007)

Imagine that you have the opportunity to hang out with this group of people at a later time. When recording ratings for the items below, consider the extent to which you think you would fit in and feel like you belong within this group.

- I would feel a sense of belonging in this group.
- Other members of this group would accept me.
- I would feel alienated from other members of this group. (R)
- I would fit in well with this group.
- The people in this group are like me.
- I would feel like an outsider within this group. (R)
- I would feel comfortable with this group.

Safety (Purdie-Vaughns et. al. 2008)

Imagine that you have the opportunity to hang out with this group of people at a later time. When recording ratings for the items below, consider the extent to which you think you would feel comfortable with this group.

- I think that I could “be myself” around this group.
- I think that I could trust this group to treat me fairly.
- I think that my values and the values of this group are very similar.

Safety (Good et. al. 2001)

Imagine that you have the opportunity to hang out with this group of people at a later time. When recording ratings for the items below, consider the extent to which you think you would feel comfortable with this group.

- I would feel respected in this group.
I would not feel comfortable fully expressing myself in this group. (R)
I don’t feel like the members of this group would take my thoughts and views seriously. (R)

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**Desire to Join (Purdie-Vaughns et. al. 2008)**

Imagine that you have the opportunity to hang out with this group of people at a later time. When recording ratings for the items below, consider the extent to which you think you would fit in and get along with the group.

I think I would like to be friends with this group.
I think that I could become close personal friends with this group.
I think that it would be pleasant to be a part of this group.
I would enjoy being in this group.
If I could, I would like to get to know the individuals in this group more.
I am interested in being friends with this group.
I would not want to hang out or affiliate with this group of people. (R)

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**Identity (Luhtanen & Crocker 1992)**

When answering the following questions, please consider how much being a(n) Asian and a Woman contribute to your overall feeling of identity as a person.

Overall, being a(n) Asian Woman has very little to do with how I feel about myself.
In general, being a(n) Asian Woman is an important part of my self-image.
Being a(n) Asian Woman is unimportant to my sense of what kind of person I am.
Being a Asian Woman is an important reflection of who I am.

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References


