Confrontation is an effective way to reduce others’ prejudice, yet people are often hesitant to confront perpetrators. This may be because they are uncertain of how others will perceive them. Indeed, past research investigating witnesses’ reactions has shown that confrontation from targets (e.g., Blacks) produces more unfavorable outcomes (i.e., perceptions of increased rudeness and decreased persuasiveness) than confrontation from non-targets (e.g., Whites) (Rasinksi & Czopp, 2010). Related studies have shown that perpetrators evaluate confronters more positively when confrontation is framed as an appeal for fairness rather than an accusation of racism (Czopp, Monteith & Mark, 2006). Research on witnesses’ perceptions, however, is limited. This study goes beyond prior work by investigating how manner of confrontation can influence witnesses’ perceptions of confronters differently based on group membership, and whether targets are perceived as complainers more than non-targets.

200 White participants will read a scenario involving a racist comment made toward a Black man. The comment will be confronted by the insulted Black man (victim), another Black man (target), or a White man (non-target), and will be framed as an accusation of racism or an appeal for fairness. Participants’ perceptions of the confronter (e.g., rude, courageous) will be measured. The victim and target are expected to be evaluated negatively, especially when confrontation is an accusation of racism. The non-target is expected to be evaluated positively, especially when confrontation is an appeal for fairness. Expected results will add to the confrontation literature by providing a more comprehensive view of how confronters are perceived.