

## **The Race Game: Section B “Reflections”**

Playing the Race Game was one of the most eye opening experiences I have ever had. Until this, I had never really questioned my own race. I had never really examined what it meant to identify as white. I had never been openly faced with my race. Just in one week of playing the Race Game, I feel like I developed from different stages of the models.<sup>1</sup> When I began playing the Race Game, I would have been in the category of “Acceptance,” under Hardiman’s model. I would place myself here because of my unconscious identification with whiteness; I had never been faced with it or thought about what it means to be white. I wouldn’t necessarily accept stereotypes about any racial group, but I wouldn’t do anything to argue them either. After playing the race game for a week, I would place myself in Helms’ model under “Immersion” because playing the Race Game literally made me face my own whiteness, and search for reasons behind white privilege and for personal meanings of racism.

I think that the biggest thing I have learned about the developmental models such as those of Helms, Hardiman, and Terry is that there is no consistent pattern of moving forward.<sup>2</sup> It isn’t like each person starts at the first stage and then steadily progresses forward. I think there are people who start in a more advanced stage and then move forward from there. I would also say that there are people who don’t move forward. I think the interaction with my Black roommate opened my eyes to her point of view. I would place her in Terry’s model under “New Whites.” I know she is black, but she stated that racism is a white problem and that it would be eliminated if

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<sup>1</sup> After beginning to reflect on the experience, I begin to tie it into a model we discussed in class. This falls under “evaluating” information.

<sup>2</sup> Here I am demonstrating personal growth from the experience after examining it through the models and theories discussed in class. This is showing I “collected” relevant information.

white people just stopped making such a big deal of it. This allowed me to believe that these models can apply to any race.

Thendeka asks the player to “endure” and to face what they feel. The task that Thendeka asks the player to endure is to be faced with their own race—their own whiteness. Her examples lead the player to realize that while many people have been faced with their race, whites typically haven’t been. She asks the player to face their whiteness, and to explore what they feel about it. In all honesty, at first I felt bad about it. I felt awkward and like it was something taboo that shouldn’t be pointed out. I think that emotion definitely played a role in this experience because I didn’t have the option of backing out. I had to push through my feelings of awkwardness and persevere.<sup>3</sup>

I think emotion especially played a role when I received negative responses, because I felt ashamed of what I was doing. I felt like it wasn’t fair for me to be playing with race when I had never been faced with it before. As the week went on and my experiences playing and having to explain the game to people who asked why I kept referring to people as “white” continued, I felt more comfortable and less awkward. Instead of stuttering and dreading every time I had to talk about one of my white friends, I began to see it as an opportunity to make my friends and family think about their race and how most of them had never been faced with it before.<sup>4</sup>.....Playing the Race Game challenged my own opinions, beliefs and ideas about white identity and whiteness. Although I have always identified as white, I have never had to fight for

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<sup>3</sup> Here I begin to address the “well-justified solution”. This is key because I am demonstrating my understanding and active construction of knowledge through coming up with a potential solution. It demonstrates my understanding of the material to a high enough extent that I am able to see the hypothetical with it. Although it is not the most complex solution, I reflect on why I thought it was a good one and this is justifying it.

<sup>4</sup> Again, I am making a “well-justified solution” out of a situation, and this demonstrates critical reflection in the form of growth—taking an awkward experience and growing from it.

any rights that come along with that. Being white had always just been an aspect of my identity.

Playing the Race Game made me realize that for some people their race plays a huge role in their identity, and for some people it is their overall identity. I realized that I needed to be more aware of that. Until playing the Race Game, I had always thought race was just a small part of who someone was.....