

+ PRIVILEGE EXPERIMENT

[Tevin Byrd - Fall/Winter 2015]

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Privilege Experiment (later became tabletop game/activity) is an experimental group challenge that sets out to see who has the most similarities or advantages in the room, therefore having more power than the others. Everyone starts off by standing in the very back of the room and the objective is to be the first person to reach the very front. On their turn, each participant would state a benefit, advantage/privilege, or unique quality they have. For example, one person may say “I have bright blue eyes” (if they have blue eyes) and step forward. Anyone else in the group who has blue eyes also gets to step forward. This would continue until someone reached the very front of the room and then everyone would take a few minutes to look at everyone’s position in the room; Who won ? Are people scattered throughout the room? Is there any particular person or group at the very back still? The group would then be prompted to have a 5-10 minute discussion about their observations and thoughts on the experiment.

The core mechanic is in using personal characteristics as a means of comparison/contrast to gain an understanding of the advantages/disadvantages people have in life (or how they simply relate to those around them). This experiment can be seen as an ice-breaker or as a way for a group of diverse people to understand one another better. The goal was to see if people’s benefits or disadvantages would elevate or hinder their progression or advancement in the room as a representation of how it could be in life when you’re “different” than everyone else. I think further iterations of this could focus on the following discussion that takes place in order to make it more productive; A set of specific questions that could be asked by a central figure or facilitator could make sure the conversation stays flowing, productive, and focused on reaching the goal of the experiment.