# Step Forward, Step Back

Participation in this game is voluntary. The last time I played it participants signed a waiver of liability. If I ask a question that you are not comfortable answering, you can simply stand where you are, or lie. It is not always safe for us to tell the truth or reveal who we are. Our political culture that determines the distribution of water is based on the myth that we are all the same.

Please do this exercise in silence. If you don’t hear a question, ask me and I will repeat it. If you don’t understand a question, either make a guess or don’t respond to it.

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| Step Forward | Step Back |
| 1.      If your family owned their own home. | 1.      If either of your parents did not graduate from college. |
| 2.      If you or anyone in your immediate family is a doctor, lawyer, minister, teacher, or professional. | 2.      If you did not vacation outside your home state before you were 18 years old. |
| 3.      If you grew up with people of color or working class people who were maids, servants, gardeners or baby-sitters in you house. | 3.      If you are black, Latina, Native American, Indian, Asian, Arab, or Middle Eastern descent. |
| 4.      If you studied the history and culture of your ethnic ancestors in elementary and secondary school. | 4.      If you have ever been denied a job or paid less for comparable work or had a less qualified man promoted over you because of your gender. |
| 6.      If you are a man. | 6.      If you were raised by someone other than by both of your parents. |
| 7.      If, as a white person, you ever worked in a job where people of color held more menial jobs, were paid less or otherwise harassed or discriminated against. | 7.      If anyone in your family has had a problem with drug or alcohol abuse. |
| 8.      If your family had more than fifty books in the house when you were growing up. | 8.      If you ever felt an opportunity or experience was closed to you because you didn’t know how to speak, dress, or act. |
| 9.      If your family told you that you could be or do anything that you choose. | 9.      If you have ever been unable to attend an event or gathering because it was not accessible to people with your disability. |
| 10.  If you were taken to art galleries, museums, or plays by your parents. | 10.  If you have ever felt judged or uncomfortable because of the size, height, or shape of your body. |
| 11.  If you ever attended a private school or summer camp. | 11.  If your family taught you that police were someone to be feared. |
| 12.  If you grew up expecting that your family would pay for your college. | 12.  If your parents told you that you were beautiful or pretty and therefore what you thought or did wasn’t important. |
| 13.  If you believe that police would help you in an emergency. | 13.  If, as a child, you were ever hungry or worried that there would not be enough food. |
| 14.  If you ever inherited, or expect to inherit, money or property. | 14.  If your family was ever forced to move because they could not afford to pay their bills. |
| 15.  If you or one or both of your parents are or were members of unions. | 15.  If you or any member of your immediate family has ever been on welfare. |
| 16.  If most of your friends are the same race as you. | 16.  If you or any member of your family has been incarcerated for reasons other than political activism. |
| 17.  If people with power in your community look like you. | 17.  If you have ever lived somewhere that didn’t feel safe. |
| 18.  If people that you see in the media, TV, newspapers, and magazines look like you. | 18.  If you have ever hesitated to reveal your or your family’s religious tradition. |
| 19.  If, as a child, your family took you to a museum, historical site, concert, or play. | 19.  If you are queer, gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, or transgender. |

Now I want us to imagine that we are all together on a life raft in the middle of the ocean. We have one barrel of water. The first people to touch this wall will decide how that water will be distributed among us.