

Privilege for Sale Activity and Reflection

This activity creates space and opportunity for participants to:

- acknowledge and investigate privilege.
- empathetically connect and reflect on the experience of having (or not having) privilege.
- consider how no one privilege is more important than another, that for someone any privilege may feel essential.
- identify privileges that they take for granted in their everyday life.
- investigate and consider what groups may have limited access to what privileges and effect that lack of access may have on an individual.

When we say privilege, we are talking about social privilege(s), or a special, unearned advantage or entitlement, used to one's own benefit or to the detriment of others. These groups can be advantaged based on social class, age, education level, disability, ethnic or racial category, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and religion.

Having privilege doesn't make you a bad person. In fact, we all have privilege in the sense that we are able to access higher education. What is most important is to understand and unpack your privilege, allowing you to be more understanding and open-minded about the experiences of those different from yourself.

First, you will be given a specific amount of (imaginary) money based on the first letter of your last name, which you can find below.

- A: \$200
- B: \$400
- C: \$700
- D: \$1,500
- E: \$300
- F: \$600
- G: \$900
- H: \$1,100
- I: 1,900
- J: \$500
- K: \$800
- L: \$1,000
- M: \$200
- N: \$400
- O: \$700
- P: \$1,500
- Q: \$300
- R: \$600
- S: \$900
- T: \$1,100
- U: 1,900
- V: \$500
- W: \$800
- X: \$1,000
- Y: \$200
- Z: \$600

Now that you know how much money you have, look at the following list of privileges. Each privilege costs \$100 to purchase. Decide which privileges you will be buying with the money you're allotted.

1. Receiving public recognition and support for an intimate relationship (e.g., congratulations for an engagement).
2. Expressing affection in most social situations and not expecting hostile or violent reactions from others.
3. Learning about romance and relationships from fictional movies and television shows.
4. Having role models of your gender and sexual orientation.
5. Having positive and accurate media images of people with whom you can identify.
6. Expecting to be around others of your sexuality most of the time. Not worrying about being the only one of your sexuality in a class, on a job, or in a social situation.
7. Talking openly about your relationship, vacations, and family planning you and your lover/partner are doing.
8. Raising, adopting, and teaching children without people believing that you will molest them or force them into your sexuality.
9. Working in a job dominated by people of your gender, but not feeling as though you are a representative/spokesperson for your sexuality.
10. Assuming strangers won't ask, "How does sex work for you?" or other too-personal questions.
11. Acting, dressing, or talking as you choose without it being a reflection on people of your sexuality.
12. Going wherever you wish knowing that you will not be harassed, beaten, or killed because of your sexuality.
13. Not worrying about being mistreated by the police nor victimized by the criminal justice system because of your sexuality.
14. Knowing that your basic civil rights will not be denied or outlawed because some people disapprove of your sexuality.
15. Expecting that your children will be given texts in school that support your kind of family unit and will not be taught that your sexuality is a "perversion."
16. Belonging to the religious denomination of your choice and knowing that your sexuality will not be denounced by its religious leaders.
17. Knowing that you will not be fired from a job nor denied a promotion based on your sexuality.
18. Playing a professional sport and not worrying that your athletic ability will be overshadowed by your sexuality and the fact that you share a locker room with the same gender.
19. Not having to worry about being evicted if your landlord finds out about your sexuality.
20. Not having to "come out" (explain to people that you're straight, as they will most likely assume it).
21. Knowing that being open with your sexuality isn't going to change how people view you.
22. Being able to live anywhere in the world and find people like yourself, unlike gay people, who are limited geographically. (Even if the people in more rural areas aren't homophobic, living in a low-density population means social isolation, lack of a dating pool, etc., for queer folks. Even among urban areas, there are only a few cities in the world, relatively speaking, where gay people can live openly and without too much fear.)
23. Not having to worry that people won't let their children play with your children because of your sexuality.

24. Being able to move abroad with your children without sudden changes of your legal status and the possibility of even losing your children.
25. You can use public restrooms without fear of verbal abuse, physical intimidation, or arrest.
26. You can use public facilities such as gym locker rooms and store changing rooms without stares, fear, or anxiety.
27. Strangers don't assume they can ask you what your genitals look like and how you have sex.
28. Your validity as a man/woman/human is not based on how much surgery you've had or how well you "pass" as non-transgender.
29. You can walk through the world and generally blend in, not being constantly stared or gawked at, whispered about, pointed at, or laughed at because of your gender expression.
30. You can access gender-exclusive spaces (e.g., a space or activity for women), and not be excluded due to your trans status.
31. Strangers call you by the name you provide and don't ask what your "real name" (birth name) is and then assume that they have a right to call you by that name.
32. If you end up in the emergency room, you do not have to worry that your gender will keep you from receiving appropriate treatment or that all of your medical issues will be seen as a result of your gender.
33. You are not required to undergo an extensive psychological evaluation in order to receive basic medical care.
34. You do not have to defend your right to be a part of "queer" (or the queer community), and gays and lesbians will not try to exclude you from "their" equal rights movement because of your gender identity (or any equality movement, including feminist rights).
35. If you are murdered (or have any crime committed against you), your gender expression will not be used as a justification for your murder ("gay panic"), nor as a reason to coddle the perpetrators.
36. You can easily find role models and mentors to emulate who share your identity.
37. Hollywood accurately depicts people of your gender in films and television, without tokenizing your identity as the focus of a dramatic storyline or the punchline of a joke.
38. No stranger checking your identification or driver's license will ever insult or glare at you because your name or sex does not match the sex they believed you to be based on your gender expression.
39. You can reasonably assume that you will not be denied services at a hospital, bank, or other institution because the staff does not believe the gender marker on your ID card to match your gender identity.
40. Your gender is an option on a form.
41. You can tick a box on a form without someone disagreeing and telling you not to lie.
42. You can go places with friends on a whim knowing there will be bathrooms there you can use.
43. You don't have to convince your parents of your true gender and/or have to earn your parents' and siblings' love and respect all over again because of your gender identity.
44. You don't have to remind your extended family over and over to use proper gender pronouns (e.g.,
45. If you're dating someone, you know they aren't just looking to satisfy a curiosity or kink pertaining to your gender identity (e.g., the "novelty" of having sex with a trans person).

Questions for Reflection

1. How did this activity make you feel?
2. What was your process when selecting privileges?
3. What were some things on this list that surprised you? Why?
4. Why do you think this activity specifically assigns money? For example, we could have easily said each privilege is worth 1 token and everyone has 5 tokens. What does money represent?
5. Why do you think the amount of money you were given was randomly assigned?



UNC
GREENSBORO

Division of Student Affairs
Intercultural Engagement

