

A DARWINIAM GAME¹

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Dedicated to those who see.

And to those who might one day start seeing.

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Goal of the Game

Primary goal: To win. (Could it be otherwise?)

Secondary goal: To open up a *Museum of Natural History* and to fill it to the brim.

Number of Players

From 4 to 7.5 billion.

Age of the Players

The sooner you start, the better. But it's never too late, folks.

Playing Instructions: Narrative Frame

X declares to a number of acquaintances, "I'm being discriminated against on account of my gender and so are many of my mates. But I'm going to do

something about it—I've had enough! Can I count on you?"

A answers fast as lightning: "I bet you're making that up! Trying to get victim status, aren't you? No way you're being discriminated against! You want to fight an imaginary enemy or what? Count me OUT!"

Then B cuts in and says: "I know you are. I believe you. Nobody is discriminating against me, but I'm going to support you and help you put an end to it. You can count me IN!

Finally, C tentatively adds: "I don't quite see how you're being discriminated against, I'm sorry... But I'll try to put myself in your shoes, see things from your perspective... Sooo... Ehhh... Yeah... Tell me if there's something I can do for you... Just don't write my name on any list, please..."

Playing Instructions: Phase One

Players decide which of X's acquaintances they want to be. They should take into account which of the following roles they are equipped to play:

- A. **The Dinosaur.** (Yeah, I know what you're all thinking... But you're wrong: dinosaurs are not extinct. Scientists don't always get it right, my dears.)
- B. **The Feminist.** (No Sir/Madam, feminists are not a vanishing species, at least not just yet. These days some are even white heterosexual males! Cultural and social analysts don't always get it right either.)
- C. **The Nice and Sympathetic Person.** (Seriously?, you wonder. Well, OK. *Nice* and *sympathetic* can be called into question, I concede that... But certainly this role will best be played by somebody very nearsighted!)

Playing Instructions: Phase Two

Once the players have chosen their roles, they start playing the game accordingly.

Players are allowed to talk, sleep, write, fight, eat, Skype, text, sulk, fart, belch, shit, pee, shout, hush,

sing, spit, jump, suck, fuss and fuck. Yeah, this too. Basically, they can do just about anything they can find listed in the dictionary as a verb.

Foreseeable Conflicts and How To Avoid Them

Clashes as to which player gets to play one role or another may compromise the second phase. Prejudices concerning the legitimacy of certain roles may also be a stumbling block for the smooth advancement of the game.

So here are some tips on how to solve possible conflicts, avoid emergencies and help everyone stay calm and confident. Or empowered, as some would put it these days.

What happens if...

... a majority of players choose role A?

The world becomes Jurassic Park. Spielberg runs the show following Trump's orders. No worries, though! This is the scenario humanity has currently chosen and the Earth is not going downhill. (Or is it?) Henceforth, these players will also be referred to as THE REALISTIC PLAYERS. This will certainly boost their confidence in the soundness of their choice.

... a majority of players choose role B?

Ha-ha-ha! No kidding! That won't happen. Human beings have not yet evolved that far. You'll have to wait a few millennia for this. Henceforth, the scant players who may actually choose role B will also be referred to as THE QUIXOTIC LUNATICS. The reference to a canonical text in world literature will sustain the morale of the few who dare pick this role. We kindly request that the term "lunatic" be not understood as having negative connotations; instead, we encourage all players to consider its romantic and utopian implications.

... a majority of players choose role C?

Don't panic. Even if this possibility sounds preposterous and unrealistic, the truth is that having a team of short-sighted players wouldn't be the end of the world—it does not even entail (not necessarily, anyway) losing the game. In fact, players in this role need a much lesser degree of evolution than those in role B. All it takes for them to have a chance to win is a willingness to try on the purple lenses the game provides. On average, these players are not conscious of their potential as eventual winners, which is a point in their favor, as everyone else underestimates them. Henceforth, these players will also be referred to as THE HOODWINK PLAYERS. Calling them *myopic* or *short-sighted* might be descriptively accurate, but many will rightly argue that description oppresses, as adjectives are inevitably associated with prejudice and preconceptions. Hoodwink is likewise deeply entrenched in negativity (what with the idea of covering a prisoner's eyes with a hood or veiling the truth, among other unedifying possibilities). But here we entreat players to remember that it was once the name used for the game *Blind*

Man's Bluff. And we urge them to invoke the playful spirit of a bygone era when political correctness had not been devised by conniving minds.

Playing the Darwinian Game: A Simulacrum

A: [*Triumphant.*] I am superior to the lot of you! Oh yeah! You're just a pack of pussies! So I win. GAME OVER.

B: [*Gasping for breath and nearly in death throes, but spirit unabated.*] Not just yet, you moron!

C: [*Surprised to see a shining object on the floor, bends over to pick it up and tries it on. Then gasps too—not for breath like B, though, but flabbergasted at the brand new world that has been unveiled. After recovering from the shocking vision, addresses A.*] You certainly are archaic, my dear. Two to one. So WE win.

[X, B and C hold each other's hands. They dance and merrily sing, and the real fun begins. At that point, all

playing Dinosaurs deflate and are reduced to the size of toy animals. It is high time they did, anyway, so tears are uncalled for.]

An Exculpatory Note

While discussing the denouement of the game, its designers failed to see the need to further complicate it with the presence of a super huge asteroid that impacts our planet and causes the disappearance of Dinosaurs as well as everything else it finds in its way.

A mere deflation of the Dinosaurs' bodies would be more than enough, they thought, to give proper closure to the game. The deflation would be naturally caused by a deficiency in Dinosaur DNA structures; in particular, an inability to adapt to and evolve in more sophisticated environments. Built-in obsolescence, some might prefer to call it these days.

Be that as it may, this ending made much more sense to the game designers, who were radical feminists and therefore logically inclined to alter the normal course of events.

Besides, as is universally acknowledged, feminists are against all forms of abuse and exploitation, and since they hold Mother Earth very dearly, it seemed to them that avoiding unnecessary destruction was certainly a noble guiding principle in the arduous task of game designing.

One player's gain, so went their reasoning, should never come at the expense of the planet's loss. But it could come at another player's loss insofar as the latter was an unworthy or deficient player, of course.

Special Warning to Players B and C

Notwithstanding how much fun and excitement you've experienced in the process of playing, please refrain from starting the game over again once the primary goal has been achieved. You should be warned that Dinosaurs, like viruses, may learn from unsuccessful attempts at conquering a territory.

Last but not least: Bear in mind that the game has not one but two goals. Do not abandon the playground until the secondary goal has been successfully attained, as failure to accomplish the secondary goal may result in everlasting damage to you both.

(Oh dear! The game has a seminal motto, too, though it hasn't been stated so far. How forgetful of us! Here it is, at last, in case it helps. Better late than never, they say...)



A Dinosaur's place is in the museum.