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 Phil. 489  
 Dr. Helman  
 Response to DeWayne  
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So what if I am white? Does race really matter that much in today's culture?

DeWayne makes the point in his paper that we as a society focus too much on the concept of ethnicity and to remedy this situation need to embrace our own ethnicity. He personally calls for an inward turn for greater understanding of one's own race through self-awareness. I do not feel this is the right means to overcome racial turmoil, but his proof seem to make sense although he does not formulate a clear answer to overcoming race itself.

DeWayne makes the push at the beginning of his paper that at the collegiate level black philosophy should be taught, for current collegiate philosophy is not relevant to the black perspective / struggle. I find this claim to be simply false. If this argument is to be made then we should stop reading German philosophers and turn to reading only American writers, for we come from different struggles. In a way it is useful to read those that agree with your given opinion or share in the same oppression, but I do not believe this is the case with philosophy. It may seem that these dead white German men did not understand the black perspective, but their truths I do believe to be universal. Based upon this point I do not believe it truly matters what color the philosopher was, given his points of thought were clear and true.

"I think therefore I am". DeWayne makes a stab at Descartes in making the claim through his source of Mill that the *I* in Descartes doesn't leave room for the

*We*. DeWayne believes like Mill, that there is a communal aspect to the way in which we perceive the self. This is not true for we can only perceive through ourselves and not by way of others and their perceptions. Descartes truth is universal. It may be true that black people harbor more of a relation to a community than white, but humanity as a whole is interconnected through itself in the being human. To me it really doesn't matter where we sense community it is that we do and can associate with it. Community is something we engage in, it does not effect our initial perceptions of our existence.

DeWayne's use of the source of Naomi Zack I found to be more useful to my understanding of race and means to overcoming it. Zack pushes for a breakdown of race and a need for a greater global community. This makes sense, for without race there would be no racism. Zack stresses a far more universal approach than DeWayne believes to be possible, but in my opinion if we as whole society dropped race as a concern it would become obsolete. In a way this is controversial in and of itself as pointed out in the paper, but in my opinion would lead to less racism than if one focused inwardly on their own race.

Stressing an inward turn to the self to better understand race raises many issues with me. If one turns to themselves to understand race they do not come to understand the race of those different than they. This is an issue and I believe such a focus on self-embrace could cause greater racial differences, for in it we reject the differences of others and embrace ourselves instead. As a white man I could see this as a problem, for in embracing myself I could inadvertently see those different from me as being less human, for they are less than me. My solution to this is to embrace

the race of everyone equally. I am pro the Zack approach that in understanding each others differences we together can understand our own and embrace diversity.