Both social networks and video games are prevalent in today’s society. These technologies have the potential to deliver meaningful experiences related to social identity, by allowing users to engage with their own identity-related experiences, as well as the experiences of others [1,2].  However, merely customizing graphical representations and text fields is insufficient when it comes to conveying the broad and subtle range of experiences pertaining to personal and social identity [5]. As a step toward conveying richer technological expressions of real-world identity issues, we implemented an interactive narrative game for iOS called *Mimesis* which invites players to explore identity phenomena arising from subtly discriminatory everyday social acts, or *microaggressions*.

*Mimesis* aims to serve as a conceptualizing tool, enabling players to understand and directly experience the phenomenon of microaggression, with a particular focus on subtle social microinvalidations. As a work of narrative art, *Mimesis* is an insurgent metaphor that places players in control of a transient mimic octopus. Along its journey home, the mimic octopus character encounters a variety of sea creatures that always initially ask: “Where are you from?” While it may seem benign, this question is actually a normative form of microinvalidation, covertly implying, “You don’t belong here.”

The particular resolution of each encounter is based on the personal traits of the player character. Significantly, *Mimesis* uses real-world user information obtained from a user’s social networking profile to computationally model players’ identities within its metaphorical narrative environment, thereby connecting players’ real world identities to their avatars’ identities.

In *Mimesis*, we use the music preferences listed on the player’s Facebook profile as a narrow lens providing access to one limited aspect of a player’s real world identity. We chose musical tastes as a metaphor for broader qualities of personal and social identity, as music is a commonly accepted marker of group identity.

After reading a user’s musical *Likes* from their Facebook profile, we encapsulate each band or artist into an entity called a **music element**. Each music element contains two pieces of meta-data: the **moods** and the **genres** associated with each artist (generated by querying an open-source music classification API). Avatar appearance reflects the most commonly occurring genre in each user’s preferences, according to predetermined genre-to-sea creature mappings. Moods are mapped onto four distinct strategies of response to a microaggression.

Once a preliminary avatar has been created, the user can choose to modify the avatar by adding, removing or swapping music elements belonging to his or her profile with elements from friends’ profiles. This exhibits the social phenomena of *posing* as a strategy of identity management. Within the game’s rules, the degree to which an avatar’s identity is posed influences the effectiveness of certain strategies in progressing through conversational encounters. Our avatar customization interface encourages players to negotiate elements of their real-world social identities within a fantasy setting.

Having customized their mimic octopus avatar, players emerge into an exploratory underwater space, with the goal of progressing from the ocean’s depths back to its surface. Along the way, players are forced into a series of conversational encounters with non-player characters (or NPCs) who exhibit various forms and degrees of microinvalidating behavior. Each encounter involves a single NPC who exhibits a single, dominant mood in its responses, as opposed to the mimic octopus protagonist’s negotiable blend of four available moods. As encounters progress, the *Mimesis* client application references hard-coded XML dialogue trees to enact each scenario. These XML-based narrative maps contain available lines of player dialogue as well as the particular NPC responses that are invoked as a result of player actions. Depending on how each encounter progresses, players are either allowed to progress on their journey, or doomed to remain in the same part of the ocean and repeat the encounter with a similar, subsequent NPC.

*Mimesis* is a game with a social agenda that is expressed via evocative metaphor rather than didactic rhetoric. Replaying the game helps players to better understand their experiences, by comparing and contrasting the results of different strategies for responding to microinvalidations. The undersea metaphor adds salience and a layer of abstraction from everyday life to help call attention to the general phenomenon of microaggression. *Mimesis* argues that computational identity representation systems are a potentially effective tool for bringing about positive conceptual change and for increasing awareness of social discrimination in all its forms.