



The Stanford Prison Experiment

By Gabriel Dischereit

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Justus-Liebig-University Giessen, language: English, abstract: In
the 1970s and '80s, the behavioral researcher and psychologist
Prof. Philip Zimbardo tested the effects of extraordinary
situations on human subjects. Zimbardo was less concerned
with demonstrating the personal situations, developments and
psychological case studies of individuals, and rather was
searching for universal relationships between external influences
and the behavior of the subject. Such influences are to be
observed in situations of extreme duress, as illustrated by those
in prisons. After World War II there were a multitude of reports
from prisoners about their personal experiences, the influences
and effects of their respective time in prison. Zimbardo now
wanted to observe the effects of prison on a universal level. He
thus clearly separated the personal psyche of the individual
from the factors that would encroach from the 'outside', making
them equal to prisoners. The core question Zimbardo was
experimenting with was the question of the 'good' and 'evil' in
humans. Would good or evil...



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