The serenity of a summer Sunday morning in Palo Alto, California, was suddenly shattered by the sirens of a police squad car sweeping through town in a surprise mass arrest of college students for a variety of felony code violations. They were handcuffed, searched, warned of their legal rights, and then taken to police headquarters for a formal booking procedure. Let's return to that scene on August 14, 1971, to recall what those arrests were all about.

Synopsis of the Research
The police had agreed to cooperate with our research team in order to increase the "mundane realism" of having one's freedom suddenly taken away by the police rather than surrendering it voluntarily as a research participant who had volunteered for an experiment. The city police chief was in a cooperative and conciliatory mood after tensions had run high on Stanford's campus following violent confrontations between his police and student anti-Vietnam War protesters. I capitalized on these positive emotions to help defuse these tensions between police and college students and thereby to solicit the invaluable assistance of police officers in dramatizing our study from the outset.

These college students had answered an ad in the local newspaper inviting volunteers for a study of prison life that would run up to 2 weeks for the pay of $15 a day. They were students from all over the United States, most of whom had just completed summer school courses at Stanford or the University of California, Berkeley. Seventy of those who had called our office were invited to take a battery of psychological tests (the California Personality Inventory) and engage in interviews conducted by Craig Haney and Curtis Banks, who were graduate students at that time. We were assisted by David Jaffe, an undergraduate who played the role of prison warden. I played the role of prison superintendent, in addition to being the principal investigator, which would later prove to be a serious error in judgment.

Two dozen of those judged most normal, average, and healthy on all dimensions we assessed were selected to be the participants in our experiment. They were randomly assigned to the two treatments of mock prisoner and mock guard. Thus there were no systematic differences between them initially nor systematic preferences for role assignments. Virtually all had indicated a preference for being a prisoner because they could not imagine going to college and ending up as a prison guard. On the other hand, they could imagine being imprisoned for a driving violation or some act of civil disobedience and thus felt they might learn something of value from this experience should that ever happen.

The guards helped us to complete the final stages in the construction of the mock prison in the basement of the Stanford University psychology department. The setting was a barren hallway, without windows or natural light. Office doors were fitted with iron bars, and closets were converted to dark, solitary confinement areas. The "yard" was the 30-foot-long hallway in front of the three prison cells -- converted from small staff offices. Three offices were set up in an adjacent hallway for the staff: one for the guards to change into and out of their uniforms, one for the warden, and the third for the superintendent. Provision was made for space in the hallway to accommodate visitors on visitors' nights. There was only a single door for access and exit, the other end of the corridor having been closed off by a wall we erected. A small opening in that wall was provided for a video camera and for inconspicuous observation. The cells were bugged with microphones so that prisoner conversations could be secretly monitored.

The guards were invited also to select their own military-style uniforms at a local army surplus store and met as a group for a general orientation and to formulate rules for proper prisoner behavior on the
Saturday before the next day's arrests. We wanted the guards to feel as if it were "their prison" and that soon they would be hosting a group of prisoner-guests.

The would-be prisoners were told to wait at home or at the address they provided us, and we would contact them on Sunday. After the surprise arrest by the police, they were brought to our simulated prison environment, where they underwent a degradation ceremony as part of the initiation into their new role. This is standard operating procedure in many prisons and military institutions, according to our prison consultant, a recently paroled ex-convict, Carlo Prescott. Nine prisoners filled three cells, and three guards staffed each of the 8-hour shifts, supplemented by backups on standby call. Additional participants were also on standby as replacements if need be, one of whom was called on midweek to take the place of a released prisoner. The prisoners wore uniforms that consisted of smocks with numbers sewn on front and back, ankle chains, nylon stocking caps (to simulate the uniform appearance from having one's hair cut off), and rubber thongs on their feet, but no underwear. Among the coercive rules formulated by the guards were those requiring the prisoners to refer to themselves and each other only by their prison number and to the guards as "Mr. Correctional Officer."

Much of the daily chronology of behavioral actions was videotaped for later analysis, along with a variety of other observations, interviews, tests, diaries, daily reports, and follow-up surveys that together constituted the empirical data of the study. Of course, we were studying both guard and prisoner behavior, so neither group was given any instructions on how to behave. The guards were merely told to maintain law and order, to use their billy clubs as only symbolic weapons and not actual ones, and to realize that if the prisoners escaped the study would be terminated.

It is important to realize that both groups had completed informed-consent forms indicating that some of their basic civil rights would have to be violated if they were selected for the prisoner role and that only minimally adequate diet and health care would be provided. The university Human Subjects Review Board approved of the study with only minor limitations that we followed, such as alerting Student Health Services of our research and also providing fire extinguishers because there was minimal access to this space. Ironically, the guards later used these extinguishers as weapons to subdue the prisoners with their forceful blasts.

It took a full day for most of the guards to adapt to their new, unfamiliar roles as dominating, powerful, and coercive. Initial encounters were marked by awkwardness between both groups of participants. However, the situation was radically changed on the second day, when several prisoners led all the others in a rebellion against the coercive rules and restraints of the situation. They tried to individuate themselves, ripped off their sewn-on prisoner numbers, locked themselves into their cells, and taunted the guards. I told the guards that they had to handle this surprising turn of events on their own. They called in all the standby guards, and the night shift stayed overtime. Together, they crushed the prisoner rebellion and developed a greater sense of guard camaraderie, along with a personal dislike of some of the prisoners who had insulted them to their face. The prisoners were punished in a variety of ways. They were stripped naked, put in solitary confinement for hours on end, deprived of meals and blankets or pillows, and forced to do push-ups, jumping jacks, and meaningless activities. The guards also generated a psychological tactic of dividing and conquering their enemy by creating a "privilege cell" in which the least rebellious prisoners were put to enjoy the privilege of a good meal or a bed to sleep on. This tactic did have the immediate effect of creating suspicion and distrust among the prisoners.

We observed and documented on videotape that the guards steadily increased their coercive and aggressive tactics, humiliation, and dehumanization of the prisoners day by day. The staff had to remind the guards frequently to refrain from such abuses. However, the guards' hostile treatment of the prisoners, together with arbitrary and capricious displays of their dominating power and authority, soon
began to have adverse effects on the prisoners. Within 36 hours after being arrested, the first prisoner had to be released because of extreme stress reactions of crying, screaming, cursing, and irrational actions that seemed to be pathological. The guards were most sadistic in waking prisoners from their sleep several times a night for "counts," supposedly designed for prisoners to learn their identification numbers but actually to use the occasion to taunt them, punish them, and play games with them, or rather on them. Deprivation of sleep, particularly REM sleep, also gradually took a toll on the prisoners. Interestingly, the worst abuses by the guards came on the late-night shift, when they thought the staff was asleep and they were not being monitored.

That first prisoner to be released, Prisoner 8612, had been one of the ringleaders of the earlier rebellion, and he jolted his fellow prisoners by announcing that they would not be allowed to quit the experiment even if they requested it. The shock waves from this false assertion reverberated through all of the prisoners and converted the simulated experiment into "a real prison run by psychologists instead of run by the state," according to one of the prisoners. After that, some prisoners decided to become "good prisoners," obeying every rule and following all prison procedures faithfully in zombie-like fashion. Powerful conformity pressures eliminated individual differences among the prisoners. But another generalized reaction was to imitate the behavior of Prisoner 8612 and passively escape by acting "crazy" and forcing the staff to release them prematurely. On each of the next three days a prisoner took that path out of the SPE. A fifth prisoner was released after he broke out in a full body rash following the rejection of his appeal for parole by our mock parole board. The parole board heard prisoner requests for early parole and refutations by the guards. The board consisted of secretaries, graduate students, and others, headed by our prison consultant, who was familiar with such hearings because his own parole requests had been turned down at least 16 times.

Although most of the time during the day and night the only interactions that took place were between prisoners and guards, it should be noted that probably as many as 100 other people came down to our basement prison to play some role in this drama. On Visitors' Night, about two dozen parents and friends came to see their prisoners. A former prison chaplain visited, interviewed all but one of the inmates, and reported that their reactions were very much like those of first-time offenders he had observed in real prisons. Our two parole boards consisted of another 10 outsiders. Perhaps as many as 20 psychology graduate students and faculty looked in from the observation window or at the video monitor during the experiment or played more direct roles inadvertently. Others helped with interviews and various chores during the study. Finally, a public defender came to interview the remaining inmates on the last day. He came at the request of the mother of one of the prisoners, who had been informed by the Catholic priest (who had visited our prison earlier) that her son wanted legal counsel to help him get out of the detention facility in which he was being held. He too likened their mental and behavioral state to those of real prisoners and jailed citizens awaiting trial.

We had to call off the experiment and close down our prison after only 6 days of what might have been a 2-week long study of the psychological dynamics of prison life. We had to do so because too many normal young men were behaving pathologically as powerless prisoners or as sadistic, all-powerful guards. Recall that we had spent much time and effort in a selection process that chose only the most normal, healthy, well-adjusted college students as our sample of research participants. At the beginning of the study there were no differences between those assigned randomly to guard and prisoner roles. In less than a week, there were no similarities among them; they had become totally different creatures. Guard behavior varied from being fully sadistic to occasionally acting so to being a tough guard who "went by the book" and, for a few, to being "good guards" by default. That is, they did not degrade or harass the prisoners, and even did small favors for them from time to time, but never, not once, did any of the so-called good guards ever contest an order by a sadistic guard, intervene to stop or prevent despicable behavior by another guard, or come to work late or leave early. In a real sense, it was the
good guards who most kept the prisoners in line because the prisoners wanted their approval and feared things would get worse if those good guards quit or ever took a dislike to them.

Building on this brief synopsis of an intensely profound and complex experience, I next want to outline why this study was conducted as it was and what we learned from it. Before doing so, I should preview the next section of this chapter by noting that the immediate impetus for terminating the study came from an unexpected source, a young woman, recently graduated with a PhD from our department, who had agreed to assist us with some interviews on Friday. She came in from the cold and saw the raw, fullblown madness of this place that we all had gradually accommodated to day by day. She got emotionally upset, angry, and confused. But in the end, she challenged us to examine the madness she observed -- that we had created. If we allowed it to continue further, she reminded us of our ethical responsibility for the consequences and well-being of the young men entrusted to our care as research participants.

**Genesis of the Experiment: Why Did We Do This Study?**

There were three reasons for conducting this study, two conceptual and one pedagogical. I had been conducting research for some years earlier on deindividuation, vandalism, and dehumanization that illustrated the ease with which ordinary people could be led to engage in antisocial acts by putting them into situations in which they felt anonymous or in which they could perceive others in ways that made them less than human, as enemies or objects. This research is summarized in Zimbardo (1970). I wondered, along with my research associates, Craig Haney and Curt Banks, what would happen if we aggregated all of these processes, making some participants feel deindividuated and others dehumanized within an anonymous environment, that constituted a "total environment" (see Lifton, 1969) in a controlled experimental setting. That was the primary reason for conducting this study.

A related second conceptual reason was to generate another test of the power of social situations over individual dispositions without relying on the kind of face-to-face imposition of authority surveillance that was central in Stanley Milgram's obedience studies (see Milgram, 1992). In many real-life situations, people are seduced to behave in evil ways without the coercive control of an authority figure demanding their compliance or obedience. In the SPE, we focused on the power of roles, rules, symbols, group identity, and situational validation of ordinarily ego-alien behaviors and behavioral styles. We were influenced here by earlier reports of "brainwashing" and "milieu control" coming out of accounts of the Korean War and Chinese Communist indoctrination methods (Schein, 1956).

Pedagogically, the study had its roots in a social psychology course I had taught the previous spring, after the student strikes against the university as part of anti-Vietnam War activities. I invited students to reverse roles and instruct me on 10 topics that interested me but that I had not had the time to investigate. They were primarily topics and issues that were at the interface of sociology and psychology or of institutions and individuals, such as the effects of being put into an old-age home, media distortion of information, and the psychology of imprisonment. The group of students, headed by David Jaffe, who chose the prison topic conducted a mock prison experiential learning session over a weekend just before they were to make their class presentation. The dramatically powerful impact this brief experience had on many of them surprised me and forced us to consider whether such a situation could really generate so much distress and role identification or whether the students who chose to study prisons, among the many other options available to the class, were in some way more "pathological" than the rest of the ordinary students. The only way to resolve that ambiguity was to conduct a controlled experiment that eliminated self-selection factors, and so we did.
Ten Lessons Learned From the SPE

Lesson 1. Some situations can exert powerful influences over individuals, causing them to behave in ways they would not, could not, predict in advance (see Ross & Nisbett, 1991). In trying to understand the causes of complex, puzzling behavior, it is best to start with a situational analysis and yield to the dispositional only when the situational fails to do a causal job.

Lesson 2. Situational power is most salient in novel settings in which the participants cannot call on previous guidelines for their new behavior and have no historical references to rely on and in which their habitual ways of behaving and coping are not reinforced. Under such circumstances, personality variables have little predictive utility because they depend on estimations of future actions based on characteristic past reactions in certain situations -- but rarely in the kind of situation currently being encountered. Personality tests simply do not assess such behaviors but rely on asking about typical reactions to known situations -- namely, a historical account of the self.

Lesson 3. Situational power involves ambiguity of role boundaries, authoritative or institutionalized permission to behave in prescribed ways or to disinhibit traditionally disapproved ways of responding. It requires situational validation of playing new roles, following new rules, and taking actions that ordinarily would be constrained by laws, norms, morals, and ethics. Such validation usually comes cloaked in the mantle of ideology; systems considered to be sacred and based on apparently good, virtuous, valued moral imperatives (for social psychologists, ideology equals their experimental "cover story").

Lesson 4. Role playing -- even when acknowledged to be artificial, temporary, and situationally bound -- can still come to exert a profoundly realistic impact on the actors. Private attitudes, values, and beliefs are likely to be modified to bring them in line with the role enactment, as shown by many experiments in dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957; see Zimbardo & Leippe, 1991). This dissonance effect becomes greater as the justification for such role enactment decreases -- for example, when it is carried out for less money, under less threat, or with only minimally sufficient justification or adequate rationale provided. That is one of the motivational mechanisms for the changes we observed in our guards. They had to work long, hard shifts for a small wage of less than $2 an hour and were given minimal direction on how to play the role of guard, but they had to sustain the role consistently over days whenever they were in uniform, on the yard, or in the presence of others, whether prisoners, parents, or other visitors. Such dissonance forces are likely to have been major causes for the internalization of the public role behaviors into private supporting cognitive and affective response styles. We also have to add that the group pressures from other guards had a significant impact on being a "team player," on conforming to or at least not challenging what seemed to be the emergent norm of dehumanizing the prisoners in various ways. Finally, let us take into account that the initial script for guard or prisoner role playing came from the participants' own experiences with power and powerlessness, of seeing parental interactions, of dealing with authority, and of seeing movies and reading accounts of prison life. As in Milgram's research, we did not have to teach the actors how to play their roles. Society had done that for us. We had only to record the extent of their improvisation within these roles -- as our data.

Lesson 5. Good people can be induced, seduced, initiated into behaving in evil (irrational, stupid, selfdestructive, antisocial) ways by immersion in "total situations" that can transform human nature in ways that challenge our sense of the stability and consistency of individual personality, character, and morality (Lifton, 1969). It is a lesson seen in the Nazi concentration camp guards; among destructive cults, such as Jim Jones' People's Temple or more recently the Japanese Aum cult; and in the atrocities committed in Bosnia, Kosovo, Rwanda, and Burundi, among others. Thus any deed that any human being has ever done, however horrible, is possible for any of us to do -- under the right or wrong situational
pressures. That knowledge does not excuse evil; rather, it democratizes it, shares its blame among ordinary participants, rather than demonizes it. Recently, a program at the U.S. Air Force Academy (code named SERE) that was designed to train cadets for survival and escape from enemy capture had to be terminated early because it got out of control. As part of a "sexual exploitation scenario," women cadets were beaten repeatedly, degraded, humiliated, put in solitary confinement, deprived of sleep, and made to wear hoods over their heads -- all much like the SPE. But in addition, the women cadets in this course were subjected to simulated rapes by interrogators that were realistic enough to cause posttraumatic stress disorder. These "rapes" were videotaped and also watched by other cadets, none of whom ever intervened. The grandfather of one abused female cadet, himself a World War II hero, said, "I can't believe that all these men, these elite boys, could stand around and watch a young woman get degraded and not one had enough guts to stop it" (Palmer, 1995, p. 24). After watching our "good guards" be similarly immobilized when witnessing SPE abuses, I can now understand how that could happen.

Lesson 6. Human nature can be transformed within certain powerful social settings in ways as dramatic as the chemical transformation in the captivating fable of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. I think it is that transformation of character that accounts for the enduring interest in this experiment for more than a quarter of a century. A recent analysis of the SPE by an Australian psychologist (Carr, 1995) reports that undergraduate students in that country who learn about the study are left surprised, disturbed, and mystified by it. He notes:

Judging by the reactions of our own students, it has even more impact than either Asch's "linelength" study (Asch, 1951) or Milgram's (1963) obedience study. What seems to strike home is that Zimbardo's situation impacted much more deeply on his subjects, reportedly corrupting their own innermost beliefs and feelings -- and all this without involving the direct pressure to change which runs through the classic conformity and obedience studies. (Carr, 1995, p. 31)

Lesson 7. Despite the artificiality of controlled experimental research such as the SPE or any of Milgram's many variations on the obedience paradigm, when such research is conducted in a way that captures essential features of "mundane realism," the results do have considerable generalizability power. In recent years, it has become customary to deride such research as limited by context-specific considerations, as not really credible to the research participants, or as not tapping the vital dimensions of the naturalistic equivalent. If this were so, there would be no reason to ever go through the enormous efforts involved in doing such research well. We believe that much of that criticism is misguided and comes from colleagues who don't know how to do such research or how to make it work or who misunderstand the value of a psychologically functional equivalent of a real-world process or phenomenon. Several previous chapters in this volume document eloquently the generalizability of Milgram's experiments.

I would like to call attention to two parallels to the SPE: one recent, the other from an earlier era. On July 22, 1995, news headlines chronicled, "Guards abused inmates in immigration center" (Dunn, 1995, p. A6). The article, reprinted in the San Francisco Chronicle from the New York Times, reported on an investigation of a New Jersey detention center holding immigrants awaiting deportation. It outlined "a culture of abuse that had quickly developed at the detention center," in which "underpaid and poorly trained guards had beaten detainees, singling out the midnight shift as particularly abusive." Investigators found that "guards routinely participated in acts meant to degrade and harass, such as locking detainees in isolation and repeatedly waking them in the middle of the night." This was all possible in part because "the detention center had become a closed and private world." Such an account mirrors exactly what transpired in the SPE: The worst abuses were by guards on our midnight shift, who thought they were
not being monitored by the research team; they degraded, harassed, and woke the prisoners repeatedly every night, and at times hit them and locked them in isolation -- and they were also underpaid and poorly trained to be guards.

Historian Christopher Browning (1992) provides a chilling account of a little-known series of mass murders during the Holocaust. A group of older reserve policemen from Hamburg, Germany, was sent to Poland to round up and execute all the Jews living in rural areas because it was too costly and inconvenient to ship them to the concentration camps for extermination. In his book, appropriately titled *Ordinary Men*, Browning documents how these men were induced to commit the atrocities of shooting Jewish men, women, and children, doing the killing up close and personal, without the technology of the gas chambers to distance the crimes against humanity. The author goes on to note, "Zimbardo's spectrum of guard behavior bears an uncanny resemblance to the groupings that emerged within Reserve Police Battalion 101" (p. 168). He shows how some became sadistically "cruel and tough," enjoying the killings, whereas others were "tough, but fair" in "playing the rules," and a minority qualified as "good guards" who refused to kill and did small favors for the Jews.

So we side with Kurt Lewin, who argued decades ago for the science of experimental social psychology. Lewin asserted that it is possible to take conceptually and practically significant issues from the real world into the experimental laboratory, where it is possible to establish certain causal relationships in a way not possible in field studies and then to use that information to understand or make changes in the real world (Lewin, 1951; Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939). In fact, in his presidential speech to the American Psychological Association, psycholinguist George Miller (1969) startled his audience by advocating a radical idea for that time, that we should "give psychology away to the public." The exemplars he later used, in a *Psychology Today* (1980) interview, as being ideal for public consumption of psychological research were the Stanford Prison Experiment and Milgram's obedience studies.

From another perspective, the SPE does not tell us anything new about prisons that sociologists and narratives of prisoners have not already revealed about the evils of prison life. What is different is that by virtue of the experimental protocol, we put selected good people, randomly assigned to be either guard or prisoner, and observed the ways in which they were changed for the worse by their daily experiences in the evil place.

Lesson 8. Selection procedures for special tasks, such as being prison guards -- especially those that are relatively new to the applicants -- might benefit from engaging the participants in simulated role playing rather than, or in addition to, screening on the basis of personality testing. As far as I know, current training for the very difficult job of prison guard, or correctional officer, involves minimal training in the psychological dimensions of this position.

Lesson 9. It is necessary for psychological researchers who are concerned about the utility of their findings and the practical application of their methods or conclusions to go beyond the role constraints of academic researcher to become advocates for social change. We must acknowledge the value-laden nature of some kinds of research that force investigators out of their stance of objective neutrality into the realm of activism as partisans for spreading the word of their research to the public and to those who might be able to implement its recommendations through policy actions. Craig Haney and I have tried to do so collectively and individually in many ways with our writings, public testimonies, and development of special media to communicate to a wider audience than the academic readers of psychology journals.
Lesson 10. Prisons are places that demean humanity, destroy the nobility of human nature, and bring out the worst in social relations among people. They are as bad for the guards as the prisoners in terms of their destructive impact on self-esteem, sense of justice, and human compassion. They are designed to isolate people from all others and even from the self. Nothing is worse for the health of an individual or a society than to have millions of people who are without, social support, social worth, or social connections to their kin. Prisons are failed social-political experiments that continue to be places of evil and even to multiply, like the bad deeds of the sorcerer's apprentice, because the public is indifferent to what takes place in secret there and because politicians use them and fill them up as much as they can to demonstrate only that they are "tougher on crime" than their political opponents. At present, such misguided thinking has led to the "three strikes" laws in California and a few other states. Meant to curtail violent crime, the statute was so broadly written as to include drug offenses as "serious felonies," thus filling prisons with a disproportionate number of nonviolent, young minority drug offenders -- for a minimum of 25 years to a maximum life term. The cost to taxpayers figures to be about one million dollars per inmate for 25 years of warehousing and medical care and to be even greater for older inmates (see Zimbardo, 1994). The costs of extensive prison construction and of hiring many guards to oversee the many prisoners starting to fill these new prisons is already diminishing the limited state and county funds available for health, education, and welfare. A "mean-spirited" value system pervades many correctional operations, reducing programs for job training, rehabilitation, and physical exercise, and even limiting any individuality in appearance. Projections are dire at best for the future of corrections in the United States.

I was able to terminate my failed prison experiment, but every citizen is paying for, and will continue to pay an enormous price in taxes for, the failed experiments taking place in every state of this union -- the failed U.S. prison system. This system has failed by any criteria: of recidivism, of prison violence, of illegal activities practiced in prisons, of second offenders often committing more serious second-time around crimes than initially, of low morale of corrections staff, and of deadly prison riots. Among the most outrageous examples of the evil that prison settings can generate come from the recent reports of guards "staging fights among inmates and then shooting the combatants," 50 of whom have been shot and 7 killed in the past 8 years (Holding, 1996). Federal investigators have been checking out such reports (Los Angeles Times, 1998). Obviously, sometimes it is the guards we must be protected from, as we saw in the SPE.
Ethics of the SPE

Was the SPE study unethical? No and Yes. No, because it followed the guidelines of the Human Subjects Research Review Board that reviewed it and approved it (see Zimbardo, 1973). There was no deception; all participants were told in advance that, if they became prisoners, many of their usual rights would be suspended and they would have only minimally adequate diet and health care during the study. Their rights should have been protected by any of the many citizens who came to that mock prison, saw the deteriorated condition of those young men, and yet did nothing to intervene -- among them, their own parents and friends on visiting nights, a Catholic priest; a public defender; many professional psychologists; and graduate students, secretaries, and staff of the psychology department, all of whom watched live action videos of part of the study unfold or took part in parole board hearings or spoke to participants and looked at them directly. We might also add another no, because we ended the study earlier than planned, ended it against the wishes of the guards, who felt they finally had the situation under their control and that would be no more disturbance or challenge by the prisoners.

Yes, it was unethical because people suffered and others were allowed to inflict pain and humiliation on their fellows over an extended period of time. This was not the distress of Milgram's participants imagining the pain their shocks were having on the remote victim-learner. This was the pain of seeing and hearing the suffering you as a guard were causing in peers, who, like you, had done nothing to deserve such punishment and abuse. And yes, we did not end the study soon enough. We should have terminated it as soon as the first prisoner suffered a severe stress disorder on Day 2. One reason we did not was because of the conflicts created by my dual roles as principal investigator, thus guardian of the research ethics of the experiment, and as prison superintendent, thus eager to maintain the integrity of my prison.

Positive Consequences

1. The study has become a model of the "power of the situation" in textbooks and in the public mind. Along with Milgram's obedience studies, the SPE has challenged people's views that behavior is primarily under the influence of dispositional factors, which is the view promoted by much of psychology, psychiatry, religion, and law.

2. The study's results, as presented in my testimony before a Congressional Judiciary Committee, influenced federal lawmakers to change a law so that juveniles jailed in pretrial detention (as was the case in our study) would not be housed with adult prisoners because of the anticipated violence against them, according to Congressman Birch Bayh.

3. The study has been presented to a great many civic, judicial, military, and law enforcement groups to enlighten them and arouse their concern about prison life and has influenced guard training in some instances (see Newton & Zimbardo, 1975; Pogash, 1976). Its role-playing procedures have been used to demonstrate to mental health staff how their mental patients perceive and respond to situational features of the ward and staff insensitivity toward them (see Orlando, 1973). Its results have been generally replicated in another culture, New South Wales, Australia (Lovibond, Mithiran, & Adams, 1979).

4. Ideas from the SPE have been the source of three research programs that I have carried out in the past 20 or more years, most notably on the psychology of shyness and ways of treating it -- first in the unique Shyness Clinic that I started at Stanford and now in the local community – to liberate shy people from their self-imposed silent prisons (see Zimbardo, 1977, 1986; Zimbardo, Pilkonis, & Norwood, 1975). The second long-standing research program
influenced by my personal experiences in the SPE is the study of time perspective, how people come to develop temporal frames to partition their experiences but then come to be controlled by their overuse of past, present, or future time frames (see Gonzalez & Zimbardo, 1985; Zimbardo & Boyd, in press). Temporal distortion was a fact of life in the SPE, with 80% of the conversations (monitored secretly) among mock prisoners focused around the immediate present and little about the past or future. Also apparent in the SPE was the fact that many healthy, normal young men began behaving pathologically in a short time period. Thus I began to study the social and cognitive bases of "madness" in normal, healthy people in controlled laboratory experiments (see Zimbardo, Andersen, & Kabat, 1981; Zimbardo, LaBerge, & Butler, 1993). We have found that pathological symptoms may develop in up to one third of normal participants in the process of trying to make sense of their unexplained sources of arousal.

5. At the personal level, there are several positive effects of the SPE that are a source of pride for me.

Carlo Prescott, our prison consultant, has been a good citizen and out of prison for the past 27 years after having served 17 previous years and being released just months before his involvement in the SPE. Because of his role in the SPE, Carlo got a job, had his own radio program for some years, taught college courses on imprisonment, lectured in the community, and gained new status and enhanced self-esteem. We have maintained a close, supportive relationship over many of the intervening years.

Doug Korpi, Prisoner 8612, a ringleader of the prisoner rebellion, was the first prisoner to suffer an extreme emotional stress reaction that forced us to release him after only 36 hours. Doug was so disturbed by his loss of control in this situation that he went on to get a PhD in clinical psychology, in part to learn how to gain greater control over his emotions and behavior. He did his dissertation on shame (of the prisoner status) and guilt (of the guard status), completed his internship at San Quentin Prison, and has been a forensic psychologist in the San Francisco and California corrections system. It is his moving testimony that gave us the title for the video Quiet Rage, when he talked to us about the sadistic impulse in guards that must be guarded against because it is always there in such situations of differential power, ready to slip out, to explode, as a kind of "quiet rage." Here is a case of the obvious initially negative effect of the power of the SPE being transformed into a positive and enduring consequence for the individual and society.

Craig Haney went on to graduate from Stanford with a law degree, as well as a PhD from the psychology department. He is now on the faculty of University of California, Santa Cruz, teaching courses in psychology and law, as well as in the psychology of institutions. Craig is one of the nation's leading consultants on prison conditions and one of only a handful of psychological experts working with attorneys who still represent prisoner class-action suits in the United States. Craig outlines his views on the relationship between lessons of the SPE and corrections in the final section of this chapter.

Christina Maslach, now a psychology professor at University of California Berkeley, who contributed the next section of this chapter, utilized her experience in the SPE to become the pioneering researcher on "job burnout," the loss of human caring among health care professionals. Her work helps to identify those at risk for burnout, and she also adopts a situationist perspective in recommending how to change institutions that promote burnout as opposed to the traditional therapeutic focus on changing "defective workers." She has also
studied the flip side of deindividuation processes, focusing instead on the positive aspects of individuation; that is, the things that make people feel uniquely special.

Finally, I end with the ultimate tribute to the crossover impact of the SPE into popular culture. "Stanford Prison Experiment" is also the name of a rock band from Los Angeles whose very loud music represents "a fusion of punk and noise," according to their leader, who learned about the SPE as a student at UCLA. Having heard their music and "hung out" with the quartet at a recent concert at San Francisco's famous Fillmore auditorium, I can attest to their high energy and tympanic destructive tendencies.

It is reasonable to conclude that there is something about this little experiment that has enduring value not only among social psychologists but also among the general public. I now believe that special something is the dramatic transformation of human nature, not by Jekyll-Hyde chemicals but rather by the power of the situation. Thus I end the first part of this trilogy being pleased that my colleagues and I have been able "to give psychology a way into the public consciousness" in an informative, interesting, and entertaining format that enables all of us to understand something so basic, although disturbing, about our conception of human nature. I think that Stanley Milgram would be pleased that our wellworn, circuitous paths have crossed again in this tribute to him.

For more information, see http://www.prisonexp.org/