

# **KEY STUDIES IN PSYCHOLOGY**

**Social psychology**



**Jiří Čeněk, 2015**

# WHAT IS SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY?

Influence of **social processes** on the way people:

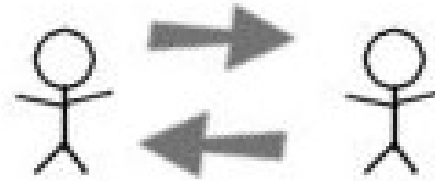
- **Think**  
(thoughts; cognition)
- **Feel**  
(feelings; emotions)
- **Behave**  
(behaviour; actions)



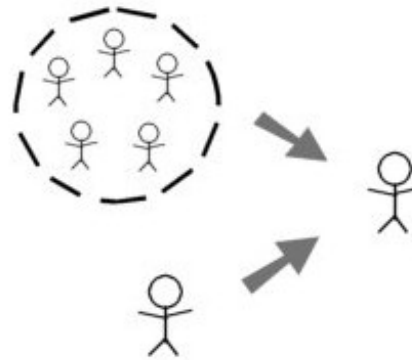
# WHAT IS SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY?

## Social processes:

### 1. Relationships



### 2. Social influence



### 3. Intergroup relations



# HISTORY & RESEARCH IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY



# EARLY APPROACHES TO SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

## **European approaches**

1. Volkerpsychology
2. Psychology of the crowd

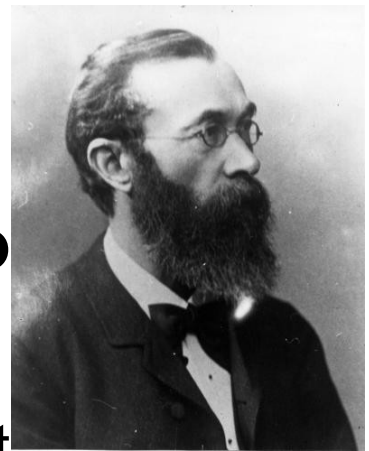
## **American approaches**

1. Tradition of behaviorism



# HISTORY

## Psychology of nations (Volkerpsycho

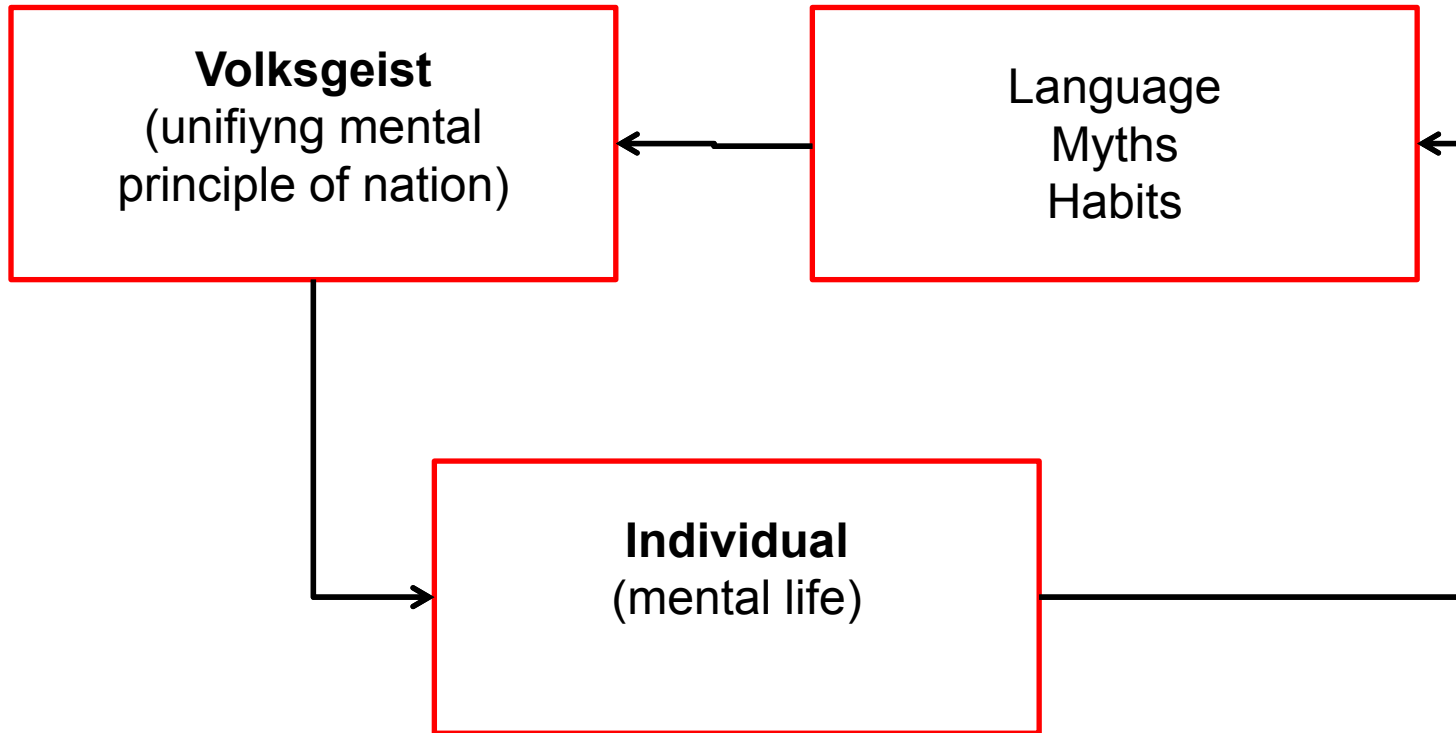


- W. Wundt (1860, Germany)
  - ‘... psychological exploration the basis of the **soul of the nations** and its influencing and uncovering the mental processes...’
  - Assumption: Nation is the natural form of human society
- M. Lazarus, H. Steinthal
  - theory of languages and mythology.
- Comparison of nations



# HISTORY

## Psychology of nations



# HISTORY

## Psychology of the crowd

- Le Bon (1895, France)
- **Grounds of the theory:**
  1. Concept of the suggestion: 1 person can directly influence thoughts of other person

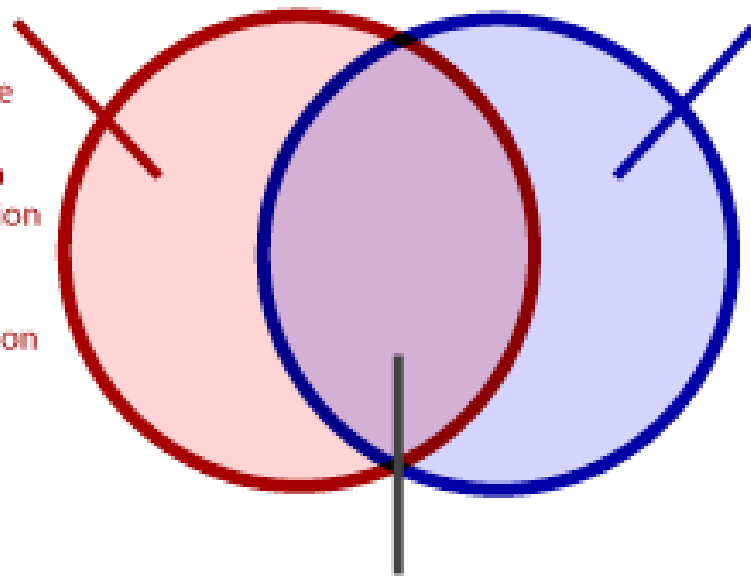




# HYPNOTIC SUGGESTION

## Hypnotic 'Trance'

A hypnotic 'trance' is the end state of a hypnotic induction. An induction aids the focus of attention and often (but not necessarily) contains suggestions for relaxation



## Suggestion

Suggestions are instructions to experience the world in a certain way. A 'successful' response is where the effect feels like it is happening all by itself (involuntariness)

Some example suggestions:

*"When you wake up you will find it difficult to remember your name, so difficult that you won't even try"* (amnesia)

*"The sensation is draining out of your left hand, it's feeling more and more numb"* (analgesia)

*"When you open your eyes you will see your best friend sitting in the chair next to you"* (hallucination)

## Hypnotic Suggestion

Hypnotic suggestions are suggestions delivered in a hypnotic context (after a hypnotic induction). Many people respond better to suggestions while in hypnosis but it is important to remember that it is not necessary to deliver a hypnotic induction for suggestions to be effective.

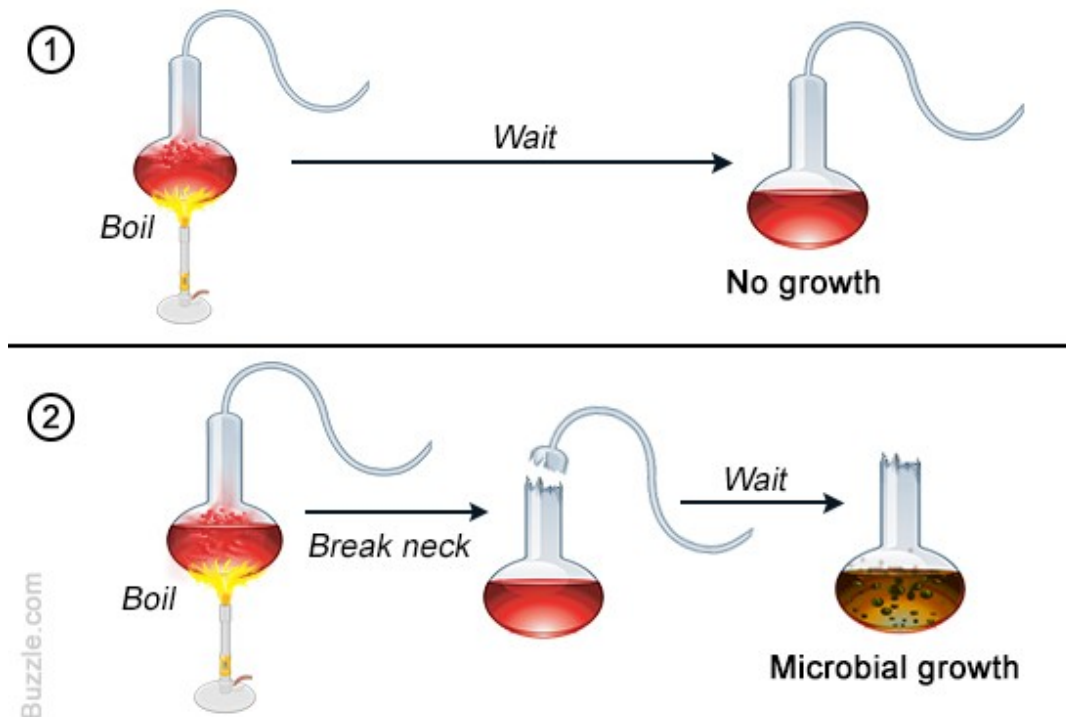


# PSYCHOLOGY OF THE CROWD :

## FOUNDATIONS OF THE THEORY

### 2. Epidemiology (L. Pasteur, R. Koch):

#### ○ Germ theory of disease



#### ○ Spreading of negative affects in crowd = mental disease

# PSYCHOLOGY OF THE CROWD: GROUNDS OF THE THEORY

3. Criminology (Tarde): lowered legal responsibility
  - Individual in the crowd
    - Descends to more primitive level
    - Lowered logical thinking



# HISTORY

## Psychology of the crowd

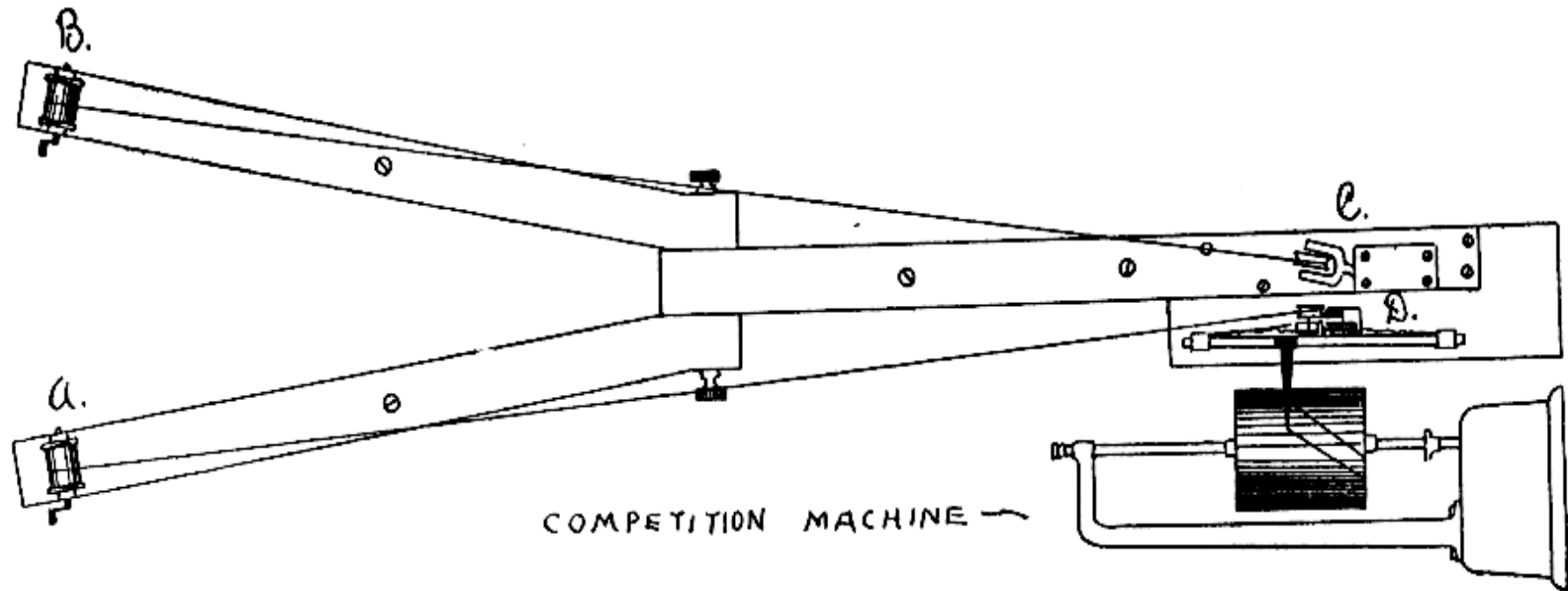


- Le Bon (1895, France)
- Defined typical characteristics of behavior of a person in crowd:
  - Domination of the feelings over the reason, loss of reasoning, loss of responsibility
  - Lessened intelligence, lessened responsibility
  - The crowd is mainly characterized by the lack of structure, it is unorganized, chaotic, it needs a leader



# HISTORY

- First social psychological experiment
- Triplett (1898) – inspired by cyclists
- Social facilitation



## HISTORICAL EVENTS

- Post WW2 - motivated to explain atrocities committed, learning the „psychology of the enemy“, etc.
- Conformity (Asch),
- Obedience (Milgram),
- Roles (Zimbardo).



# STUDIES ON CONFORMITY AND OBEDIENCE



# CONFORMITY

- **Definition:** *A change in **behavior** or a **belief** as a result of real or imagined pressure.*

*“Conformity is not just acting as other people act, it is being affected by how they act. It is acting differently from the way you would act alone” – David Myers  
(1999)*





# CONFORMITY

Conformity in everyday life:

- **The bystander effect:**
  - Conformity
  - Defusion of responsibility

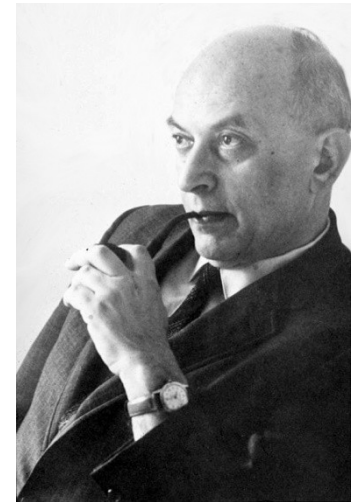


# CLASSIC STUDIES

- Sherif – Norm formation



- Asch – Group pressure



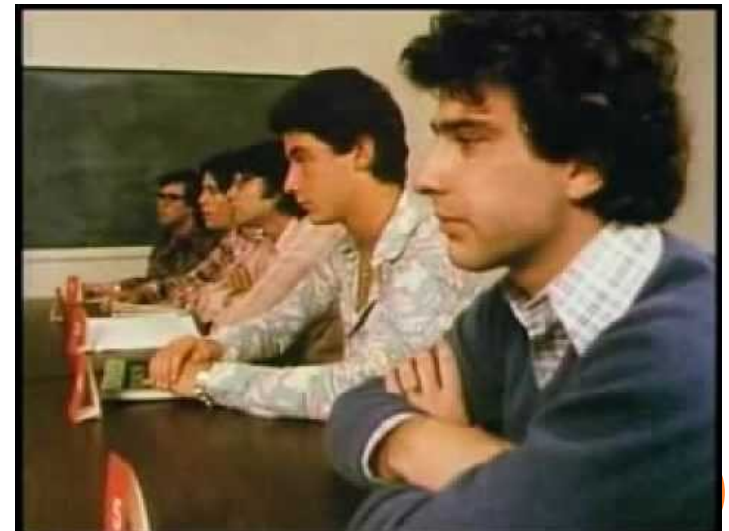
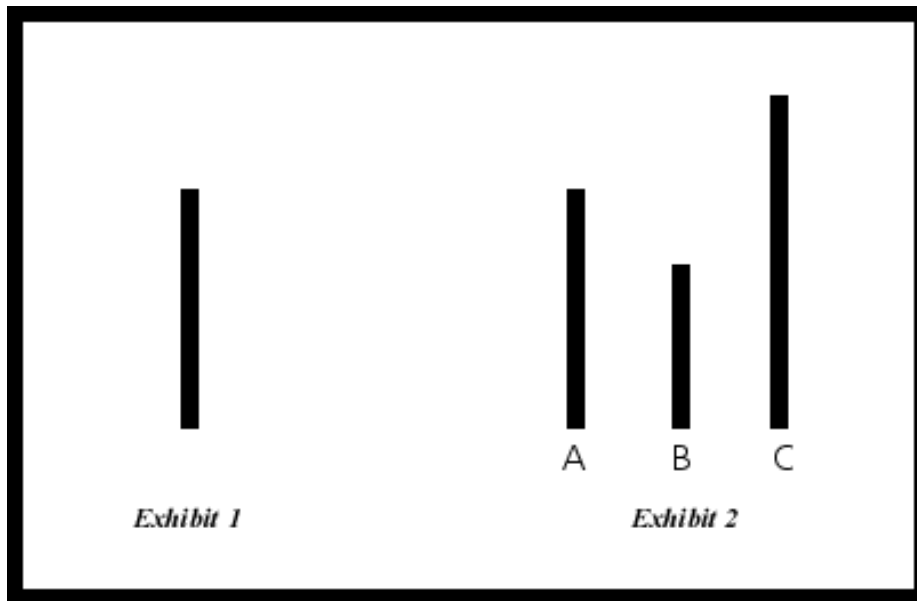
- Milgram - Obedience



# GROUP PRESSURE (ASCH)

## ○ Salomon Asch:

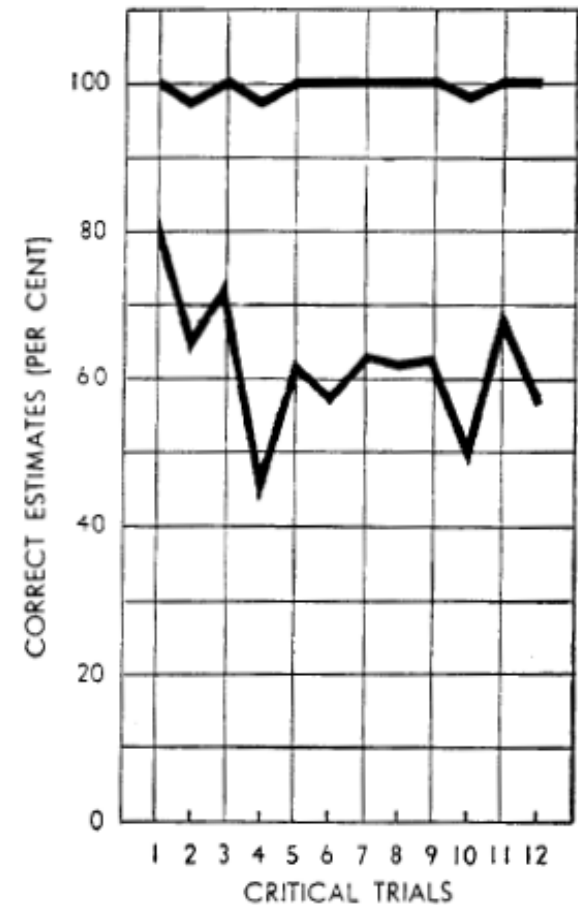
- Experiments on group pressure:
  - Situations: rewards to conform + no punishment for deviance.
- Perceptual judgements
  - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QzS5LS6m3KE>
- Elevator experiment
  - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B738X-ibz2o>



# GROUP PRESSURE

## Findings of the main study:

- On the critical trials, the average rate of conformity was 32%.
- 74% agreed at least once.
- 5% agreed on nearly every trial
- 26% never gave a wrong answer
- Behaviour was constant



# GROUP PRESSURE

## Those who did not conform:

- Asch states “*Those who strike out on the path to independence, do not, as a rule, succumb to the majority*”.
- confidence in their own judgment
- capacity to recover from doubt
- felt it was “*their obligation to call the play as they saw it*”



# WHEN DO PEOPLE CONFORM?

- 1. Group size**
- 2. Unanimity (unity)**
  - „Easier to be non-conform with an ally.“
- 3. Status**
  - Higher status = more impact
  - Lower status = more obedience
- 4. No prior commitment**
  - „ Once you take a position its hard to convince you otherwise.“
- 5. Public/unfamiliar situations**
  - Conformity decreases in private
- 6. Cohesion**
  - In and outgroup, more cohesive = more conform with ingroup members.



# OBEDIENCE – FOLLOWING ORDERS

- *Definition: Form of conformity when a person simply follows orders given by others (authority).*
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fCVII-4GZQ>
- Obedience to authority is not only typical to „weak“ but also to „normal people“.



# OBEDIENCE

- The participants in the were 40 men recruited using newspaper ads. Each was paid \$4.50.
- Milgram developed an intimidating shock generator, with shock levels starting at 30 volts and increasing all the way up to 450 volts. The many switches were labeled with terms including "slight shock," "moderate shock" and "danger: severe shock." The final two switches were labeled simply with an ominous "XXX."





# OBEDIENCE

- Most participants asked the experimenter whether they should continue. The experimenter issued a series of commands to prod the participant along:
  - *"Please continue."*
  - *"The experiment requires that you continue."*
  - *"It is absolutely essential that you continue."*
  - *"You have no other choice, you must go on."*
- What if anything happens?
- *„I am responsible.“*



# OBEDIENCE

Pre-taped audio:

- 75-135 volts: “Ugh!!!”
- 150 volts: “Ugh!!! Experimenter! That's all. Get me out of here. I told you I had heart trouble. My heart's starting to bother me now. Get me out of here, please. My heart's starting to bother me. I refuse to go on. Let me out.”
- 165-255 volts: (Shouting) “Ugh!!! Let me out!”
- 270-285 volts (Screaming) “Let me out of here. Let me out of here. Let me out of here. Let me out. Do you hear? Let me out of here.”
- 300-315 volts: (Screaming) “I absolutely refuse to answer any more. Get me out of here. You can't hold me here. Get me out. Get me out of here.”
- 330 volts: (Intense and prolonged screaming) “Let me out of here. Let me out of here. My heart's bothering me. Let me out, I tell you. (Hysterically) Let me out of here. Let me out of here. You have no right to hold me here. Let me out! Let me out! Let me out! Let me out of here! Let me out. Let me out.”
- 345-450 volts: (Silence)
- The experiment was terminated by the experimenter after 3 shocks at 450 volts



# OBEDIENCE

*How many percent of subjects did continue up to 450 volts?*



# OBEDIENCE

## **Results:**

- Signs of high stress observed
- 3 subjects got uncontrollable seizures
- All 40 subjects obeyed until 300 V
- 25 Obeyed until 450 V



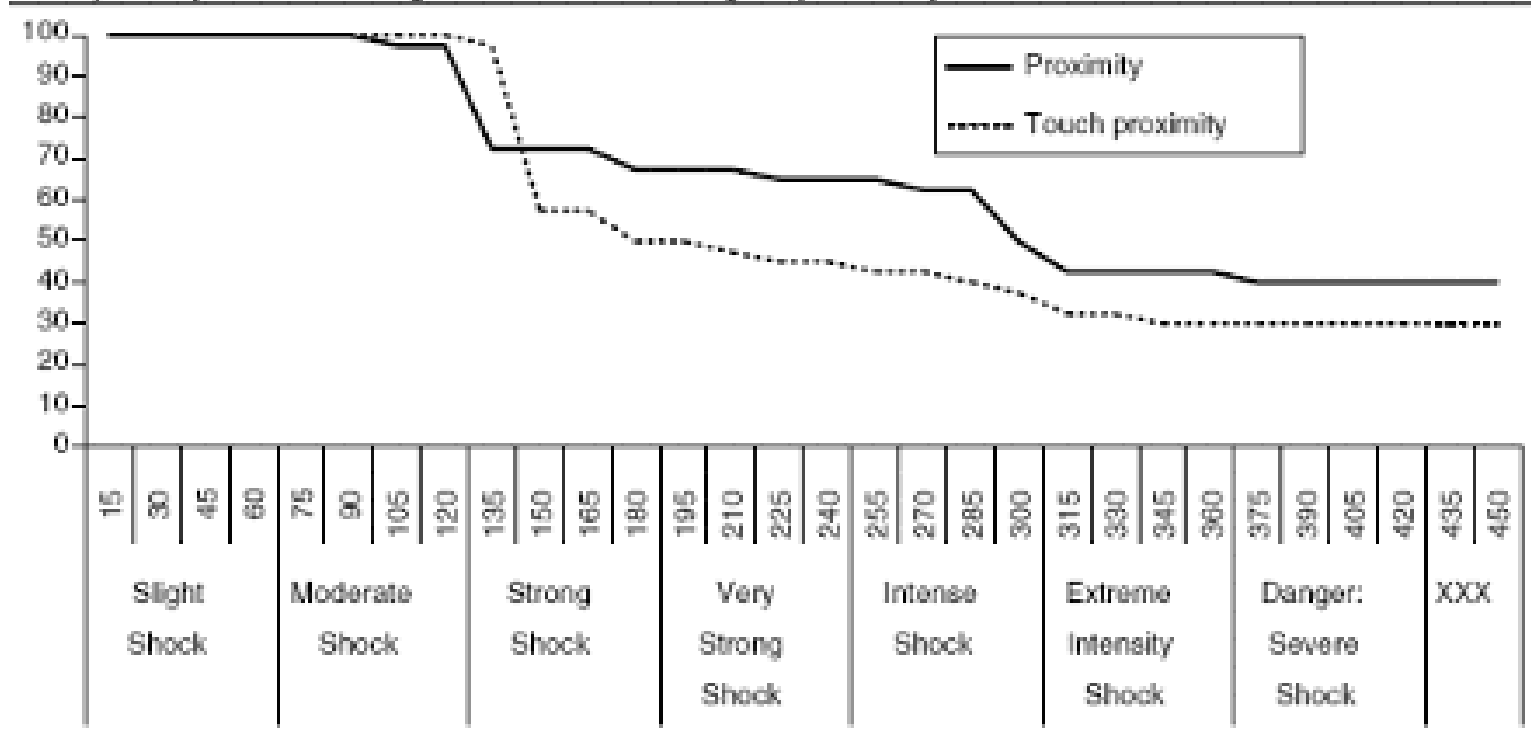
# OBEDIENCE

- Milgram varied the social conditions (variables).
  - Obedience 0 % - 93 %
- 4 factors determining obedience
  - Emotional distance of the victim
  - Closeness and legitimacy of the authority
    - „rectal ear ache“
  - Institutional authority
  - Group influence
- Example: Jaywalking



# OBEDIENCE

% of participants reaching each level of voltage – proximity variants



Source: Milgram (1974)



# OBEDIENCE

"Ordinary people, simply doing their jobs, and without any particular hostility on their part, can become agents in a terrible destructive process. Moreover, even when the destructive effects of their work become patently clear, and they are asked to carry out actions incompatible with fundamental standards of morality, relatively few people have the resources needed to resist authority" (Milgram, 1974).



# STANFORD PRISON EXPERIMENT: OBEDIENCE TO THE ROLE





# STANFORD PRISON EXPERIMENT

- Original purpose: Psychology of prison life

*What happens when you put good people in an evil place?*

- Intended duration: 14 days
- Terminated after 6 days
  - Sadism of guards
  - Depression and severe stress of prisoners



# STANFORD PRISON EXPERIMENT

- Advertisement in local newspaper: 15 bucks/day
- 75 replied, 24 most stable chosen
- Randomly divided into 2 groups: prisoners and guards
- „Prisoners“ arrested for armed robbery and burglary by real cops
  - Searched, handcuffed
  - Brought to police station
  - Full identification
  - Finger-prints
- Blindfolded
- Brought to „the prison“ – basement of Stanford Psychology department building



# STANFORD PRISON EXPERIMENT

The prison:

- o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TShFPParenk>



# STANFORD PRISON EXPERIMENT

Arrival of prisoners:

- Stripped naked
- Searched
- Deloused with a spray



# STANFORD PRISON EXPERIMENT

## Dehumanization of prisoners

- Dress with ID
- No underpants
- Stockings over heads
- Chain on right ankle



- Goal: Arise feelings of anonymity, oppression, losing ones individuality



# STANFORD PRISON EXPERIMENT

## Guards

- Need to maintain law
- Command the respect of prisoners
- No violence
- Appearance:
  - Uniforms
  - Whistle
  - Billy club
  - Sunglasses



# STANFORD PRISON EXPERIMENT

## Asserting control:

- „Counts“
- Direct confrontations

## Punishment:

- Breaking rules
- Improper attitudes toward guards
- Push-ups



- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x3wxEmHqVCY>



# STANFORD PRISON EXPERIMENT

- Rebellion on day II
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uTdttd7XTfQ>

## **Harrassment begins:**

- Guards broken into cells
- Stripped prisoners naked
- Solitary confinement for leaders
- Intimidation
- Priviledged prisoners (special treatment)
- Breaking alliances, causing distrust





# STANFORD PRISON EXPERIMENT

## **36 hours from the start:**

- Prisoner #8612: acute emotional disturbance, disorganized thinking, uncontrollable crying, and rage.



# STANFORD PRISON EXPERIMENT

## Conclusions:

### ○ **3 types of guards:**

- Tough and fair following prison rules
- Good guys: favors, no punishment
- Hostile, enjoying power
- No personality assessment discovered it

### ○ **Prisoners coping styles:**

- Rebellious
- Breaking down emotionally
- Good prisoners

### ○ Disintegration of prisoners at both group and individual level

### ○ Rebels seen as trouble makers



# STANFORD PRISON EXPERIMENT

- Prisoner #416:
- *"I began to feel that I was losing my identity, that the person that I called Clay, the person who put me in this place, the person who volunteered to go into this prison -- because it was a prison to me; it still is a prison to me. I don't regard it as an experiment or a simulation because it was a prison run by psychologists instead of run by the state. I began to feel that that identity, the person that I was that had decided to go to prison was distant from me -- was remote until finally I wasn't that, I was 416. I was really my number.,,"*
- Prison guard: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fQnOkmvigi0#t=15>



# STANFORD PRISON EXPERIMENT

- Discussion: prison system



THANK YOU!

