**Source #1**

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| **Milgram’s Experiment on Obedience to Authority**  [Gregorio Billikopf Encina](mailto:gebillikopf@ucdavis.edu) University of California  Why is it so many people obey when they feel coerced? Social psychologist Stanley Milgram researched the effect of authority on obedience. He concluded people obey either out of fear or out of a desire to appear cooperative--even when acting against their own better judgment and desires. Milgram’s classic yet controversial experiment illustrates people's reluctance to confront those who abuse power. It is my opinion that Milgram's book should be required reading (see References below) for anyone in supervisory or management positions.  Here is Encina’s claim. Why might he argue that these types of people should read Milgram’s book?  Why might this researcher want a variety of people for this experiment?  Milgram recruited subjects for his experiments from various walks in life. Respondents were told the experiment would study the effects of punishment on learning ability. They were offered a token cash award for participating. Although respondents thought they had an equal chance of playing the role of a student or of a teacher, the process was rigged so all respondents ended up playing the teacher. The learner was an actor working as a cohort of the experimenter.  "Teachers" were asked to administer increasingly severe electric shocks to the "learner" when questions were answered incorrectly. In reality, the only electric shocks delivered in the experiment were single 45-volt shock samples given to each teacher. This was done to give teachers a feeling for the jolts they thought they would be discharging.  “Teachers” and “learners” are marked by quotations. What is the author indicating about his use of those words?  Shock levels were labeled from 15 to 450 volts. Besides the numerical scale, verbal anchors added to the frightful appearance of the instrument. Beginning from the lower end, jolt levels were labeled: "slight shock," "moderate shock," "strong shock," "very strong shock," "intense shock," and "extreme intensity shock." The next two anchors were "Danger: Severe Shock," and, past that, a simple but ghastly "XXX."  Why would the researchers add descriptions to the jolt levels?  In response to the supposed jolts, the "learner" (actor) would begin to grunt at 75 volts; complain at 120 volts; ask to be released at 150 volts; plead with increasing vigor, next; and let out agonized screams at 285 volts. Eventually, in desperation, the learner was to yell loudly and complain of heart pain.  A 45 volt shock feels like a slight tickle. A 120 volt shock produces moderate pain and a tingling sensation. If your skin is wet, a 120 volt shock could be deadly.  At some point the actor would refuse to answer any more questions. Finally, at 330 volts the actor would be totally silent-that is, if any of the teacher participants got so far without rebelling first.  Teachers were instructed to treat silence as an incorrect answer and apply the next shock level to the student.  You should probably be glad that your teachers don’t have to do this for silent and incorrect answers.  If at any point the innocent teacher hesitated to inflict the shocks, the experimenter would pressure him to proceed. Such demands would take the form of increasingly severe statements, such as "The experiment *requires* that you continue."  Why does Encina use these questions at this point in his essay?  What do you think was the average voltage given by teachers before they refused to administer further shocks? What percentage of teachers, if any, do you think went up to the maximum voltage of 450?  *Results from the experiment*. Some teachers refused to continue with the shocks early on, despite urging from the experimenter. This is the type of response Milgram expected as the norm. But Milgram was shocked to find those who questioned authority were in the minority. Sixty-five percent (65%) of the teachers were willing to progress to the maximum voltage level.  These teachers are not really teachers! These are participants in the experiments. Don’t be confused.  Participants demonstrated a range of negative emotions about continuing. Some pleaded with the learner, asking the actor to answer questions carefully. Others started to laugh nervously and act strangely in diverse ways. Some subjects appeared cold, hopeless, somber, or arrogant. Some thought they had killed the learner. Nevertheless, participants continued to obey, discharging the full shock to learners. One man who wanted to abandon the experiment was told the experiment must continue. Instead of challenging the decision of the experimenter, he proceeded, repeating to himself, "It’s got to go on, it’s got to go on."  How are these two variations different from the original experiment?  Milgram’s experiment included a number of variations. In one, the learner was not only visible but teachers were asked to force the learner’s hand to the shock plate so they could deliver the punishment. Less obedience was extracted from subjects in this case. In another variation, teachers were instructed to apply whatever voltage they desired to incorrect answers. Teachers averaged 83 volts, and only 2.5 percent of participants used the full 450 volts available. This shows most participants were good, average people, not evil individuals. They obeyed only under coercion.  Why would people be less likely to comply when they have to touch the learner?  What voltage would you be willing to use? What voltage do you think I would use?  In general, more submission was elicited from "teachers" when (1) the authority figure was in close proximity; (2) teachers felt they could pass on responsibility to others; and (3) experiments took place under the auspices of a respected organization.  Auspices – this means with the backing or sponsorship of.  Participants were debriefed after the experiment and showed much relief at finding they had not harmed the student. One cried from emotion when he saw the student alive, and explained that he thought he had killed him. But what was different about those who obeyed and those who rebelled?  Good question. I’d like to know if I’d rebel or just obey.  Milgram divided participants into three categories:  *Obeyed but justified themselves*. Some obedient participants gave up responsibility for their actions, blaming the experimenter. If anything had happened to the learner, they reasoned, it would have been the experimenter’s fault. Others had transferred the blame to the learner: "He was so stupid and stubborn he deserved to be shocked."  This category is like students who don’t do their work and then blames everyone else for their failure. Just full of EXCUSES!  This category is like students who blame themselves for not doing their work. There is hope for these kids.  *Obeyed but blamed themselves*. Others felt badly about what they had done and were quite harsh on themselves. Members of this group would, perhaps, be more likely to challenge authority if confronted with a similar situation in the future.  *Rebelled*. Finally, rebellious subjects questioned the authority of the experimenter and argued there was a greater ethical imperative calling for the protection of the learner over the needs of the experimenter. Some of these individuals felt they were accountable to a higher authority.  What type of sophomore might these people in this category be like? Who’s that higher authority?  Why were those who challenged authority in the minority? So entrenched is obedience it may void personal codes of conduct.  Entrenched – a strongly defended position  When were you first taught to obey authority figures?  **References**  Milgram, S. (1974). *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View*. New York: Harper and Row.  An excellent presentation of Milgram’s work is also found in  Brown, R. (1986). Social Forces in Obedience and Rebellion. *Social Psychology: The Second Edition*. New York: The Free Press.  © 2003 by The Regents of the University of California. Printing this electronic Web page is permitted for personal, non-commercial use as long as the author and the University of California are credited.  **Source #2** |

**Scientific American Volume 307, Issue 5**

**What Milgram’s Shock Experiments Really Mean?**

Replicating Milgram's shock experiments reveals not blind obedience but deep moral conflict

Oct 16, 2012 |By Michael Shermer

In 2010 I worked on a Dateline NBC television special replicating classic psychology experiments, one of which was Stanley Milgram's famous shock experiments from the 1960s. We followed Milgram's protocols precisely: subjects read a list of paired words to a “learner” (an actor named Tyler), then presented the first word of each pair again. Each time Tyler gave an incorrect matched word, our subjects were instructed by an authority figure (an actor named Jeremy) to deliver an electric shock from a box with toggle switches that ranged in 15-volt increments up to 450 volts (no shocks were actually delivered). In Milgram's original experiments, 65 percent of subjects went all the way to the end. We had only two days to film this segment of the show (you can see all our experiments at http://tinyurl.com/3yg2v29), so there was time for just six subjects, who thought they were auditioning for a new reality show called What a Pain!

Contrary to Milgram's conclusion that people blindly obey authorities to the point of committing evil deeds because we are so susceptible to environmental conditions, I saw in our subjects a great behavioral reluctance and moral disquietude every step of the way. Our first subject, Emily, quit the moment she was told the protocol. “This isn't really my thing,” she said with a nervous laugh. When our second subject, Julie, got to 75 volts and heard Tyler groan, she protested: “I don't think I want to keep doing this.” Jeremy insisted: “You really have no other choice. I need you to continue until the end of the test.” Despite our actor's stone-cold authoritative commands, Julie held her moral ground: “No. I'm sorry. I can just see where this is going, and I just—I don't—I think I'm good. I think I'm good to go.” When the show's host Chris Hansen asked what was going through her mind, Julie offered this moral insight on the resistance to authority: “I didn't want to hurt Tyler. And then I just wanted to get out. And I'm mad that I let it even go five [wrong answers]. I'm sorry, Tyler.”

Our third subject, Lateefah, became visibly upset at 120 volts and squirmed uncomfortably to 180 volts. When Tyler screamed, “Ah! Ah! Get me out of here! I refuse to go on! Let me out!” Lateefah made this moral plea to Jeremy: “I know I'm not the one feeling the pain, but I hear him screaming and asking to get out, and it's almost like my instinct and gut is like, ‘Stop,’ because you're hurting somebody and you don't even know why you're hurting them outside of the fact that it's for a TV show.” Jeremy icily commanded her to “please continue.” As she moved into the 300-volt range, Lateefah was noticeably shaken, so Hansen stepped in to stop the experiment, asking, “What was it about Jeremy that convinced you that you should keep going here?” Lateefah gave us this glance into the psychology of obedience: “I didn't know what was going to happen to me if I stopped. He just—he had no emotion. I was afraid of him.”

Our fourth subject, a man named Aranit, unflinchingly cruised through the first set of toggle switches, pausing at 180 volts to apologize to Tyler—“I'm going to hurt you, and I'm really sorry”—then later cajoling him, “Come on. You can do this…. We are almost through.” After completing the experiment, Hansen asked him: “Did it bother you to shock him?” Aranit admitted, “Oh, yeah, it did. Actually it did. And especially when he wasn't answering anymore.” When asked what was going through his mind, Aranit turned to our authority, explicating the psychological principle of diffusion of responsibility: “I had Jeremy here telling me to keep going. I was like, ‘Well, should be everything's all right….’ So let's say that I left all the responsibilities up to him and not to me.”

Human moral nature includes a propensity to be empathetic, kind and good to our fellow kin and group members, plus an inclination to be xenophobic, cruel and evil to tribal others. The shock experiments reveal not blind obedience but conflicting moral tendencies that lie deep within.

This article was originally published with the title "Shock and Awe."

**Source #3:**

Shocking "prison" study 40 years later: What happened at Stanford?

<http://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/shocking-prison-study-40-years-later-what-happened-at-stanford/>

Background information:

From: BBCNews “Stanford Prison Experiment - 'We should have ended it earlier'”

**17 August 2011** Last updated at 18:40 BST

Forty years ago, a group of students hoping to make a bit of holiday money turned up at a basement in Stanford University, California, for what was to become one of the most notorious experiments in the study of human psychology.

The idea was simple - take a group of volunteers, tell half of them they are prisoners, the other half prison wardens, place them in a makeshift jail and watch what happens.

The Stanford Prison Experiment was supposed to last two weeks but was ended abruptly just six days later, after a string of mental breakdowns, an outbreak of sadism and a hunger strike.

Philip Zimbardo was the psychologist who led the experiment.

More information is found at: <http://www.prisonexp.org/>

Question 1: How does the Milgram Shock experiment explain why the Stanford prison guards treated their prisoners so cruelly? Cite evidence and identify the source by the title or author. Use at least two pieces of evidence.

Question 2: People need to be reminded that it is good to stand up against hurtful behavior. Provide two pieces of evidence from different sources that support this claim and explain how each example supports the claim. Cite evidence for each piece of information and identify the source by title or author.

Question 3: select the boxes to show the claim (s) that each source supports. Some sources will have more than one box selected.

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|  | Source 1: Milgram’s Experiment on Obedience to Authority | Source 2 What Milgram’s Shock Experiments Really Mean? | Source 3 Shocking "prison" study 40 years later: What happened at Stanford? |
| Claim 1: “Humans are more good than evil” |  |  |  |
| Claim 2: People are more willing to hurt others when there is a nearby authority figure telling them to do it. |  |  |  |
| Claim 3: People who are being hurt by others often feel powerless to change the behavior. |  |  |  |

Part 2: Performance Phase

Situation: We have been studying how intolerance causes people to do evil. Authors write about their experiences and we can only hope that humanity learns to treat each other better. Researchers have also conducted experiments looking into why people treat others as they do.

Task: Your task is to examine these two experiments and then explain how their findings help us to understand why people might be intolerant towards others. Your task is to write a blog post of no less than five paragraphs which answers the question of “Why do people treat others intolerantly?” Please use evidence from the sources as well as from the texts we have studied in unit 3.

Audience: The blogosphere.

Role: You are a community activist who is seeking an end to recent intolerance within the community. You have studied why people are willing to hurt others despite not wanting to be in pain themselves.

Tools/Tech: Texts, online website, graphic organizer, paper, pens, pencils