

Stanford Prison Experiment

Social Cognition

Name _____

Date _____

Period _____

Using the website <http://www.prisonexp.org>, answer the following questions about the Stanford Prison Experiment.

1. What police procedures are used during arrests, and how do these procedures lead people to feel confused, fearful, and dehumanized?

2. If you were a guard, what type of guard would you have become? How sure are you?

3. What prevented "good guards" from objecting to or going against the orders from "bad guards"?

4. If you were a prisoner, would you have been able to get through the experience? What would you have done differently than those subjects did?

5. Why did our prisoners try to work within the arbitrary prison system to effect a change in it (e.g., food strike), rather than trying to dismantle or change the system through outside help?

6. What factors would lead prisoners to explain the guard brutality on the guards' personality or character, rather than to the situation?

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7. Do you think that kids from different backgrounds would have broken down emotionally in the same way as did our white, male, middle-class prisoners? Why? What about women?

8. After the study, how do you think the prisoners and guards felt when they saw each other around the Stanford campus?

9. Was it ethical to do this study? Was it right to trade the suffering experienced by participants for the knowledge gained by the research?

10. Knowing what this research says about the power of prison situations to have a negative effect on human behavior, what recommendations would you make about changing our prison system?