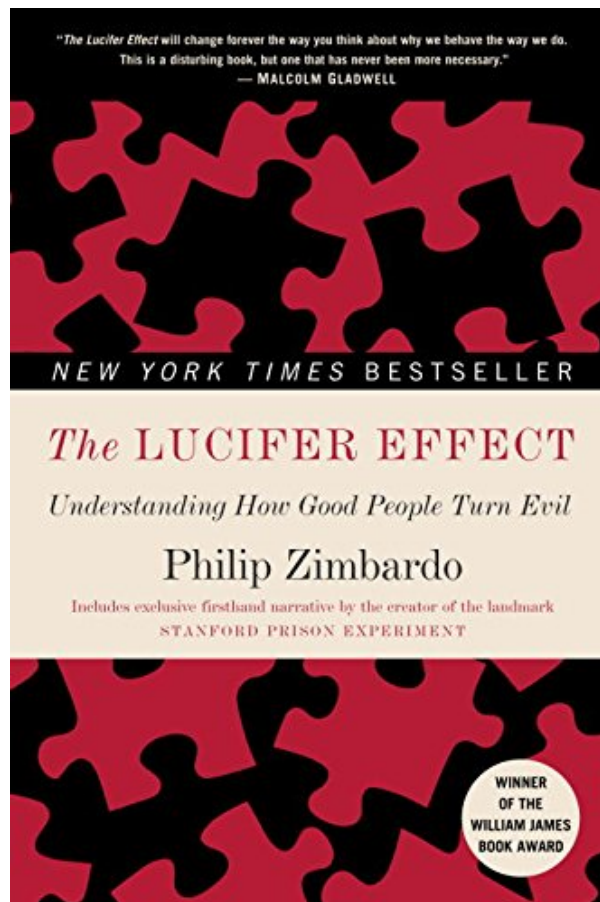


THE LUCIFER EFFECT: UNDERSTANDING HOW GOOD PEOPLE TURN EVIL BY PHILIP ZIMBARDO



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— MALCOLM GLADWELL

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

The LUCIFER EFFECT

Understanding How Good People Turn Evil

Philip Zimbardo

Includes exclusive firsthand narrative by the creator of the landmark
STANFORD PRISON EXPERIMENT

WINNER
OF THE
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The definitive firsthand account of the groundbreaking research of Philip Zimbardo—the basis for the award-winning film *The Stanford Prison Experiment*

Renowned social psychologist and creator of the Stanford Prison Experiment Philip Zimbardo explores the mechanisms that make good people do bad things, how moral people can be seduced into acting immorally, and what this says about the line separating good from evil.

The Lucifer Effect explains how—and the myriad reasons why—we are all susceptible to the lure of “the dark side.” Drawing on examples from history as well as his own trailblazing research, Zimbardo details how situational forces and group dynamics can work in concert to make monsters out of decent men and women.

Here, for the first time and in detail, Zimbardo tells the full story of the Stanford Prison Experiment, the landmark study in which a group of college-student volunteers was randomly divided into “guards” and “inmates” and then placed in a mock prison environment. Within a week the study was abandoned, as ordinary college students were transformed into either brutal, sadistic guards or emotionally broken prisoners.

By illuminating the psychological causes behind such disturbing metamorphoses, Zimbardo enables us to better understand a variety of harrowing phenomena, from corporate malfeasance to organized genocide to how once upstanding American soldiers came to abuse and torture Iraqi detainees in Abu Ghraib. He replaces the long-held notion of the “bad apple” with that of the “bad barrel”—the idea that the social setting and the system contaminate the individual, rather than the other way around.

This is a book that dares to hold a mirror up to mankind, showing us that we might not be who we think we are. While forcing us to reexamine what we are capable of doing when caught up in the crucible of behavioral dynamics, though, Zimbardo also offers hope. We are capable of resisting evil, he argues, and can even teach ourselves to act heroically. Like Hannah Arendt’s *Eichmann in Jerusalem* and Steven Pinker’s *The Blank Slate*, *The Lucifer Effect* is a shocking, engrossing study that will change the way we view human behavior.

Praise for *The Lucifer Effect*

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From the Hardcover edition.

- Sales Rank: #13713 in Books
- Brand: Zimbardo, Philip G.
- Published on: 2008-01-22
- Released on: 2008-01-22
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.30" h x 1.20" w x 5.50" l, 1.00 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 576 pages

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From the Hardcover edition.

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136 of 154 people found the following review helpful.

A scholarly and disturbing look into the banality of evil

By David Maxfield

This book is the breathtaking culmination of more than 30 years of careful research into the causes of evil. Dr Zimbardo, Stanford professor, former president of the American Psychological Association, host of the PBS series Psychology, and author of the bestselling introductory psychology text of all time, has devoted nearly all of his academic career to careful studies of the path between good and evil.

His dozens of research papers have documented how environmental and social forces can push even the best of us toward bad behavior. Even more importantly, he has documented the steps we can take as individuals and as societies to become more humane. His findings are widely respected within the academic community. This is not "controversial" stuff; it's the right stuff.

Dr. Zimbardo's review of the field is lively and engaging. Then, he brings us new findings and shows how they apply in ways that can powerfully change lives. This is an exciting book that needs to be widely read.

David Maxfield

Vice President of Research

VitalSmarts LC

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Read this

By Amazon Customer

A book everyone must read. Let me rephrase- a study every educated person should know about in some detail .Of all the things that have been written about this study, the one I find the most intriguing is that the vast majority of the volunteers hoped to be assigned the "prisoner role". The guard and the prisoner roles were randomly assigned, during an era when many young people had lifestyles and ideals for which they could conceivably be arrested. As such, a number of volunteers voiced the opinion that "the experiment" would be good practice for them, if they were ever incarcerated, to learn to be strong and conduct themselves with integrity.

What really happened, and how quickly the veneer of civilization wore off as soon as "guard" roles were designated is chilling, but well worth reading.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Worried that the world is going to hell in a handbasket?

By karfrica

Here's how to attempt to avoid going along for the ride. Far reaching, motivating and well worth more than one read. I'm taking this one slowly because while the writing is great the subject matter is challenging and thought provoking. I'll be going back to this one again and again. Thanks Dr.Zimbardo for your lifetime of work and thought on this theme.

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