privileges, but by the end of the day, order had yet to be restored. So the guards tossed the "good" prisoners into "bad" cells, expecting to weaken the inmates' solidarity and confidence. The prisoners were even forced to keep buckets of urine and feces in their cells.

By the end of the second day, one prisoner began to have a nervous breakdown, with fits of screaming and crying, but everyone—including members of the research staff—believed that this was merely a trick. It wasn't. Over the next couple of days, as more events escalated out of control, Zimbardo himself began to realize that he was going through a personality transformation: "I began to talk, walk, and act like a rigid institutional authority figure more concerned about the security of 'my prison' than the needs of the young men entrusted to my care."[35] And hardly any other members of the research team questioned the morality of the experiment itself. A Catholic priest who observed the cruelty contacted one participant's parents, who then engaged an attorney to get their son released, but even the attorney was persuaded to let the experiment continue. Finally, the line between role playing and reality became so blurred that the experiment had to be terminated prematurely, on the sixth day. (Today, studies like Milgram's and Zimbardo's would not be allowed, since they can result in substantial psychological harm to the participants.)

In the years that followed his experiment, Dr. Zimbardo attempted to use his findings to improve correctional systems in the United States. But little has changed in the past thirty years. Also, there are disturbing similarities between what happened at Stanford and the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by American soldiers at Abu Ghraib. Put good people into an "evil" place, and morality can quickly break down.

The Seventeen Stages of Evil

The two most significant factors in undermining individual morality are group conformity and the power of authority to override personal objections and doubts. Furthermore, the weaker an individual's moral convictions, the more inclined he or she will be to go along with someone else's beliefs. Drawing from the findings of

hundreds of studies on social behavior, the following list highlights the main elements that any person or group can use to sway another person's beliefs and induce behavior that he or she might otherwise refuse to do.[36] Each step after the first builds on the previous one, and the farther down the list you go, the more authoritative, cruel, and ultimately violent group behavior becomes:

1. Establish a set of ideals and beliefs that insinuate your superiority over others.
2. Provide logical justification for implementing your beliefs.
3. Have clearly defined behaviors that the members of your group must endorse.
4. Reinforce steps 1, 2, and 3 as often as possible through discussion and written material until they become your primary beliefs.
5. Have members contractually agree to the above steps—this reinforces a sense of obligation to the group and its leaders.
6. Select a charismatic spokesperson to advertise your group and reinforce your beliefs.
7. Create a range of punishments for those who do not conform.
8. Emphasize the importance of conformity and punishment to help members aspire to your ideals.
9. Insist that each member find new initiates to join the group.
10. Institute severe penalties for those who may wish to leave the group.
11. Limit alternative perspectives and communication between members of your group.
12. Exclude, as much as possible, contact with people from outside the group.
13. Identify a group that opposes your beliefs and ideals.
14. Depersonalize and denigrate those who are not members of your group.
15. Gradually increase hostility and aggression toward the outgroup.
16. When dealing with the "enemy" create a sense of anonymity. (a) Don't use names for your victims. (b) Give impressive ti-