



THE FINAL RECKONING OF THE STANFORD PRISON SAGA

PART 8: CLEANSING THE PANDEMONIUM

--- Hugo Meijers ---

We embarked on a journey to get to the bottom of one of psychology's most notorious experiments. The winding road we traveled through a murky narrative landscape revealed that the Stanford psychologists fooled a susceptible audience for decades and tricked the unwary into believing fantasy was fact.

Till now, the truth was blurry, the evidence found wanting, and the logic lacking. But at long last, the house of cards has finally fallen through thanks to experiences shared by participating students and scrutinizing the available source material. The demonstration is not about power-wielding students spinning out of control but the captivating power of compelling storytelling and the blind faith in academic authorities abusing the power of their station. So what now?

[Ryan Fan on Medium](#) was petrified about how the researchers could manipulate the findings. In light of my disclosures, he will probably be having traumatizing nightmares now. Ryan asked whether we have gotten the Stanford Prison Experiment all wrong? And what should we do about it if we have? Well, we were utterly misguided. And here is some food for thought on what should be done about psychology's great fiasco.

Face the harsh reality

For starters, accept that the Stanford Prison Experiment is science fraud. Some psychologists might forgive the artistic license their colleagues took in crafting a Pirandellian play. Except this



transgression was not a harmless slipup. Decades of deliberate subterfuge — with numerous articles, books, and a film — is unsurpassed.

Non-stop fudging the truth for 50 years while basking in media attention and academic adoration is a whole other bowl of wax. Indeed, a half-century of dramatic deceit makes the demonstration arguably the most audacious theater in social science history.

Therefore, the devastation this travesty wreaks on the faith in psychology cannot be underestimated. Neglecting to respond adequately is not an option. That might well be the downfall of social science. Failing to denounce and deal with complicit psychologists, and refusing to come clean as a failing community to face the music, can substantially erode trust in a field already in crisis.

Crucially, condoning misconduct sends some perplexing messages. First, the cautionary tale that demasking fraud is pointless. No one will be held accountable anyway. Instead, messengers run the risk of having to face the fury of a scorned field that prefers to remain ignorant.

Next, to rise to the apex, fabricate a fallacy and trick your way up. Rigged rhetoric gets you hoisted on a pinnacle. Conning your community lets you attain iconic status as long as you never admit to any wrongdoing.

Further, letting transgressors off the hook leaves the unnerving impression that anyone smart enough to fool everyone is rightfully irreproachable. Heroic deception is to be admired, sending some to aspire to sucker-punch the gullible with their own concoction. This would be truly Kafkaesque.

I stress the point of sending the wrong signals because it is not uncommon to give peers the benefit of the doubt by refusing to face the facts. It serves associated scholars to remain agnostic. But self-respecting academics can no longer afford the luxury of faking neutrality. Now that fabrication is undeniable, acting ambivalent adds insult to injury.

The same holds for those finding justification in the honorable mission to reform prisons and believing a noble cause exonerate the guilty. Yet to say researchers did evil with good intention is a gross misnomer. Playing vexed philanthropists with the best interest of prisoners at heart is a devious ploy to get off the hook. There is no excuse to regurgitate an ever more intricate web of lies and manufacture new fakes, like the simulated sodomy. The activist cause is merely gaslighting the gullible.

Anyway, the end does not justify the means. No doubt, some feel sympathy for the culprits. They might emphasize their contributions to the field. Except, in light of hard evidence of a false narrative, how much of their work is baseless?

Hold accountable

Exposure of misconduct means the gauntlet is thrown. But at whom? What was the role of Stanford University? Which colleagues knew and played along? Even authorities like the American Psychological Association are under suspicion. So there is no single door to knock on. The Stanford Prison fallacy comes pounding down on many doors.



Moreover, where does the buck stop? Zimbardo took the brunt of the controversial barrage, while his culprits generally went scot-free. They stayed outside the firing line, not having to deal with warding off the criticism. However, these psychology professors delved in the same deceit and are all accountable for covering up. I am referring in particular to co-conspirators Craig Haney, Curt Banks and Christina Maslach. Their tenures, one posthumous, are no longer tenable.

What to do with the adherents giving testimonials to the master? Zimbardo lured esteemed peers into [writing depositions on his behalf](#) to back up his response when he was taking the heat in the hot summer of 2018. Professors vouched for "[A character and integrity without question.](#)" and, "I can vouch for the scientific honesty, soundness, and integrity of the man himself... the attacks on [Zimbardo are unwarranted.](#)"

The second testimonial is by Gordon Bower. He is the colleague who confronted Zimbardo on Tuesday night as to the design of the experiment when everyone had fled to the fifth floor. Being directly involved raises questions and fuels suspicion. What did he know?

And what to do with Douglas Korpi and David Eshleman. These acolytes stood to gain a lot from their years of pretense. It seems appropriate to require some atonement — a walk of shame befitting their contribution to the con. In the least, they should no longer benefit from their pretense. Nor should anyone else.

Retract and rectify

A massive task of epic proportions lies ahead to retract and revise. I am referring to all the journals with papers on the Stanford Prison Experiment, not to mention countless textbooks, websites, and curricula containing a fable.

Currently, you will not find the two original journal papers in the open, searchable [Retraction Watch Database](#) — a collection of tens of thousands of withdrawn papers and conference abstracts. It is the [treasure trove of fallacious and fraudulent science](#). In my view, that is where they belong.

Moreover, the rogue researchers wrote hundreds of articles. How many are founded on this nefarious experiment? Every paper and abstract will require a critical examination as to its reliability and validity. When publications are found to be rooted in fabricated data, it stands to reason that the publishing journal no longer endorses such articles.

The same applies to peer-reviewed journal papers reviewing, revisiting or otherwise rewriting the Stanford Prison Experiment. In principle, these are null and void and require retraction or revisions to the findings and conclusions.

Naturally, references to the experiment are in dire need of correcting. And not just within psychology. The simulation findings flowed across the boundary of the field. Up to 2014, the overwhelming [majority of papers in criminology journals](#) widely accepted the study's message without skepticism.

Zimbardo's book *The Lucifer Effect* is shredder material from a scientific standpoint. The book contains some 300 drama-dripping pages on the theatrical script alone. The remainder is, for a large part, now baseless inference.



Every version of the official false narrative requires a clear warning of the fraudulent nature and disclaimers referring to the recent revelations of research misconduct. Any mention of a scientific study requires amendment.

Official psychology websites are required to take the lead to incorporate the facts. Foremost influential associations that have awarded Zimbardo, like the [American Psychological Association](#) flaunting "Demonstrating the Power of Social Situations via a Simulated Prison Experiment." Other popular websites should follow suit, like [Wikipedia](#), [Very well mind](#), and [Simply psychology](#), to name a few.

And what to do with Zimbardo's official Stanford Prison Experiment website? As is, it stands as a manifesto of what you can accomplish with a fairy tale — a monument of infamy. So at least remove every reference of and link to the site.

Should Haslam and Reicher amend the [consensus statement](#) they signed recently with Zimbardo and Haney? If I were standing in their shoes, I would. Which self-respecting person wants to be associated with conning their peers, the press, and the general public?

Do not rewrite history

Back in 2018, Blum's exposé spurred academics to call for scrapping the experiment. Sentiment grew to get the [anti-scientific encounter](#) out of textbooks and [remove it from the psychology canon](#). These scholars wanted to tear out the black page in social science history. Even so, the call to trashcan the study is an easy way out. Besides, [textbooks aren't keeping up](#).

Defenders of the experiment came to the rescue of maintaining the official version, stressing the need for open academic debate. However, these custodians of proper science practices do not seem to fathom that a study needs to be sciencey for a sensible exchange of ideas.

A third group promoted rewriting textbooks and lectures, striking the simulation from [psychology's atheneum](#). These proponents break a lance to replace the official version with a revised version based on the archival revelations to [teach students about science and scientific thinking](#). In other words, [textbooks need to catch up](#).

Some psychologists reacted in denial. They searched for excuses to hold on to the official version and keep on ignoring the facts. But should psychology purge itself from the Stanford Prison shame? Not in my view. Never waste great lessons on research misconduct and the failure of a discipline to detect sordid science and deal with fraud. Besides, the science mockery unquestionably deserves a merciful death.

So I propose an optimization. Keep the official version and emphasize the flaws, falsifications, and fabrications. Tell the false narrative together with what occurred to avoid polluting impressionable and inquisitive fresh minds. Add what made the story stand the storms of criticism for decades. Perverted science practices and mistaken beliefs helped the narrative to rise well above its station.

In any case, the Stanford Prison Experiment is unlikely to leave [either the classroom or public discourse](#). You cannot kill a Pirandellian phantom roaming freely or expect it will never arise like a phoenix, which makes wiping the slate clean delusional. Therefore, walk the middle road. Hit the real lessons to learn head-on. Do not seek to put the Stanford prison story in the rearview mirror. Do not



rewrite history to forget the field's role in creating an illusionary seminal study, but learn from decades of deceit never to repeat. The recital of how we were played time and again is a gripping tale — a caveat for everyone to take to heart. Irrevocably, it will provide unsurpassed study material to reflect on.

Counter the perversion

The failure to see through deception is typical of human nature. People are terrible at detecting lies while experts in generating fibs. Psychologists are no better at spotting falsehoods, specifically within their own ranks. In fact, they are masters in masking misconduct by generating irrational explanations resulting from professional deformation.

No doubt, Zimbardo devotees will seek ways to justify crafting a play, cutting the culprits some slack. They might try to hide the black-and-white allegation of fraud in shades of obscuring grey, specifically scientists who have a career stake in the story. Scholars that join the chorus are guilty by association, forcing them to find valid-sounding arguments to avoid embarrassment.

Some scholars will likely bring memory drift to the fold. Details of an experience tend to erode over time when a story is recalled and retold. The gradual shifting of memories causes our minds to generate new things to fill in the blanks. Except, fundamental aspects of a story do not tend to change unless they were manufactured in the first place. Numerous discrepancies in conflicting accounts, falsifying data and making new events up are not prone to memory failure.

Others might react in discomfort to a failing field to detect and deal with undeniable fabrication. Bizarre responses again lie in wait. Some have already attempted to reconcile the official version that flies in the face of facts to suggest my revelations are not mutually exclusive, as if I am giving a different account. All I have done is provide the available facts that prove the official story is unsustainable.

Then there are those who have remarked that the study was not sciencey in the first place so let's not make a mountain out of a molehill. Indicative are the somewhat perplexing [tweets by David Amadio](#). He claimed that the study was never considered to be scientific. In his opinion, the study is presented in classrooms as a demonstration and a notorious case of ethical malfeasance. Therefore it is not science fraud in the typical sense.

Another example of masking the travesty is reframing the experiment. Zimbardo took the lead to foil allegations of running interference after being caught out so often and renamed the experiment a demonstration as intellectual justification. He continued reframing with exploration, experience, and an encounter to avoid the debunking of his legacy.

However, changing the status of a study is psychology 101. It is an overt attempt to cop out to admitting guilt — a childish guise to get out of the misconduct pickle. And associations appear pleased with the adaptation. The American Psychological Association (APA) followed suit on the perspective change and also calls the study a demonstration. Now they no longer have to deal with science fraud. But changing the status downplays psychology's role in making a fable famous and praising Zimbardo for his deceit.



Furthermore, misguided beliefs constrict critical thinking. I had a brief exchange with a psychology researcher who opted to stay agnostic despite my revelations. He argued that disproving the narrative was hard because very little was recorded. Lack of data was reason enough for him to give rogue researchers the benefit of the doubt, irrespective of what the available data actually proves. He conveniently interchanged not knowing with not caring when the facts are not in favor.

To boot, he turned the world upside down by reversing the burden of proof revealing a general misperception. He misunderstood the point of fact-checking statements to expose misrepresentation and illustrated he feels free to discard facts if that suits.

I have no reason to suppose the painstaking efforts to justify malversation will change anytime soon. Old habits die hard when they serve a purpose. Even so, should the field of psychology not remedy perverted practices of renaming, reframing, and explaining away if we want to learn from the debacle and take appropriate measures to prevent history from repeating itself? Possibly therein lies the fundamental problem.

Investigate psychology's role

Five decades of incessant fudging raises a myriad of thorny questions. Why did the discipline fail to spot deception? Psychology rendered itself incompetent to identify fiction, creative half-truths, and uncanny making-up facts. How could researchers take unchecked liberties with the truth? Why did psychology's self-organizing powers never stop them?

In effect, Zimbardo and his colleagues scripted a behavioristic Pirandellian *Theater of the Absurd* by cleverly mixing fiction and facts. Creating a composed piece of art allowed them to spin perpetual circular reasoning to preach the power of the situation. The prison was run by psychologists not running anything. Psychologists in power were powerless. Powerless guards wielded absolute power. Playacting became real because reality is playacting. Brutal guards created the environment that created them. Why was such baffling logic in remission never effectively rebutted?

Importantly, psychology showed symptoms of mass psychosis in believing the play was real. The implication of going straight to the press with a foregone conclusion, attribution on a false dichotomy, claiming personality implies disposition, directly involved psychologists losing control, combined with the numerous examples of circular reasoning, were manifest red flags. Why were these not collectively flagged and systematically followed up?

Indeed, clear warning signs given by participants who started to speak out did not trigger a thorough investigation. Few listened and picked up inescapable smoking guns. Revelations hardly enthused anyone to scrutinize the data in the narratological way I did to spot the many fabrications. Sure, symptomatic of science is a general lack of interest in falsifying research. But outlandish claims, red flags and smoking guns demand looking into if science is to be taken seriously.

Now how often did science drop the ball? Part of the problem is there is no overseeing authority on foul play and flawed research. Who then picks up such signals and settles disputes? For that matter, who decides when a theory or study is truly debunked?



Change the culture

The bottom line is no one brought Zimbardo and his henchmen down. On the contrary, universities turned rogue researchers into tenured professors and associations bestowed grandeurs. Instead of stopping the folly in its tracks, esteemed peers played along and wrote character confirming affidavits, turned a blind eye, gave the researchers the benefit of the doubt, opted to remain agnostic, promoted a false narrative, or kept on referring to a famous study to inflate their publications. The pressing question is what academic culture made this possible?

Little doubt that the negative [impact of careerism](#) — opportunistically promoting own reputation — has something to do with this academic culture. But there is more to it. [Jennifer Crocker asked](#) along similar lines what allowed Diederik Stapel to continue his misconduct for so long? [Two factors were at play](#). The sophisticated way in which Stapel used his power and prestige. And the poor functioning of scientific scrutiny and criticism.

Both factors fit hand in glove with the Zimbardian case at hand. Zimbardo's charismatic demeanor enchanted commentaries, and his unwavering hubris wowed acolytes. Lack of critical thinking allowed the audience to be led astray by a compelling story that incarcerated their mind.

[The APA website mentions](#) both causes that allowed Stapel to fool everyone for so long. But what did APA do about them? Years of constant lying demonstrate the [need for more sound research ethics](#). Yet why did APA deem the study ethical and never return on that decision when new facts surfaced like false imprisonment and sleep deprivation, which are unlawful in the U.S.? Critically, what is APA going to do now?

Moreover, scientists are expected to be sound minds with impeccable character. But pretending intellectuals are of unquestionable integrity, like some peers did for Zimbardo, is nonsense. It is also hazardous. Blind faith in the flawless nature of researchers breeds irreproachability. The expectation is presumptuous and prevents scrutinizing preposterous statements. This is unsanitary for the practice of science. To keep scientific endeavors healthy, you need to cultivate skeptical and open minds. What we need is an academic culture change.

Plug systemic holes

Systemic issues that are part and parcel of narrative art also need to be addressed and remedied. However, the knee-jerk cocktail — improving scientific rigor, tightening peer-review, and emphasis on replication — to redeem an already heavily dented reputation will not cut it. Superficially fighting symptoms does not cure deeply rooted ailments in practicing the science of psychology.

Avi Loeb made me realize something is fundamentally [wrong with the scientific community](#) today. He makes a fist that too many scientists are motivated mainly by ego, trying to achieve honors and awards. Instead of engaging in open-minded dialogue to augment core concepts and progress our understanding, scientists are too absorbed in self-promoting gospel preaching and showing colleagues how smart they are.

Likewise, the sermons on the power of the situation were geared towards converting a pagan audience into true believers. Criticasters were often cast aside as ignorant heretics. And although



Zimbardo tired of defending his faith, he should have perhaps rethought why his gospel raised so much critique. He probably knew why.

Still, Zimbardo had a valid point that evil barrels can create dishonesty. Diederik Stapel attested to the systemic pressures that corrupted him to commit capital fraud. He explained that science polluted his mind. And not just his. Scientific dishonesty is hardly unique. Social science is an environment that fosters deception — a bad barrel causing good apples to rot.

So we need to rethink the system of scientific endeavor that contaminates scruples and is incapable of holding ego in check. Replication and peer-review are weak defenses against fabricating compelling stories and presenting so-called expert advice in the media to pursue celebrity status. The rules of the academic game harnessing intellectual anarchy and self-promotion need revision.

In other words, start plugging the holes of a system that corrupts and cultivates egotistical behavior. Undoubtedly, stressing quantity over quality publication is a contributing factor. The obsessive focus on the number of papers produced does not progress our insight into the human psyche. Better write one ground-breaking revelation than hundreds of reframed and rehashed dribble.

Stop resuscitating

All the while, something far worse is going on. Despite heavy criticism, returning controversy, and various attempts to debunk the prison simulation, researchers kept on revisiting, reviewing, reciting and referring to a famous or notorious study. The brief upheaval caused by Blum's revealing barrage did not prevent scholars from writing papers on the Stanford Prison Experiment for science journals.

For instance, [new revelations](#) about the Stanford prison experiment's scientific validity. [A novel re-reading](#) of the archived material to elucidate the behavior of the nine guards. The [role of identity leadership](#) in the Stanford Prison Experiment. Or what about the [scripting influence](#) of the guard orientation.

Kamil Izydorczak even took the time for some intellectual contemplation. He examined whether the evidence Blum provided warrants the strong allegation of calling the experiment a lie. He found justifications in Zimbardo's response to denounce Blum's conclusion as [biased and exaggerated](#). Was he enchanted like so many others into believing distorted retorts?

Whatever the answer, Blum's denouncement was a blatant understatement in light of my revelations. These scholars raise the contentious issue to what extend psychologists create fiction while ignoring the facts, convinced that you should not let the truth get in the way of a good story.

Evidently, academics persist in giving meaning to fabrication to inflate a self-created myth. Giving attention to a still-born study that should have been laid to rest long ago can only be seen as an effort to benefit from the famosity.

Yet further citing science fantasy under the pretense of solid science — using self-serving superlatives as notorious, seminal, famous, or landmark — is sordid. Foremost, issuing papers based on the *Stanford Prison Experiment* conveys that fabricating a tale and giving everyone the run-around is a safe way to rise the ranks since colleagues will continue to pay homage and cover your back.



Burst the bubble

Psychology is a predominantly subjective storytelling art and, to a certain extent, opinionated anarchy. Countless encapsulated ideas get dumped into science journals in complete disarray from which individuals select what to read and believe. There is no coherent conceptual source on human nature, despite creating the psychiatric bible called Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) — a failed hodgepodge illustrating my point.

In this way, individual bubbles keep conflicting beliefs afloat, resulting in an intellectual landscape littered with obsolete, irrelevant, inconsistent and flawed ideas. For psychology has no caretaker to dispose of bunk and clean up the theorized debris. Unsound concepts just lay waste until they get picked up again, polluting young minds. Eugenics or Social Darwinism is a prime example.

Therefore, reevaluate the fabric of the field. Investigate the impact of not having a coherent psychology canon. Multiple textbooks lie around that do not keep up. Psychology teachers generally avoid them since they are under no obligation to use them. Subsequently, few, if any, of the criticisms on the Stanford Prison Experiment [are ever mentioned to students](#).

So trainees and students are still spoon-fed with a falsehood. But this is no way forward. This teaching practice is fodder for more anarchy, where teachers decide what the proper curriculum to teach is. They continue to indoctrinate inquisitive newcomers on the academic block with flawed concepts and unethical practices.

Crucially, bubble custodians are free to absorb and integrate shared brain food. Essentially this tends to be a confirmation seeking and dissonance avoiding quest, as demonstrated by the researchers that continued to write papers on the Stanford Prison Experiment as if they scientifically reflected on a study. They showed cunning creativity in recycling nonsense to boost their own ideas. The mechanism of do not embarrass yourself by referring to flawed research clearly has its limits.

Reconsider anecdotal evidence

Arguably the most significant outcome from the Stanford Prison debacle is the folly of taking anecdotal evidence seriously. Accepting hearsay allows researchers to select whatever suits their storylines. Relying on testimonies opens the doors to seeking confirmation of foregone conclusions.

Testimonial observations are hardly evidence given under oath that stands up in court. Writing research narratives on this basis inevitably leads to biased, hyped, misrepresented, flawed and potentially even fraudulent publications. Allowing hearsay gives unchecked possibilities to fudge and conveniently tweak quotes. The Stanford researchers only selected quotable quotes and used them out of context. In short, anecdotes make it dead easy to write a false narrative.

Importantly, anecdotes lend full weight to the researchers' words, who have free reign reciting to control their narrative. What researchers state is unprovable and unfalsifiable. Only the quoted can attest to being misquoted. But masking the participant's identity inhibits further examination. Controversy subsequently becomes pure speculation.

Moreover, psychology as a narrative art is prone to a subjective compilation of facts and fiction. There is always some form of artistic license to fudge the framing. But the Pirandellian prison frame



shows that a narrative haunts the halls of belief forever when it is resilient to rational scrutiny and logical sensemaking. Once the anecdotal phantom was out of the bottle, no one could put it back.

And what about all the other simulation studies based on anecdotes? The Stanford mock prison is just one of many that have turned out to be flawed. Have a look at some [experiments mentioned by Brian Resnick](#). Many composed pieces of art might still fly under the radar with dire repercussions if they too turn out to be surreal stories.

Reengineer debunking

The last suggestion I have is on falsification. Up till now, scientists spent little to no time seriously debunking. Debunking often leads to nothing, as the attempts to kill the mock prison show. Adherents simply uphold flawed theories and fraud research, sweeping criticism and facts under the rug.

Furthermore, debunking takes far more fact-checking, research, critical thought and courage to bring down false beliefs bordering on sectarian adherence. It can even be a career-killer if you get it wrong. Inevitably, in the eyes of fanatical followers, you always do.

So it is far safer to peddle over ethics, methodical flaws, logical inferences, and the proper application of statistics. Civilly tossing intellectual arguments from a dug-in position ending in unresolved let's agree to disagree.

The present method of debating promotes unethical defense and relentless protection of personal opinion. Zimbardo's defense over the decades illustrates that a defender can handpick criticism to respond to while leaving crucial valid comments untouched. His defense also shows that you can lie with impunity.

Therefore, controversy requires due process and an ethical code of conduct. Some form of independent arbitration is needed when one camp goes on touting salutations to a seminal study, while the opposing camp regards it as anti-science.

Primarily, science is information warfare — a battle of ideas. Arbitration prevents senseless trench warfare. Fire-and-forget exchange of opinions to convince the opposition is often fruitless. Gatekeepers could guard the synthesis of conflicting ideas, consolidate views and leave the intellectual arena with common ground to build further on.

Of course, warring factions do not speak for the majority in relative agreement. Perhaps it is a misperception that science is incredibly polarized when the majority in the middle remains silent, just like the prison students did for decades. The moderate find they have much more in common than the differences the extremities' rhetoric ramp up. Still, somehow the divide needs to be bridged between adherents promoting the experiment as valid science and crucifiers cutting it down as anti-science, or the intellectual standoff will persist.

Furthermore, why not create more reliable methods to detect fabrications? To begin with a clear distinction between debunking a flawed theory and dealing effectively with fraud. The need for clarification became apparent when [defenders of the official version](#) felt unable to leave the prison study out of psychology curricula, arguing that falsified theories of Freud or Jung are still basic study material. These guardians seem not to grasp the difference between fraud and falsification.



Coming full circle

Let me finish with [Ben Blum's sequel](#) where he explored the ramification of Le Texier's *Debunking the Stanford Prison Experiment*. Blum believes the paper caused a miniature scientific paradigm shift in action when it got published in the official peer-reviewed journal of the American Psychological Association. Yet I thoroughly disagree. It hardly made a noticeable dent. If anything, the paper only made the Stanford researchers more untouchable.

Le Texier's repudiation of an incredibly flawed *study* that should have died an early death was not enough to pass the sentence of science fraud and convict the perpetrators. Psychology refused to take the simulation down, illustrating that fact does not triumph over falsehood. Even agreement that the experiment was scientifically meaningless does not deter psychology teachers from including the official false version in their curriculum without the main criticisms.

So I wonder if my exposure of an open-and-shut case of fabrication will finally wake up the field. Fact-checking unveiled that the facts fly straight in the face of the official narrative. The story does not fly. It never did. Psychology made a fable larger than life, disclosing a complete lack of moral clarity to see through rogue researchers. In the end, the Stanford Prison simulation is a [grim psychological touchstone](#).

It is hard to see Zimbardo emerge from his shambolic decades of defense without his credibility shredded. Irrespective, now is the time for psychology to kill its darling — a momentous turning point to salvage the scientific standing of a field in disarray.

Let this be the beginning of a new end.

The Final Reckoning of the Stanford Prison Saga is fast approaching its apocalyptic end. But not before I finish off Zimbardo's response. In the next episode, you can read about the two remaining issues that are indirectly related to the simulation. Early publications appeared outside peer-reviewed journals to avoid rejection, and a British research team failed to replicate the simulation.

Previous articles of The Final Reckoning:

Part 1: [The Aftermath of The Lifespan of a Lie](#)

Part 2: [David Eshleman's deepfake](#)

Part 3: [John Mark's insubordination](#)

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Part 9: Finishing off the response

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