

The cast

- Perpetrators
- Victims
- Bystanders
- Collaborators
- Rescuers
- Opposition

# Perpetrators

- Frustrated, aggressive , gifted young men
- Levels of motivation: „the kindly ones”, revolutionaries, fanatical Anti-Semites, manipulators, carrierists, conformists, robbers, sadists
- Ideologues
- Politicians
- Remote control bureacratic killers
- Professional killers

# Robert Brasillach (1909-1945)

- Editor, poet, literary critic, film fan
- Idealism, romanticism, repressed homosexuality
- He supported the ideology of national socialism
- He wrote vicious pamphlets against the Jews living in France
- He signed a call for the execution of the members of the French Resistance
- He was executed for „intellectual crimes“ (words as deeds)

# Mengele

- State funding of his research
- Obsession of human engineering
- Carrierism
- Vision of human perfection
- Dissecting twins, injecting methylene blue dye into the eye, collecting body parts

# Bureaucratic killers

- Remoteness
- Specialists in a large organization
- Bureaucratic culture
- Diffusion of responsibility
- Carrier building

# The banality of evil



# Ordinary men

- Culture of inequality (racism)
- Ideology of anti-Semitism
- Authoritarianism (family+state)
- Blind identification with the authority
- References to glory or decency
- Self-justification (self-deception)
- Pretension of being ignorant
- Suspension of Kant's imperative
- Split personality

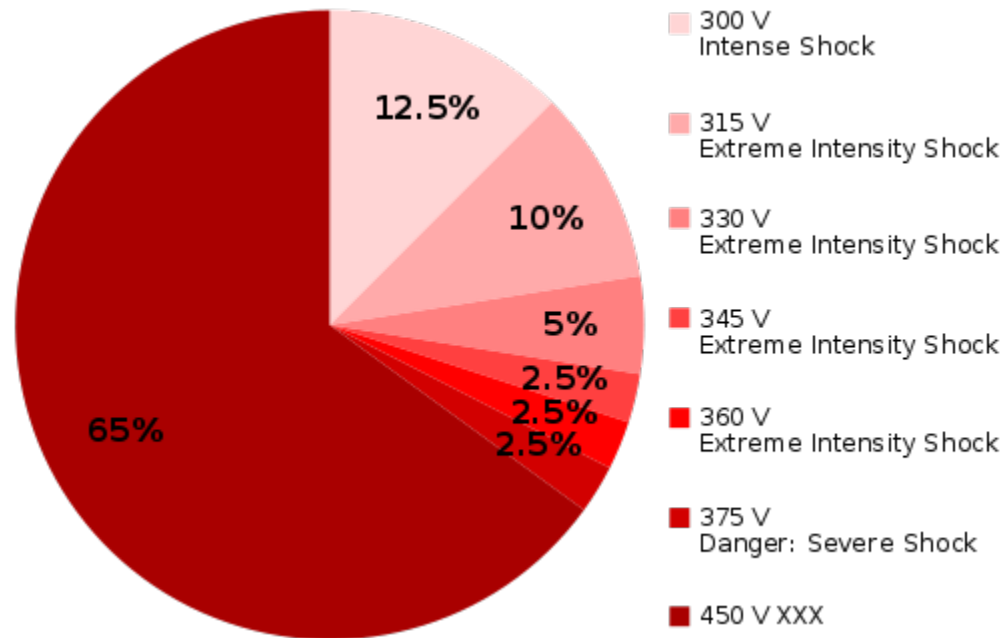


# Explanations

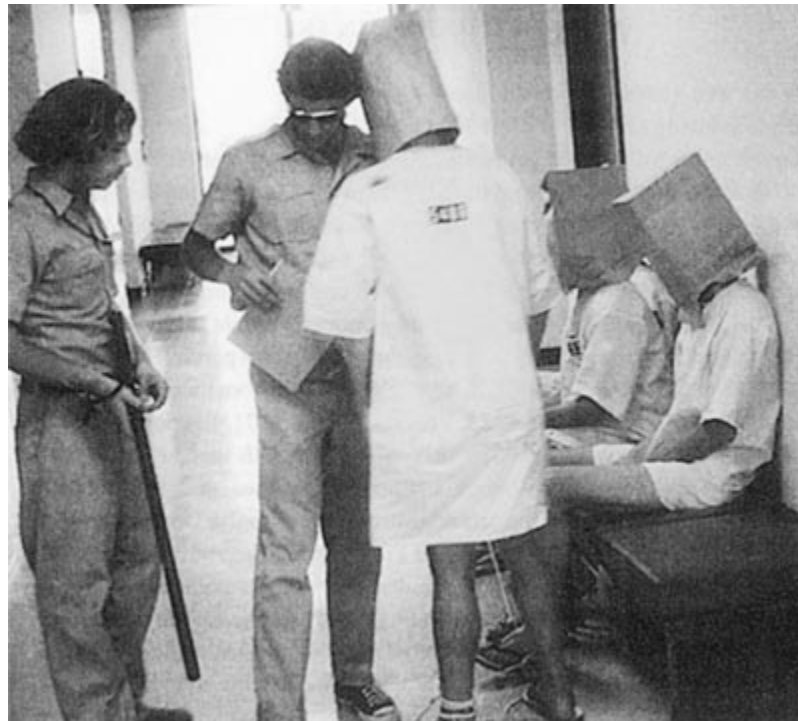
- Dehumanization attitude
- They had no choice
- Followed orders
- Group pressure
- Retaliation (fallen soldiers, civilians killed by Allied bombing)
- Inhumanity is function of social context (experimental research of Zimbardo, Milgram)

- „During the first try, my hand trembled a bit as I shot, but one gets used to it. By the tenth try I aimed calmly and shot surely at the many women, children, and infants. I kept in mind that I have two infants at home, whom these hords would treat just the same, if not ten times worse. The death that we gave them was a beautiful quick death, compared to the hellish torments of thousands and thousands in the jails of the GPU. Infants flew in great arcs in the air, and we shot them to pieces in flight, before their bodies fell into the pit and into the water (Snyder, T. Bloodlands, p. 205-206)

# Milgram's experiment



# Zimbardo's experiment



# Victims

- Gradual reduction (deprivation of rights, property, status, family members, dignity)
- Distorted bodies
- Degradation and torture
- To subject the victims to filth and excrement
- „Typhus caused diarrhea which flooded the bottom of the cages into the faces of the women lying in the cages below, and mixed with blood pus and urine”

# „Perfect victims”

- Two thousand years of victimhood
- Jewish experience with oppression
- Hilberg: Coping mechanisms (alleviation, evasion, paralysis, compliance)
- Alleviation: protection payment, ransom arrangement, relief
- Evasion: flight
- Compliance: accepting anti-Jewish measures
- Rare instances of armed resistance

# Victim's psychology

- Innocence
- Inability to believe
- Self-deception
- Disorganization
- Blind spots

# Bystanders

- Domestic bystanders
- Foreign bystanders
- Ignorance
- The scheme beyond imagination
- „Missing hero“ (Why I?)
- Scepticism
- habituation



# Collaborators

- The tragic paradox of Jewish councils
- Primo Levi (The Drowned and the Saved)
- The grey zone inhabited by the hybrid-class of prisoner-functionary (again a discrepeant role)
- Moshe Merin of East Upper Silesia
- Chaim Rumkowski of Lodz
- Adam Czerniakow of Warsaw
- „Messianic complex”
- Choiceless choices
- Justification (to prevent the worse)

# Rescuers

- Marginality (between two worlds)
- Risk taking
- Empathy, compassion
- Universal ethic standards
- Sense of justice
- Wallenberg, Schindler

# Opposition

- Moral rage
- National shame
- Nobility of the soul
- Showing example
- Posteriority
- White Rose Movement, Marie Scholl
- Distributing anti-Nazi leaflets at the University of Munich
- Stauffenberg, July 20, 1944.

# Her last words

- „How can we expect righteousness to prevail when there is hardly anyone willing to give himself up individually to a righteous cause. Such a fine, sunny day, and I have to go, but what does my death matter, if through us thousands of people are awakened and stirred to action?“

(Sophie Magdalena Scholl -1921-43)