

THE GOOD NURSE TO BE OR NOT TO BE ODEDIENT

Catherine Leuckx

STFRAN.

(HBO₅-school for nurses – Leuven, Belgium)



HB05 VERPLEEGKUNDE
CAMPUS GASTHUISBERG
HERESTRAAT 49, 3000 LEUVEN
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A moment's insight is sometimes worth a life's experience.

-Oliver Wendell Holmes

The End.

A BRIEF STORY



How can an order of 'a white coat', create a blind spot for the well-being of the patient?



4 Cases



The inconvenient gastroscopy

Case-study 1



Time for reflection!



- What values are involved?
- What is the ethical dilemma?
- What needs to be done next?

A word cloud of ethics-related terms, including: SENSE, PRINCIPLES, WORTHINESS, FAITH, MOTIVATION, RESPONSIBILITY, INTEGRITY, HONESTY, THEORY, VALUES, SOCIAL, EQUALITY, CONVENTIONALITIES, TRUTH, RESPECTABILITY, TREATMENT, HYPOCRISY, ETHICS, PHILISOPHY, MORALS, PERFORMANCE, TRUST, RULES, AUTHENTICITY, CHARACTER, ETIQUETTE, RESPECT, HONOR, VIRTUE, STANDARDS, PURPOSE, ATTITUDE, FAIRNESS, CONDUCT, ACCEPTANCE, INNOCENCE, DECENCY, FAIRNESS, CRITERIA, and SENSE.

How did the story end?

Finally, the nurse did what she was told. She felt very bad about this but nevertheless she did what the doctor told her to do, knowing that this might cause the patient problems. In the end it went well for the patient.

Lunch under peer/group pressure

Case-study 2



Time for reflection!



- What values are involved?
- What is the ethical dilemma?
- What needs to be done next?



How did the story end?

Michael follows Amelie's instructions and goes to the cafeteria. It's not that terrible that Mr. Anderson has to wait half an hour to be changed, he thinks. I'm afraid that, if I had changed him first, I would have gotten bad grades from Amelie. And of course, she is the nurse. She knows what's best for the patient, doesn't she?

The student and the pills

Case-study 3



Time for reflection!



- What values are involved?
- What is the ethical dilemma?
- What needs to be done next?



How did the story end?

The head nurse spoke to Rita and tells her that her mother was incorrectly given pills. These pills should at least have been crushed. It is a human error, she explains. What she doesn't mention, is that the pills were given by an intern...

The skin affair

Case-study 4



Time for reflection!



- What values are involved?
- What is the ethical dilemma?
- What needs to be done next?



How did the story end?

Florence removes the bandage and causes serious damage to the patient's skin. At the moment it was not that painful for the patient because she was already receiving a lot of analgesic medication. Unfortunately, this was followed by a very painful recovery.

Would you resist pressure?

Aren't we unrealistically positive about
our own judgement?



STANLEY MILGRAM

Experiment on obedience to authority.

Who's he?

- °1933 - +1984
- Psychologist at Yale University.
- Conducted an experiment focusing on the conflict between obedience to authority and personal conscience.



What?

- Researching how far people would go in obeying an instruction if it involved harming another person.
- He was interested in how easily ordinary people could be influenced into committing atrocities (ex. Germans in WWII).

How did it work?

- Milgram **selected** participants by **newspaper** advertising.
- **Male** participants for a 'study of learning' at **Yale** University (1961).
- At the beginning, they were **introduced** to another participant, who was a confederate of the experimenter (Milgram).
- They drew straws to determine their **roles** – learner or teacher – although this was fixed and the confederate was always the learner. There was also an “experimenter” dressed in a gray lab coat, played by an actor (not Milgram).

- Two rooms were used:

- one for the **learner** (with an electric chair) and
- another for the **teacher** and **experimenter** with an electric shock generator.



- The 'learner' (Mr. Wallace) > strapped to a chair with electrodes.
- After he has learned a list of word pairs given him to learn, the 'teacher' tests him by naming a word and asking the learner to recall its partner/pair from a list of four possible choices.
- The teacher is told to administer an electric shock every time the learner makes a mistake, increasing the level of shock each time.
- There were 30 switches on the shock generator marked from 15 volts (slight shock) to 450 (danger – severe shock).

- The learner gave mainly wrong answers (on purpose) > for each of these: an electric shock!
- When the 'teacher' refused to administer a shock, the experimenter was to give a series of orders/prods to ensure they continued.
 - Prod 1: Please continue.
 - Prod 2: The experiment requires you to continue.
 - Prod 3: It is absolutely essential that you continue.
 - Prod 4: You have no other choice but to continue.

Results?

- 65% (two-thirds) of participants ('teachers') continued to the highest level of 450 volts.
- All the participants continued to 300 volts.
- Milgram did more than one experiment – he carried out 18 variations of his study. All he did was alter the situation to see how this affected obedience.

So?

- Ordinary people are likely to follow orders given by an authority figure, even to the extent of killing an innocent human being.
- Obedience to authority is ingrained in us all from the way we are brought up.
- People tend to obey orders from other people if they recognize their authority as morally right and/or legally based.

Conclusion

- Impressive experiment that has had a lot of impact.
- People generally want to do the right thing, but the system, the desire to obey, is stronger.
- People are sensitive to authority.
- Humility about one's own behaviour is appropriate.

Would you press
the button?



- Trying to explain the horror of WWII:
 - 'An order is an order' > ordinary people did horrible things.
 - What would have been your role?
 - If we can transfer the responsibility, we succeed in eliminating our conscience.

- Yet we are no robots.
- It is important that our systems are appropriate.
- Systems in which what's right, is rewarded and what's wrong, is punished.
- "If I don't, someone else will (push the button)."



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yr5cjoykVUs>

CHARLES K. HOFLING

Hospital Experiment on Nurses

What?

- Created a more realistic study (than Milgram's) of obedience in the nurse-physician relationship (1966).
- Carrying out field studies on nurses > unaware that they were involved in an experiment...

How did it work?

- In a hospital setting > nurses were ordered by unknown doctors to administer what could have been a dangerous dose of a (fictional) drug to their patients.
- In spite of official guidelines (forbidding administration in such circumstances), Hofling found that 21 out of the 22 nurses would have given the patient an overdose of medicine.

Results?

- Makes able to demonstrate that people are very unwilling to question those who are considered "authority figures".
- Even when they might have a good reason to.
- This experiment helped illustrate how one could be willing to do something they are ordered to do, even if they know what they are being ordered to do is wrong (such as giving a patient too much of a drug).
- This study was also very important in relation to the Milgram experiment.

11 NURSES DIDN'T REALISE
THEY WERE GIVING AN OVERDOSE
BUT BROKE OTHER PROTC



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BZlmzqXIZMw>



thank
you!

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