



We are going to consider some of the ethical issues involved in Zimbardo's prison study. Imagine you are writing an essay evaluating Zimbardo's study in terms of ethics. Below, the issues are raised for you. What you need to do is place a comment by each one to complete the point made as you would in a well-structured essay.



<p>The participants who were due to play prisoners were arrested at night in their own homes and handcuffed outside in the street before being bundled into police cars. This was done without their prior knowledge and in full view of the neighbours. This raises several ethical issues:</p>	
<p>When the 'prisoners' reached the jail, they were stripped, blindfolded and deloused. This is an ethical problem because</p>	
<p>Some of the guards were hostile and dehumanising towards the prisoners and were not prevented from treating them unreasonably. For example, they controlled when they could go to the toilet and woke them in the middle of the night to stand on parade. This is an ethical problem because the prisoners were</p>	
<p>Zimbardo himself overlooked the abusive behaviour of the prison guards until a graduate student questioned the morality of the situation. Even then it was several more days before the study was ended. This is considered by some to be ethically unacceptable because</p>	

HINTS - POINTS YOU MAY WISH TO RAISE.

- Zimbardo put his own research interests before the welfare of the participants.
- The neighbours had no way of knowing this was a simulated study. How would that reflect on the participant and his family?
- Some participants were treated far more harshly than they might have expected when they volunteered to take part.