

I'm not asking, you're not telling

In "The Psychology of Evil" a Ted Talk delivered by Dr. Philip Zimbardo, he outlines that Evil is the exercise of power and is often attributed to a person being a bad apple. However, through an engaging and articulate discussion, his hypothesis is that evil can be attributed to "bad barrels" which are negative social situations and to "bad barrel makers" who are the people in power who create bad situations which exacerbate bad apples. Interestingly "The 7-5" by Tiller Russel is a gritty documentary on Police corruption which exemplifies Zimbardo's Ted Talk. Indeed, Mike Dowd and his partners demonstrate how a bad situation such as New York in the 1980s and 1990s can develop bad apples. If Zimbardo were to view "The 7-5" he would undoubtedly comment on the concept of being a "good cop," the bad barrel makers also known as the system and what evil actually means as a word.

Back in the 1980s in New York City, in the 75th precinct what it meant to be a "good cop" differs vary greatly from what the average cop would think what a "good cop" is. Dowd stating in his trial, when the judge asked him what a "good cop" meant to him, "being good is a cop that would never give up another cop, a cop that if he witnesses something go down he's being one hundred percent behind anything the cop does. No matter what it is... You took the side of the other cop because he was the only one who would back you up when you needed help," and then going into the examples of how it would work in the police force. Dr. Zimbardo would be very interested as this paints Dowd in a different light as a person who got into this situation. Dr. Zimbardo stating in his talk talking about a comic, "I'm neither a good cop nor a bad cop, Jerome. Like yourself, I'm a complex amalgam of positive and negative personality traits that emerge or not, depending on the circumstances," and possibly thinking that Dowd was just a good apple in a bad barrel.

Dr. Zimbardo brought up three excellent questions, them being, "what do the people bring into the situation? What does the situation bring out of them? And what is the system that creates and maintains that situation?" making people think about the old thought of the good apples and bad apples in the barrel, but his questions asking about the barrels the apples were in, wondering if the barrels were, in fact, good or bad. Going with that, Dowd in his trial, was asked if he received the lesson that Internal Affairs gave the new cops all the time. His response was, after getting asked "did the instructors take it seriously?", was "Not at all, I recall Internal Affairs giving a lesson to the class and after the individual left, our academy instructor looked at us and said 'now, you can go that way or, you can go this way. If you want to be a successful cop you don't go that way.' And this is the academy. I didn't step on the street and I was told 'side with this direction whatever you do, cover your ass'", making it very clear that he was a possible good apple who was placed in a very bad barrel. Dowd being placed in a very corrupted

precinct, the bad barrel, and it caused things to escalate, for him in the precinct and how corruptible he became.

After Dowd had become quite the dirty cop, he had become quite happy with his status and his power level, essentially becoming an evil cop. Stating that, "I was in control now, that gave me the real feeling of being in control," in regards to what he was capable of doing. He and two of his friends were at point-blank robbing people, taking their coke and drug money. The people who were robbed couldn't go to the police and report it, because it would sound insane and they would say that they were actively buying drugs off the street, which wasn't too smart. Comparing what Dr. Zimbardo said about power, "Evil is the exercise the power. And that's the key: it's about power," because that is what evil is, and it's possible that Dowd became an evil cop with his own agenda. Dowd became so proud with how much control he had, he had lots of money from his doings, people could have easily thought he was the evil cop who basically helped one drug company win and try not to get caught by the police.

Dr. Zimbardo would most likely comment on how easy it was for Dowd to get away with everything he did. Continuing on, he would also comment on the precinct was a bad barrel and how the system was flawed, as well as how evil Dowd had become during his reign. He would highlight other big things as he saw in the documentary and compare them to his talk, seeing if what happened matched with what he was saying. He would also talk about the seven steps of evil and how Dowd did most of them. Dr. Zimbardo would maybe try to talk with Dowd himself and ask what it felt like when he was in his reign. Finally, he would indicate that there should be more things to stop cops from turning out like Dowd. Unfortunately, no one was asking, so no one was telling.