

# The TSA is a Milgram Experiment

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Everybody's least favorite homeland security goon squad, the Transportation Security Agency (TSA), is back in the news again this week, and for precisely the same reason as it always is: Engaging in the degradation, humiliation, dehumanization and molestation of innocent people which is its real raison d'être.

This time the victim was Jeanne Clarkson, a 96-year-old WWII veteran who the jackbooted thugs of the police state decided would be a fitting target for their "deluxe" treatment, i.e., a full six minutes of groping, patting and molestation. The only reason this even made it as a blip on the news radar (and even then, only in [the tabloids](#) and [the alt media](#)) was that her daughter had the sense to record the entire ordeal and [post it to facebook](#), where the post went viral.

Sadly, there is nothing new here. Nothing shocking. Nothing unexpected to those who have seen this taking place for nearly two decades now. Whatever one makes of how long (or short) a journey it was from the pre-9/11 airport security experience (the waltz through the metal detector) to the police state gauntlet of today (removing shoes and belts, bomb swabs, radiation scanners, and the dreaded molestation pat-downs), the only surprising part of this story is that people are surprised by it.

As Matt Agorist notes in [his write-up](#) on the Clarkson incident

and its context:

*The TSA – whose job is supposedly “fighting terrorism” – is, without doubt, one of America’s most corrupt and incompetent agencies. However, last year, they apparently became so unsatisfied with the mere ability to [strip search](#) babies, [remove colostomy bags](#), beat up [blind cancer patients](#), and [fondle your genitalia](#), that they announced a more invasive physical pat-downs. The pat-downs, which TSA warned would [probably prompt assault complaints](#) with the police department because of their invasive nature, have been implemented and a 96-year-old WWII veteran has become their latest victim.*

To those who are truly surprised at the latest TSA outrage, I could point out yet again that the TSA is pure security theater, nothing more.

- Their security screenings have a staggering [95% failure rate](#).
- They have repeatedly failed to find [bombs](#), massive shipments of [narcotics](#), loaded [guns](#), and even the very types of [box cutters](#) used on 9/11.
- And, in the ultimate case of “pot meet kettle,” even the US Congress itself has [excoriated the TSA](#) as an “enormous, inflexible and distracted bureaucracy, more concerned with human resource management and consolidating power, and acting reactively instead of proactively.”

But, just as the “intelligence failures” narrative is trotted out after every *successful* false flag terror incident in order to steer the conversation away from the intelligence agencies culpability for those attacks, so, too, is the “security failure” narrative trotted out to explain TSA “incompetence” and distract us from a hidden truth. The TSA is not “failing” in any way. It is not a well-intentioned agency in need of

better management or more funding or more highly-trained agents. On the contrary. It is doing *precisely* what it was created to do. The problem is that most people do not know what it was created to do.

In order to understand the real purpose of this spectacularly successful agency, we need to revisit the Milgram experiment.

Surely you remember the Milgram experiment from 1000 pop-psy presentations, but even if you don't you can go [read about it](#) or [watch the footage](#) of the original experiment online.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m0UEC5YXV8U>

Long story short: a psychologist recruits a member of the public to aid in performing "a scientific study of memory and learning." This "study" involves the recruit taking the role of a "teacher" delivering a memory test to a "learner," who he believes to be another randomly selected volunteer. For every incorrect answer, the "teacher" is asked to deliver an electric shock to the "learner." Each subsequent incorrect answer involves an increasingly powerful (and painful) electric shock.

But the "study" is a sham. The "teacher" is not, in fact, delivering electric shocks and no one is actually being harmed. In reality, the "learner" is an actor, an accomplice of the psychologist. What is *actually* being tested is the "teacher's" willingness to deliver increasingly powerful electric shocks to a perfect stranger merely on the behest of an authority figure (the psychologist).

The study is famous in the annals of psychology because the results were so completely unexpected. Most psychologists predicted that only a very small percentage of the participants in the study would continue delivering shocks past the point where (they believed) the shocks could be fatal to the learner. Instead, a staggering 65% of the test participants proceeded all the way to the maximum (supposedly

lethal) voltage.

65% of participants in the original study—ordinary men and women who thought they were volunteering for a simple experiment about memory and learning—were willing to deliver what they sincerely believed to be potentially fatal doses of electricity to random strangers (at this point crying out in agony or feigning unconsciousness) simply because an authority figure assured them it was necessary to continue with the experiment.

So now let's look at the TSA's *real* role. No, they are not there to keep us safe from the scary, turban-wearing Al-CIA-da goblins. But they *are* running a giant, society-wide, real-world Milgram experiment in obedience training. In this case, though, there are no actors. Real people are really being tortured, molested, degraded and subjected to the most demeaning humiliation at the hands of the police state goons. And this time the subjects of the experiment (the general public) are not being asked to deliver a shock. They are not being asked to participate in the torture, aid in the pat-downs, or help run the body scanners.

Instead, they are being asked *not* to participate. To sit. To watch. To learn. This is what happens to those who resist. This is what happens to random people who do not resist. This is what happens to 96-year-old WWII veterans. This is what happens to toddlers. This is what happens to pregnant mothers. One day it will probably happen to you. And you, the public who are made to watch these torture sessions from the lengthy line up at the security gate, are expected to do nothing. There is nothing you can do. Nothing you will do.

And look at what a remarkable success this nearly two-decade long experiment in obedience training has been.

People watch passively as the molestation of people like Jeanne Clarkson unfolds mere steps away from them. No outcry.

No protest. No boycotts. No mass movements to stop these scenes from playing out again.

Yes, a few keyboard warriors will have a few nasty words for the agents in the comment section of a viral facebook post. A few journalists will write a few editorials (this one included) drawing attention to the issue. A few people witnessing the act as it plays out will have the sense that it's wrong. That it's unjust.

But the next time they have to take a flight, those same people will step dutifully into line, take off their belt and shoes, and pray that it won't be them next. And unless and until people stop doing *nothing* and start doing *something* in the face of these obvious injustices, absolutely none of this will change. And, if people continue doing nothing, within a generation no one will even understand that these scenes are objectionable. That they don't have to happen.

But you see, this is the most surprising part of the Milgram experiment. The one that everyone forgets. The experiment wasn't run once or twice. It was run dozens of times, under all types of circumstances, and a remarkable fact was discovered: The way the experiment was set up determined the extent to which the participants obeyed their instructions. Sometimes the experiment was run so that one "teacher" could watch other "teachers" do the study before they did. And in cases where the first teachers obeyed the psychologist and delivered the shocks, the later teacher would, too.

But—and here we get to the *real* lesson of the Milgram experiment—if the teacher saw other teachers disobey the psychologist and *refuse* to deliver the shocks, they would disobey, too.

Disobedience, once modeled, becomes an option in the mind of the public.

Remember this the next time you are at the security

checkpoint: When you are asked to step into the body scanner, those behind you *will* be watching. Your choice *will* make a difference. When someone is being molested at a TSA pat-down, those around you *will* be taking note of your reaction. Your behavior *will* affect theirs.

So, what choice will you make? Will you pass or fail the experiment?