**Conformity to Social Roles**

**Social Roles –** the parts individuals play as members of a social group which meet the expectation of that situation.

Each social situation has its own **social norms** (an expected way for individuals to behave).

Individuals learn how to behave by looking at the social roles other people play in situations and then conform to these roles.

Conforming to social roles therefore involves \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (what type of conformity)?

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**Research into Conformity to Social Roles (Zimbardo) – What do I know about Zimbardo?**

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| **What do you know about… (Aims and Procedure)** |
| **The Aim….** |
| **The Participants…** |
| **How the participants were divided up across the two roles…** |
| **How the prisoners treated in the research….** |
| **How the guards were treated in the research..** |
| **How the prisoners were managed in the prison day to day…** |
| **What procedures existed in the prison…** |
| **How long the research was planned to run for…** |
| **What do you know about… (Findings and Conclusions)** |
| **The actions of the guards…** |
| **The actions of the Participants…** |
| **After 36 hours one prisoner was released because…** |
| **The study was stopped after because…** |
| **In post-experimental interviews…** |
| **The Conclusions…** |

**Evaluation of** **Zimbardo’s research into Conformity to Social Roles**

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| **Point** | **Evidence** | **Evaluation/Elaboration** |
| **The Stanford Prison Experiment had control over key variables** | **For example,** Zimbardo was able to select emotionally stable participants which were randomly assigned to guard or prisoner roles as a way to reduce the effect of personality on the results. |  |
| One weakness of the SPE is that it lacks **mundane realism** | **For example, Banuazizi & Mohavedi (1975)** argued that participants were merely play-acting rather than genuinely conforming to the role and their performance was based on personally held stereotypes of how prisoners and guards are *supposed* to behave. |  |
| **The research raises the ethical issue of** |  |  |