12 Angry Men

Lessons in Interpersonal Behavior

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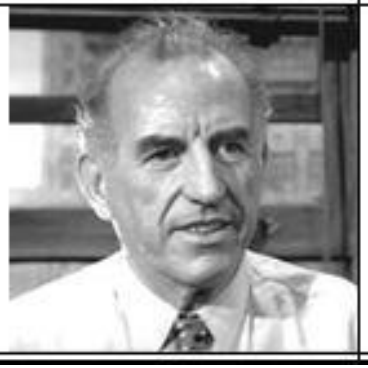
12 Angry Men

- Television drama written by Reginald Rose
- Performed as a live one-hour drama on CBS, September 1954

- Rights bought by Henry Fonda
- Screenplay extended to enlarge roles
- Jurors 9 and 11 the same actors as on television
- Additional actors:
  - Lee J Cobb as Juror 3, E.G. Marshall as Juror 4, Jack Klugman as Juror 5

- Filmed 1956, on a low budget, over four weeks in New York City
- Not a commercial success when released, but now a classic

12 Angry Men: The Jury

Juror #1	Juror #2	Juror #3	Juror #4
Juror #5	**Juror #6**	**Juror #7**	**Juror #8**
Juror #9	**Juror #10**	**Juror #11**	**Juror #12**
			

12 Angry Men: The Jury

1. Martin Balsam
   Foreman
   High school football coach

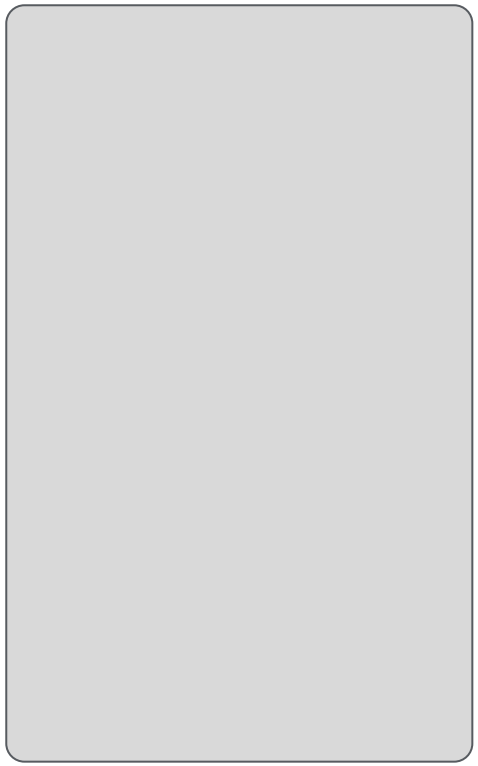
12. Robert Webber
    Ad man

11. George Voskovec
    Watchmaker, immigrant

10. Ed Begley
    Garage owner, has a cold

9. Joseph Sweeney
   The old man

8. Henry Fonda
   Architect



2. John Fiedler
   Bank teller

3. Lee J. Cobb
   Delivery service

4. E. G. Marshall
   Stock broker

5. Jack Klugman
   Man from slums

6. Edward Binns
   House painter

7. Jack Warden
   Salesman
   Baseball fan

Agree or Not?

- Jurors shifted their votes based on the evidence, as they came to have a reasonable doubt about the defendant's guilt.
  - The second knife was not one-of-a-kind
  - Difficult to hear a shout with an el train roaring by
  - Would he have come back if he had killed his father?
  - The slow walk to the door of the old man downstairs
  - Not remembering movie actors is not uncommon
  - The downward angle of the stab wound
  - The woman across the street wore glasses

12 Angry Men: A study of group dynamics

Jury as a Group

- Twelve people
  - Small enough to sit at one table
- Randomly assembled
  - No past associations, no differences in seniority
- No hierarchy
  - Foreman is first among equals
  - Usually the first juror empaneled
- They exhibit common dynamics of groups
  - Members take on roles
  - Members display patterns of participation

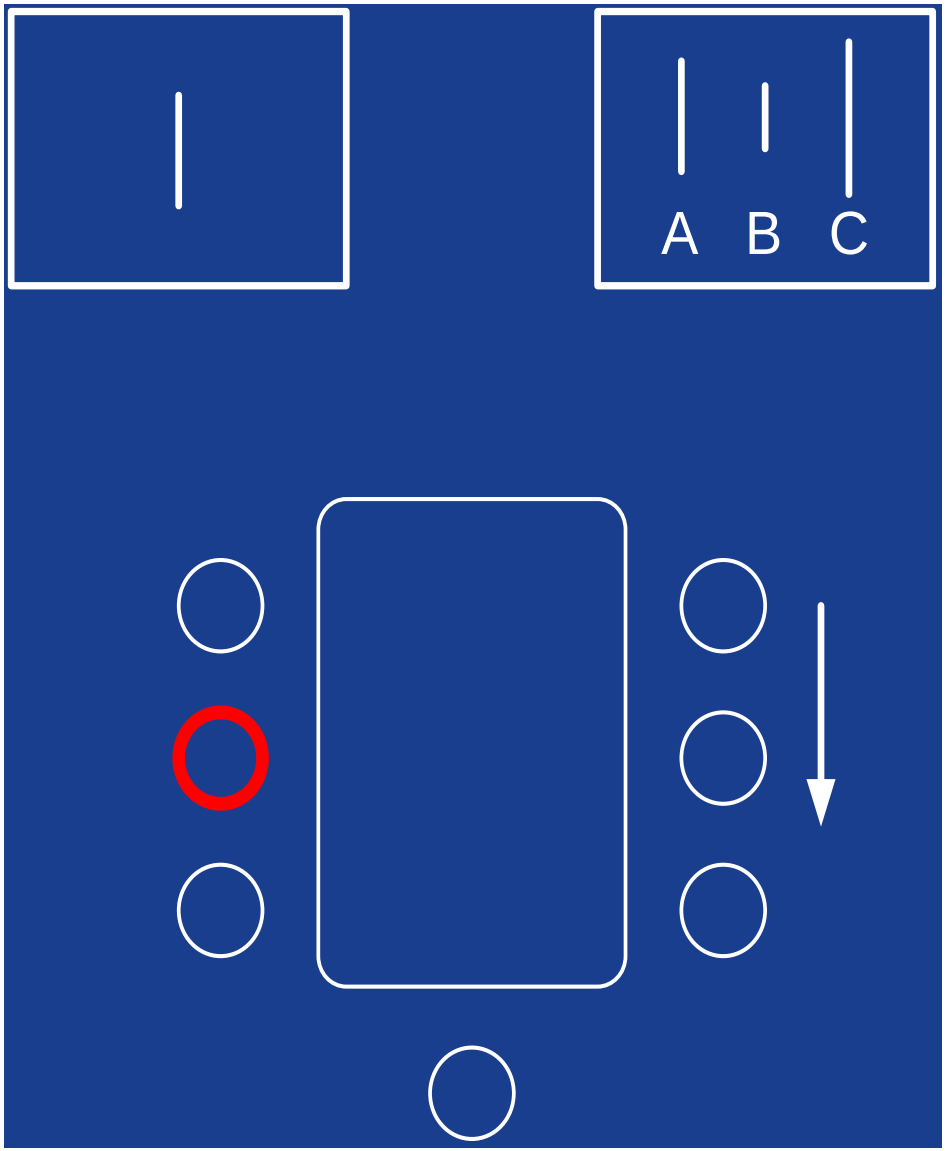
A stressful setting

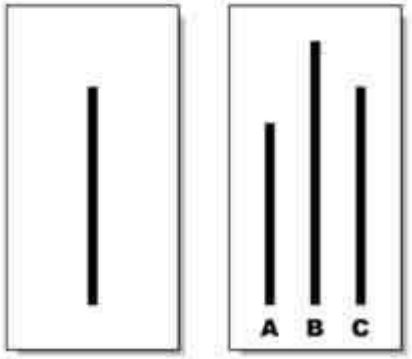
- A difficult task
- Highly consequential – life and death
- No clear rules or procedures
- No legal expertise
- Unanimous verdict required
- Uncertain length – no time limit
- Surrounded by strangers, unknown to one another
- Confined in a small space, no escape
- Hot and cramped!

Behaviors in groups

- Avoidance
- Changing patterns of participation
- Attraction and Repulsion
- Reciprocity
- Displacement
- Ostracism
- Transference
- Conformity

Solomon Asch study on Social Conformity, 1951





Results of the Asch Study

18 trials in all.
In trials where confederates gave correct answers, only 1% of subject answers were incorrect.
In “critical trials” where confederates gave wrong answers, subjects gave on average 32% incorrect responses.

75% of subjects conformed at least once and 25% never conformed

When interviewed, most said they had not really believed their answers but went along with the group for fear of being ridiculed or thought peculiar.

Results of the Asch Study (2)

In variations of the basic study, Asch found that the likelihood to conformity *decreased* when:

- At least one person had already given the correct answer.

- Votes were private, not declared openly.

Pressure to conform was greatest for the lone dissenter in a public vote – precisely the setting for Juror 8.

Juror 8: Influence without Formal Authority

Juror 8: Procedural Tactics

- Define the problem (guilt vs. reasonable doubt)
- Create space and time to discuss
  - "Let's take an hour"
- Use time to develop and identify allies
  - Cast a net for potential allies. Once you have one, the chances of more increases.
  - When did Juror 8 think he should call for a second vote?

- Use *private voting* to reduce pressure to conform
- Use *public voting* to apply conformity pressure
- Call for votes to cement support and build momentum

Juror 8: Interpersonal Tactics

- Ask questions rather than assert positions:
  - "Supposing we're wrong?" "It's possible"
- Establishes expertise
  - Cites the Constitution
- Give opponents 'enough rope to hang themselves'
  - Did not reveal the knife early, but waited until Juror 4 enumerating each point
- Remain calm and appear neutral and impartial
- Able to confront if needed – showing versatility.
- Don't argue when an opponent makes a good point
  - 4: everyone has a breaking point; knife is possible, but not very probable
- Never gloat or take personal pride in success
  - Quiet reaction shots only
- Make the room safe for others to speak and act.

Effective leadership in groups

- What you say matters – as well as *how* you say it
  - Calm, reasoned
  - Credible, fact based
- What you do *not* say also matters – maybe even more so!
  - Avoid *ad hominem* comments
  - Avoid exaggeration that causes a good comment to be rejected
  - No need to reply to a good point
  - Create space for others to participate
- When to shape indirectly, and when to confront directly
  - Stand up to bullies
    - "What makes you believe her? She's one of *them*, too." (to Juror 10)
    - "This isn't a game" (to Jurors 3 and 12)
  - Provoke an emotional outburst
    - "You're a sadist" (to Juror 3)

Who raises questions?

Could the shout be heard with the passing el?	Juror 8
Would the boy have returned if guilty?	Juror 11
Did the old man say he ran to the door?	Juror 5
Could he remember names of actors?	Juror 8
Downward stab wound not right	Juror 2
Use a switchblade knife stabbing upwards	Juror 5
Witness had dents on her nose from glasses	Juror 9

The transformation of Juror 2

From:

"I just think he's guilty. I thought it was obvious from the word go"

Told to be quiet by Juror 3

Anyone want a cough drop? Seeking affirmation and connection

Stands behind Juror 8 for safety and affiliation

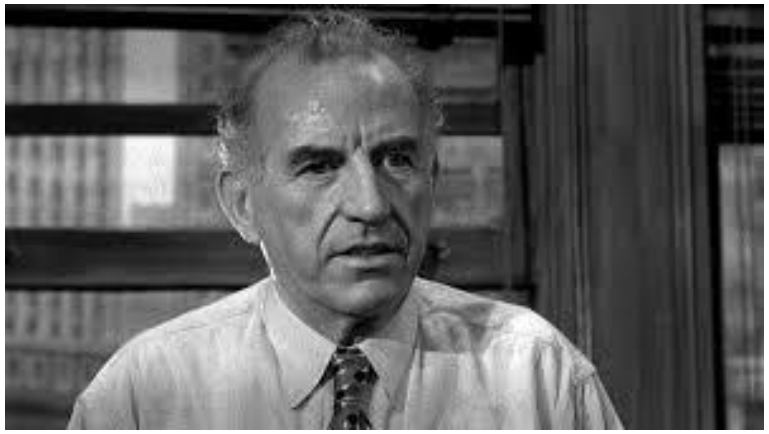
To:

To 7: "I don't feel that way. There're a lot of details that never came out…"

To 10: Cough drops: "They're all gone, my friend"

Raises question about the knife: "There's something I'd like to say. I mean, it's been bothering me a little … the whole business about the stab wound and how it was made, the downward angle of it, you know?"

Segmentation: Opponents and adversaries



Juror 10
The bigot

Juror 3 The angry bully

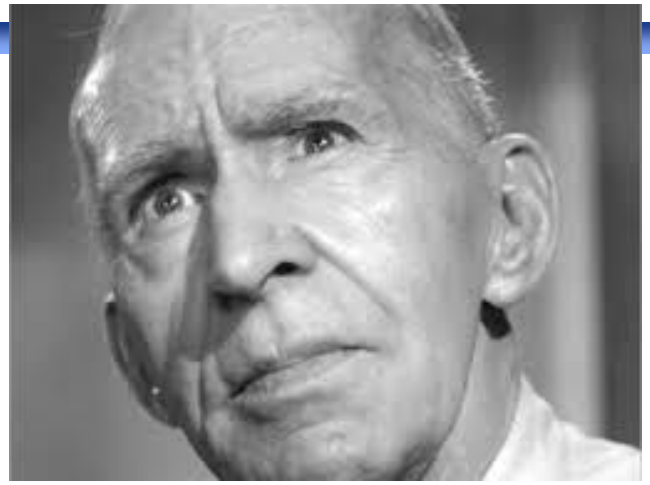
Juror 4
The hyper-rational

Juror 7 The impatient

Segmentation: Potential allies

Juror 9

The old man



Juror 5

The poor

Juror 2 The meek

Juror 11 The immigrant

Segmentation: Swing jurors

Juror 6 The decent

Juror 12 Unsure and can be swayed

Foreman
Juror 1

Well meaning but weak

Juror 7 The indifferent

Two hypotheses

- Jurors shifted their votes based on the evidence, as they came to have a reasonable doubt about the defendant's guilt

Or:

- Jurors shifted their votes primarily for social reasons
  - Desire to associate with an admirable person
  - Desire to reject unpleasant and repulsive people
  - Ability to withstand pressure for conformity

- Did "reasonable doubt" drive the decision, or was "reasonable doubt" invoked to justify a decision made for other reasons?