

# Forces

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## Stomp

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recognizable as a social norm because it is so commonplace. It is, in fact, almost instinctive, so most people do not give a second thought to the behavior. It is simply accepted without question, allowing the norm to be further entrenched in the minds of individuals. In a way, it is not unlike the parable of the frog in the pot: those who live in society do not recognize the rules and regulations that are being imparted on them, just as the frog in the parable does not realize

he is being boiled alive when the water's temperature gradually increases.

**T**he unconscious adherence to society's laws means that individuals are prone to be swayed by whatever societal "voice" is strongest. That is, the opinion that is most influential—the one that is heard by the majority of those in a society—will be almost unquestioningly followed, like a steer being goaded to the slaughterhouse. For instance, the values and opinions

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explicitly and implicitly shown in media are likely to be adopted by the society that views it because it cannot fathom questioning it. It is used to not questioning things, after all; as mentioned previously, society is accustomed to following implicit laws such as the rules of “personal space.” In a sense, society has a veritable “hive-mindset,” the shared paradigms of society forcing it to think as a single organism. If society’s loudest voice instructs society to take a certain stance on an issue, society will willingly oblige, a muscle that cannot resist the instructions of the nervous system.

**T**his “hive-mindset” tendency of society is both its greatest strength and most devastating weakness. It is a strength when the “voice” agrees with society’s values and customs; it is a weakness when the “voice” diverges from the societal

norms. For instance, the rhetoric of Donald Trump does not threaten the particular society he panders to, for his words do not contradict its norms and beliefs. In fact, his rhetoric reinforces that society’s paradigm, strengthening the overall influence society holds over its citizens. However, it is likely that that same group could be implicitly influenced by a different opinion via media; that society could watch a television program, for example, that subversively contradicts their paradigms. Given its vulnerability to influence, the group could begin to accept the subtle rhetoric without question, weakening its own paradigms while instituting others.

Like Trump’s influence over a particular society, a single person can become the “voice,” altering society’s norms. When this occurs, the balance of power between



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