



Why Police “Don’t Get No Respect”

The shooting rampage in Detroit last week has spurred a re-thinking of so-called “community policing” — a method of making law enforcement appear accessible, friendly, and open to neighborhood folk. Such was par for the course in the 1950s, but then was abandoned in the volatile 1960s, when leftist radicals started inciting students and minorities to attack authority figures. School principals and college professors were barricaded in their offices; police and other law enforcement officers were called “pigs”; squad cars were bombed; anti-riot and SWAT teams were hit with rocks, bricks, and bottles. That the perpetrators of these early, bona fide “hate crimes” constituted but a relatively small, misguided few didn’t seem to make much difference to our nation’s leaders inasmuch as the ruckus could be exploited by an already left-leaning press.

Most Americans assumed from the skewed news coverage that the activists, primarily college students and older, high school seniors, had legitimate gripes. Today, many of the participants admit that their sit-ins, demonstrations, and protests were more an effort to connect with their friends and “be seen” than a reaction to heartfelt principles. They (and their befuddled parents) grasped little concerning the architects behind the contrived temper tantrums. But the well-publicized, biased, and exaggerated coverage of incidents like Kent State, and the subsequent made-for-TV style “massacre,” helped create a public perception that law enforcement was overstepping in a foolish attempt to maintain order, and that the Establishment — then seen as traditionalist, Christian, and conservative — was an anachronism.

Meanwhile, most ringleaders among the student-activists, no matter how vile their actions — people like [Bernadine Dohrn](#) and husband William (Bill) Ayers, [Emily and husband Bill Harris](#), and Kathleen Ann Soliah (a.k.a. [Sara Jane Olson](#)) — served little time, if any, for their crimes. They earned major-league degrees, assumed aliases or changed their names, and generally lived the good life under the radar, till the fuss died down. Belatedly, a few were apprehended, served perfunctory sentences before being released without fanfare. Their crimes would have earned most folks a life sentence, or even the death penalty — attempted murder, kidnapping, mass endangerment, and permanent injury.

All were organizers of violent groups that would be called today “domestic terrorist organizations” — Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the Weathermen, and the Symbionese Liberation Army — ridiculous monikers for groups that would have been better named “Let’s Play Terrorists.”

Nevertheless, these mostly spoiled brats of wealthy, clueless liberals went on to assume cushy occupations in prominent universities (Dohrn and Ayers) and in business (Emily Montague Schwartz-cum-Emily Harris). Harris, released after a mere eight years for attempted murder and kidnapping, became a computer programmer (an occupation she took up in prison on the taxpayer’s dime). She launched her own successful computer consulting firm.

Many of the individuals these hippie-style domestic terrorists hurt are still living, some 40 years later, some with grievously painful wounds and permanent paralysis. Meanwhile, unrepentant goofballs like Bernadine Dohrn resumed their hateful “pigs” rhetoric in speeches at various gatherings.

As for their followers, much changed once the brash, smug college kids became parents themselves and had assumed professional mantras of respectability. Suddenly, they realized that police were virtually helpless to keep their houses safe from burglary, their daughters safe from sexual assault, their cars safe from break-ins and carjacking, and their businesses exempt from the mandates they themselves had helped impose. The fast-food chain, McDonalds, for example, which for years supported liberal, as



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well as legitimate, philanthropic causes, today is under fire for selling fattening foods. Never mind that McDonalds has added slim-diet choices, like salads. The chain has gotten its just desserts.

Suddenly police are seen as derelict in their duties as officers of law and order. Once-vicious crack-heads and hippies now want "protection." They want speed bumps (cost to taxpayers: \$1,200 to \$2,000 apiece). They want surveillance cameras in subways and on street corners. They want all passengers, not just some passengers, screened at airports.

The nation's tie-dyed nincompoops may have grown up, but they left in their wake a legacy of police forces grown progressively weary and sullen.

With every passing year since the 1970s, law enforcement's hands became more tied. No sooner would a suspect get booked than he or she would be released on some technicality directly or indirectly linked to legislation generated by the same brats who once called policemen "pigs." Bernadine Dohrn, for example, has sat on important committees and boards of the American Bar Association, American Civil Liberties Union and has served as Associate Professor of Law at Northwestern University, allegedly teaching children's legal rights, of all things. She is also the director of the Legal Clinic's Children and Family Justice Center.

Meanwhile, guess who bears the brunt of all the surveillance, cameras, groping and aggressive driving? Guess which faction of parents is ignored when their child goes missing for five hours ("sorry, your child is not considered [a missing person until at least 24 hours have elapsed....](#)")? Why are parents almost always the first suspects when a child is declared missing, injured, or the victim of foul play? Why are homeowners always at risk of being arrested for defending themselves with lethal force against a stranger who enters their home illicitly and even armed? Why are automobile break-ins ignored when owners leave valuables in plain sight, even when the vehicle was locked? And on and on.

Police are no longer called "pigs," except maybe by Bernadine Dohrn and today's assortment of "gangbangers." But the small, naïve, and egotistical element who flaunted the rules in their high school and college years changed life for the rest of us, right down to the current misguided approach to homeland security. They created havoc for those of us who, at the time, wanted nothing more than to be upstanding members of their community, obtain eminence in a profession; take advantage of cultural offerings like plays, museums and school dances; get married and raise families. The lax educational and childrearing environment created by a comparative minority of hooligans in the 1960s and '70s devastated society in ways unanticipated at the time. Serious advocates of old-fashioned law enforcement were among them, and today such agents of justice no longer need apply. Without them, nations have fallen to chaos, inviting the very police state once decried by a bunch of bell-bottomed, pretentious "conscientious objectors" playing games at society's expense.

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