

The history of policing

[History](#)



The history of policing in the United States is broke down into three general eras they are the political era from 1840 to1930, the reform era from 1930 to 1980 and the community era from 1980 to present. As we look at these eras we find that some of the tactics and policies that were effective in one era were quite ineffective in another or in contrast that some tactics that were thought ineffective are now being considered necessary for an effective and productive police force.

In the political era officers were appointed by politicians and would remain loyal to those who appointed them. In this era officers provided several services that would include running soup lines, helping immigrants find jobs and establish themselves, the officers would at times allow new immigrants temporary housing in the station house.

The main means of patrolling their beat was on foot. These officers would also live in the neighborhoods that they patrolled this would prove to be both beneficial and detrimental. The beneficial part was that they knew their neighborhood they had a personal stake in maintaining order.

The detrimental part was that they had a tendency to keep those who " did not belong" or " strangers" out of the neighborhood by using " Curbstone justice" this often resulted indiscrimination. In the reform era the public grow tired of the corruption, brutality and unfairness of police forces and wanted to follow J. Edgar Hoover's reform of the Bureau of Investigation.

Those that wanted these changes became known as " reformers" and they demanded change, they saw politicians as the problem with policing and wanted to remove the ties between politics and police. These reformers

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began to get changes made across the country things like civil service exams, making it illegal for an officer to live in the area that he patrolled and making changes to how the chief of police was hired or fired.

Changes were also made to the why officers did their jobs and even what their jobs were. Police focused on law enforcement and controlling crime all of the other duties became Social work. This system removed foot patrols and wanted officers to be distant and removed from the communities they served, the belief was that this would enable them to administer the law in an objective manner.

In 1967 the " President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice ratified this orientation: heretofore, Police had been conceptualized as an agency of urban government; the President's Commission reconceptualized them as part of the Criminal Justice System." The community era started in the 1980's however the research that much of this era is based on began in the late 1970's in places like Flint Michigan where foot patrols were brought back throughout the city.

The city even voted twice to raise taxes in order to maintain the foot patrols. The result of the foot patrols were " reduced fear, increased citizen satisfaction with police and increased morale and job satisfaction of the officers." Other programs like the " Safe and Clean Neighborhood Program" in New Jersey had similar success.

Research also showed that increasing other types of patrols that focus on police-citizen interactions also had similar results. These studies lead to a new way of policing referred to as community policing. This new tactic put <https://assignbuster.com/the-history-of-policing/>

officers back in the communities and changed what was expected of them. Officers were now tasked with maintaining order, negotiating conflicts and solving community problems these tasks require neighborhood and community involvement.

Community policing encourages people to bring problems to an officer or to a local police station and gives the officer and the station the ability to devise and implement solutions, it is also a strategy that allows officers to learn what is expected or wanted by their community then gives the officer the ability to deliver results that will meet these expectations.

The intention is to deliver on what the community wants and in turn gain the trust and cooperation of the community, this trust and cooperation will in turn reduce crime and gain effective information from the community when needed to solve crime. The history of policing in the United States has gone through several changes since the political era of the 1840's. With wide spread changes made in the reform era of the 1930's that took police away from the community and kept them distant from those that they served.

It took research conducted in the late 1970's and early 1980's to discover that better information on crime and criminals could be obtained by police from citizens and that patrol officers were in the best position to obtain this information. This research has led to the community policing that we see in today's police departments.