

The karate kid and the goonies

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



In the year 1984, Ronald Reagan was president of the United States. This was a time of greed, a time when it was crucial to have the right clothes, the right car, and to earn these things through hard work or by marrying money. Popular culture reflected the notion that one had to be self-sufficient; “ The Karate Kid” and “ The Goonies” were two of the most popular movies that year; they were movies about teenagers who took control of their lives in order to save themselves from suffering or homelessness. It was also an Olympic year in which the summer games were held in Los Angeles, California.

Athletes worked hard to win medals and make their home countries proud. American culture was wrapped around working hard and earning one’s success. Even a group that called themselves “ Band Aid” sang to help the starving children of Africa at Christmastime. Overall, this was a time where people expected to earn their place in the world and to help others along the way. Today, children are coddled and held blameless when they fail to graduate from high school, to be accepted to college, or to get and maintain jobs thereafter.

We have a law called No Child Left Behind which insists that teachers and schools are the problem, not the students or their parents. In the eighties, there was a stigma attached to having a child out of wedlock. It was expected that a single mother would marry the child’s father or give the child up for adoption because that is what was best for the child. The attitude regarding having children changed drastically. Instead of considering a child’s needs, it is now acceptable to have children to validate

oneself and to remain in complete ignorance of the effect a fatherless existence will have on children.

This selfish attitude is the reason why most young people today would not take a bullet or make any other sacrifice for a friend or loved one. They have grown up with the notion that it is perfectly acceptable to be selfish and there is no one speaking out against the idea. In the eighties, having sex outside of marriage (or, at the very least, a committed relationship) was considered taboo. It happened, of course, but no one talked about it. To admit that one was not a virgin was often a source of shame.

Today, young people begin having sex even before entering middle school. It is expected that they will have plenty of experience by the time they reach high school. In short, the only values being taught are those that are still taught in the home. Those values are few and far between. A large part of the problem is popular culture. Music lyrics refer to boys and girls as “pimps” and “ho’s” (a crude reference to “whore”), so people are treated accordingly. Self-respect has become a thing of the past.

If an individual does not respect his or herself, he or she cannot respect, much less protect, anyone else. The next problem is that standards have been lowered to the point of non-existence. In California, high school students are expected to take an exit exam to prove that they have earned the diploma. In 1984, students would not only have been able to pass the exam, but to pass a battery of college entrance exams as well.

Unfortunately, many students cannot pass an exam that doesn't test them past the ninth grade.

In conclusion, young people today are far too worried about themselves to think twice about other people. They have been brought up with the idea that they are the center of the universe and everything should revolve around them. They know nothing of hard work or sacrifice. They do know that if they audition for a reality show, they can become celebrities without possessing a single talent or unique quality. With this in mind, why should anyone make a sacrifice for anyone else? After all, there is always someone else to do it.