

Anarchists are often questioned about the utility of challenging the police. We hope that this zine is informative on that subject. For more information, and to find more zines like this, please check out these additional resources!

**Crimethinc** – [crimethinc.com](http://crimethinc.com)

**Sprout Distro** – [sproutdistro.com](http://sproutdistro.com)



To Change  
Everything –  
Start Anywhere.



Food  
Not  
Bombs

Why Challenge the  
Police?

FAQ in the Fight for a World  
Without Cops



# Aren't the Police just Upholding the Law?

**The law is not always just** – Even when the police are correctly upholding the law, it is important to remember that many things we would consider unjust have been perfectly legal. Slavery was legal, and challenging it through the Underground Railroad was not. Concentration camps were and are legal. Upholding the law can sometimes be the very definition of injustice.

**The police regularly violate the law** – In some sense, this is exactly why CopWatch exists. The police lie, cheat, and behave contrary to ethical procedure quite regularly, and they get away with it far more often than other people do. The Supreme Court has ruled that the police are not obligated to tell the truth, nor are they obligated to protect you. (Frazier v. Cupp, 394 U.S. 731, 1969.)

# Don't The Police Protect Us?

**The police protect institutions, not individuals** - The police are there to protect the prevailing economic and social order. This is why we often see police officers jailing homeless people merely trying to get food, but rarely see them taking down wall street bankers, even though the latter does far more harm to society. They are not there to protect you from violence – in fact, they are far more likely to commit violence against you. All of the good things that cops supposedly do is far more easily and effectively done by adequately trained medical and community justice organizers.

**The police prevent people from receiving help and protection** – Police have shut down food distribution centers that don't adhere to arcane laws. Police have jailed people who need detox and medical help. For the most marginalized people in our society, the last thing the police will ever do for them is protect them.

# Do You Just Hate the Police?

**Police are people too, and deserve the same respect due all living beings.** The point is that, in purely pragmatic terms, they must not be allowed to brutalize people or impose an unjust social order. Liberation is not a matter of exacting revenge but of rendering it unnecessary.

**Delegitimizing the police**, and proving that their work is better done by the community, is not only beneficial for those they target - but also for police officers' families and police officers themselves. Not only do police officers have disproportionately high rates of domestic violence and child abuse, they're also more likely to get killed, commit suicide, and struggle with addiction than most sectors of society. Anything that encourages police officers to quit their jobs is in their best interest, as well as the interest of their loved ones and society at large. Let's create a world in which no one oppresses or is oppressed, in which no one has to live in fear.