

RADICAL DEFENSE





Beware of this man.

Further Sources

Movement Readings:

Guide to Public Order Situations-- old school street tactics zine from England.

Fight the Man and Get Away Safely-- street tactics zine.

Resistance in the Streets-- FtMaGAS version two, zine.

Bodyhammer- armor, shields and tactics, zine.

Available on-line at www.devo.com/sarin/bodyhammer

Gone to Croatan- subterfuge, disguise and escape tactics, zine.

Anti-Mass methods of organization for collectives- early 70s zine, still relevant for anarchist organizing today.

Captain Mayhem's Guide to Anti-Crowd Control-- excellent guide to modern day street tactics. Includes the amazing section, "the guided riot."

Steal This Book-- includes late 60's style street tactics and trashing, not bad for being available at every corporate bookstore in existence (hint hint). **ISBN 1568580533**

Videos:

Crowd Bites Wolf-- Very funny video on S26 demos in Prague, plenty of great footage of anti-crowd control tactics in action.

Breaking the Spell-- Video on N30 Seattle black bloc. Inspiring.

Know Yr Enemy

Police Crowd Control-- general manual on police tactics by a San Francisco police chief **ISBN 0873646746**

Riot Control-- classic manual on riot patrols, techniques and equipment by 'the father of modern crowd control' Col Rex Applegate. **ISBN 087364202**

Far Beyond Defensive Tactics-- Advanced Concepts, Techniques, Drills and Tricks for Cops on the Street **ISBN0873649869**

Sportsmans guide-- mail order army surplus, everything you could imagine, gasmasks, authentic police riot gear, helmets, boots, etc.

Call 1-800-882-2962 or go to www.sportsmansguide.com

Protect your self from the "Poke" and the "Blow":

Police use two main attacks with their batons. The "poke" is most commonly used during standoffs and can be very painful. They like to use it because it is controlled, less likely to be disarmed and not easy to capture on video or media. Hard shells works well for this. Blows occur when cops charge or break formation (it is hard to swing in formation). The best defense against the swing is the shield. It is best to grab a baton after the swing is complete. It breaks up their momentum. If you want to block try to absorb the blow bring your arms vertically in front of you.

Protecting your Comrades

If you are properly padded you may wish to try to protect others—this is a key part of radical defense tactics. The best way to protect others is to remain calm and level headed. If you see someone in need of protecting trying to get others to help. The more folks involved the better. The best things to yell out is, "Someone Needs Help" and point. Do not yell "Help!" or that some one is being beaten by cops, this will only cause confusion.

After an Attack:

Introduce yourself, even a nickname helps people calm down. Offer to try to take them to a safe place and call for a medic if need be. Be supportive and realize the comrade may be very freaked out. Do not assume they need a hug, or try to put your arm around them. Ask them if they are alright and offer your hand for them to hold. This can be very important. Lead them to a safe spot or to their other comrades.

The Foundations of Radical Defense (outro)

Radical defense only works when groups of people, friends and strangers alike, work to help each other against the repression of the state. It's mutual aid in the streets. We have the immense advantage of numbers, unpredictability (creative tactics) and mobility. Practice with your affinity group before the action is fun and will prepare you to defend yourself if police repress you. Morale is extremely important: when we are together and want something, it's hard to stop us.



Outline for Radical Defense Street Tactics Training

AFFINITY GROUPS (AG)

An AG is a small group (around 3 to 10 people) of trusted friends and comrades with shared tactical goals.

The Basics

- 1 Know your role in your AG (medic, tactical, coms, scout, etc)
- 2 Know the roles of everyone else in your group.
- 3 Have a clear idea of the goals of the AG.
- 4 Have a buddy/partner in your group.
- 5 Practice roles and scenarios with your group.

If you don't have an AG.

- 1 Find a buddy, at least.
- 2 Form and work with an AG for next time!

EVACUATING INJURED PEOPLE

Know or figure out your role when someone gets injured.

Blockers- *create distance between the injured person and the attackers.*

- 1 Always face police: you need to see attackers if you're going to keep them at bay.
- 2 Link arms with others.
- 3 Block the view of the police.
- 4 Block police access to the injured person.

Assisting the injured- *defer those who are more knowledgeable in first aid than you.*

- 1 If someone is injured, clearly call out "Medic! Medic!". Simply yelling "Help!" (or freaking out) will cause confusion. Keep calm and contact a medic.
- 2 If the person is a pepper spray/tear gas victim, get water to flush out the eyes and face.
- 3 If a medic is unavailable, you may wish to move the injured person. First, make sure the person won't be further harmed by moving them (spinal cord injury, etc). Second, if possible, make sure the person *wants to be moved*. This can be difficult sometimes, as a person may still be in danger of arrest or further injury, and not know it.

Carries- *Ways to move an injured person.*

- 1 Arm over shoulder carry.
- 2 Fireman's carry.
- 3 Two person seat.
- 4 Bad injury carry.

BREAKING HOLDS

Single hand wrist hold- Twist your wrist so that the bone is towards the weak point of your attacker's grip (between the thumb and fingers) and pull out quickly. Do this in one quick motion. For a stronger pull, grab the fist of the arm being held and pull back. Now run!

Double hand wrist holds-

Keeping distance version: Twist your wrist to the weak point, grab the held hand and pull between the holder's arms.

Up close version: Move your body right next to your held arm, grab the held hand, twist your wrist and quickly spin your body away for the hold. If you do this in a smooth enough motion, you can spin 180 degrees and be in a good position to high tail it out of there.

Both arm wrist hold-

Twist your wrist to the weak point in the grip and pull out both arms simultaneously, just as you would for the single handed wrist hold.

Keep in mind

- 1 Move fast, in a smooth motion.
- 2 Get away!
- 3 Practicing these few simple techniques will make them second nature.

SNATCH SQUADS

A snatch squad is a group of police who aim is to "extract" a specific person from the crowd. The target is often someone taking leader roles or someone who is tactically useful (communications person, medics, person with cell phone, flag, banner, etc). As such police tactics often lead to illegal arrests, you and your comrades should attempt to prevent them from happening.

Crowd etiquette.

- 1 Always be aware of your surroundings, especially in crowds.
- 2 Watch out for police amongst you.
- 3 Be aware of plainclothes officers. Call them to the crowd out if you make a positive ID.

Spot the snatch squad

- 1 Squads are mobilized on the orders of police commanders. Commanders often wear white-shirts or are otherwise dressed differently than other police officers.
- 2 Commanders will clearly indicate who they want (the extractee). Because snatch squads often wear riot gear with helmets point or just because it's noisy, white shirts will literally point at the person they want.
- 3 After the person is identified, the police line will briefly open up, and the snatch squad (usually six to ten police) will enter the crowd and attempt to capture the person they want.

Limit their effectiveness

Snatch squads operate on a team basis, just like we do. Half the officers make the arrest, while the other half will surround them with batons, hitting anyone who gets in the way. Once they have their target snatched, they will be pulled back behind the police lines.

- 1 Put distance between the snatch squad and the extractee. This can be a reinforced banner, a puppet, or a line of people.
- 2 Link arms with those around you, if practical, and create a human wall. Block the view.
- 3 Surround the snatch squad. Police rarely will venture into a hostile crowd because they are

police will grab hold of it and twist causing severe injury to your neck and making it easy for you to be illegally detained. Hockey masks are good and so are other sports equipment. Hardhats are easy to find. cheap. They need to be attached with elastic (not string or rope) so they will not fall off.

Ears:

Concussion grenades are much more popular with state forces than they once were. These canisters make a large sonic boom and push air out of an area. They should never be tossed (they could severely damage your hand). The best protection is a good set of construction ear protectors. However these might not be practical so carrying yellow soft earplugs (cheap and small) will help a great deal.

Chemical Attacks:

The best way to help folks is to have extra supplies. If you do not and you see that someone has been gassed or pepper sprayed call for a street medic. According to the medic guides it is best to simply yell "Medic!" over and over again. Introduce yourself to the person (who can not probably see you and may think you are a cop). Ask if they are OK and try to reassure them and remain calm. Tell them you will stay with them until someone comes, this is very important to people who are blind and suffering from psychological shock or are very afraid. Do not attempt to clean off the stricken comrade unless you have the right materials (e.g. anti-gas solution) and training. It is best to wait for a medic.

Protecting Yourself When Attacked

Prone:

If you get knocked to the ground, it is best to protect you vitals and curl up. It always best to try to get back up. (*Practice*). Never stay down if you can avoid it. Crawl away, jump up, whatever but get up. Traditional non-violence trainings teach people to sit down in large groups, relying on the conscience of the police to avoid repression. We know better. Being down is very dangerous for anyone, so get up and run, join the rest of the crowd for safety.

Back—Gecko Tail approach:

A back pack filled with padding works well for the front or the back. It is simple and easy. The best defense is distance. Since you are not fight with cops but defending your body from damage, any thing that puts distance between your body and a cops stick or fist is for the best. Large bags (even garbage bags) filled with lightweight stuffing can help . The back pack or bags should be able to rip away easily (garbage bags no problem). For back packs you can use Velcro.

Boots:

Steel toe boots are perfect for these type of actions. It easy for your toes to be injured by horses, vehicles or just comrades trying to move away. Cops have also been know to stomp on protestors feet. One can get thick boots but again you must first break them in (never wear new shoes or boots to a protest!). Thick wool socks are also a necessity. There is no reason not to attach some extra padding on the front of your boots with duct tape if you think you need it. Even a small water bottle (empty) can be duct taped to your boots.

massive amounts of duct tape. You can always make extra layers, but make sure you have padding closest to your body. Shields can be made from liberated fast-food trays, other dumpstered plastic scraps, two liter soda bottles, styrofoam, garbage can lids, etc.

Practical stuff:

(List your weak spots on a big piece of paper) Groin, joints, face, neck, gut, head.

Hair:

If you have long hair make sure it is tied up and out of the way. Make sure the pony tail or braid is very tight. It will help you from getting your hair pulled and keep hair out of your eyes. If your hair is grabbed in a pony tail grab the attackers hand and push it towards your head. You will have better leverage and it will keep the hair pull from being effective.

Piercings:

Take out your piercings. It may be square but if you are on the front line or in jail you will thank us for this piece of advice.

Joints:

Should be covered first with foam and then with ace bandages or duct tape. Then a harder shell-like covering. The shell should be loose hanging and be used to deflect blows. Bandages especially on wrists will be helpful from avoiding very painful handcuff situations (put on handcuffs). If you are handcuffed do not resist (it will only cause the cuffs to go on tighter), do not struggle when they are on, if you are flexible enough to get them in front of you than do it will relieve some of the pressure. Make fists when you are being cuffed this will widen your wrists about 5% thus making the cuffs a bit looser.

Fingers:

The most common injury are wrist and finger injuries. Especially when you are holding shields. The best thing is to wear padded gloves with a mitten over them. The mitten is not for protection but simply to protect individual fingers. Make sure gloves are well secured. Foam is ideal but corrugated cardboard strips can also work well.

Neck:

Ideally you will have 2 defenses on your neck. First will be a hard shell type of thing over the back of your neck. The base shell should be secured to the helmet and terminate near the middle of the shoulders. Thus the helmet and the shoulders will take the bulk of the vibration from a hit. A thick scarf or other padding can be added easily. The front is a trickier bit, but the most effective protection is your reflexes, tucking your chin.

Head:

It is important to protect your head! Always wear something on your head. First it will protect you from the elements, heat, sun, rain, cold, etc. It will also make your identification more difficult. It will also protect your hair from being pulled and from chemical warfare. Ideally one would have a motorcycle helmet, these offer good protection, are relatively comfortable and have decent visibility and protect the entire head. Bike helmets are light weight and offer some protection but do not protect the most vulnerable parts like ears, face and back of the skull. Football helmets are good but one must remove the face mask because

in danger of being surrounded. Be smart about escalating matters too quickly, but don't be afraid to actively defend yourself and those around you.

4 Beat the snatch squad to the person they want. Shuttle them off. Have them change their appearance if at all possible (put on/take off a hat, change shirt/hoodie).

5 Don't allow the two parts of the squad do their jobs. Create distance between members of the squad, get in the way, dance, chant "shame", cause confusion. It's much easier to preemptively discourage an arrest than to have to literally fight to get someone back.

5 Be ready to quickly unarrest the person if they do wind up getting grabbed.

6 Know how to break holds if the police attempt to grab you out of frustration.

UN-ARRESTING

1 Look for signs of snatch squads.

2 Create distance between the police and the arrestee.

3 Move fast!

4 Surround the police if possible.



Roles in Un-arresting

Blockers- Just as in the evacuation of an injured person, you want to create space between the person in danger and the police. Blockers help make that space possible.

1 Link arms with other blockers.

2 Put yourself between the police and the one being arrested.

3 Attempt to isolate the arresting officer(s) from the rest of the police.

Grabbers- These people actually liberate the arrestee. They should make sure not to get themselves or the arrestee injured in the process. They should avoid direct contact with the police: avoid touching police if possible. If done sloppily, grabbers can wind up with assault charges. If done correctly, everyone gets out!

1 Move behind the blockers and get the arrestee out of police holds. Remember, as long as someone isn't physically detained, they aren't under arrest, so you have a short opportunity to keep you and your comrades free.

2 Envelope the liberated, ex-arrestee into the larger group and get them away.

Different Kinds of Police Lines

1 Single Row

2 Multiple Rows

3 L formation— Police with one line facing you and another row perpendicular.

Often used to form two lines, boxing you in or splitting your group in two.

4 T formation—Police with one line facing you and another trailing behind. Used to

strengthen the front line: even if people break through, a group of police wait to arrest you.

5 Horses

6 Bicycles

7 Motor vehicles

Formations for police:

- 1 Solid lines of people with linked arms.
- 2 Tight groups with visual unity (all in one color, all with flags or signs)
- 3 Banners and other barricades. People always should face the police.

Protect Escape Routes

- 1 If a police line forms, their intent is usually to take control of the crowd's movement (whether to slow it down, stop it, split it up, snatch someone, or make a mass arrest). Make alternatives possible! Look for places to go other than the paddy wagon.
- 2 Know how to create space with banners: lines of people and barricades. Barricades can be made with materials on hand: dumpsters, garbage cans, newspaper boxes, stray fences, automobiles, construction site materials.
- 3 Know how to break police lines.

Breaking Lines/Counter-advancing

Know when to break a line or advance on police lines

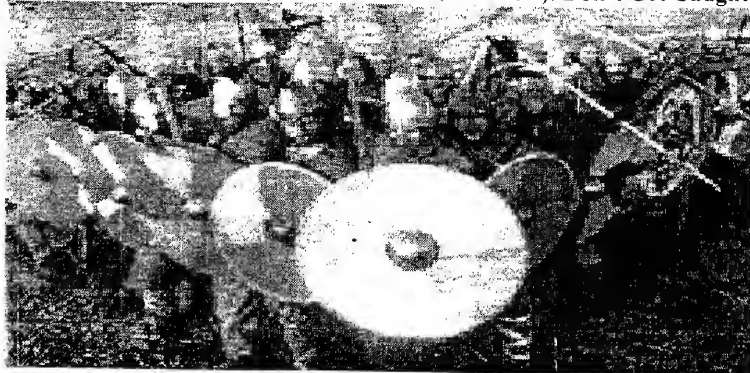
- 1 Remember, we don't go to demonstrations to battle the police! The way we "win" in police confrontations is to get everyone away safely, without injury or arrests. Breaking police lines is seen as a provocation, so it's best to use these tactics defensively, as in a retreat, to avoid being boxed in, or illegally arrested.

Identify weak points

- 1 Find places with single lines, poor formations and attempt first to sneak through.

Advancing/ Breaking Lines

- 1 Wedge- Classic formation. Form a triangle or diamond. The people in front should have some shields or some sort of protection. Stay tight, link arms and charge!
- 2 Movable barricades- Form your wedge behind the barricade, lift it, advance towards the police line.
- 3 Banners- Use the same way as a barricade. Banners made with PVC joints can be made into super-effective wedges. Use the countdown tactic to confuse the police.
- 4 Dumpsters- Roll dumpsters and fill in the space cleared by its path.
- 5 Surround them- Again, police dislike being outnumbered by non-passive crowds.
- 6 Discourage police repression by creative means (see below). **Don't Get Caught!**



Protect Yo Neck!: Equipment and Armor



Protecting Yourself

To be effective in a demonstration, you must be confident in your ability to defend yourself and protect others from the oppressive powers of the state. Confidence in your ability, your group and your equipment is key to staying safe and protecting others.

Keeping a cool head

The most important thing in avoiding getting hurt is always remain calm and not to panic. Learning to breathe and finding ways to keep yourself calm during tense times is paramount for staying safe. Panic is contagious, but so is confidence. The cops work on intimidation and are used to others giving them power and being submissive... their main tool is fear. Know that you are strong and that what your group is doing is important. Always keep your focus. Do not react to the police, but follow your plan.

Getting used to your equipment:

It is crucial that your equipment is yours. Modify it to fit your strengths, weaknesses and your fears. Always caution on the side of more than less. Get used to wearing your padding. Know everything you can about it. Spend time wearing it and doing things in it that you might have to do in an action while wearing it. Decorate it with slogans or art. Try to make your padding as comfortable and uncumbersome as possible.

Practice Makes Perfect

The more you practice the better you will be at defending yourself and others. Practice with your affinity group as often as you can. It is fun and well worth the time. Like anything it takes practice to get good, and the better you are the safer you and others will be.

Basic Radical Defense Design

Armor should be as light as possible and comfortable as possible. Always have at least two layers, a hard shell on the outside and padding closest to your body. Soft foam (like that used under carpets) stapled to strong cardboard tubing or plastic works well. Wrap with