

Why I'm Teaching My Son To Break the Law

Editor's Pick. Written by J.D. Tuccille.

In 1858, hundreds of residents of Oberlin and Wellington, Ohio—many of them students and faculty at Oberlin College—surrounded Wadsworth's Hotel, in Wellington, in which law enforcement officers and slavehunters held a fugitive slave named John Price, under the authority of the Fugitive Slave Act. After a brief standoff, the armed crowd stormed the hotel and overpowered the captors. Price was freed and transported to safety in Canada (that's a photo of some of the rescuers in the courtyard of the Cuyahoga County Jail, below and to the right). I know these details because my son recently borrowed from the library *The Price of Freedom*, a book about the Oberlin-Wellington Rescue, as the incident is called. My wife and I used it as a starting point for telling our seven-year-old why we *don't* expect him to obey the law—that laws and the governments that pass them are often evil. We expect him, instead, to stand up for his rights and those of others, and to do good, even if that means breaking the law.

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