

A Review of The Trial of the Haymarket Anarchists



by Armando Simón

I first became interested in Messer-Kruse's *The Trial of the Haymarket Anarchists* halfway through my ongoing, extensive, compilation of censorship activities in both the [social media](#) and the [mainstream media](#) (what I collectively refer to as "the [media](#) hivemind"). [Messer-Kruse](#) had been sparked to investigate the trial of Chicago's Haymarket anarchists for the murder of a policeman during the 1886 riot because of a question posed by one of his students which he could not answer.

The historical narrative has always been that the anarchists were innocent lambs, the judge prejudiced, there had been a dearth of evidence and the overall trial bogus. Supposedly, the men had been really convicted simply for exercising their freedoms of speech and assembly.

Messer-Krause's investigation into the archives revealed the exact opposite in every respect. The evidence was overwhelming including—novel at the time—forensic science which revealed

that the metallic fragments of the bomb thrown at the police were identical to the composition of the numerous bombs found at homes and offices of the anarchist newspaper. Witnesses for the defense were caught lying or were detrimental to the defense while those for the prosecution were consistently damning. The fanatical mentality of the defendants further hindered their case.

The attorneys for the defense were incompetent. Part of the reason for their handicap was the lawyers' ideological blinders. A misconception most people share is that attorneys are diligent and conscientious, protective of their clients. The reality is many lawyers are lazy, uncaring and just plain inept (and, yes, I am talking from experience). The Haymarket defense attorneys made one legal blunder after another to the point that the judge, though trying to be impartial, hinted at them that they were overlooking an obvious legal opportunity (even so, the evidence was overwhelming).

During their imprisonment, several bombs were found in their cells, smuggled in by one of their attorneys, who shared the same political viewpoint.

In the end, seven men were sent to the gallows with the eighth given a 15-year sentence, which was commuted halfway through years of intense political and media agitation.

The aftermath of their trial was a barrage of propaganda in newspapers and books portraying the men as innocent martyrs. This mythology lasted for many decades, until recently in fact.

The aftermath also illustrates that the problems that our society presently faces in this century and in the previous one are not new: [propaganda](#) by the [media](#), fanaticism, political [violence](#), [lawlessness](#), [falsification](#) of [history](#), a thirst for absolute power by fanatics, the sanitized martyrdom of [criminals](#), and the [goal](#) to [tear down](#) a democratic [society](#).

Most persons think that the serious problems we face today are new, but in truth we can see they have been around for a very long time. It is an ancient enemy.

Ideally, if we could make a consistent endeavor to educate future generation on this matter it would go a long way in inoculating and thereby ending the cycle. The obstacle, of course, is that the education system is firmly in the hands of those very same fanatics.

And has been for some time.

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