

Parents no longer masters in our castles

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We had thought that growing up, becoming adults and assuming the responsibility of home ownership came with certain perks. As kids, we all wanted to be "king of the castle."

Be careful what you wish for.

The other night my wife mentioned the roots of the term "master bedroom," which had a distinctly male connection. I held back my usual witty comeback, but chuckled inwardly and thought of the dashing Ward Cleaver of Leave it to Beaver fame. There were many handbooks penned on "wifely duties" in the 1950s that pointed to a man and his castle.

But enough about reminiscing about the good, old days!

Society is one of the most fluid things on the planet and things like this show just how far we've come in only a few, short decades. Today in the western world, we raise our girls to be confident, assertive women. We prove to them there is nothing standing in their way of success and achieving greatness.

The current generation gives its young a lot of rope, and allows them many freedoms not afforded by their parents.

When I was a teen, I was spoiled but by no means were my powers unlimited. I had chores, responsibilities, respect for my elders. Doing things around the house was a "given" and when mom or dad called you for dinner, or to give them a hand, you dropped everything. A cuff to the back of the head (until I learned to duck) was waiting in the wings.

Today's parents, in their quest to learn from the past and raise their young in best way they know how, have relinquished a great deal of power. And we've done so willingly.

Talk about the perfect coup!

Parents, we need to rally the troops and assemble our forces, before it's too late!

My eldest, even though she's learning to drive, won't be completely free for a while. There are still many trips to and from her part-time job, the boyfriend's house, movies, parties, school trips, etc. These days, we get very little notice and few pleasant requests or cordial pleas.

My dance card is prepared for me and I'm often the last to know. My charges have come to expect a great deal.

Boy, how a generation has changed.

Our role has transformed. No longer are we seen as commander in chief, rule-maker, security blanket and hug-giver.

We're the bank, tutor, chauffeur, chef, lunch-maker, trip planner, snack designer, entertainer.

Our kids today are entitled and perhaps pampered.

Again, we'd like to think of ourselves as progressive, leading-edge parents. Society's indecisiveness is a key factor. Concepts of firmness, discipline, freedom and consequences are always changing, swinging like the proverbial pendulum. Even if there was a definitive parents' handbook, it would be rewritten every couple of years.

Spare the rod and spoil the child? I got the belt at home a few times (deserved) and was once whacked by my grade school principal with a ruler on the back of the hand (also deserved).

Was I scarred for life??Did I?turn out to be a sociopath? No. In fact, I still display cordiality and respect.

With an absence of ?firm hands??today, I?think our teens are taking liberties and taking a lot for granted. They are seemingly untouchable at school or at home. No one can raise a hand to them and even loud voices are frowned upon in public. How is a lack of discipline preparing them for the real world?

How can our future doctors, lawyers, engineers and journalists succeed if they're not given responsibilities and instead handed everything on a silver platter?

Don't even get me going about clean rooms, laundry, picking up after themselves and helping siblings with homework.

So, parents, we must stem the tide.

I?have a plan, so off to our closets, basements and garages for our battle gear.

First, dust off any marionettes, clowns and old dolls that appear scary. For starters, place them around the house as your new ?decorations,? hopefully in strategic locations so the creepy eyes follow the young offenders around the house. If this doesn't generate any response, place them in the kids' rooms!

Create a list of chores and stick it to the refrigerator. Make sure they are exaggerated and so onerous that they can't be physically completed. Once the level of complaints reaches a certain level, knock it down a notch and the kids will feel as though they've won.

Don't flinch and show no mercy!

Embarrass them at every occasion, especially if you have access to their social networking sites. Dig up a nice baby or childhood photo of them and post them on the Internet, along with sufficiently gushy parental sentiments. If this seems too extreme, just dig out the photos, show them to your kids and threaten to post them to your profile page. This could very well bring them to their knees!

Sign them up for volunteer work with a local charity.

If you really want to drive them mad, hide their cell phones, tablets and tinker with their video came connections.

We must be creative in our approach. We need to maintain order. How about a social network for parents who want to take back control?

Any ideas?