Occupy Wall Street: [http://occupywallst.org/](http://occupywallst.org/)

Adbusters: [http://adbusters.org/](http://adbusters.org/)

How Occupy Wall Street Really Got Started

Meet the international activists who lit the fuse for the populist protest movement that’s sweeping the world.

**Andy Kroll** Oct. 17, 2011 10:00 AM

The group often credited with sparking Occupy Wall Street is *Adbusters*, the Canadian anticapitalist magazine that, in July, issued a call to flood lower Manhattan with 90,000 protesters. “Are you ready for a Tahrir moment?” the magazine asked. But that’s not how Occupy Wall Street sprang to life. Without that worldly group that met at 16 Beaver and later created the New York City General Assembly, there might not have been an Occupy Wall Street as we know it today.

The group included local organizers, including some from New Yorkers Against Budget Cuts, but also people who’d taken part in uprisings all over the world. That international spirit would galvanize Occupy Wall Street, connecting it with the protests in Cairo’s Tahrir Square and Madrid’s Puerta del Sol, the heart of Spain’s populist uprising. Just as a comic book about Martin Luther King Jr. and civil disobedience, translated into Arabic, taught Egyptians about the power of peaceful resistance, the lessons of Egypt, Greece, and Spain fused together in downtown Manhattan. “When you have all these people talking about what they did, it opens a world of possibility we might not have been able to imagine before,” says Marina Sitrin, a writer and activist who helped organize Occupy Wall Street.

Occupy Wall Street (OWS) was a protest movement that began on September 17, 2011, in Zuccotti Park, located in New York City's Wall Street financial district, receiving global attention and spawning a surge in the movement against economic inequality worldwide.[7]

The Canadian anti-consumerist and pro-environment group/magazine Adbusters initiated the call for a protest. The main issues raised by Occupy Wall Street were social and economic inequality, greed, corruption and the perceived undue influence of corporations on government—particularly from the financial services sector. The OWS slogan, "We are the 99%", refers to income inequality and wealth distribution in the U.S. between the wealthiest 1% and the rest of the population. To achieve their goals, protesters acted on consensus-based decisions made in general assemblies which emphasized redress through direct action over the petitioning to authorities.[8][nb 1]

The protesters were forced out of Zuccotti Park on November 15, 2011. Protesters turned their focus to occupying banks, corporate headquarters, board meetings, foreclosed homes, and college and university campuses.

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Criticism
Lack of clear goals
Lack of minority representation
Lack of measurable change

Date
September 17, 2011

Location
New York City
40°42′33.79″N 74°0′40.76″W

Caused by
Wealth inequality, political corruption,[3] corporate influence of government

Methods
- Occupation
- Civil disobedience
- Picketing
- Demonstrations
- Internet activism

Resulted in
Extensive social media coverage and outreach / some television and traditional media coverage / developed a widespread network of activists that
The original protest was initiated by Kalle Lasn and Micah White of Adbusters, a Canadian anti-consumerist publication, who conceived of a September 17 occupation in Lower Manhattan. The first such proposal appeared on the Adbusters website on February 2, 2011, under the title "A Million Man March on Wall Street." Lasn registered the OccupyWallStreet.org web address on June 9. That same month, Adbusters emailed its subscribers saying "America needs its own Tahrir." White said the reception of the idea "snowballed from there." In a blog post on July 13, 2011, Adbusters proposed a peaceful occupation of Wall Street to protest corporate influence on democracy, the lack of legal consequences for those who brought about the global crisis of monetary insolvency, and an increasing disparity in wealth. The protest was promoted with an image featuring a dancer atop Wall Street's iconic Charging Bull statue.

Meanwhile, several similar proposals were being explored by independent groups, as reported by journalist Nathan Schneider in his book Thank You, Anarchy: Notes from the Occupy Apocalypse. Thousands of people, organized by a group of labor unions marched on Wall Street; the online collective Anonymous attempted an occupation on June 14; activists planned an indefinite occupation of Freedom Plaza in Washington, D.C., which eventually became known as Occupy Washington, D.C.

On August 1, 2011, almost a month prior to the major media event, a group of artists were arrested after a series of days protesting nude as an art performance on Wall Street. This event may have inspired or triggered the major event to follow. This was a protest by the 49 participants on American Institutions and was titled "Ocularpation: Wall Street" by artist Zefrey Throwell.

Then in an unrelated incident, a group called New Yorkers Against Budget Cuts (NYAB) was formed, which promoted a “sleep in” in lower Manhattan called "Bloombergville", in July 2011, preceding OWS, and provided a number of activists to begin organizing. Activist, anarchist and anthropologist David Graeber and several of his associates attended the NYAB general assembly but, disappointed that the event was intended to be a precursor to marching on Wall Street with predetermined demands, Graeber and his small group created their own general assembly, which eventually developed into the New York General Assembly. The group began holding weekly meetings to work out issues and the movement’s direction, such as whether or not to have a set of demands, forming working groups and whether or not to have leaders. The Internet group Anonymous created a video encouraging its supporters to take part in the protests. The U.S. Day of Rage, a group that organized to protest "corporate influence [that] corrupts our political parties, our elections, and the institutions of government", also joined the movement. The protest itself began on September 17; a Facebook page for the demonstrations began two days later on September 19 featuring a YouTube video of earlier events. By mid-October Facebook listed 125 Occupy-related pages.
The original location for the protest was One Chase Manhattan Plaza with Bowling Green Park (the site of the "Charging Bull") and Zuccotti Park as alternate choices. Police discovered this before the protest began and fenced off two locations; but they left Zuccotti Park, the group’s third choice, open. Since the park was private property, police could not legally force protesters to leave without being requested to do so by the property owner. At a press conference held the same day the protests began, New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg explained, "people have a right to protest, and if they want to protest, we'll be happy to make sure they have locations to do it."

Because of its connection to the financial system, lower Manhattan has seen many riots and protests since the 1800s and OWS has been compared to other historical protests in the United States. Commentators have put OWS within the political tradition of other movements that made themselves known by occupation of public spaces, such as Coxey's Army in 1894, the Bonus Marchers in 1932, and the May Day protesters in 1971.

More recent prototypes for OWS include the British student protests of 2010, 2009-2010 Iranian election protests, the Arab Spring protests and, more closely related, protests in Chile, Greece, Spain and India. These antecedents have in common with OWS a reliance on social media and electronic messaging, as well as the belief that financial institutions, corporations, and the political elite have been malfeasant in their behavior toward youth and the middle class. Occupy Wall Street, in turn, gave rise to the Occupy movement in the United States. David Graeber has argued that the Occupy movement, in its anti-hierarchical and anti-authoritarian consensus-based politics, its refusal to accept the legitimacy of the existing legal and political order, and its embrace of prefigurative politics, has roots in an anarchist political tradition. Sociologist Dana Williams has likewise argued that "the most immediate inspiration for Occupy is anarchism", and the LA Times has identified the "controversial, anarchist-inspired organizational style" as one of the hallmarks of OWS.

**Background**

"We are the 99%"

The Occupy protesters’ slogan “We are the 99%” refers to the protester’s perceptions of, and attitudes regarding, income disparity in the US and economic inequality in general, which have been main issues for OWS. It derives from a “We the 99%” flyer calling for OWS's second General Assembly in August 2011. The variation “We are the 99%” originated from a tumblr page of the same name. Huffington Post reporter Paul Taylor said the slogan is "arguably the most successful slogan since 'Hell no, we won't go!' of the Vietnam War era, and that the majority of Democrats, independents and Republicans see the income gap as causing social friction. The slogan was boosted by statistics which were confirmed by a Congressional Budget Office (CBO) report released in October 2011.

**Income Inequality**

Income inequality is a focal point of the Occupy Wall Street protests. This focus by the movement was studied by Arindajit Dube and Ethan Kaplan of the University of Massachusetts Amherst, who noted that "inequality in the U.S. has risen dramatically over the past 40 years. So it is not too surprising to witness the rise of a social movement focused on redistribution...Greater inequality may reflect as well as exacerbate factors that make it relatively more difficult for lower-income individuals to mobilize on behalf of their interests...Yet, even the economic crisis of 2007 did not initially produce a left social movement...Only after it became increasingly clear that the political process was unable to enact serious reforms to address the causes or consequences of the economic crisis did we see the emergence of the OWS movement...Overall, a focus on the 1 percent concentrates attention on the aspect of inequality most clearly tied to the distribution of income between labor and capital...We think OWS has already begun to influence the public policy making process." An article on the same subject published in Salon Magazine by Natasha Leonard noted "Occupy has been central to driving media stories about income inequality in America. Late last week, Radio Dispatch’s John Knefel compiled a report for media watchdog Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR), which illustrates Occupy’s success: Media
focus on the movement in the past half year, according to the report, has been almost directly proportional to the attention paid to income inequality and corporate greed by mainstream outlets. During peak media coverage of the movement last October, mentions of the term "income inequality" increased "fourfold"...tokens of Occupy rhetoric — most notably the idea of a "99 percent" against a "1 percent" — has seeped into everyday cultural parlance. As income inequality remained on people's minds, Republican Presidential Candidate Mitt Romney said such a focus was about envy and class warfare.

**Goals**

OWS's goals include a reduction in the influence of corporations on politics, more balanced distribution of income, more and better jobs, bank reform (especially to curtail speculative trading by banks), forgiveness of student loan debt or other relief for indebted students, and alleviation of the foreclosure situation. Some media label the protests "anti-capitalist", while others dispute the relevance of this label. Nicholas Kristof of *The New York Times* noted "while alarmists seem to think that the movement is a 'mob' trying to overthrow capitalism, one can make a case that, on the contrary, it highlights the need to restore basic capitalist principles like accountability". Rolling Stone writer Matt Taibbi asserted, "These people aren't protesting money. They're not protesting banking. They're protesting corruption on Wall Street." In contradiction to such views, academic Slavoj Zizek wrote, "capitalism is now clearly re-emerging as the name of the problem," and Forbes columnist Heather Struck wrote, "In downtown New York, where protests fomented, capitalism is held accountable for the dire conditions that a majority of Americans face amid high unemployment and a credit collapse that has ruined the housing market and tightened lending among banks.

Some protestors have favored a fairly concrete set of national policy proposals. One OWS group that favored specific demands created a document entitled the 99 Percent Declaration but this was regarded as an attempt to "co-opt" the "Occupy" name and the document and group were rejected by the General Assemblies of Occupy Wall Street and Occupy Philadelphia. However others, such as those who issued the Liberty Square Blueprint are opposed to setting demands, saying they would limit the movement by implying conditions and limiting the duration of the movement. David Graeber, an OWS participant, has also criticized the idea that the movement must have clearly defined demands, arguing that it would be a counterproductive legitimization of the very power structures the movement seeks to challenge. In a similar vein, scholar and activist Judith Butler has challenged the assertion that OWS should make concrete demands: "So what are the demands that all these people are making? Either they say there are no demands and that leaves your critics confused. Or they say that demands for social equality, that demands for economic justice are impossible demands and impossible demands are just not practical. But we disagree. If hope is an impossible demand then we demand the impossible." Regardless, activists favor a new system that fulfills what is perceived as the original promise of democracy to bring power to all the people.

During the occupation in Liberty Square, a declaration was issued with a list of grievances. The declaration stated that the "grievances are not all-inclusive".
Protester demographics

Early on the protesters were mostly young. As the protest grew, older protesters also became involved. The average age of the protesters was 33, with people in their 20s balanced by people in their 40s. Various religious faiths have been represented at the protest including Muslims, Jews, and Christians. Rabbi Chaim Gruber, however, is reportedly the only clergy member to have actually camped at Zuccotti Park. The Associated Press reported in October that there was "diversity of age, gender and race" at the protest. A study based on survey responses at OccupyWallSt.org reported that the protesters were 81.2% White, 6.8% Hispanic, 2.8% Asian, 1.6% Black, and 7.6% identifying as "other".

According to a survey of occupywallst.org website visitors by the Baruch College School of Public Affairs published on October 19, of 1,619 web respondents, one-third were older than 35, half were employed full-time, 13% were unemployed and 13% earned over $75,000. When given the option of identifying themselves as Democratic, Republican or Independent/Other 27.3% of the respondents called themselves Democrats, 2.4% called themselves Republicans, while the rest, 70%, called themselves independents. A study released by City University of New York found that over a third of protesters had incomes over $100,000, 76 percent had bachelor's degrees, and 39 percent had graduate degrees. While a large percent of them were employed, they largely reported they were "unconstrained by highly demanding family or work commitments". The study also found that they disproportionally represented upperclass, highly educated white males. A survey of 301 respondents by a Fordham University political science professor identified the protestor's political affiliations as 25% Democratic, 2% Republican, 11% Socialist, 11% Green Party, 0% Tea Party, and 12% "Other"; meanwhile, 39% of the respondents said they did not identify with any political party. Ideologically the Fordham survey found 39% self-identifying as extremely liberal, 33% as Liberal, 8% as slightly liberal, 15% as moderate/"middle of the road", 2% as slightly conservative, 3% as conservative, and 1% as extremely conservative.

Main organization

The assembly is the main OWS decision-making body and uses a modified consensus process, where participants attempt to reach consensus and then drop to a 9/10 vote if consensus is not reached. Consensus is a process of common sentiment; it is not agreement. Participants are given room for dissent and complex ideas are able to form. The process has been used in many indigenous traditions, Quaker practices, the women's liberation movement, anti-nuclear movement, and alter-globalization movement.

In the assembly OWS working groups and affinity groups discuss their thoughts and needs, and the meetings are open to the public for both attendance and speaking. The meetings are without formal leadership. Meeting participants comment upon committee proposals using a process called a "stack", which is a queue of speakers that anyone can join. New York uses what is called a progressive stack in which people from marginalized groups are sometimes allowed to speak before people from dominant groups. Facilitators and "stack-keepers" urge speakers to "step forward, or step back" based on which group they belong to, meaning that women and minorities may move to the front of the line, while white men must often wait for a turn to speak. Participants take minutes of the meetings so that other participants, who are not in attendance, can be kept up-to-date. In addition to the over 70 working groups that perform much of the daily work and planning of Occupy Wall Street, the organizational structure also includes "spokes councils", at which every working group can participate.

Even with the perception of a movement with no leaders, leaders have emerged. A facilitator of some of the movement's more contentious discussions, Nicole Carty, says, "Usually when we think of leadership, we think of authority, but nobody has authority here... People lead by example, stepping up when they need to and stepping back when they need to." According to Fordham University communications professor Paul Levinson, Occupy Wall Street and similar movements symbolize another rise of direct democracy that has not actually been seen since ancient times.

Funding
During the initial weeks of the park encampment it was reported that most of OWS funding was coming from donors with incomes in the $50,000 to $100,000 range, and the median donation was $22. According to finance group member Pete Dutro, OWS had accumulated over $700,000. The largest single donor to the movement was former New York Mercantile Exchange vice chairman Robert Halper, who was noted by media as having also given the maximum allowable campaign contribution to Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney. During the period that protesters were encamped in the park the funds were being used to purchase food and other necessities and to bail out fellow protesters. With the closure of the park to overnight camping on November 15, members of the OWS finance committee stated they would initiate a process to streamline the movement and re-evaluate their budget and eliminate or merge some of the "working groups" they no longer needed on a day-to-day basis.

Met with increasing costs and significant overhead expenses in order to sustain the movement, an internal audit from the fiscal management team known as the "accounting working group" revealed on March 2, 2012, that only $44,000 of the several hundred thousand dollars raised still remained available. The report warned that if current revenues and expenses were maintained at current levels, then funds would run out in three weeks. Some of the movement's biggest costs include ground-level activities such as food kitchens, street medics, bus tickets, subway passes, and printing expenses.

In late February 2012 it was reported that a group of business leaders including Ben Cohen, Jerry Greenfield, Danny Goldberg, Norman Lear, and Terri Gardner created a new working group, the Movement Resource Group, and with it have pledged $300,000 with plans to add $1,500,000 more. The money would be made available in the form of grants of up to $25,000 for eligible recipients.

The People's Library

The People's Library at Occupy Wall Street was started a few days after the protest when a pile of books was left in a cardboard box at Zuccotti Park. The books were passed around and organized, and as time passed, it received additional books and resources from readers, private citizens, authors and corporations. As of November 2011 the library had 5,554 books cataloged in LibraryThing and its collection was described as including some rare or unique articles of historical interest. According to American Libraries, the library's collection had "thousands of circulating volumes", which included "holy books of every faith, books reflecting the entire political spectrum, and works for all ages on a huge range of topics."

Following the example of the OWS People's Library, protesters throughout North America and Europe formed sister libraries at their encampments.

Zuccotti Park encampment

Prior to being closed to overnight use and during the occupation of the space, somewhere between 100 and 200 people slept in Zuccotti Park. Initially tents were not allowed and protesters slept in sleeping bags or under blankets. Meal service started at a total cost of about $1,000 per day. While some visitors ate at nearby restaurants, according to the Wall Street Journal and the New York Post many businesses surrounding the park were adversely affected. Contribution boxes collected about $5,000 a day, and supplies came in from around the country. Eric Smith, a local chef who was laid off at the Sheraton in Midtown, said that he was running a five-star restaurant in the park. In late October, kitchen volunteers complained about working 18-hour days to feed people who were not part of the movement and served only brown rice, simple sandwiches, and potato chips for three days.

Many protesters used the bathrooms of nearby business establishments. Some supporters donated use of their bathrooms for showers and the sanitary needs of protesters.
New York City requires a permit to use "amplified sound", including electric bullhorns. Since Occupy Wall Street did not have a permit, the protesters created the "human microphone" in which a speaker pauses while the nearby members of the audience repeat the phrase in unison. The effect has been called “comic or exhilarating—often all at once.” Some feel this provided a further unifying effect for the crowd.[127][128]

During the weeks that overnight use of the park was allowed, a separate area was set aside for an information area which contained laptop computers and several wireless routers.[129][130] The items were powered with gas generators until the New York City Fire Department removed them on October 28, saying they were a fire hazard.[131] Protesters then used bicycles rigged with an electricity-generating apparatus to change batteries to power the protesters’ laptops and other electronics.[132][133] According to the *Columbia Journalism Review*’s New Frontier Database, the media team, while unofficial, ran websites like Occupytogether.org, video livestream, a "steady flow of updates on *Twitter*, and *Tumblr*" as well as *Skype* sessions with other demonstrators.[134]

On October 6, Brookfield Office Properties, which owns Zuccotti Park, issued a statement saying: "Sanitation is a growing concern... Normally the park is cleaned and inspected every weekend [but] because the protesters refuse to cooperate... the park has not been cleaned since Friday, September 16 and as a result, sanitary conditions have reached unacceptable levels.[135][136]

On October 13, New York City’s mayor Bloomberg and Brookfield announced that the park must be vacated for cleaning the following morning at 7 am.[137] However, protesters vowed to “defend the occupation” after police said they wouldn’t allow them to return with sleeping bags and other gear following the cleaning, and many protesters spent the night sweeping and mopping the park.[138][139] The next morning the property owner postponed its cleaning effort.[138] Having prepared for a confrontation with the authorities to prevent the cleaning effort from proceeding, some protesters clashed with police in riot gear outside City Hall after it was canceled.[137] MTV followed two protesters for their series *True Life*, one of whom, Bryan, was on the sanitation crew. Filming took place during the time when the cleanup happened.[140]

On October 20, residents at a community board meeting complained about inadequate sanitation, verbal taunts and harassment by protesters, noise, and related issues. One resident angrily complained that the protesters “[a]re defecating on our doorsteps”; board member Tricia Joyce said, "They have to have some parameters. That doesn't mean the protests have to stop. I'm hoping we can strike a balance on parameters because this could be a long term stay.[141]

Shortly after midnight on November 15, 2011, the New York City Police Department gave protesters notice from the park’s owner (Brookfield Office Properties) to leave Zuccotti Park due to its purportedly unsanitary and hazardous conditions. The notice stated that they could return without sleeping bags, tarps or tents.[142][143] About an hour later, police in riot gear began removing protesters from the park, arresting some 200 people in the process, including a number of journalists.

On December 31, 2011, protesters started to re-occupy the park. At one point, protesters started to push police barricades into the streets. Police quickly put the barricades back up. Occupiers then started to take down barricades from all sides of the park and stored them in a pile in the middle of Zuccotti Park.[144] Police called in reinforcements as more activists entered the park. Police tried to enter the park but were pushed back by protesters. There were reports of pepper-spray being used by the police. About 12:40 am after the group celebrated New Years in the park, they exited the park and marched down Broadway. Police in riot gear started to clear out the park around 1:30 am. Sixty-eight people were arrested in connection with the event, including one accused of stabbing a police officer in the hand with a pair of scissors.[145]
Since the closure of the Zuccotti Park encampment, some former campers have been allowed to sleep in local churches, but how much longer they will be welcomed is in question and even former park occupiers debate whether or not they can continue to provide funds and meals for homeless protesters. Since the removal, New York protesters have been divided in their opinion as to the importance of the occupation of a space with some believing that actual encampment is unnecessary, and even a burden.\cite{146} Since the closure of the Zuccotti Park encampment, the movement has turned its focus on occupying banks, corporate headquarters, board meetings, foreclosed homes, college and university campuses, and Wall Street itself. Since its inception, the Occupy Wall Street protests in New York City have cost the city an estimated $17 million in overtime fees to provide policing of protests and encampment inside Zuccotti Park.\cite{147,148,149}

On March 17, 2012, Occupy Wall Street demonstrators attempted to mark the movement's six-month anniversary by reoccupying Zuccotti Park. Protesters were soon cleared away by police, who made over 70 arrests. Veteran protesters said the force used by police was the most violent they had witnessed and a Guardian reporter witnessed a protester being slammed into a glass door by a police officer.\cite{150,151} On March 24, hundreds of OWS protesters marched from Zuccotti Park to Union Square in a demonstration against police violence.\cite{152}

On September 17, 2012, protesters returned to Zuccotti Park to mark the one-year anniversary of the beginning of the occupation. Protesters blocked access to the New York Stock Exchange as well as other intersections in the area. This, along with several violations of Zuccotti Park rules, led police to surround groups of protesters, at times pulling protesters from the crowds to be arrested for blocking pedestrian traffic. A police lieutenant instructed reporters not to take pictures. The New York Times reported that two officers shoved city councilman Jumaane D. Williams off a bench with batons after he refused two orders to move. A spokesman for Williams later stated that he had been pushed by police while trying to explain his reason for being in the park, but was not arrested or injured. There were 185 arrests across the city.\cite{153,154,155,156}

Security, crime and legal issues

OWS demonstrators complained of thefts of assorted items such as cell phones and laptops; thieves also stole $2,500 of donations that were stored in a makeshift kitchen.\cite{157} In November, a man was arrested for breaking an EMT's leg.\cite{158}

NYPD spokesman Paul Browne said protesters delayed reporting crime until three complaints were made against the same individual.\cite{159} The protesters denied a "three strikes policy", and one protester told the New York Daily News that he had heard police respond to an unspecified complaint by saying, "You need to deal with that yourselves."\cite{160}

After several weeks of occupation, protesters had made enough allegations of rape, sexual assault and gropings that women-only sleeping tents were set up.\cite{161,162,163,164} Occupy Wall Street organizers released a statement regarding the sexual assaults stating, "As individuals and as a community, we have the responsibility and the opportunity to create an alternative to this culture of violence, We are working for an OWS and a world in which survivors are respected and supported unconditionally... We are redoubling our efforts to raise awareness about sexual violence. This includes taking preventative measures such as encouraging healthy relationship dynamics and consent practices that can help to limit harm."\cite{165}

It was revealed that an internal Department of Homeland Security report warned that Occupy Wall Street protests were a potential source of violence; the report stated that "mass gatherings associated with public protest movements can have disruptive effects on transportation, commercial, and government services, especially when staged in major metropolitan areas". The DHS keeps a file on the movement and monitors social media for information, according to leaked emails released by WikiLeaks.\cite{166,167}

Government crackdowns

Surveillance

As the movement spread across the United States, the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) began keeping tabs on protesters. A DHS report entitled "SPECIAL COVERAGE: Occupy Wall Street", dated October 2011, observed that "mass gatherings associated with public protest movements can have disruptive effects on transportation, commercial, and government
services, especially when staged in major metropolitan areas.\[168\]

On December 21, 2012, Partnership for Civil Justice obtained and published U.S. government documents\[169\] revealing that over a dozen local FBI field offices, DHS and other federal agencies monitored Occupy Wall Street, despite labeling it a peaceful movement.\[170\] The New York Times reported in May 2014 that declassified documents showed extensive surveillance of OWS related groups across the country.\[171\]

### Arrests

Gideon Oliver, who represented Occupy with the National Lawyers Guild in New York, said about 2,000 [protesters] had been arrested just in New York City alone. Most of these arrests in New York and elsewhere, are on charges of disorderly conduct, trespassing, and failure to disperse.\[172\] Nationally, a little under 8,000 Occupy affiliated arrests have been documented by tallying numbers published in local newspapers.\[173\]

In a report that followed an eight-month study, researchers at the law schools of NYU and Fordham accuse the NYPD of deploying unnecessarily aggressive force, obstructing press freedoms and making arbitrary and baseless arrests.\[174\]

#### Brooklyn Bridge arrests

On October 1, 2011, a large group of protesters set out to walk across the Brooklyn Bridge resulting in 700 arrests, the largest number of arrests in one day at any Occupy event. Some said the police had tricked protesters, allowing them onto the bridge, and even escorting them partway across.\[175\][176] Jesse A. Myerson, a media coordinator for Occupy Wall Street said, "The cops watched and did nothing, indeed, seemed to guide us onto the roadway."\[177\] A spokesman for the New York Police Department, Paul Browne, said that protesters were given multiple warnings to stay on the sidewalk and not block the street, and were arrested when they refused.\[2\] By October 2, all but 20 of the arrestees had been released with citations for disorderly conduct and a criminal court summons.\[178\] On October 4, a group of protesters who were arrested on the bridge filed a lawsuit against the city, alleging that officers had violated their constitutional rights by luring them into a trap and then arresting them.\[179\]

In June 2012, a federal judge ruled that the protesters had not received sufficient warning.\[180\]

#### Court cases

In May 2012, three cases in a row were thrown out of court, the most recent one for "insufficient summons."\[181\] In another case, photographer Alexander Arbuckle was charged with blocking traffic for standing in the middle of the street, according to NYPD Officer Elisheba Vera. However, according to Village Voice staff writer Nick Pinto, this account was not corroborated by photographic and video evidence taken by protesters and the NYPD.\[182\] In yet another case, Sgt. Michael Soldo, the arresting officer, said Jessica Hall was blocking traffic. But under cross-examination Soldo admitted, it was actually the NYPD metal barricades which blocked traffic. This was also corroborated by the NYPD's video documentation.\[183\]
Eight men: Episcopalian Bishop George Packard, Mark Adams, Jack Boyle, Ed Mortimer, Ted Alexandro, John Lenmesin, Rev. Dr. Earl Koopercamp, and William Gusakov, all associated with Occupy Wall Street, were found guilty of misdemeanors stemming from a criminal trespass arrest on December 17, 2011. Coined the "Duarte Eight". One of them, Mark Adams, was also convicted of attempted criminal mischief and attempted criminal possession of burglar's tools for trying to slice a lock on a chain-link fence with bolt cutters. Adams was sentenced to 45 days imprisonment (he served 29 days); the other seven were convicted of criminal trespass and sentenced to community service.[184][185] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qz_IOoDhh34

One defendant, Michael Premo, charged with assaulting an officer, was found not guilty of all charges after the defense presented video evidence which "showed officers charging into the defendant unprovoked." The video contradicted the sworn testimony of NYPD officers, who had claimed the defendant assaulted them.[186][187]

A court has ordered that the City pay $360,000 for their actions during the November 15, 2011 raid.[188] That case, Occupy Wall Street v. City of New York, was filed in the US District Court Southern District of New York.[189] Further, the City of New York has since begun settling cases with individual participants. The first of which was most notably represented by students of Hofstra Law School and the Occupy Wall Street Clinic.[190]

Nkrumah Tinsley was indicted on riot offenses and assaulting a police officer during the Zuccotti Park encampment. On May 21, 2013 Tinsley pleaded guilty to felony assault on a police officer, and will be sentenced later 2013.[191]

In April 2014, the final Occupy court case, the Trial of Cecily McMillan began. Cecily McMillan was charged with and convicted of assaulting a police officer and sentenced to 90 days in Rikers Island Penitentiary.[192] McMillan claimed the assault was an accident and a response to what she claimed to be a sexual assault at the hands of said officer.[193] The jury that found her guilty recommended no jail time.[194] She was released after serving 60 days.[195]

**Notable responses**

During an October 6 news conference, President Barack Obama said, "I think it expresses the frustrations the American people feel, that we had the biggest financial crisis since the Great Depression, huge collateral damage all throughout the country ... and yet you're still seeing some of the same folks who acted irresponsibly trying to fight efforts to crack down on the abusive practices that got us into this in the first place."[196][197]

On October 5, 2011, noted commentator and political satirist Jon Stewart said in his Daily Show broadcast: "If the people who were supposed to fix our financial system had actually done it, the people who have no idea how to solve these problems wouldn't be getting shit for not offering solutions."[198]

Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney said that while there were "bad actors" that needed to be "found and plucked out", he believes that targeting one industry or region of America is a mistake and views encouraging the Occupy Wall Street protests as "dangerous" and inciting "class warfare".[199][200] Romney later expressed sympathy for the movement, saying, "I look at what's happening on Wall Street and my view is, boy I understand how those people feel."[201]

House Democratic Leader Rep. Nancy Pelosi said she supports the Occupy Wall Street movement.[202] In September, various labor unions, including the Transport Workers Union of America Local 100 and the New York Metro 32BJ Service Employees International Union pledged their support for demonstrators.[203]

Five days into the protest, political commentator Keith Olbermann, formerly of CurrentTV, vocally criticized mainstream media outlets for failing to cover the initial Wall Street protests and demonstrations adequately.[204][205]

On October 18, 2011, the Communist Party USA endorsed the Occupy Wall Street Movement.[206]
On October 19, 2011, Greenpeace Executive Director Phil Radford spoke on behalf of Greenpeace supporting Occupy Wall Street protesters, stating: "We stand – as individuals and an organization – with Occupiers of all walks of life who peacefully stand up for a just, democratic, green and peaceful future.[207]

The Internet Archive and the Occupy Archive, a project at the Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media at George Mason University, has been collecting material from Occupy sites beyond New York.[208]

In November 2011, Public Policy Polling did a national survey which found that 33% of voters supported OWS and 45% opposed it, with 22% not sure. 43% of those polled had a higher opinion of the Tea Party movement than the Occupy movement.[209] In January 2012, a survey was released by Rasmussen Reports, in which 51% of likely voters found protesters to be a public nuisance, while 39% saw it as a valid protest movement representing the people.[210]

Pulitzer Prize–winning journalist Chris Hedges, a supporter of the movement, argues that OWS had popular support and "articulated the concerns of the majority of citizens.[211]

Many notable figures joined the occupation, including David Crosby, Kanye West, Russell Simmons, Alec Baldwin, Susan Sarandon, Don King, Noam Chomsky, Jesse Jackson, Cornel West, and Michael Moore.[212]

**Occupy Yale**

In November 2011, some students started an *Occupy Yale* movement, discouraging fellow students from joining the finance sector.[213] 25% of Yale graduates join the financial sector.[214][215]

**Shorty Award for #Activism**

In March 2012, Justin Wedes, OWS Social Media team member, accepted the Shorty Awards for Activism on behalf of the @OccupyWallStNYC TweetBoat social media team.[216]

**Time Magazine: Person of the Year 2011**

On December 17, 2010, Tunisian street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire, sparking the Tunisian which set a domino effect for other uprisings in Egypt, Bahrain, Syria, Israel, USA, Spain, Greece etc... Time Magazine wrote: "In 2011, protesters didn't just voice their complaints; they changed the world.[217]

**Criticism**

A number of criticisms towards Occupy Wall Street have emerged, both during the movement's most active period and subsequently after. These criticism include a lack of clear goals, false claim as the 99%, a lack of measurable change, trouble conveying its message, a failure to continue its support base, pursuing the wrong audience, and accusations of anti-Semitism.

**Lack of clear goals**

The Occupy Movement has been criticized for not having a set of clear demands that could be used to prompt formal policy change. This lack of agenda has been cited as the reason why the Occupy Movement fizzled before achieving any specific legislative change. Although the lack of demands has simultaneously been argued as one of the advantages of the movement[218] the protesters in Occupy rejected the idea of having only one demand, or a set of demands, and instead represented a host of broad demands that did not specifically allude to a desired policy agenda.[219][220] Thus, this criticism was heavily debated.

**Lack of minority representation**
Although the movement's primary slogan was "We are the 99%," it was criticized for not encompassing the voice of the entire 99%, specifically lower class individuals and minorities. For example, it was characterized as being overwhelmingly white[222] and poorly representative of the needs of the immigrant population. The lack of African American presence was especially notable, with the movement being criticized in several news outlets and journal articles about its lack of inclusivity and racial diversity.[222][223][224][225]

**Lack of measurable change**

Some publications mentioned that the Occupy Wall Street Movement failed to spark any true institutional changes in banks and in Corporate America. This idea is supported by the number of scandals that continued to emerge following the financial crisis such as the London Whale incident, the Libor-fixing scandal, and the HSBC money laundering discovery. Furthermore, the idea of excess compensation through salaries and bonuses at Wall Street banks continued to be a contentious topic following the Occupy protests, especially as bonuses increased during a period of falling bank profits.[226][227][228]

**Trouble conveying its message**

Another criticism was the idea that the movement itself was having trouble conveying its actual message. The movement was criticized for demonizing the rich and establishing a theme of class warfare.[229][230][231] Another issue that was raised was that the Occupy Movement was attempting to indict the entire 1% and argue for wealth redistribution when in fact, the focus of the movement was centered around upward mobility and fairness for all through government regulation and taxation.[232][233]

**Failure to continue its support base**

The movement was also criticized for not building a sustainable base of support and instead fading quickly after its initial spark in late 2011 through early 2012.[234] This may be attributed to Occupy's lack of legislative victories, which left the protestors with a lack of measurable goals. It was also argued that the movement was too tied to its base, Zuccotti Park. Evidence of this lies in the fact that when the police evicted the protestors on November 15, the movement largely dissipated.[235][232] While there is evidence that the movement had an enduring impact, protests and direct mentions of the Occupy Movement quickly became uncommon.[236][237][234]

**Wrong audience**

Many people felt that Occupy had the wrong target in mind, and that Washington, politicians, or the Federal Reserve should have received much of the rebuke for ignoring the warning signs leading up to the financial crisis and not taking action more quickly. In addition, the movement was criticized for demonizing banks and the entire financial industry with the argument being that only a certain portion of Wall Street workers contributed to the actions that eventually sparked the financial crisis.[220][240]

**Anti-semitism accusations**

Many Occupy Wall Street protests have included anti-zionist and anti-Semitic slogans and signage such as "Jews control Wall Street" or "Zionist Jews who are running the big banks and the Federal Reserve". As a result, the Occupy Wall Street Movement has been confronted with accusations of anti-Semitism by major US media.[241][242][243][244][245]
Subsequent activity

May Day 2012
Occupy Wall Street mounted an ambitious call for a citywide general strike and day of action on May 1, 2012. Recalls journalist Nathan Schneider, "The idea of a general strike had been circulating in the movement since who-knows-when. There was a woman who called for it back on September 17th. Occupy Oakland tried to mount one on November 2nd, with some success and a few broken windows. Soon after, Occupy LA took the lead in announcing a target that seemed sufficiently far off to be feasible, and sufficiently traditional to seem plausible: May Day." Though the day fell short of its wildest ambitions, tens of thousands of people participated in a march through New York City, demonstrating continued support for Occupy Wall Street's cause and concerns.

Occupy Sandy
Occupy Sandy is an organized relief effort created to assist the victims of Hurricane Sandy in the northeastern United States. Occupy Sandy is made up of former and present Occupy Wall Street protesters, other members of the Occupy movement, and former non-Occupy volunteers.

3rd Anniversary
Three years after the original occupation, there were fewer people actively involved in Occupy than at its height. However, a number of groups that formed during the occupation or resulted from connections made at that time were still active. More broadly, the 99% meme has persisted in common parlance and Thomas Piketty's 700-page tome on global income inequality had become a best-seller.

On-going efforts

Strike Debt
To celebrate the third anniversary of the occupation, an Occupy Wall Street campaign called "Strike Debt" announced it had wiped out almost $4 million in student loans, amounting to the indebtedness of 2,761 students. The loans were all held by students of Everest College, a for-profit college that operates Corinthian Colleges, Inc. which in turn owns Everest University, Everest Institute, Heald College, and WyoTech.

We chose Everest because it is the most blatant con job on the higher ed landscape. It's time for all student debtors to get relief from their crushing burden.

The loans became available when the banks holding defaulted loans put the bad loans up for sale. Once purchased, the group chose to forgive the loans. The funds to purchase the loans came from donations to the Rolling Jubilee Fund, part of the Occupy Student Debt program. As of September 2014, the group claimed to have wiped out almost $19 million in debt.

As of September 2014, Rolling Jubilee claims to have cancelled more than $15 million in medical debt.

Strike Debt, and a successor organization, The Debt Collective, were active in organizing the Corinthian 100 students who struck against Corinthian college, a for-profit school that was shut down by the U.S. Department of Education.

Occupy the SEC
Occupy the SEC came together during the occupation. The group seeks to represent the 99% in the regulatory process. They first attracted attention in 2012 when they submitted a 325-page comment letter on the Volcker Rule portion of Dodd Frank.\[254\]

**Alternative Banking**

Another offshoot of the Occupy Movement, calling itself the OWS Alternative Banking Group, was established during the occupation of Zuccotti Park in 2011.\[255\] In 2013, the group published a book titled "Occupy Finance" and distributed copies in Zuccotti Park at the second anniversary and elsewhere.\[256\] FT Alphaville gave it "two thumbs up for discussable policy proposals" while the New York Times Dealbook called it "a guide to the financial system and the events surrounding the crisis, and it proposes a policy framework that it calls 'popular regulation'."\[257\][258] The group continues to meet weekly at Columbia University including a speaker series.\[259\] The group started a blog in the Huffington Post in 2014.\[260\]

Alternative Banking ran Occupy Summer School at the Urban Assembly Institute of Math and Science for Young Women in July 2015.\[261\]

**Influence on movement for higher wages**

Commentators attribute Occupy Wall Street as an influence on the fast food worker strikes.\[262\] Occupy Wall Street Organizers also contributed to workers at Hot and Crusty, in New York City, obtaining higher wages and the right to form a union by working with a Worker center.\[263\] Occupy Wall Street takes some of the credit for introducing income inequality into the broader political discourse, for inspiring the fight for a $15 minimum wage.\[264\]

**See also**

- Arab Spring
- 15 October 2011 global protests
- 2011 United States public employee protests
- 2011 Wisconsin protests
- 2011 protests in Spain
- 2013 protests in Brazil
- 2013 protests in Turkey
- 2014 Hong Kong protests
- UC Davis pepper-spray incident
- Bonus army 1932
- List of Occupy movement topics
- Poor People's Campaign 1968
- Radical media
- Nuit Debout
- List of incidents of civil unrest in the United States
- Post-democracy

**References**

1. Author Dan Berrett writes: “But Occupy Wall Street’s most defining characteristics—its decentralized nature and its intensive process of participatory consensus-based decision-making—are rooted in other precincts of academe and activism: in the scholarship of anarchism and, specifically, in an ethnography of central Madagascar.”\[8\]

2. The Huffington Post reports that Graeber and friends discovered that the “General Assembly” had been “taken over by a veteran protest group called the Worker's World Party”. Graeber, his companions and others went off on their own to begin their own assembly. Eventually both factions came together Matt Sledge of the Huffington Post writes: “As the meetings evolved, they became forums for people to air their grievances.” There were about 200 activists who organized the ground rules 47 days before the protest began.\[22\]
Citations


but they got really lucky when they elected to gather at Zuccotti Park in downtown Manhattan on November 13, 2013.


"Wall Street protest's long historical roots" (http://www.cnn.com/2011/10/11/opinion/opinion_mills-occupy-history_1_protesters-historical-roots-vets/?s=PM%3AOPINION)

"The Digital Evolution of Occupy Wall Street" (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3667169)

"A historical precedent that might prove a bonus for Occupy Wall Street" (http://www.guardian.co.uk/comics/2011/nov/19/historical-precedent-bonus-occupy)

"The Geospatial Characteristics of a Social Movement Communication Network" (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3590214)

"The Great Depression offers a striking parallel to this week's attack on Wall Street" (http://www.history.com/news/2011/10/11/wall-street-300-years-of-protests/)


"A relatively small gathering of young anarchists and aging hippies in lower Manhattan has spawned a national movement. What happened?"

41. "Occupy Wall Street's anarchist roots" (https://www.webcitation.org/63aiysYLM?url=http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/11/2011112872835904508.html) Al Jazeera. Archived from the original (http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/11/2011112872835904508.html) on November 30, 2011. Retrieved February 23, 2012. "It was only on August 2, when a small group of anarchists and other anti-authoritarians showed up at a meeting called by one such group and effectively wooed everyone away from the planned march and rally to create a genuine democratic assembly on basically anarchist principles, that the stage was set for a movement that Americans from Portland to Tuscaloosa were willing to embrace."


120. "Somewhere between 100 and 200 people sleep in Zuccotti Park...." "Many occupiers were still in their sleeping bags at 9 or 10 am" \( \text{Wall Street functions like a small city} \) (https://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqMj1cCvOt8Ihya8vGX0L0BuZu6Ixt_A?docid=0b872a8c42874850a511343166b0b871). Associated Press. October 7, 2011


128. "A general assembly of anyone who wants to attend meets twice daily". Because it's hard to be heard above the din of lower Manhattan and because the city is not allowing bullhorns or microphones, the protesters have devised a system of \( \text{hand symbols} \). Fingers downward means you disagree. Arms crossed means you strongly disagree. Announcements are made via the "people's mic... you say it and the people immediately around you repeat it and pass the word along. Wall Street functions like a small city" (https://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqMj5j1CcVt8Ihya8vGX0L0BuZu6Ixt_A?docid=0b872a8c42874850a511343166b0b871). Associated Press. October 7, 2011.

129. "Behind the sign marked "info" sat computers, generators, wireless routers, and lots of electrical cords. This is the media center, where the protesters group and distribute their messages. Those who count themselves among the media team for Occupy Wall Street are self-appointed; the same goes with all teams within this community". "I later learned that power comes from a gas-powered generator which runs, among other things, multiple 4G wireless Internet hotspots that provide Internet access to the scrappy collection of laptops." "Occupy Wall Street's Media Team" (https://web.archive.org/web/20131214200133/http://www.cjr.org/the_news_frontier/occupy_wall_streets_media_team.php). Columbia Journalism Review's New Frontier Database. October 5, 2011. Archived from the original (https://www.cjr.org/the_news_frontier/occupy_wall_streets_media_team.php) on December 14, 2013.

143. CNN Wire Staff (November 15, 2011). "New York court upholds eviction of "Occupy'protesters" (https://web.archive.org/web/20120222134938/http://www.cnn.com/2011/11/15/us/new-york-occupy-eviction/index.html?hpt=hp_t1) CNN. Archived from the original (http://www.cnn.com/2011/11/15/us/new-york-occupy-eviction/index.html?hpt=hp_t1) on February 22, 2014 Retrieved November 15, 2011. "A New York Supreme Court has ruled not to extend a temporary restraining order that prevented the eviction of “Occupy” protestors who were encamped at Zuccotti Park, considered a home-base for demonstrators. Police in riot gear cleared out the protesters early in the day, a move that attorneys for the loosely defined group say was unlawful. But Justice Michael Stallman later ruled in favor of New York city officials and Brookfield properties, owners and developers of the privately owned park in Lower Manhattan. The order does not prevent protests from gathering in the park, but says their First Amendment rights do not include remaining there, "along with their tents, structures, generators, and other installations to the exclusion of the owner’s reasonable rights and duties to maintain Zuccotti Park."


216. "#OccupyWallStreet Shorty Awards Acceptance Speech" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rRfQmI-S eo).


Further reading


External links

The **Occupy movement** is an international socio-political movement against social and economic inequality and the lack of "real democracy" around the world. It aims primarily to advance social and economic justice and new forms of democracy. The movement has many different scopes; local groups often have different focuses, but among the movement's prime concerns are how large corporations (and the global financial system) control the world in a way that disproportionately benefits a minority, undermines democracy, and is unstable.[12] “Occupy” forms part of what Manfred Steger calls the "global justice movement".[13]

The first Occupy protest to receive widespread attention, Occupy Wall Street in New York City's Zuccotti Park, began on 17 September 2011. By 9 October, Occupy protests had taken place or were ongoing in over 951 cities across 82 countries, and in over 600 communities in the United States.[14][15][16][17] Although most active in the United States, by October 2012 there had been Occupy protests and occupations in dozens of other countries across every inhabited continent. For the first month, overt police repression remained minimal, but this began to change by 25 October 2011 when police first attempted to forcibly remove Occupy Oakland. By the end of 2011 authorities had cleared most of the major camps, with the last remaining high-profile sites – in Washington, D.C. and in London – evicted by February 2012.[22]

The Occupy movement took inspiration in part from the Arab Spring,[23][24] from the 2009 Iranian Green Movement, and from the Spanish Indignados Movement, as well as from the overall global wave of anti-austerity protests. The movement commonly uses the slogan “We are the 99%” and the #Occupy hashtag format; it organizes through websites such as Occupy Together.[25][26] According to *The Washington Post*, the movement, which Cornel West described as a “democratic awakening”, is difficult to distill to a few demands.[27][28] On 12 October 2011, Los Angeles City Council became one of the first governmental bodies in the United States to adopt a resolution stating its informal support of the Occupy movement.[29] In October 2012 the Executive Director of Financial Stability at the Bank of England stated that the protesters were right to criticise and had persuaded bankers and politicians "to behave in a more moral way".[30]

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"We are the 99%" slogan

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**Occupy movement**

**Date**  
17 September 2011 – present

**Location**  
Worldwide (List of locations)

**Caused by**  
Economic and social inequality, corporate influence over government, *inter alia*.

**Methods**

- Occupation
- Nonviolent protest
- Civil disobedience
- Picketing
- Demonstrations
- Internet activism
- General strikes
- Direct action
- Riots

**Arrests/Injuries/Deaths**

- **Arrests**: 7,700+[1]
- **Injuries**: 400+[2]
- **Deaths**: 32[3][4][5][6][7]

**Official website**
Chronology of events
17 September to 14 October 2011
15 October to 4 November
5 to 25 November
26 November to 31 December 2011
1 January 2012 to 2016
June 2018-the present
Protests
Armenia
Australia
Belgium
Brazil
Canada
Colombia
Czech Republic
Cyprus
Denmark
France
Germany
Hong Kong
Israel
Italy
Malaysia
Mexico
Mongolia
Nepal
Netherlands
New Zealand
Nigeria
Norway
Republic of Ireland
South Africa
South Korea
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  Wales
United States
Reactions
Political
Media
Other
Impact
Social impact
Political impact
National monitoring and crackdown
Lawsuits
End
Background

In 2009 and 2010, students across the University of California occupied campus buildings in protest against budget cuts, tuition hikes, and staff cutbacks that had resulted from the Great Recession of 2008. According to Dissent Magazine, “It was in the context of the California student movement that the slogan ‘Occupy Everything, Demand Nothing’ first emerged.” The Huffington Post noted that “During one incident in March of 2010, 150 protesters were arrested for trying to occupy part of Interstate 80 in protest of the budget cuts and tuition hikes, displaying a banner that read ‘Occupy everything,’ while shutting down the roadway for an hour, and were crushed by the same kind of overwhelming police force that was later mobilized against Occupy encampments across the country.”

Adbusters editor Micah White, who designed the original Occupy Wall Street concept, traveled to California for the protests and took part in the occupation of Wheeler Hall. He wrote enthusiastically for Adbusters about the “revolutionary potential of [the students] struggle.”

The Spanish Indignados movement began in mid-May 2011, with camps at Madrid and elsewhere. According to sociologist Manuel Castells, by the end of the month there were already hundreds of camps around Spain and across the world. For some journalists and commentators the camping in Spain marked the start of the global occupy movement, though it is much more commonly said to have begun in New York during September.

On 30 May 2011, a leader of the Indignados, inspired by the Arab Spring, 5.18 Movement of 1980, and June Democracy Movement of 1987 called for a worldwide protest on 15 October. In mid-2011, the Canadian-based group Adbusters Media Foundation, best known for its advertisement-free anti-consumerist magazine Adbusters, proposed a peaceful occupation of Wall Street to protest corporate influence on democracy, address a growing disparity in wealth, and the absence of legal repercussions behind the recent global financial crisis. Adbusters co-founder Kalle Lasn registered the OccupyWallStreet.org web address on 9 June. According to Micah White, the senior editor of the magazine, “[we] basically floated the idea in mid-July into our [email list] and it was spontaneously taken up by all the people of the world, it just kind of snowballed from there.”

One of the inspirations for the movement was the Democracy Village set up in 2010, outside the British Parliament in London. The protest received additional attention when the internet hacker group Anonymous encouraged its followers to take part in the protests, calling protesters to “flood lower Manhattan, set up tents, kitchens, peaceful barricades and Occupy Wall Street.” They promoted the protest with a poster featuring a dancer atop Wall Street’s iconic Charging Bull. The first protest was held at Zuccotti Park in New York City on 17 September 2011, the tenth anniversary of the re-opening of Wall Street trading after the 11 September 2001 attacks. The protests were preceded by a similar Occupy Dataran movement in Kuala Lumpur in July, seven weeks before Occupy Wall Street.
Occupy protests across the world

"We are the 99%" slogan

The phrase "The 99%" is a political slogan used by participants in the Occupy movement.[54] It was originally launched as a Tumblr blog page in late August 2011.[52] It refers to the concentration of wealth among the top 1% of income earners compared to the other 99 percent,[54] the top 1 percent of income earners nearly tripled after-tax income over the last thirty years according to a Congressional Budget Office (CBO) report.[55]

The report was released just as concerns of the Occupy Wall Street movement were beginning to enter the national political debate.[56] According to the CBO, between 1979 and 2007 the incomes of the top 1% of Americans grew by an average of 275%. During the same time period, the 60% of Americans in the middle of the income scale saw their income rise by 40%. Since 1979 the average pre-tax income for the bottom 90% of households has decreased by $900, while that of the top 1% increased by over $700,000, as federal taxation became less progressive. From 1992 to 2007 the top 400 income earners in the U.S. saw their income increase 392% and their average tax rate reduced by 37%.[57] In 2009, the average income of the top 1% was $960,000 with a minimum income of $343,927.[58][59][60]

In 2007, the richest 1% of the American population owned 34.6% of the country's total wealth, and the next 19% owned 50.5%. Thus, the top 20% of Americans owned 85% of the country's wealth and the bottom 80% of the population owned 15% —an example of the Pareto principle. Financial inequality (total net worth minus the value of one's home)[61] was greater than inequality in total wealth, with the top 1% of the population owning 42.7%, the next 19% of Americans owning 50.3%, and the bottom 80% owning 0.5%.[62]

However, after the Great Recession which started in 2007, the share of total wealth owned by the top 1% of the population grew from 34.6% to 37.1%, and that owned by the top 20% of Americans grew from 85% to 87.7%. The Great Recession also caused a drop of 36.1% in median household wealth but a drop of only 11.1% for the top 1%, further widening the gap between the 1% and the 99%.[62][63][64] During the economic expansion between 2002 and 2007, the income of the top 1% grew 10 times faster than the income of the bottom 90%. In this period 66% of total income gains went to the 1%, who in 2007 had a larger share of total income than at any time since 1928.[65] This is in stark contrast with surveys of U.S. populations that indicate an "ideal" distribution that is much more equal, and a widespread ignorance of the true income inequality and wealth inequality.[66]
Goals

During the early weeks, the movement was frequently criticized by the news media for having no clearly defined goals. Speaking on 7 October 2011, Kalle Lasn of Adbusters said that, in the early stages, the lack of demands was the "mysterious part" that allowed the movement to grow. By late October, Adbusters had been trying to "rally it around a single, clear demand" for a Robin Hood tax, with a global march in support of the Robin Hood tax planned for 29 October. Naomi Wolf argued that the impression created by much of the media that the protestors did not have clear demands was false. Wolf argued that they did have clear demands including a desire to end what they saw as the corrupting effect of money on politics. The New Yorker magazine stated that the claims of Kalle Lasn and Micah M. White were specific: tighten banking-industry regulations, ban high-frequency trading, arrest all ‘financial fraudsters’ responsible for the 2008 crash, and form a Presidential commission to investigate and prosecute corruption in politics. According to Bloomberg Businessweek, protesters wanted more and better jobs, more equal distribution of income, bank reform, and a reduction of the influence of corporations on politics. The movement has also been described as broadly anticapitalist. Some commentators such as David Graeber and Judith Butler criticized the idea that the movement must have clearly defined demands; they argued that issuing demands is counterproductive for the Occupy movement, because doing so would legitimize the very power structures the movement seeks to challenge. In late November, the London contingent of the Occupy movement released their first statement on corporations, in which they called for measures to end tax evasion by wealthy firms. The reason for the delay in articulating a clear demand was given as the time it takes to reach a consensus with the sometimes slow processes of participatory democracy. In November “Occupy London Stock Exchange”, an offshoot of Occupy London, said that they were working on a global collaboration of various occupations that reflected the voices of diverse movements worldwide. The global movement has been called the reinvention of politics, revolution, and utopia in the twenty-first century.

Methods

Activists have used web technologies and social media like IRC, Facebook, Twitter, and Meetup to coordinate events. IndyMedia helped the movement with communications, saying there had been conference calls on Skype with participants from up to 80 locations. Interactive live streams of events by independent journalists such as Tim Pool were used to augment mainstream media coverage. The progressive provider May First/People Link offered cost-free memberships for dozens of groups, including groups in Iran and Germany, to host websites, emails, and email lists securely. The movement went further to attempt to promote its causes through multimedia and art, which has been gathered and archived by institutions such as the National Museum of American History and New York Historical Society. The aim of much of the art produced was to visually impact the mainstream through imagery to attempt to create solidarity and unity among the “99%.”

The Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund released a model community bill of rights, promoting laws that strip corporations of their personhood rights and elevating the rights of citizens, for occupy organizers to adopt locally. In December 2011, Occupy Homes embarked on a movement to assist home owners who had lost or were scheduled to lose their homes due to foreclosure as a result of what they called the illegal practices used by banks that took advantage of consumers. The group planned to occupy foreclosed homes, disrupt bank auctions, and block evictions.
Structure

The movement has been described as having an "overriding commitment" to participatory democracy. Much of the movement's democratic process occurs in "working groups," where any protester is able to have their say. Important decisions are often made at General assemblies, which can themselves be informed by the findings of multiple working groups. Decisions are made using the consensus model of participatory democracy. This often features the use of hand signals to increase participation and operating with discussion facilitators rather than leaders – a system that can be traced in part to the Quaker movement several centuries ago, to participatory democracy in ancient Athens, and to the spokescouncils of the 1999 anti-globalization movement.

At the assemblies, working group proposals are made to meeting participants, who comment upon them using a process called a stack, a queue of speakers that anyone can join. In New York City, Occupy Wall Street uses what is called a progressive stack, in which people from marginalized groups are sometimes allowed to speak before people from dominant groups, with facilitators, or stack-keepers, urging speakers to "step forward, or step back" based on which group they belong to, meaning that women and minorities get to go to the front of the line, while white males must often wait for a turn to speak. The progressive stack concept has been criticized by some outside the movement as "forced equality" and "unfair."

Nonviolence

The occupy movement began with a commitment to nonviolence. Frequent references were made to the writings of nonviolent theorist Dr. Gene Sharp whose work was reported to have influenced nonviolent struggle movements in Serbia and the Arab Spring. Study groups were organised across the US Occupy camps discussing Sharp's 198 methods of nonviolent action and his book From Dictatorship to Democracy. A subsequent film about his work How to Start a Revolution premiered in Boston on 18 September was screened in Occupy camps across the US and Europe. Sharp himself warned that many of the tactics the movement were employing were not effective. In an Al Jazeera interview, he said, "The [Occupy] protesters don't have a clear objective, something they can actually achieve. If they think they will change the economic system by simply staying in a particular location, then they are likely to be very disappointed. Protest alone accomplishes very little."

In late May 2011, sociologist Manuel Castells congratulated Spanish occupiers for the fact that not a single violent incident had been reported after 11 days of camping all over Spain. Castells said that nonviolence was of fundamental importance, and was echoed by various other sociologists and social historians including Lester Kurtz, Prof. Maurice Isserman and Prof. Tom Juravich. Juravich and others have, however, said that conflict can be important in attracting attention, with much to be gained if occupiers are seen as victims of the violence, providing occupiers keep their own aggression strictly within limits. In the words of one occupier, it can help them gain media coverage if they "make things a little sexy and badass". The Direct Action Working Group of Occupy Wall Street endorsed diversity of tactics from the earliest days of the encampment. Not all occupiers have upheld the commitment to nonviolence, with aggressive tactics being used in Spain from as early as 15 June, and with some journalists saying the New York branch of the movement did initially accept protestors who had not signed up to nonviolence.

In September, sympathetic coverage given to the movement by the media was substantially increased after the circulation of a video of pepper spray being used by a police commander against peaceful female protestors. By November 2011, media sources began to report an increase in violence, with allegations of sexual assault and incidents of violence from occupiers against the police, including one officer allegedly stabbed with scissors. Some occupy camps responded by requiring that all occupiers sign a resolution to be nonviolent if they wished to stay. Rick Hampton for USA Today said the vast majority of occupy members have been nonviolent. Reviewing the global movement in December 2011, Anthony Barnett said its nonviolence remained an immense strength. In late January 2012, the movement's commitment to nonviolence was questioned after clashes with the police that saw about 400 arrests in
the U.S. city of Oakland. Some protesters and witnesses said the police initiated the violence; others said there was violence against the police; however, they blamed black bloc anarchists and agents provocateurs. One protester who did not take part stated, "It was organized by a very militant anarchist segment of the movement; I support the idea of taking a building, especially for housing those who don't have housing. But I don't support it with the kind of triumphal attitude I saw expressed.

Social media

The beginning of the Occupy Movement was reliant on the usage of social media accounts for the dispersal of information. These accounts were very useful and helped tremendously. The social media accounts eventually became hierarchical and failed their purpose. Some believe, in order to have been more successful, the social media accounts should have been more heavily regulated and kept to a standard. In addition, a study was published that followed how Occupy user interests changed in time from June 1, 2011 to August 31, 2012. It showed 40% of users produced Occupy related content during peak activity of the movement. But, it was not sustained over the following year with the user ratio dropping to less than 5% in the last three months of the study period.

Responses to the movement from celebrities were both in-person and online. Some find it controversial that rich celebrities made appearances at the Occupy Wall Street Movement, but Kanye West justified his appearance as helping give power back to the people. Other celebrities such as Yoko Ono, Mark Ruffalo, and Michael Moore tweeted and showed their support. Many hold that the success of OWS has led to the success of Bernie Sanders and his political platform, disrupting the political conversation about environmental impact and economic equality. Some believe that there was social media blockage of Sanders' presidential campaign, in favor of more airtime for Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton. During the 2016 Presidential Election, people used the #BernieBlackout hashtag to boost awareness around the unfair usage of popular media to favor some presidential candidates over others.

Chronology of events

The WikiLeaks endorsed news site WikiLeaks Central began promoting the idea of a "US Day of Rage," on 10 March 2011. The Canadian editor in chief Heather Marsh and the American WikiLeaks Central writer Alexa O'Brien modeled the concept after the Day of Rages being held at that time in the Middle East and North Africa. Early promotion by the WikiLeaks Twitter and blog was reported as being instrumental in the group's success. It was renamed Occupy Wall Street after the idea publicized on an email list and online blog, 13 July 2011, by Vancouver-based non-profit Canadian group Adbusters. The Occupy Wall Street protests began on 17 September 2011 in downtown Manhattan. On 9 October 2011, activists in cities in over 25 countries repeated calls for a global protest on 15 October. A list of events for 15 October included 951 cities in 82 countries. On 15 October events were held in many cities worldwide.

17 September to 14 October 2011

On 17 September 2011, 1,000 protesters gathered in downtown Manhattan walking up and down Wall Street. About 100 to 200 people stayed overnight in Zucotti Park, two blocks north of Wall Street. By 19 September, seven people had been arrested. At least 80 arrests were made on 24 September after protesters started marching uptown and forcing the closure of several streets. Most of the 80 arrests were for blocking traffic, though some were also charged with disorderly conduct and resisting arrest. Police officers also used a technique called kettleting which involves using orange nets to isolate protesters into smaller groups. Videos which showed several penned-in female demonstrators being hit with pepper spray by a police officer were widely disseminated, sparking controversy. That police officer, later identified as Deputy Inspector Anthony Bologna, was shown in other videos hitting a photographer with a burst of spray.

Public attention to the pepper-spraying resulted in a spike of news media coverage, a pattern that was to be repeated in the coming weeks following confrontations with police. Clyde Haberman, writing in The New York Times, said that "If the Occupy Wall Street protesters ever choose to recognize a person who gave their cause its biggest boost, they may want to pay tribute to Anthony Bologna," calling the event "vital" for the still nascent movement. On 1 October 2011, protesters set out to march across the Brooklyn Bridge. The New York Times reported that more than 700 arrests were made. Some said the police had tricked protesters,
allowing them onto the bridge, and even escorting them partway across. Jesse A. Myerson, a media coordinator for Occupy Wall Street said, "The cops watched and did nothing, indeed, seemed to guide us onto the roadway!" A spokesman for the New York Police Department, Paul Browne, said that protesters were given multiple warnings to stay on the sidewalk and not block the street, and were arrested when they refused.[136]

On 4 October, a group of protesters who were arrested on the bridge filed a lawsuit against the city, alleging that officers had violated their constitutional rights by luring them into a trap and then arresting them.[137] In June 2012, a federal judge ruled that the protesters had not received sufficient warning of arrest pending entrance onto the Brooklyn Bridge. Although video evidence showed the police warning protesters by bullhorn,[138] after reviewing it, Judge Jed S. Rakoff sided with plaintiffs, saying, "a reasonable officer in the noisy environment defendants occupied would have known that a single bullhorn could not reasonably communicate a message to 700 demonstrators."[139]

On 5 October 2011, joined by union members, students, and the unemployed, the demonstration swelled to the largest yet with an estimated 15,000 marchers joining the protest. Smaller protests continued in cities and on college campuses across the country. Thousands of union workers joined protesters marching through the Financial District. The march was mostly peaceful—until after nightfall, when scuffles erupted. About 200 protesters tried to storm barricades blocking them from Wall Street and the Stock Exchange. Police responded with pepper spray and penned the protesters in with orange netting. Inspired by Occupy Wall Street, British protesters organized an occupation of the London Stock Exchange to bring attention to what they saw as unethical behavior on the part of banks. One of the organizers of the protest said the protests were to be focused against "increasing social and economic injustice in this country." In his opinion, "the Government has made sure to maintain the status quo and let the people who caused this crisis get off scot-free, whilst conversely ensuring that the people of this country pay the price, in particular those most vulnerable.[140]"[141] [142]

**15 October to 4 November**

On 15 October 2011 global protests were staged around the world, with thousands of protesters staging demonstrations in 900 cities including Auckland, Sydney, Hong Kong, Taipei, Tokyo, São Paulo, Paris, Madrid, Berlin, Hamburg, Leipzig, and many other cities. In Frankfurt, 5,000 people protested at the European Central Bank and in Zurich, Switzerland's financial hub, protesters carried banners reading "We won't bail you out yet again" and "We are the 99 percent." Protests were largely peaceful; however, a protest in Rome that drew thousands turned violent.[143] Thousands of Occupy Wall Street protesters gathered in Times Square in New York City and rallied for several hours.[144] [145] Several hundred protesters were arrested across the U.S., mostly for refusing to obey police orders to leave public areas. In Chicago there were 175 arrests, about 100 arrests in Arizona (53 in Tucson, 46 in Phoenix), and more than 70 in New York City, including at least 40 in Times Square.[146] Multiple arrests were reported in Chicago, and about 150 people camped out by city hall in Minneapolis.[147]

In the early morning hours of 25 October, police cleared and closed an Occupy Oakland encampment in Frank Ogawa Plaza in Oakland, California.[148] [149] The raid was chaotic and violent, but Oakland Police Chief Howard Jordan expressed his pleasure concerning the operation because neither the police nor the public suffered any injuries.[150] [151] A street march that afternoon protesting the closure culminated in a confrontation between police and protesters, who sought to re-establish the Ogawa Plaza encampment. During this confrontation, protestor Scott Olsen, a former Marine and Iraq War veteran, suffered a skull fracture caused by a tear-gas projectile or smoke canister fired by police.[151] [152] By 29 October 2011, there were around 2,300 Occupy protest camps across around 2,000 cities worldwide.[153] On 2 November, protesters in Oakland, California shut down the Port of Oakland,
the fifth busiest port in the nation. Police estimated that about 3,000 demonstrators were gathered at the port and 4,500 had marched across the city; however, a member of the Occupy movement was quoted by the BBC as estimating as many as 30,000 may have taken part.[154]

On 4 November 2011, “Occupy the Roads” (OTR) started traveling throughout the U.S. to bring the message of Occupy, in order to educate the people on various issues facing the general public and shine a light on the inequities and political injustice. OTR has been to every major Occupy Event in support of all occupied cities, traveling over 31,000 miles and visiting 42 States and 160 cities since inception. One side of the RV (named the “V”- from the chant “Whose V? RV”) has been decorated with stickers, posters, and event notices from around the Country representing a billboard for the Occupy movement. On the other side is 31 ft of graphics in support for Bradley/Chelsey Manning and WikiLeaks.[155]

5 to 25 November

On 5 November, protesters held "Bank Transfer Day", marching on banks and other financial institutions to urge Americans to move their money from big corporate banks to smaller community credit unions. It was reported that an estimated 600,000 people took their money out of major banks.[156] On 11 November, Remembrance Day in Canada, police forcibly removed tents from Victoria Park in Halifax, Nova Scotia and arrested 15 protestors[157] On the night of 14 November, a coordinated crackdown was undertaken by authorities around the world, with several camps being forcibly cleared including Zuccotti Park in New York, Oakland, Oregon, Denver and Zurich. For some of the other camps such as the one at St Pauls in London, no physical action was taken, but on 15 November authorities stepped up legal action to gain authorization for a forcible eviction. Financial Times editor Richard Lambert suggested that the shift to confrontational tactics by authorities would be more likely to spur on the movement rather than cause it to disband.[158][159] However, John Gapper, chief business commentator at the FT, offered a different view. Gapper said that it may be advantageous that the camps were being closed down, as they were beginning to alienate even members of the public who were initially fully sympathetic with the movement.[160] During a demonstration at UC Davis on 18 November 2011, campus police Lieutenant John Pike used pepper spray on seated students.[161] The incident drew national attention and led to further demonstrations, petitions, and calls for Chancellor Linda P.B. Katehi to resign. (See: UC Davis pepperspray incident)[162][163] On 22 November, occupiers mic checked President Obama to draw his attention to the treatment they had received from the police, including thousands of arrests[164]

26 November to 31 December 2011

By December, occupiers had begun to divert their energies beyond protest camps and a narrow focus on the banks, instead seeking to engage further with mainstream politics and joining forces with established activist groups to support causes broadly compatible with the interests of “the 99%”. Interviewing one of the informal leaders of the movement, Financial Times journalist Shannon Bond found that issues of concern included: “the unemployment rate, household debt, student debt, the lack of prospects for people graduating from college and foreclosures.”[165] In the U.S., Occupy Homes joined with other existing human rights activists groups and began to occupy foreclosed homes, disrupt bank auctions, and block evictions.[85] On 1 December, two evicted activists in Portland, Oregon, planted a table on the plaza of Portland’s City Hall and lit a candle, igniting a Prayer Vigil/Occupation of City Hall that lasted 18 months. On 22 December The Washington Post reported that some of the cities which had forcefully disbanded occupy camps were now facing legal challenges.[166]

1 January 2012 to 2016

On 2 January 2012, Occupy Nigeria began, sparked by Nigeria’s President Goodluck Jonathan announcing the ending of fuel subsidies in the country. There was support from the global movement, but most of the activity took place in Nigeria itself, with a report from CSM saying strikes were effectively shutting down whole cities. On 16 January Jonathan responded by announcing he would bring
prices back down by partially restoring the fuel subsidy.\textsuperscript{168}

While students have been involved with Occupy since its inception, early 2012 has seen increasing formal interaction between the Occupy movement and academia. In the US, universities including Columbia and Roosevelt have begun offering courses about the movement, in the case of Columbia the course includes field work where students join in with Occupy activities. In Great Britain, Occupy's outwork teams are planning school visits to give talks about the movement and related issues.\textsuperscript{169}\textsuperscript{170}\textsuperscript{171}

On 23 January, EGT LLC (Export Grain Terminal) and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) reached a tentative agreement, mediated by Washington state governor Christine Gregoire.\textsuperscript{172}\textsuperscript{173} The agreement resolved a year-long dispute, paving the way for ILWU Local 21 workers to work inside the $200 million grain terminal at the Port of Longview in southwest Washington state. This came after "Occupy the Ports" protests which shut down multiple ports on the west coast of the United States on 12 December. The goals of those protests included support of longshoremen and truckers in disputes with EGT and terminal operator SSA Marine (partially owned by Goldman Sachs).\textsuperscript{174}

A worldwide poll conducted in January 2012 found that only one third (37\%) of respondents were familiar with the movement. Of the respondents who were aware of the movement, supporters of the movement outweighed those in opposition two to one.\textsuperscript{175} In late January, Occupy protested at the World Economic Forum.\textsuperscript{176}\textsuperscript{177} On 17 March, Occupy Wall Street attempted to mark six months of the movement, by reoccupying Zuccotti Park, the location of the first Occupy camp. Protestors were soon cleared away by police, who made over 70 arrests.\textsuperscript{178} On 1 May, the Occupy movement marked a resurgence with a May Day general strike that took place in cities across the U.S., including New York; Washington, D.C.; Chicago; and Los Angeles.\textsuperscript{179} This included a revival of the Free University of New York.\textsuperscript{180}

On the weekend of 15 and 16 September, members of the Occupy movement gathered in Union Square, with direct action training on the 15th and a celebration of the movement on the 16th. On 17 September, the Occupy movement celebrated its first anniversary with several marches and general assemblies which were attended by thousands of protesters.

The longest US "re-occupation" started on 1 December 2011, when evicted activists from the Occupy Portland camp set up a table on the plaza of Portland's City Hall and lit a candle, igniting the 24/7 Prayer Vigil to Lift the Camping Ban, referring to the city's anti-"camping" ordinances that were cited during the eviction.\textsuperscript{181} The activists claimed the laws, which prohibit the use of "bedding, sleeping bags, or other sleeping matter," are immoral and that they're obligated to challenge them. The occupiers claim that sleep is human right and is essential for mental, physical and emotional health, citing that human beings need to spend nearly a third of their lives sleeping. Prohibiting sleep by making it illegal for people to protect themselves and their belongings from the elements causes sleep deprivation; it is inhumane, unconstitutional, and amounts to torture.\textsuperscript{183}\textsuperscript{184}\textsuperscript{185} The activists said the prayer vigil would continue until "bedding matter" was again legal. The vigil was staffed around the clock until 23 July 2013, when Mayor Charlie Hales ordered the removal of the vigil and associated encampments on the abutting sidewalks.\textsuperscript{186}

The Occupy movement has "already transformed beyond recognition from its original state" and "campaigns have emerged outside the constraint of the trademark Occupy tactics."\textsuperscript{187} These campaigns include Occupy Sandy, which has provided needed relief to the New York area since Hurricane Sandy;\textsuperscript{188} Occupy London's Occupy Economics group that hosted, and was praised by the Bank of England's Executive Director for Financial Stability;\textsuperscript{189} Occupy the SEC, which monitors US financial regulatory matters;\textsuperscript{190} The Rolling Jubilees program of Strike Debt,\textsuperscript{191} which is raising money to retire "zombie debt," debt, such as medical bills, that the
individual cannot re-pay. Occupy University, which has developed and made accessible free educational materials, and the Debt Collective, a successor of Strike Debt, worked to get students of a fraudulent for-profit college absolved of their debt with some success.

On 3 April 2016, hundreds of supporters of Bernie Sanders protested outside of CNN’s Headquarters in Los Angeles. Sanders supporters were protesting CNN’s coverage of the 2016 United States presidential elections, specifically in regards to the amount of airtime Sanders has received. Known as Occupy CNN, protestors are claiming that major media networks have intentionally blacked out Sanders’ presidential campaign in favor of giving much more airtime to candidates such as Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump.

In Switzerland, the Occupy spirit lives on by annual online and offline celebrations each year on 17 September in the village of St. Imier where modern anarchism began with the International Congress of 1872. The Occupy Cafe along with the Decentrale Co operative continues to assist those wishing to participate in the continuing “decentralisation of the power” of banks and corporate entities; and, to encourage global activism through developing trust and value networks.

June 2018-the present

After an approximate 2 year hiatus in activism on location, the Occupy Movement organized the Occupy ICE phase in order to protest the actions of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement office regarding the detention of undocumented immigrants presenting themselves at the southern US border points to seek asylum. While small groups of protestors emerged across the country in protest of the separation of families who were detained during immigration processing, a group swarmed the ICE facility in SOHO, NYC, causing it to shutdown temporarily. In Washington state, hundreds of Occupy ICE activists took over a portion of the grounds of the Portland ICE building. The blockade caused the building to shutdown for several days, with ICE staff citing ‘safety concerns’. On June 25, Feds ordered the protestors to vacate government environs or face arrest. On June 28, 2018, Federal officers moved in the early morning hours to remove and/or arrest protestors blockading the building. 8 protestors were arrested.

Protests

Armenia

On 20 February 2012 near Margaryan Maternity Clinic, where kiosks were being built by the city authorities. The place of protests was promptly dubbed “Mashtots park” – a name under which it is now widely known by the Armenian society now.

The protesters faced police violence as with many other “Occupy” movements, a report was filed to the ombudsman of RA on account of the destruction of a tent with a sleeping protester inside. “Occupy” demonstrations are still continuing in Mashtots Park, and the leader of the Greens party Armenak Dovlatyan has named it the most successful civic action in the history of the Republic of Armenia.

Australia

“Occupy” demonstrations took place in Canberra, Wollongong, Perth, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Melbourne as well as smaller towns around the country. At the Occupy Melbourne protest on 21 October 2011, approximately 150 protesters defied police orders to clear the area, and were subsequently removed with force. 95 arrests were made and 43 reports of police violence were filed. Occupiers returned the following day in a walk against police violence, re-occupying multiple sites since. Occupy Sydney had an ongoing occupation in Martin Place since their initial police eviction, marking almost 21 months in July 2013. The Occupy Sydney camp was removed on 3 July 2013 but it returned on 4 July. It was again removed on 5 July.
Belgium

In Brussels, a large Occupy demonstration took place on 15 October involving between 6,500 and 8,000 participants. The protest was largely peaceful, although seven people were arrested following vandalisation of the Dexia bank headquarters and financial tower.[217] The Occupy Antwerp (Antwerpen) movement had its first gathering on Saturday 22 October at the Groenplaats, next to the cathedral. About 150–200 people attended a speakers corner. The left-wing socialist party (PVDA) was present and served free soup as well as information about its proposed "millionaires' tax". To date, there have been four Occupy protests in Leuven. Three took place on the Grand Market in the centre of the city and one took place at a building of the city's Catholic university. The number of protesters in these rallies varied from 100 to 250. These protests have not included prolonged camping, but the protesters say that it is a possibility in the future.[218][219] Occupy Ghent (Gent) began on 29 October with 400 people in the South Park (Zuidpark). They received a visit by supporters attending the "second day of Socialism" (de Tweede Dag van het Socialisme), also held in Ghent on the same day.[220]

Brazil

The 2013 protests in Brazil (also known as the V for Vinegar Movement,[5] Salad Revolt, Vinegar Revolt, Come to the street and Brazilian Spring) are ongoing public demonstrations in several Brazilian cities, initiated mainly by the Movimento Passe Livre (Free Fare Movement), a local entity that advocates for free public transportation. The most recent movement being "Ocupe Estelita"[221] in Recife, Pernambuco which is focused on the demolition of an historical part of the city to make way for high-priced housing and leisure facilities.[222]

Canada

Occupy protests have taken place in at least 20 Canadian cities since 15 October 2011. On that day, 5,000 people gathered in Vancouver to protest perceived social injustice, while 150 stayed the night in front of the Vancouver Art Gallery.[223][224] 2,000 people marched in Toronto on 15 October and around 100 continued to occupy St James Park,[225][226] and 1,000 gathered in Montreal to march down Ste-Catherine Street; 85 tents were set up in Victoria square.[227] Beginning on 23 October 2011 approximately 40 people occupied Memorial Park on Minto Street in downtown Sudbury and still continue to do so.[228] On 20 October 2011, over 100 people occupied the front of City Hall in Prince George British Columbia.[229] Events have been concentrated in provincial urban areas, and there have yet to be any demonstrations in the territories of Yukon, Northwest Territories, or Nunavut.[127][230] A relatively small group of occupiers successfully occupied Harbourside Park in St John's Newfoundland for the entire 2012 Winter season. This site, known also as "King's Beach" is symbolically significant as the birthplace of the British Empire, and the encampment is seen by some protesters to represent an occupation of colonialism vis-a-vis its birth site. There are currently a number of court proceedings across Canada on whether or not the eviction of protestors and violence from police is an infringement of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.[231]

Colombia

Around 800 student protestors began occupying universities across Colombia on 12 November 2011.[232]
Czech Republic

On 28 April 2012, a week after demonstrations of unions and civic associations (more than one hundred thousand protesters) the camp "Occupy Klárov" in Prague was started. Pirate Party participated in the occupation. Police dissolved the camp a month later.

Cyprus

On 19 November 2011, protesters started the "No Borders Camp" or "Occupy Buffer Zone", a permanent occupation of the United Nations controlled buffer zone in the centre of the capital, Nicosia, demanding an end to the decades-long division of the Island. The movement used the Twitter hashtag "OccupyBufferZ". By June 2012 the occupation of the buffer zone was essentially over.

Denmark

On 15 October 2011, 2,000 protesters showed up on the square in front of the city hall of Copenhagen, protesting in sympathy with OWS. Immediately after the demonstration an "Occupy Copenhagen" camp was established. The camp, internally nicknamed "Plaza One Love", lived through harsh climate conditions and a couple of eviction attempts for two months, until it was torn down by the Municipality of Copenhagen and Danish police, on 21 December. The movement has shifted to a mobile camp tactic, and still holds GA every Wednesday and other activities throughout the week.

France

Some 300 protesters started occupying Paris's financial district, La Défense, on 4 November 2011. Since then, their camp has been torn down by several police forces. According to French protestors, relations with the police have varied considerably. Some police joined them for coffee and friendly discussion, but otherwise were hostile and confiscated blankets and food, leaving protesters sleeping in the cold outdoors without protection. On 11 November, following a call made on social networks, some 400 additional people joined the occupation. Occupy protests have also begun at Nantes, Lyon, Grenoble, Marseille; Perpignan and more than 50 cities.

On 31 March 2016, students and young workers began occupying public spaces in France in opposition to the 2016 neoliberal labor reforms in a protest movement known as Nuit debout. As of 8 April, it has spread to dozens of cities in France as well as to Belgium, Germany, and Spain.

Germany

The Occupy movement began in Germany on 15 October 2011 with protests in Berlin, focused outside the Reichstag, as well as Frankfurt, Hamburg and Düsseldorf. Occupy Frankfurt subsequently took residence in front of the European Central Bank and Occupy Berlin established a protest camp at St. Mary's Church. On 12 November major Occupy protests took place in Berlin and Frankfurt. Police reported that around 9,000 people peacefully protested near the headquarters of the European Central Bank, and that "several thousand" people took to the streets of Berlin; organisers of the protests claimed that turnout was around 8,000 in Berlin and 10,000 in Frankfurt.
Hong Kong

An Occupy movement in Hong Kong, named 'Occupy Central', began on 15 October 2011 with protesters occupying the plaza beneath the HSBC Main Building in Central, an iconic landmark of the territory's central business district.[247][248] Despite the fact that the protesters were peaceful, HSBC filed a lawsuit for their eviction. On 13 August 2012, the High Court ruled that the protesters must leave the occupied area. On 11 September 2012, the protesters were evicted from the plaza by court bailiffs, ending one of the world's longest continuously occupied Occupy protest camps.

Israel

Social protests have been ongoing in Israel since 14 July 2011.

Italy

On 15 October 2011, about 200,000 people[249] gathered in Rome to protest against economic inequality and the influence of the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund on government.[250] Many other protests occurred in other Italian cities the same day.[251] In Rome masked and hooded militants wearing makeshift body armor, in black bloc fashion, participated in the protests centered in St John Lateran square and committed numerous violent acts, throwing Molotov cocktails and other homemade explosives, burning and blowing up cars, burning buildings, and smashing up property such as ATMs and shop windows.[65] The Roman Catholic church Santi Marcellino e Pietro al Laterano received extensive damage, including a statue of the Virgin Mary being thrown into the street and destroyed.[65] Several unexploded petrol bombs were reportedly found on several streets by Italian police.[65] Over 1,000,000 euros of damage (equivalent to over 1.3 million dollars) was recorded.[65] At least 135 people were injured in the resulting clashes, including 105 police officers, several of whom were left in critical condition.[252] and two news crews from Sky Italia.[65][253] Two protesters had their fingers amputated by exploding smoke bombs.[65] Almost 20 people have been arrested in connection with the violence.[65] After the 15 October demonstration, people occupied the Santa Croce in Gerusalemme square and started camping as in other cities worldwide. The name of this Rome's group, related to international Occupy movement, is Accampata Roma.[254]

Malaysia

The Occupy Dataran movement first held their assembly at Dataran Merdeka (Independence Square) seven weeks before Occupy Wall Street on 30 July 2011[255] to create an alternative to the current representative democracy[256] using the popular assembly model based on principles of participatory democracy[257] As part of the 15 October 2011 global protests, over 200 people[258] took part in 15 October's Occupy Dataran, the largest assembly to date.[259] In late October, the movement spread to Penang with Occupy Penang[260] and Kelantan with Occupy Kota Bharu.

Mexico

Occupy began in Mexico City on 11 October 2011, with a hunger strike in front of the Mexican Stock Exchange highrise. Edur Velasco, a 56-year-old labor economist and university professor, was on a 42-day-long hunger strike sitting in a tent outside Mexico City's stock market, demanding that the government guarantee greater access to higher education among the youth.[261] Days after his initiative, it came as a surprise to see the multiplication of tents setting up outside the stock exchange building. Police remained discreetly around the corner sitting in their truck[262]

Occupy Mexico did not achieve the level of popularity it gained in other areas. This is attributed to the fact that Mexico's Occupy protesters, which were focused on poverty and workers' rights, failed to resonate with a public enthralled by the violence of the Mexican Drug War.[263] In contrast, an anti-violence movement led by Javier Sicilia during the time that the Occupy protests occurred, drew thousands onto the streets of Mexico City.[263] The Occupy Movement was almost entirely ignored by Mexico's mainstream politicians[263] By late January 2012, most of the tents were empty and only a few protesters remained outside the Stock Exchange.[263]
Mongolia

S. Ganbaatar, the head of Mongolia's Confederation of Trade Unions (CTU), has announced that the association joins the worldwide occupy protests of Wall Street and other high streets on 20 October 2011.[264] He claimed that bankers are charging higher interest rates from customers and corporates. In the most recent data in September 2011, the weighted average annual MNT lending rate is 16% in Mongolia.[265]

Nepal

Also known as Baluwatar Satyagraha, Occupy Baluwatar is a peaceful protest movement calling on the Nepali state to better address the widespread problem of impunity and gender-based violence. Since 28 December 2012, protesters have gathered outside the prime minister's official residence in Baluwatar from 9:00 to 11:00 am daily. The protesters created a coherent set of demands, divided into short- and long-term goals, which they presented to then prime minister Baburam Bhattarai. The short-term demands called on the state, including the police and the judiciary, to properly investigate and prosecute the guilty in five specific cases which took place immediately prior to the movement's start. The long-term demands focused on policy reform in the arenas of migration and rape laws, among others.

Netherlands

In the Netherlands, Occupy protests took place in many cities, most notably Amsterdam,[266] The Hague,[267] Rotterdam,[268] and Utrecht.[269]

New Zealand

In October 2011, Occupy protests began in six New Zealand cities (Auckland, New Plymouth, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Invercagill) with protests in Auckland drawing up to 3,000 supporters.[270] A seventh Occupy protest started on 19 November in the Lower Hutt suburb of Pomare by a group called "Pomare Community Voice" to highlight what they call the "loss of community" caused by the demolition of state homes in the area.[271][272] On 23 January, police moved in on four sites in Auckland. Two arrests were made and police said campers were in breach of council bylaws regarding camping. The sites were at Aotea Square, 360 Queen St, Victoria Park and Albert Park.[273]

Nigeria

Occupy Nigeria is an anti-fuel subsidy removal protest that started in Nigeria on 2 January 2012 in response to fuel subsidy removal by the Federal government of Nigeria on 1 January 2012. It is a movement against corruption in Government & public service, insensitive & inhuman treatment of Nigerians by Government & Security agents. The movement ended on 16 January 2012 following agreement between the government and the organized labour leaders which saw a partial restoration of the subsidy regime. Fuel pump price in Nigeria has since then been fixed at the official rate of 97 naira per litre while it practically sells for as high as 130 naira in some major cities including Port Harcourt, one of the cities in the oil-producing states in Nigeria.

Norway

The Occupy movement in Norway began on 15 October with protests in Oslo and Bergen as part of the Global Day of Action.[274][275] In Oslo, the movement has since then met every Saturday in the city centre, usually at Eidsvolls plass in front of the Parliament, but sometimes at other sites, like Spikersuppa and Youngstorget. In Bergen, the movement meets on Saturdays at
Republic of Ireland

To date six towns and cities in Ireland have witnessed experienced Occupy camps; Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway, Waterford, Letterkenny and Athlone. Protests were held in Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Galway. The Irish Times described the movement in the following terms: “The group has no hierarchical structure, has set up a Facebook page and Twitter account – with the social media links attracting a very mixed, and sometimes critical, reaction.” The protest in Dublin was organized by "Pots & Pans – Ireland", and #OccupyDameStreet protest group, who then invited Real Democracy Now! Shell to Sea, Ó na Saor and many other non-political groups to participate and all set up camp outside the Central Bank of Ireland in solidarity with the Occupy Wall Street movement in New York. On 22 October it was reported that over 2,000 people took part in a demonstration organized by Occupy Dame Street. This camp survived through the winter, but was removed by an Garda Síochána (Irish police) on 13 March 2012, days before the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. On the morning of 16 May 2012 at approximately 4:30 am, the Occupy camp in Eyre Square in Galway, the longest-lasting of the Occupy groups in Ireland, was removed by An Garda Síochána and Galway City Council. The camp was removed because the group was illegally occupying a public amenity. At the time the camp was dismantled, there were only 6 protesters at the camp. The camp had lasted for 215 days.

South Africa

In South Africa, a movement called Taking Back South Africa! sprung up as an initiative primarily aimed at protesting and inciting mass action against the economic and social inequality in the country. It consists of a loose informal affiliation of on-the-ground groups and individuals across South Africa as well as internet based groups. During the 2016 Fees Must Fall movement, protest groups also adopted the slogan #Occupy4FreeEducation in response to the government's perceived lack of interest in dealing with the issue.

South Korea

Hundreds of protesters held rallies in the South Korean capital of Seoul on 15 and 22 October in 2011 under the slogan of "Occupy Seoul". Protesters focused on issues such as a recent free trade agreement with the United States as well as costs of tuition and rent.

"Occupy Seoul" began as a part of 15 October 2011 global protests. Protesters gathered in several places in Seoul, including Yeouido (financial hub of Seoul) where protesters rallied under the slogan of "Occupy Yeouido: 99% against Financial Exploitation of 1%." Three primary requirements demanded by these protesters were: (1) clarifying the responsibility of the bureaucracy, (2) financial regulations, and (3) compensations for the victims of failed financial policies of Korean government. Other protesters, led by leftist organizations such as People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy, gathered in front of Seoul train station and Daehanmoon. However, they failed to enter the Seoul City Hall Plaza as they had planned, as their protest permit was rejected by the police due to an exhibition that was already taking place in the Plaza.

Although there were considerable support from public, there were also criticisms regarding the nature of the protest. Unlike the original Occupy movement which started out as the anti-capitalist protest, many of the catchphrases of Occupy Seoul contained anti-government or anti-American messages. One of the observers has argued that "South Korea overcame the 2008 financial crisis relatively well and there was no serious crisis in financial sector it is hard to find the legitimate basis of the protest.”

Spain
A series of protests demands a radical change in Spanish politics, as protesters do not consider themselves to be represented by any traditional party nor favoured by the measures approved by politicians. Spanish media have related the protests to the economic crisis, Stéphane Hessel's *Time for Outrage!* the NEET troubled generation and current protests in the Middle East and North Africa, Greece, Portugal as well as the Icelandic protest and riots in 2009. The 15-M Movement drew inspiration from 2011 revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt and uprisings in 1968 France, South Korea in 1980 and 1987 and Greece in 2008.

**Switzerland**

On 15 October 2011, between 500 to 1,000 Occupy protesters demonstrated in front of the offices of UBS and Credit Suisse on the Paradeplatz in Zurich. 100 protesters later established an occupation on the nearby Lindenhof, which was evicted by the police on 15 November.

**Taiwan**

The Sunflower Student Movement (太陽花學運) is a protest movement driven by a coalition of students and civic groups that began on 18 March 2014, in the Legislative Yuan and, later, also the Executive Yuan of the Republic of China (Taiwan). The activists protested the passing of the Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement (CSSTA) by the ruling party Kuomintang at the legislature without clause-by-clause review. The protesters occupied the legislature for 24 days before vacating peacefully.

**Turkey**

The initial protests in Istanbul on 28 May 2013 were led by about 50 environmentalists against replacing Taksim Gezi Park with a reconstruction of the Ottoman Era Taksim Military Barracks (the scene of pro Sultan riots in 1909). The current protests developed into riots after the heavy handed police intervention which featured significant use of tear gas and water cannons. The oppressive reaction to the protests caused the protests to widen with many more people to become involved, people from many different walks of life including a wide range of political interest groups, secular and religious people, students, gays, feminists, football fans, women in head scarves, whole families, all finding reason to join the protests.

What started as an environmentalist protest against plans to replace Taksim Gezi Park developed into wider anti-government demonstrations. Demands issued on 4 June included:

1. the end of police brutality
2. the end of the sale of public facilities such as parks, forests and beaches to private investors,
3. the right of public expression,
4. media responsibility in informing the public of events, and other demands.

The protests (up to 500,000 in Istanbul and 30,000 people in Ankara) also spread to other cities in Turkey, and protests were seen in other countries with significant Turkish communities.

**United Kingdom**

**England**

As part of the 15 October 2011 global protests, protesters gathered in London, Bristol, and Birmingham in England, together with Glasgow and Edinburgh in Scotland (See Scotland heading below). The London Stock Exchange in Paternoster Square was the initial target for the protesters of Occupy London on 15 October 2011. Attempts to occupy the square were thwarted by police. Police sealed off the entrance to the square as it is private property, and a High Court injunction had been granted against public access to the square. 2,500–3,000 people gathered nearby outside St Paul's Cathedral, with 250 camping overnight. A canon of St. Paul's, Reverend Giles Fraser, said he was happy for people to "exercise their right to protest.
peacefully" outside the cathedral and an indefinite encampment was established.[305] Additional smaller protests occurred in Birmingham[307] and Nottingham.[308] As of 17 October an indefinite encampment had also been established on College Green in Bristol.[309]

On 29 October a camp was also established in Victoria Gardens, Brighton, and grew from six tents to around twenty within one week.[310] Further Occupy camps took place in Liverpool,[311] Bath, Bournemouth University, Bradford, Leeds, Sheffield, Newcastle upon Tyne, Plymouth, Exeter, Norwich.[312] The Occupy Thanet protests also focused on local issues,[314] including the closure of shops in the town and the Dreamland Margate amusement park, a lack of employment opportunities[314] and perceived disparities in the allocation of education resources.[314] Lancaster in England and Cardiff in Wales.[315] On 8 January 2012, Lancaster Police arrested four members of Occupy Lancaster who were occupying a disused hotel in the city centre.[316]

On 11 November, police arrested 179 people believed to be EDL supporters[317] on Armistice Day after apparent threats to the St Paul's camp were posted on Facebook.176 were released without charge and 3 were bailed "pending further inquiries."[318]

On 15 November, an Occupy camp was established in the centre of Leicester near the Highcross shopping centre.[319] On 25 November an Occupy camp was established in Liverpool near the Walker Art Gallery.[320][321] Starting on 30 November 2011 following a national strike action, a body of students occupied the University of Sheffield Arts Tower in solidarity with, but not limited to, the Occupy movement.[322][323]

On 17 October 2014 a new camp was established in Parliament Square, Westminster by a group called Occupy Democracy. The camp was part of a campaign for greater transparency in democracy as well as an end to lobbying.[324] The camp lasted two days until police swept in, giving protestors 30 minutes to leave or face arrest. Any items that could be used for sleeping have been deemed illegal under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, created after the original occupation. The eviction was live streamed, showing police dragging protesters away.[325] Police said there was one arrest. Fifty to a hundred protesters remained in the park overnight.[326] On their website, the group says their goal is "to direct the energy from current single issue struggles into a critical mass that can radically challenge the corrupt and unrepresentative system."[327]

**Northern Ireland**

In Northern Ireland, Occupy Belfast initiated its protest outside the offices of Invest NI on 21 October 2011. Occupy Belfast took residence at Writer's Square, in the Cathedral Quarter.[328] It also took control of a disused building owned by the Bank of Ireland, renaming it the People's Bank, with plans to open a library and homeless accommodation to be a community hub.[329] It was expected that an Occupy Derry would take place in the near future.

Occupy Coleraine took over the University of Ulster Common Room for three weeks in December 2013.[330] The group protested the demolition of the historic student-teacher shared space, due for refurbishment as a senior management corporate dining room.[331]

**Scotland**

Occupy camps were established in the financial district of St. Andrew Square, Edinburgh on 15 October 2011. St. Andrews Square is the home of the Royal Bank of Scotland headquarters in the Dundas House mansion. Edinburgh City Council subsequently officially backed Occupy Edinburgh and the Occupy movement worldwide. Protesters from Occupy Glasgow set up in the civic George Square on 15 October but after the council obtained a court order moved to Kelvingrove Park, where the council agreed to provide running water, toilets and safety fences.

**Wales**
In Wales, Occupy Cardiff originally set its camp-site outside Cardiff Castle but it was disbanded by police, and some protesters were arrested. Charges were later dropped following calls from trade unionists, lawyers and politicians including Plaid Cymru leader Leanne Wood, Labour Party politician Tony Benn and demonstrations outside Cardiff magistrates court.[332] Occupy Cardiff set up a new camp in the city, outside the offices of Welsh Labour and a number of trade unions at the Transport House, Cathedral Road[315][333]

**United States**

The Occupy Wall Street protests began in New York City on 17 September 2011.[334] By 9 October, similar demonstrations were either ongoing or had been held in 70 major cities and over 600 communities across the U.S.[17] The movement rejects existing political institutions and attempts to create alternative ones through direct action and direct democracy.[75][335][336] Occupy protesters’ slogan, “We are the 99%”, asserts that the “99%” pay for the mistakes of the “1%”. The original location of choice by the protesters was 1 Chase Plaza, the site of the “Charging Bull” statue, but when police discovered the planned site, it was fenced off and nearby Zuccotti Park was chosen. There was scant media coverage till 24 September when a large march forcing the closure of several streets resulted in 80 arrests. Police used a technique called “netting”, the use of orange plastic nets to corral protesters, and the march received extensive media coverage when a video of several “netted” young women being pepper sprayed was widely circulated[337]

Media coverage was again sparked on 1 October, when New York City protesters attempted to march across the Brooklyn Bridge and more than 700 arrests were made. Some said the police had tricked protesters, allowing them onto the bridge and even escorting them partway across before they began to make mass arrests. On 25 October, police officers cleared two Occupy Oakland protest camp sites. Police fired tear gas canisters at the protesters, allegedly in response to objects being thrown at them. Protest organizers said that many of the troublemakers were not part of the Occupy movement.[338] The raid was described as “violent and chaotic at times”[339] and resulted in over 102 arrests. Scott Olsen, a former Marine and Iraq War veteran, suffered a skull fracture caused by a projectile that witnesses believed was a tear gas or smoke canister fired by the police.[340] On 2 November, protesters in Oakland, California, shut down the Port of Oakland, the fifth busiest port in the nation. Police estimated that about 3,000 demonstrators were gathered at the port and 4,500 had marched across the city[154]

At about 1:00 am on 15 November, police cleared the Zuccotti Park encampment. Many journalists complained that the police had made a deliberate decision to keep journalists away from the park during the raid.[341] New York City journalists responded to what they perceived as “alarming suppression, abuse and arrests of reporters” by forming “The Coalition for the First Amendment” to “monitor police-press relations as a way of spotlighting police activities that threaten constitutional protections”.[342] Executive Director Alison Bethel McKenzie of the International Press Institute commented: “It is completely unacceptable to hinder reporting on a subject that is undoubtedly of public interest. Such reporting is vital to democracy, and authorities at every level of government – federal, state and local – must honour their constitutional obligation not to infringe upon the freedom of the press.”[343]

On 6 December, Occupy Homes, an offshoot of Occupy Wall Street, embarked on a “national day of action” to protest the mistreatment of homeowners by big banks, who they say made billions of dollars off the housing bubble by offering predatory loans and indulging in practices that allegedly took advantage of consumers. In more than two dozen cities across the nation the movement took on the housing crisis by re-occupying foreclosed homes, disrupting bank auctions and blocking evictions.[85] On 17 September 2012, protesters returned to Zuccotti Park to mark the one-year anniversary of the beginning of the occupation.
Reactions

Political

- Brazil—President Dilma Rousseff said, “We agree with some of the expressions that some movements have used around the world [in] demonstrations like the ones we see in the US and other countries.”

- Canada—Finance Minister Jim Flaherty expressed sympathy with the protests, stating “There’s growing worry about a lack of opportunities for the younger generation – particularly in the United States – and it’s up to governments to ensure youth are able to capitalize on their education and find good jobs.” He later commented, “I can understand some legitimate frustration arising out of that.”

- India—Prime Minister Manmohan Singh described the protests as “a warning for all those who are in charge of the processes of governance.”

- Iran—Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei voiced his support for the Occupy Movement saying, “Ultimately, it will grow so that it will bring down the capitalist system and the West.”

- United Kingdom—On 21 October 2011, former Prime Minister Gordon Brown said the protests were about fairness. “There are voices in the middle who say 'Look, we can build a better financial system that is more sustainable, that is based on a better and proportionate sense of what's just and fair and where people don't take reckless risks, if they do, they're penalized for doing so.’”

- United States—President Barack Obama spoke in support of the movement, but also asked protesters not to “demonize” finance workers. Local authorities in the United States have collaborated to develop strategies to respond to the Occupy movement and its encampments, and political leaders in eighteen United States cities consulted on cracking down on the Occupy movement, according to Oakland Mayoral Candidate Quan, who participated in a conference call.

- United States—On 6 November 2011, Opposition leader Ed Miliband said: “The challenge is that they reflect a crisis of concern for millions of people about the biggest issue of our time: the gap between their values and the way our country is run.” He mentioned that he is “determined that mainstream politics, and the Labour Party in particular, speaks to that crisis and rises to the challenge.”

- United States—President Barack Obama spoke in support of the movement, but also asked protesters not to “demonize” finance workers. Local authorities in the United States have collaborated to develop strategies to respond to the Occupy movement and its encampments, and political leaders in eighteen United States cities consulted on cracking down on the Occupy movement, according to Oakland Mayoral Candidate Quan, who participated in a conference call.

- Venezuela—President Hugo Chávez condemned the “horrible repression” of the activists and expressed solidarity with the movement.

Media

*Foreign Affairs* has had various articles covering the movement. In the January/February 2012 issue, Francis Fukuyama argued that the Occupy movement was not as influential as the right-wing Tea Party movement. “One of the most puzzling features of the world in the aftermath of the financial crisis,” he wrote, “is that so far, populism has taken primarily a right-wing form, not a left-wing one.” In contrast, a survey for the think tank Center for American Progress suggested that the Occupy movement has succeeded in substantially boosting the coverage of the job crisis in the American media.

Other

Egyptian protesters from Tahrir Square have lent their support of the movement. A message of solidarity issued by a collective of Cairo-based protesters declared: “As the interests of government increasingly cater to the interests and comforts of private, transnational capital, our cities and homes have become progressively more abstract and violent places, subject to the casual ravages of the next economic development or urban renewal scheme. An entire generation across the globe has grown up realizing, rationally and emotionally, that we have no future in the current order of things.” In early December 2011, business magnate Richard Branson said the movement is a “good start”, that they have been protesting for valid reasons, and that if the business community take some of their concerns on board they will have made a difference.
On 15 December 2011, Jesse Jackson said that Jesus Christ, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King were all occupiers, and that: "Occupy is a global spirit, which is now sweeping the nation and the world, fighting for justice for all of God's children". A global survey of 23 countries published by Ipsos on 20 January 2012 found that around 40% of the world's citizens are familiar with the movement. Over twice as many reported a favourable response to the movement compared to those who dislike it. Support for the movement varied markedly among countries, with South Korea (67%), Indonesia (65%), and India (64%) reporting the highest sympathy – while Australia (41%), Japan (41%), and Poland (37%) reporting the lowest.

Impact

Some known impacts to date include the following:

**Social impact**

In the United States, the protests have helped shift the focus of national dialogue from the federal budget deficit to economic problems many ordinary Americans face, such as unemployment, the large amount of student and other personal debt that burdens middle class and working class Americans, and other major issues of social inequality, such as homelessness. The movement appears to have generated a national conversation about income inequality, as evidenced by the fact that print and broadcast news mentioned the term “income inequality” more than five times more often during the last week of October 2011 than during the week before the occupation began. Longer term effects are much less clear, as according to Google search trends, in the years since 2012 interest has waned. Occupy movement raised awareness regarding what organizers consider undeserved wealth and lack of fairness in American society. Labor unions have become bolder in the tactics they employ and have been using digital social media more effectively thanks to the Occupy movement. In New York City, the Occupy Wall Street protest has also provided hundreds of protesters to help in picket actions conducted by labor unions.

Offshoots of the Occupy movement, such as Rolling Jubilee, a project of Strike Debt, have bought millions in “zombie debt,” money that individuals owe that they have no financial means to pay, including medical debt, to free the debtors from the obligation to pay it off. As of September 2014, Rolling Jubilee claims to have cancelled more than $15 million in medical debt and $4 million in private student loan debt. Noam Chomsky argues that the movement “spontaneously created something that doesn't really exist in the country: communities of mutual support, cooperation, open spaces for discussion . . . just people doing things and helping each other.” As of April 2015, Rolling Jubilee reports it has cleared nearly $32 million in debt.

On 10 November 2011, The Daily Telegraph reported that the word "occupy" had been the "most commonly used English word on the internet and in print" over the past 12 months according to a top ten list published by media analysis company Global Language Monitor. In January 2012, members of the American Dialect Society voted with an overwhelming majority for "Occupy" as the word of the year for 2011. Numerous news shows and radio shows have been using the term "1%" and "99%" TV shows such as The Middle, Revenge and, The Office have made references to Occupy, and, in July 2012, the City of Vancouver added the word to its list of reserve names for civic assets such as streets and buildings. In December 2012, the Television show Conan launched a contest called "Occupy Conan."

**Political impact**

On 27 December 2011, the Financial Times argued that the movement had had a global impact, altering "the terms of the political debate." However, some sympathetic commentators such as Anthony Barnett have suggested that in Spain, where the movement once had the support of well over 70% of the population with millions taking part, the popularity of Occupy is now past its peak and has achieved no consequences of any significance. However, there were numerous successes at local levels, and The Economist has reported that Spanish protesters caused their government to pass various laws including new limits on the amounts banks can "claw" back from defaulting borrowers. In November 2011, U.S. Congressman Ted Deutch, member of the House Judiciary Committee, introduced the "Outlawing Corporate Cash Undermining the Public Interest in our Elections and Democracy (OCCUPIED) Constitutional Amendment," which would overturn the United States Supreme Court decision in Citizens United v FEC recognizing corporate constitutionally protected free speech rights and would ban corporate money from the electoral process.
In March 2012, former U.S. Vice President Al Gore called on activists to "occupy democracy", explaining that "Our democracy has been hacked. It no longer works to serve the best interests of the people of this country." [389] Also in November 2011, Paul Mason said that the Occupy movement had started to dynamically shape the global policy response to the Late-2000s financial crisis, being mentioned so often at the 2011 G20 summit that if Occupy had been a brand "it would have a profile to die for among the super-elite" [390] Various journalists along with Jared Bernstein, former chief economist and economic adviser to Vice President Joe Biden, have suggested that Occupy influenced the President's January 2012 State of the Union address, with the movement creating the political space for Obama to shift to the economic left and speak about the desirability of the rich paying a greater share of the tax burden. Inequality has remained a central theme of President Obama's reelection campaign, yet he no longer mentions the Occupy movement by name, which analysts say reflects the fact that by early 2012 Occupy had become a divisive issue, unpopular with some of the public. [397][391][392][393]

Three years later, income inequality had become a major part of the political discourse and The Atlantic Magazine declared "The Triumph of Occupy Wall Street" [394]

National monitoring and crackdown

Government documents released in December 2012 pursuant to Freedom of Information Act requests by the Partnership for Civil Justice Fund reveal FBI monitoring of what became known as the Occupy movement since at least August 2011, a month before the protests began. [395][396] The FBI, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, local police, regional law enforcement "counterterrorism" fusion centers, and private security forces of major banks formed the Domestic Security Alliance Council (DSAC) to collect and share information about, and to share plans to target and to arrest Occupy protesters. Banks met with the FBI to pool information about participants of the Occupy movement collected by corporate security, and the FBI offered to bank officials its plans to prevent Occupy events that were scheduled for a month later [395][397]

FBI officials met with New York Stock Exchange representatives on 19 August 2011, notifying them of planned peaceful protests. [398] FBI officials later met with representatives of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond and Zions Bank about planned protests. [398] The FBI used informants to infiltrate and monitor protests; information from informants and military intelligence units was passed to DSAC, which then gave updates to financial companies. [399] Surveillance of protestors was also carried out by the Joint Terrorism Task Force. [400][401] DSAC also coordinated with security firms hired by banks to target OWS leaders [402]

Lawsuits

Following actions by police and municipal officials to use force in closing various Occupy tent camps in public spaces, lawsuits have been filed, while others are being planned. [403] Civil liberties organizations filed separate lawsuits against the FBI for refusing to turn over documents requested pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) regarding the FBI's role in surveillance of the Occupy movement and the FBI's sharing of intelligence about Occupy events with private corporate security officials. [404] The FBI withheld documents requested under the FOIA citing the reason that the withholding was "in the interest of national defense or foreign policy." [404]

In 2013, MIT doctoral student Ryan Shapiro, collecting research on the role of the FBI in the Occupy movement, sent the FBI three FOIA requests regarding "a potential plan to gather intelligence against the leaders of [Occupy Wall Street-related protests in Houston] and obtain photographs, then formulate a plan to kill the leadership [of the protests] via suppressed sniper rifles." When the FBI refused the request, Shapiro filed a federal complaint in Washington, D.C., and subsequently obtained 17 pages (most of the requested documentation was ruled withheld due to the possibility to "disclose the identity of a confidential source."). The redacted FBI document confirmed the Houston plot and contradicted an earlier claim by the FBI that it had never opened an investigation on the Occupy movement [405][406]

End

By 2015, there were no more Occupy events chasing the same original goals. Instead, there were multiple reported protests that had similar methods to the Occupy movement, with different goals.
"Occupy" has since become a style of protest, a movement aimed at tech wealth as well as general inequality caused by technology and its advances.

**Criticism**

Apart from the dismissals made by political conservatives, there have also been appreciative criticisms from more left-wing scholars. One such critique concerns itself with the way in which the Occupy movement has focused its demands around a narrowly modern understanding of freedom that differs little from the claims of mainstream liberal pluralism:

> The modern ideology of freedom ... provides its point of departure. This singular dominance of the modern becomes clear in the long list of demands that follow. Practicality dominates and there is not a single demand for relief from the ontological dominance of modern practices and subjectivities that abstract, codify, rationalize and objectify our lives. Though the ideals and demands ... are laudable, they are not that much different in form from the Millennium Goals of the United Nations.

International activists involved in the Occupy Movement have seen it stall due to a lack of synergy to work with other alternative movements calling for change. The biggest criticism is that the movement is without depth, without a lasting vision of an alternative future.

Remarks from Occupy Wall Street participant Justine Tunney, a Google software engineer, who called on President Obama to appoint Eric Schmidt "CEO of America", have also sparked criticism, including from the vast majority of other Occupy participants, many of whom have observed that her politics are inconsistent with horizontalism.

Many Occupy Wall Street protests have included anti-zionist and anti-semitic slogans and signage such as "Jews control Wall Street" or "Zionist Jews who are running the big banks and the Federal Reserve". As a result, the Occupy Wall Street Movement has been consistently confronted with accusations of anti-Semitism. However, Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League stated that "it's not surprising that in a movement that deals with economic issues you're going to get bigots that believe in this stereotype...[however] they are not expressing or representing a larger view.

**See also**

- Anarchism and the Occupy movement
- List of Occupy movement topics
- List of Occupy movement protest locations
- Law enforcement and the Occupy movement
- Occupy Wall Street
- We are the 99%
- Occupy the Hood

Other U.S. protests
- 2011 United States public employee protests
- 2011 Wisconsin protests
- Occupy Homes
- Tea Party protests

Other international protests
- 2009 Icelandic financial crisis protests
- 2009 Iranian presidential election protests
- 2011 Chilean protests
- 2011 Indian anti-corruption movement
- 2011 Israeli social justice protests
- 2013 Bulgarian protests
- 2013 Brazilian protests
- Aam Aadmi party, Common Man's Party, India
- Anti-austerity movement
- Anti-austerity movement in Greece

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- Bernie Sanders presidential campaign, 2016
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- Coxey's Army
- Empowered democracy
- Grassroots movement
- Green Feather Movement
- Guy Fawkes mask
- Hooversville
- Income inequality in the United States
- List of countries by distribution of wealth
Anti-austerity movement in Ireland
Anti-austerity movement in Portugal
Anti-austerity movement in Spain (Indignados Movement)
Anti-austerity movement in the United Kingdom and 2010 UK student protests
Arab Spring
Yo Soy 132
Idle No More

List of countries by income equality
March Against Monsanto
Neoliberalism
Occupy (book)
Occupy Sandy
Peace Convoy
Plutocracy
Regulatory capture
Selected Historical income tax rates in the U.S. (1913–2010)
Wealth inequality in the United States
Cecily McMillan

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"Occupy Nottingham – Nottingham Culture" (http://www.lefftion.co.uk/articles.cfm/id/3991/title/occupy-nottingham) Lefftion.co.uk. Retrieved 19 October 2011.


"’Occupy Brighton’ protesters camp out in landmark gardens" (http://www.theargus.co.uk/news/9335159._Occupy_Brighton__protesters_camp_out_in_landmark_gardens/)Brighton and Hove Argus


"Occupy activists braced for more police violence"(http://www.morningstaronline.co.uk/a-bfb6-Occupy-activists-braced-for-more-police-violence#.VErTWCg_iU) morningstaronline.co.uk Retrieved 19 January 2015.


Bennett, Drake (26 October 2011)."David Graeber the Anti-Leader of Occupy Wall Street" (http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/david-graeber-the-antileader-of-occupy-wall-street-10262011.html) Business Week. Retrieved 13 February 2012.: "While there were weeks of planning yet to go, the important battle had been won. The show would be run by horizontal, and the choices that would follow—the decision not to have leaders or even designated police liaisons, the daily GAs and myriad working-group meetings that still form the heart of the protests in Zuccotti Park—all flowed from that".


400. Grey, 2012


Further reading


External links

- Occupywallstreet.net, official Occupy Wall Street website
- Occupy.com
- nycga.net, website of Occupy Wall Street NYC General Assembly
- Occupy Together, OccupyTogether.org
- Occupy Movement Directory
- 10 Films that Explain Why Occupy Wall St Exists
- Model Community Bill of Rights Template for Occupy Communities
- We All Occupy Directory/Resource Lists
- Occupy Educated: Collection of literature and documentation relevant to the movement
- Occupy Poetry Anthology
- Occupy Agenda
- Occupy Together Meetups Everywhere at Meetup
- Occupy movements channel on YouTube
- The Occupy Money Cooperative
- Occupy Wall Street Media Watch

News media

- The Occupy Wall Street Flickr Archive collection at the Internet Archive
- "Occupy movement collected news and commentary" The Guardian 🔗
- "Occupy" photographs from around the nation from the Denver Post


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