

Occupy Wall Street

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Occupy Wall Street is an ongoing series of demonstrations in New York City^[5] based in Zuccotti Park, formerly "Liberty Plaza Park". The protest was originally^[6] called for by the Canadian activist^[7] group Adbusters; some compare the activity to the Arab Spring movement (particularly the Tahrir Square protests in Cairo, which initiated the 2011 Egyptian revolution) and the Spanish Indignants.^{[8][9]}

The participants of the event are mainly protesting against social and economic inequality, corporate greed, and the influence of corporate money and lobbyists on government, among other concerns.^{[10][11]} By October 9, similar demonstrations had been held or were ongoing in over 70 cities.^[12]

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Occupy Wall Street



A poster created by Adbusters^[1] promoting the start date of the occupation, September 17.

Date	September 17, 2011 – <i>ongoing</i>
Location	Zuccotti Park/"Liberty Park", New York City, USA 40.709385°N 74.011323°W
Status	Ongoing with "occupy" movements having taken place in other cities. See: List of "Occupy" protest locations.
Causes	Wealth inequality, Corporate influence of government, <i>inter alia</i> .
Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Non violent protest ■ Civil disobedience ■ Occupation ■ Picketing ■ Demonstrations ■ Internet activism

Number

Street marches, mesh nets, and first pepper-spraying incident

- 4.3 Week 3 (October 1 – October 7)
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Zuccotti Park/"Liberty Park":

Several hundred "core" demonstrators^[2]

Other activity in NYC:

- 2,000+ marchers
(march on police headquarters, October 2, 2011)^[2]
- 700+ marchers
(crossing Brooklyn Bridge, October 3, 2011)^[3]
- 15,000+ marchers
(Lower Manhattan solidarity march, October 5, 2011)^[4]

Arrests/Injuries

Arrests: 780+^[3]

Background

In mid-2011, the Canadian-based group Adbusters Media Foundation, best known for its advertisement-free anti-consumerist magazine called *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.^[6] According to the senior editor of the magazine, “[they] 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.”^[6] Adbusters promoted the protest with a poster featuring a dancer atop Wall Street's iconic Charging Bull.^{[13][14]} Activists from Anonymous also encouraged its followers to take part in the protest which increased the attention it received calling protesters to "flood lower Manhattan, set up tents, kitchens, peaceful barricades and occupy Wall Street".^{[8][15][16][17]} *Adbusters* stated that, "Beginning from one simple

demand – a presidential commission to separate money from politics – we start setting the agenda for a new America."^[18] Adbusters' Kalle Lasn when asked why it took three years after Lehman Brothers' implosion for people to storm the streets said:

"when the financial meltdown happened, there was a feeling that, 'Wow, things are going to change. Obama is going to pass all kinds of laws, and we are going to have a different kind of banking system, and we are going to take these financial fraudsters and bring them to justice.' There was a feeling like, 'Hey, we just elected a guy who may actually do this.' In a way, there wasn't this desperate edge. Among the young people there was a very positive feeling. And then slowly this feeling that he's a bit of a gutless wonder slowly crept in, and now we're despondent again."^[19]

Although it was originally proposed by *Adbusters* magazine, the demonstration is leaderless.^[20] Other groups began to join the protest, including the NYC General Assembly and U.S. Day of Rage.^[21] The protests have brought together people of many political positions. A report in *CNN* suggested that protesters "got really lucky" when gathering at Zuccotti Park since it was private property and police could not legally force them to move off of it; in contrast, police have authority to remove protesters without permits from city parks.^[22]

Prior to the protest's beginning on September 17, New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg said in a press conference, "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."^[21]

Demands and goals

Overview of goals

Perceptions vary as to the specific goals of the movement.^[23] According to Adbusters, a primary protest organizer, the central demand of the protest is that President Obama "ordain a Presidential Commission tasked with ending the influence money has over our representatives in Washington".^[18] Liberal commentator Michael Moore had suggested that this is not like any other protest but this protest represents a variety of demands with a common statement about government corruption and the excessive influence of big business and the wealthiest 1% of Americans on U.S. laws and policies.^[24] The belief is held by some protesters that the President has become irrelevant, stressing the importance for the 99% to lead and inspire change.^{[25][26][27][28]}



The protesters set up camp in Zuccotti Park. Locals and protesters call it "Liberty Plaza", the park's former name.

Public discussion over focus and lack of "official list of demands"

The desire to form a more coherent agenda was evident around the 13th day of the occupation, with sentiment in the encampment generally split along two lines: those who want to draft focused demands about the unequal distribution of wealth in the United States; and those who want the protest to remain amorphous and to grow through spectacle.^[30] Participatory online discussion forums have been emerging for citizens to submit and vote for specific agenda items.^{[31][32]}

A "proposal" forum post on occupywallst.org^[33] submitted by a single user was misreported as an official list of

demands.^[34] According to the admin-edited forum post, "[the] content was not published by the OccupyWallSt.org collective, nor was it ever proposed or agreed to on a consensus basis with the NYC General Assembly. There is NO official list of demands."^[33]

The protest has been criticized for lack of focus and actionable agenda. In an article that was critical of the protesters, Ginia Bellafante wrote in *The New York Times*:

"The group's lack of cohesion and its apparent wish to pantomime progressivism rather than practice it knowledgeably is unsettling in the face of the challenges so many of its generation face – finding work, repaying student loans, figuring out ways to finish college when money has run out."^{[35][36]}

Glenn Greenwald responded to this criticism, writing,

"Does anyone really not know what the basic message is of this protest: that Wall Street is oozing corruption and criminality and its unrestrained political power—in the form of crony capitalism and ownership of political institutions—is destroying financial security for everyone else?"^[37]

On October 8, the *New York Times* released an editorial statement, expressing their official stance on the demand debate:

"It is not the job of the protesters to draft legislation. That's the job of the nation's leaders, and if they had been doing it all along there might not be a need for these marches and rallies. Because they have not, the public airing of grievances is a legitimate and important end in itself."^[38]

On October 12, the Washington Post interviewed Kalle Lasn about how he sees the global revolution playing out and the criticism of the movement being leaderless and for having no focus. He replied:

"The initial phase of the revolution, what we are seeing right now, is leaderless, and the protesters are not hopping into bed with any party, even the Democratic party...As the winter approaches, I think there will be different phases and ideas, possibly fragmentation into different agendas. I think crystal-clear demands will emanate... The messy, leaderless, demandless movement has launched a national conversation of the likes that we haven't had in 20 years. That's as good as it gets! Not every one needs to have a leader with clear demands. That's the old way of launching revolutions. This revolution is run by the Internet generation, with egalitarian ways of looking at things, and an inclusive process of getting everyone involved. That's the magic of it."^[39]

Participants

Demographics



The Occupied Wall Street Journal's debut issue, founded by donations^[29]



Video of the "human microphone," the method employed by the protesters to allow everyone in the crowd to hear the speaker's words, since a sound system is prohibited

The protesters include persons of a variety of political orientations, including liberals,^[40] political independents,^[41] anarchists,^[41] socialists,^[40] libertarians,^{[40][41]} conservatives,^[40] and environmentalists.^[42] At the protest's start, the majority of the demonstrators were young,^{[41][40][43]} however, as the protest grew the age of the protesters has become more diverse, mostly related to the use of social networks.^[44] Religious beliefs are diverse as well.^[40] On October 10 the Associated Press reported that "there's a diversity of age, gender and race" at the protest.^[44]

New York Magazine conducted a survey of 100 protest participants on October 2, 2011. When asked about their view of capitalism, 46% stated that they believe capitalism "isn't fundamentally evil; it just needs to be regulated," while 37% believe that capitalism "can't be saved; it's inherently immoral." When asked if they voted in the 2010 midterm election, 39% answered "yes," 55% answered "no," and 5% answered "no, but only because I wasn't 18." When asked about their thoughts on Obama, 40% said they "believed in him, but were let down", 1% said "he's doing great," 22% "said he's doing the best he can," and 27% "never believed in him."^[45]

Some news organizations have compared the protest to a left-leaning version of the Tea Party protests.^[46] However, some left-leaning academics and activists expressed concern that it may become co-opted by the Democratic party.^{[47][48]}

Participant organization

While the organization calls itself leaderless, the protest in Zuccotti Park has discernable "organizers", according to analysis by Fordham University Sociologist Heather Gautney,^[49] as well as "stations" that coordinate protest activities and functions (e.g., medical, food, legal, media, security), as well as organizational processes for decision making.^[50]

Organizational processes and infrastructure

New York City General Assembly

According to the *Columbia Journalism Review's* New Frontier Database, "The New York City General Assembly (NYCGA) is the governing body of New York City's Occupy Wall Street; it meets every evening at 19:00, where all the committees come and discuss their thoughts and needs. It is open to all who want to attend, and anyone can speak. And while there is no named leader, some of the members do routinely moderate the general assembly meetings. [Various volunteers] update the minutes from every meeting, along with other need-to-know information for organizers. Agreement on issues is reached using the consensus decision-making process."^[51]

Meetings and internal communications

There are two "general assembly" meetings a day for administrative type announcements.

Sound system

New York City requires a permit to use "amplified sound." Since Occupy Wall Street does not have a permit,



The General Assembly's first meeting in Washington Square Park on October 8th

police have interpreted that to mean even the use of an electric bullhorn. As a response to such limitations, a phenomenon known as the "Human Microphone" has evolved, where a person making a speech pauses while the nearby members of the audience repeats the previous phrase (somewhat) 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.^{[52][53]}

Media center

A separate section is set aside for an information/media area which contains laptop computers, cameras, gas-powered generators, and several wireless routers.^{[54][55]} The generators also provide power for cell phones, and Internet access is available throughout Zucotti Park via these wireless routers.^[56]

According to the *Columbia Journalism Review's* New Frontier Database, the media team, while unofficial, runs websites like Occupytogether.org, video livestream, a "steady flow of updates on Twitter, Facebook, and Tumblr" as well as Skype sessions with other Occupy-themed protest sites such as in Scotland.^[57]



People working at the media center

Sanitation

On October 6, 2011, it was reported that Brookfield Office Properties, which owns Zuccotti Park, had issued a statement which said, "Sanitation is a growing concern... Normally the park is cleaned and inspected every weeknight... because the protesters refuse to cooperate... the park has not been cleaned since Friday, 16 September and as a result, sanitary conditions have reached unacceptable levels."^[58] On September 25, Brookfield had issued new rules against tarps and sleeping bags, and personal property on the ground. Previously, the only rules posted in the park prohibited skateboarding, rollerblading and bicycling. The firm has indicated that it wishes for the protesters to be removed, but has been discouraged from evicting them by the police department.^[59]

Bloomberg News reported on October 10th that "[t]he ground is mostly free of litter" and committees had formed to handle sanitation and comfort issues.^[60]

Many protesters have taken to utilizing the bathrooms of nearby business establishments.^[61] Supporters in New York have also donated use of their bathrooms for showers and the sanitary needs of protesters.^[60]



The greywater treatment system used by the protesters to collect water for the park's plants

The protesters have constructed a greywater treatment system to recycle dishwasher contaminants.^{[62][63]} The filtered water is used for the park's plants and flowers.

Sleeping arrangements

Somewhere between 100 and 200 people sleep in Zuccotti Park. Because tents are not allowed at Zucotti Park, the protesters that do decide to spend the night sleep in sleeping bags or under blankets. Some blankets and

other supplies have been donated.^[64]

Fiscal impact

New York City Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly reported on October 7 that Occupy Wall Street has cost the Police Department \$1.9 million in overtime.^[65]

Chronology of events

Main article: Timeline of Occupy Wall Street

Planning for the event united disparate groups of protesters throughout the month of August, uniting a loose coalition set up around the *Adbusters* time and date with allies of the Spanish protests, members of Anonymous, and a group discussing the United States debt-ceiling crisis, which introduced the term "General Assembly" to the organizers.

Week 1 (September 17 – September 23)

On September 17, 1,000 protesters marched through the streets, with an estimated 100 to 200 staying overnight in cardboard boxes (tents being prohibited by the NYPD). By September 19, seven people had been arrested by the New York Police Department.^{[66][67]}



The protesters march toward a police station and various other targets

Week 2 (September 24 – September 30)

September 24 – Street marches, mesh nets, and first pepper-spraying incident

At least 80 arrests were made on September 24,^[68] after protesters started marching uptown and forcing the closure of several streets.^{[69][70]} Most of the 80 arrests were for blocking traffic, though some were also charged with disorderly conduct and resisting arrest. Police officers have also been using a technique called kettling which involves using orange nets to isolate protesters into smaller groups.^{[69][70]}

Videos which showed several penned-in female demonstrators being pepper-sprayed by a police official were widely disseminated, sparking controversy.^[71] That police official, later identified as Deputy Inspector Anthony Bologna, was shown in other videos hitting a photographer with a burst of spray.^[72] In the days that followed a lawsuit against Bologna alleging false arrest during the Republican National Convention in 2004 surfaced, and the activist group Anonymous posted details about his family online.^[73]



Protesters rallying near New York police headquarters, St. Andrew's Church in the background.

Initially Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly and a representative for Bologna defended his actions, while decrying the disclosure of his personal information.^{[71][72]} However, after growing public furor, Kelly announced that Internal Affairs and the Civilian Complaint

Review Board were opening investigations.^[71] Meanwhile, Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance, Jr. started his own inquiry.^[72]

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.^[74] 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.^[75]

Week 3 (October 1 – October 7)

March on Brooklyn Bridge and mass arrests

On October 1, 2011, protesters set out to march across the Brooklyn Bridge. *The New York Times* reported that more than 700 arrests were made.^[76] The police used ten buses to carry protesters off the bridge. 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."^[77] However, some statements by protesters supported descriptions of the event given by police: for example, one protester tweeted that "The police didn't lead us on to the bridge. They were backing the fuck up."^[73] 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.^[3] By October 2, all but 20 of the arrestees had been released with citations for disorderly conduct and a criminal court summons.^[78] The following day, drivers of the City Bus program sued the New York Police Department for "commandeering their buses" and forcing them to cart detained protesters.^[79]



Occupy Wall Street protesters in Portland, Oregon.

October 5 – Rushing of barricades and second pepper-spraying incident

On October 5, 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 continue in cities and on college campuses across the country.^[80]

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.^[81] According to the NYPD, 28 people were arrested.

Week 4 (October 8 – October 14)

Protests spread worldwide

See also: List of "Occupy" protest locations and "Occupy" protests

Taking their cue from the Occupy Wall Street protests, as of October 9 there are calls for global demonstrations on October 15 in cities in more than 25 countries. Using Facebook and Meetup to coordinate the events, some

pages show only a few dozen will attend while others have thousands. Protest pages in Spain and Italy have the largest Facebook attendees so far, with 42,410 and 20,568, respectively. A group of protesters are organizing an occupation of the London Stock Exchange to bring attention to what they see as unethical behavior on the part of banks. One of the organizers of the protest said the protests are focused against "increasing social and economic injustice in this country". In his opinion, "Since the financial crisis 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."^{[82][83][84][85][86][87][88][89]} A similar protest group inspired by Occupy Wall Street has formed in the UK under the name OccupyLSX.^{[90][91][92]}



Responses and reception

Elected officials and political candidates

During an October 6 news conference, President 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."^{[93][94][95]} When Jake Tapper of ABC News pushed Obama to explain the fact that his administration hasn't prosecuted any Wall Street executives who didn't play by the rules, he replied, "One of the biggest problems about the collapse of Lehman's and the subsequent financial crisis and the whole subprime lending fiasco is that a lot of that stuff wasn't necessarily illegal; it was just immoral or inappropriate or reckless."^{[96][97]}

Vice President Joe Biden likened the protest to the Tea Party, saying, "What are the people up there on the other end of the political spectrum saying? The same thing: 'Look guys, the bargain is not on the level anymore.' In the minds of the vast majority of the American – the middle class is being screwed."^[98]

2012 Republican presidential candidate Herman Cain accused the movement of being "anti-capitalist" and argued "Don't blame Wall Street, don't blame the big banks, if you don't have a job and you're not rich, blame yourself!"^[99] Republican Ron Paul came out to refute Cain by saying, "the system has been biased against the middle class and the poor...the people losing jobs, it wasn't their fault that we've followed a deeply flawed economic system."^[100] In an interview with the *Wall Street Journal*, Cain also expressed his belief that Occupation Wall Street was "planned and orchestrated to distract from the failed policies of the Obama administration", but admitted that he "[didn't] have facts" to back up his accusation.^[101]

U.S. Congressman and 2012 Republican presidential candidate Ron Paul (R-TX) stated, "If they were demonstrating peacefully, and making a point, and arguing our case, and drawing attention to the Fed — I would say, 'good!'"^[102]



Writer and 2006 New York gubernatorial candidate Malachy McCourt at Zuccotti Park on October 8

2012 Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney called the protests "dangerous" and "class warfare".^[103]

House Democratic Leader Rep. Nancy Pelosi, said she supports the growing nationwide Occupy Wall Street movement. Pelosi said she includes herself in the group of Americans dissatisfied with Congress.^[104]

Independent Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, who caucuses with the Democratic Party, appeared on *Countdown with Keith Olbermann* and supported the protests saying, "We desperately need a coming together of working people to stand up to Wall Street. We need to rebuild the middle-class in this country and you guys can't have it all."^[105]

House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-Va), in a speech to a Values Voter Summit, characterized the movement as "growing mobs" and suggested that President Barack Obama's "failed policies" and rhetoric "condon[ing] the pitting of Americans against Americans" were to blame. In response, White House Press Secretary Jay Carney noted Cantor's apparent "hypocrisy unbound", pointing out the Majority Leader's support of the Tea Party Protests and adding "I can't understand how one man's mob is another man's democracy. I think both are expressions that are totally consistent with the American democratic tradition."^[106]

In an interview with *The Washington Post*, Former Democratic U.S. Senator Russ Feingold endorsed the movement on October 5 stating, "This is like the Tea Party – only it's real...By the time this is over, it will make the Tea Party look like ... a tea party."^[107]

2012 Republican presidential candidate Buddy Roemer expressed support for the movement.^[108]

The Democratic co-chairs of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, Representatives Raúl Grijalva and Keith Ellison announced their solidarity with the movement on October 4.^[109] The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee is asking for 100,000 names on its website which will subsequently be added to 100,000 letters to Speaker of the House John Boehner and House Majority Leader Eric Cantor expressing support for the Occupy Wall Street protesters, the middle class, and condemnation of millionaires, big oil, and big bankers.^[110]

New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg said that the protests "aren't productive" although he also expressed sympathy for some of their complaints.^[111] On October 8th, during his weekly radio show, Bloomberg complained that the protestors are trying to "take the jobs from the people working in the city", and said that although "[t]here are some people with legitimate complaints, there are some people who just like to protest".^[112]

Federal Reserve

During a hearing before the Joint Economic Committee October 4, 2011, Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke said, "People are quite unhappy with the state of the economy and what's happening.... Certainly, 9 percent unemployment and very slow growth is not a good situation."^[113] Dallas Federal Reserve President Richard W. Fisher said, "We have too many people out of work. We have a very uneven distribution of income. We have a very frustrated people, and I can understand their frustration."^[114]

Union support

Various unions, including the Transport Workers Union of America Local 100 and the New York Metro 32BJ Service Employees International Union have pledged their support for demonstrators.^[115] On October 3, Transport Workers Union bus drivers sued the New York Police Department for ordering their buses to drive to

the Brooklyn Bridge to pick up detained protesters. Union President John Samuelson said, "We're down with these protesters. We support the notion that rich folk are not paying their fair share. Our bus operators are not going to be pressed into service to arrest protesters anywhere."^[116] On October 5, representatives from more than 14 of the country's largest labor unions intended to join the protesters for a mass rally and march.^[117]

Noting the growing union support, an article in the liberal *Mother Jones* magazine suggested the possibility that union support could splinter and derail the protests rather than sustain them because while unions are tightly organized, hierarchical, and run with a clear chain of command, Occupy Wall Street is the opposite in that they are "a horizontal, autonomous, leaderless, modified-consensus-based system with roots in anarchist thought". However, the article went on to suggest that joined together they could work to create a progressive movement that "effectively taps into the rising feeling among many Americans that economic opportunity has been squashed by corporate greed and the influence of the very rich in politics".^[118]

Celebrity commentary

On 19 September, Roseanne Barr, the first celebrity to endorse the protest, spoke to protesters calling for a combination of capitalism and socialism and a system not based on "bloated talk radio hosts and that goddamn Ayn Rand book."^{[119][120]}

Educator and author Cornel West addressed the frustrations that some critics have expressed at the protest's lack of a clear and unified message, saying, "It's impossible to translate the issue of the greed of Wall Street into one demand, or two demands. We're talking about a democratic awakening."^[121]

Canadian writer Naomi Klein supported the protest, saying, "This is not the time to be looking for ways to dismiss a nascent movement against the power of capital, but to do the opposite: to find ways to embrace it, support it and help it grow into its enormous potential. With so much at stake, cynicism is a luxury we simply cannot afford."^[122]

Filmmaker Michael Moore spoke against Wall Street, saying, "They have tried to take our democracy and turn it into a kleptocracy."^{[123][124]} Rapper Lupe Fiasco, one of the initial supporters of Occupy Wall Street, wrote a poem, "Moneyman", for the protest.^{[125][126]} Susan Sarandon spoke at the demonstration saying, "I came down here to educate myself.... There's a huge void between the rich and the poor in this country."^[127] Actor and activist Mark Ruffalo has supported the Occupy Wall Street protest saying, "Peaceful Resistance. That is what changes the world. We must be peaceful. This movement is about decency."^{[128][129]}

Conservative radio talk show hosts have commented on the movement. Rush Limbaugh told his listening



On October 5 members of the National Nurses United union march to Foley Square in solidarity with OWS



Naomi Klein leading an open forum on October 6



Tom Morello of Rage Against the Machine playing a set on Day 28 in New York; Morello previously played for the Los Angeles protests

audience on his October 5th show that: "When I was 10 years old I was more self-sufficient than this parade of human debris calling itself Occupy Wall Street."^[130] Glenn Beck said, "Capitalists, if you think that you can play footsies with these people, you are wrong. They will come for you and drag you into the streets and kill you. They will do it. They're not messing around".^[131]

On 9 October, Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek gave a speech on Wall Street in which he expressed support for the protests and criticized the capitalist system and the corporations saying that, "They tell you we are dreamers. The true dreamers are those who think things can go on indefinitely the way they are. We are not dreamers. We are awakening from a dream which is turning into a nightmare. We are not destroying anything. We are only witnessing how the system is destroying itself", but also warned that they must not forget why they're there or else the protest might lose its meaning.^{[132][133][134]}

Remy Munasifi wrote and sang a song, in the style of Bob Dylan, called "Occupy Wall Street Protest Song," which criticized the protestors for not understanding how well off they are.^{[135][136]}

Other celebrities lending their support include Anti-Flag,^[137] Margaret Atwood, Alec Baldwin, Immortal Technique, John Carlos,^[138] Noam Chomsky, David Graeber,^[139] Chris Hedges,^[140] Stéphane Hessel,^[141] Paul Krugman,^[142] Radiohead,^[143] Salman Rushdie,^[144] George Soros,^[145]; Richard D. Wolff.^[146]; Kanye West^[147] and Russell Simmons^[148] Nobel Prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz and *New York Times* columnist Jeff Madrick gave a teach-in on October 2.^[149]

Foreign political responses

Canada

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty expressed sympathy with the protests, citing high unemployment amongst the youth.^[150]

China

The Chinese state news agency Xinhua said the protests had exposed "fundamental problems" with the US economic and political systems, and that it showed "a clear need for Washington, which habitually rushes to demand other governments to change when there are popular protests in their countries, to put its own house in order."^[151]

Germany

The German Greens endorsed the European arm of the protests Occupy Together.^[152]

Greece

Prime Minister George Papandreou supported the U.S. protests saying, "We fight for changing the global economic system, like many anti-Wall Street citizens who rightly protest against the inequalities and injustices of the system."^[153]

Iran

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei commented that the protests are because a "corrupt foundation has been exposed to the American people."^[154]

North Korea

The Korean Central News Agency of DPRK commented that the Occupy Wall Street movement were "in protest against exploitation and oppression by capital, shaking all fabrics of society."^{[155][156]}

Poland

Lech Wałęsa, former president of Poland and cofounder of the Polish Solidarity Movement has expressed his support for Occupy Wall Street and is considering a visit to the site.^[157]

Russia

Former Premier Mikhail Gorbachev compared it the perestroika period and collapse of a superpower, calling the protests justified. He said Americans should put their own house in order before attempting to do such with other countries.^[158]

Venezuela

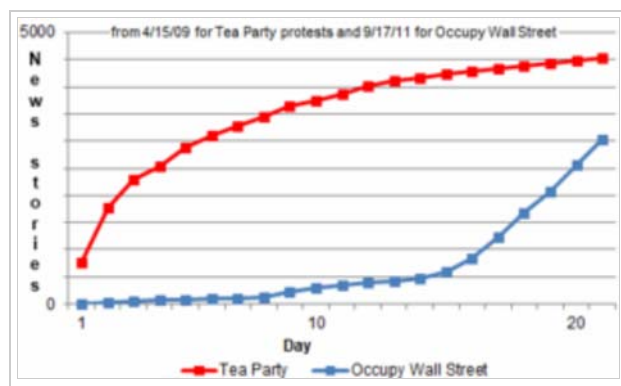
Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez condemned the "horrible repression" of the Occupy Wall Street activists and expressed solidarity with the movement.^[159]

Local residents

According to one source, local residents of the area surrounding Zucotti Park have voiced various complaints about the demonstrations. One caller to a radio show complained that the park has been rendered "unusable" by the protestors, and that "a general atmosphere of incivility", together with loud shouting and drums, prevailed; another complained that the drums from the protest, which he said "start in the morning" and get louder in the evening until 11:30pm, made it difficult for his children to sleep or do their homework. One resident complained that protestors had been vandalizing and urinating in the vestibule to his apartment building.^[112] Responding to the caller who complained about the noise and incivility, Mayor Michael Bloomberg said "we couldn't agree more".^[112]

Media coverage

The protests began on Saturday, September 17. The following Wednesday, *The New York Observer* reported on the nascent protests in Zuccotti Park.^{[161][162]} On Friday, September 23, Ginia Bellafante panned the movement in *The New York Times*.^[163] Five days into the protest, Keith Olbermann criticized the media for failing to cover the protests.^{[164][165]} Joanna Weiss of *The Boston Globe* found it difficult to take the protests seriously, criticizing Occupy Wall Street for its "circus" atmosphere."^[166] In a September



27 article, Lauren Ellis of *Mother Jones* magazine criticized the movement's lack of a clear message.^[167]

Comparison of news coverage of Occupy Wall Street protests and the Tea Party Movement.^[160]

Media theorist Douglas Rushkoff criticized the mainstream media for dismissing the protesters. "Anyone who says he has no idea what these folks are protesting is not being truthful. Whether we agree with them or not, we all know what they are upset about, and we all know that there are investment bankers working on Wall Street getting richer while things for most of the rest of us are getting tougher."^[168] Rushkoff says that Occupy Wall Street is the first true Internet-era movement, and as such, it does not have a charismatic leader or particular endpoint. Unlike a traditional protest which identifies the enemy and fights for a particular solution, Rushkoff concludes that the protest is less about victory than sustainability, inclusion and consensus.^[168]

Appearing on CBS's *The Early Show*, Michael Daly, of *Newsweek* and *The Daily Beast* characterized the position of the protestors as a "feeling that there is just a fundamental unfairness. From their point of view, the very people who almost wrecked the U.S. economy on Wall Street continue to get wealthy while working people are struggling to pay their bills. I mean, it comes down to that."^[169] By October 4, economist Richard Wolff commented that the unclear shape of the movement is "mostly irrelevant" at this early stage and the priority should be to invite all interested parties.^[170] Kalle Lasn, co-founder of *Adbusters*, believed that the protests had gone mainstream and expressed the opinion that "it's become kind of a political left movement in the U.S., hopefully to rival the Tea Party".^[171]

On October 11, Katrina vanden Heuvel, who writes a weekly column for *The Post* and is the editor and publisher of *The Nation*, said that many if not most of the protesters are wary about embracing the progressive establishment and have concerns about being co-opted. However, she went on to say that, "most understand that the main task ahead is growing the movement, and that may mean going to where the injustice is — to where people are being evicted from foreclosed homes or losing jobs". Pointing to recent legislation, she suggests that the movement has already influenced public dialogue.^[172]

See also

- 1971 May Day Protests (1913–2010)
- Corruption Perceptions Index
- Income inequality in the United States
- Income tax rates in the United States
- Tea Party protests
- We are the 99%

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External links

- Unofficial website (<http://occupywallst.org>) backed by *Adbusters*
- *Adbusters* page (<http://www.adbusters.org/campaigns/occupywallstreet>) listing websites and updates
- NYC General Assembly (<http://nycga.cc/>) , the official website of the General Assembly at #OccupyWallStreet.
- Occupy Together (<http://occupytogether.org>)
- Occupy Wall Street Videos (<http://www.gvu.tv>) . The growing and expanding movement captured on video.
- Photographs from around the nation (<http://photos.denverpost.com/mediacenter/2011/10/photos-wall-street-protests-around-the-nation/>) from the *Denver Post*
- Occupy Together Meetups Everywhere (<http://www.meetup.com/occupytogether>) . Meetup.
- Occupy Directory (https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0AjnECehlgV69dHdzUUJVV19nYkM4NjFubHV3bjI1Snc&hl=en_US#gid=0) .
- OccupyTV's Channel (<http://www.youtube.com/occupytv>) . YouTube.

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