FROM THE INTERNET TO THE STREETS:
OCCUPY WALL STREET, THE INTERNET, AND ACTIVISM

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ABSTRACT

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In September of 2011 protestors filled the streets of New York City's Wall Street Financial District as part of the social movement known as Occupy Wall Street. Prior to their protests in the streets, Occupy Wall Street was a movement that originated and spread online through various social media such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and interactive webpages. The strategy of using Internet communication as a tool for activism is not new. Social movements since the 1990s have utilized the Internet.

The growing use of Web 2.0 technologies in our everyday lives is a topic that is not yet fully understood or researched by anthropologists, nor is its potential for ethnographic research fully realized. This thesis addresses both of these points by presenting a case study of how, as anthropologists, we can collect data from both the online and in-person presences of a group.

This thesis focuses on the social movement, Occupy Wall Street, because of its beginnings and continuing activity online. In-person data of the Occupy Wall Street movement were collected at Occupy movements in Flint, Michigan and New York City, New York using traditional ethnographic methods such as interviews and participant observation. Online data were collected using computer scripts (programs that automate

computer tasks), that recursively downloaded websites onto my personal, locally owned hard drive. Once the online data was collected, I also used computer scripts to filter through data and locate phenomena on the websites that I had chosen to focus. By analyzing both online and in-person data I am able to gain a more holistic view and new ways of understanding social movements.

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Introduction

On September 17, 2011 protestors filled Zuccotti Park, located in New York City's Wall Street Financial District, as part of the social movement known as Occupy Wall Street (OWS). Occupy Wall Street would eventually grow into a worldwide movement. At its peak, OWS consisted of demonstrations in 951 cities in 82 countries in what Occupy claims to be the "first time in history a global movement has ever done anything like this" (NPR Staff and Wires 2011; Wander 2011). As of the summer of 2012, the Occupy Wall Street movement had remained solid for eight months enduring weather, police brutality, arrests, and eviction from areas the movement came to call home.

The inception of the Occupy movement began several months prior to protestors meeting in the streets. In early June, *Adbusters* posted the idea of Occupy Wall Street on one of their blogs and the idea spread through other social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, message boards, and E-mail. Using these Internet tools, the Occupy movement was able to gain a broad social network of supporters before it hit the streets in September and has continued to use Internet communication throughout its existence. Occupy Wall Street was a movement "born on the Internet, diffused by the Internet" (Castells 2012:168). However, the strategy of using Internet communication as a tool for activism is not new. Social movements since the 1990s, including the Zapatista National Liberation Army, protests against the World Trade Organization in Seattle (Bimber, Flanagin, and Stohl 2005; Langman 2005; Zimbra, Abbasi, and Chen 2010), and the recent Arab Spring protests have used the Internet to organize, spread information, and form social networks of support.

The growing use of Web 2.0 technologies[1] in our everyday lives is a topic that is not yet fully understood or researched by anthropologists, nor is its potential for ethnographic research fully realized. To demonstrate both of these points, I will present a case study of how, as anthropologists, we can look at both the online and in-person activities of a group when they are available. In doing so I will demonstrate how using both online and in-person data can provide a more holistic view and offer new ways of understanding social movements.

Social Movements and the Internet

Social movements consist of networks of individuals who share and recognize identities, goals, and perceptions of the world in informal interactions and act in ways that are uncommon to everyday life and challenge the limits of social systems to influence change (Diani 1992:7-8; Edelman 2001:288-289; Hess 2007:466). Two crucial aspects of social movement theory are the ability of a social movement a) to form a social network of collective identities and b) create fundamental change within a social system. The forms of collective identity relevant to social movements entail "a shared sense of the movement as a collective actor – as a dynamic force for change – that [participants] identify with and are inspired to support in their own actions" (Holland, Fox, and Daro 2008:97). Collective identities within a movement are not static but instead "continually emerging, forming and reforming between people and groups in multiple sites and places of contentious practice" (Holland, Fox, and Daro 2008:99). Previous work on social movements identifies the ability to form and maintain collective identities along with the

[1] Web 2.0 is used to describe sites that are more than just static pages. Web 2.0 sites allow users to interact with each other and collaborate, such as in forums, blogs, and other social networking sites, whereas prior to Web 2.0 websites were only available for users to view.

ability to create social change as essential to the movement (Diani 1992; Edelman 2001; Hess 2007; Holland, Fox, and Daro 2008).

The process through which collective identities and social networks are formed involves a coordination of multiple discourses and differing versions of self (Holland, Fox, and Daro 2008:100) and social actors' construction of "meaning on the basis of cultural attributes that are given priority over other potential sources of meaning" (Edelman 2001:298). Therefore, I will closely examine the discourse present in Occupy Wall Street as a social movement. I will also be focusing on the social change brought about by social movements, which can vary from bringing awareness of social issues to changing public policy.

Social movements continue to rely upon traditional activism methods that have been adapted to the Internet (Meikle 2002; Zimbra, Abbasi, and Chen 2010). The most common uses of Internet activism are spreading information, sharing experiences, developing solidarity and identity, and promoting, facilitating, and organizing activism (Zimbra, Abbasi, and Chen 2010:49). The structure of an online activist movement is that of a network that maintains a sense of collective identity, not a hierarchical organization (Van de Donk et al. 2004; Zimbra, Abbasi, and Chen 2010). However, one of the challenges with studying online social movements is that their activity is "dynamic, appearing and disappearing without warning, and distributed across multiple related websites, forums, or virtual communities, some of which may not be readily apparent to the researcher" (Zimbra, Abbasi, and Chen 2010:49). My research must face the same challenges that have been present for many researchers studying social movements online. To combat some of these challenges, I conducted a study that utilizes readily

available computer tools and Internet tools to collect data within 24 hours of its availability in a way that is efficient and not time consuming to the researcher. These tools specifically ameliorate the ephemerality of Internet phenomena.

I conducted a two part ethnographic study. To collect my data, I used multiple methods within ethnography to gather different kinds of data "in an attempt to obtain a fuller picture of the phenomenon under study" (Ahearn 2012:34). The first part of this study consisted of an online ethnography comprised of Internet archiving, online participant observation, and online interviews. For a more in-depth discussion of my archival procedures, please see Chapter 1. The second portion of my research consisted of an in-person ethnography of the Occupy movement during which I used ethnographic techniques such as interviews, participant observation, and video and audio recordings (which I also discuss more in-depth in Chapter 1).

Theoretical Challenges of Online Research

"Anthropology is uniquely suited" for the study of Internet communication (Wilson and Peterson 2002:450). Ethnographers observe communities in naturally occurring environments that enable anthropologists to observe a community from a holistic perspective, one that relies heavily on the context in which the data was collected. According to Goodwin and Duranti (1992:32) "the notion of context stands at the cutting edge of much contemporary research into the relationship between language, culture, and social organization, as well as into the study of how language is structured." However, current anthropological and linguistic theories do not yet address the complex context surrounding interactions in an online environment and may need to be rethought (Jones 2004:21). Currently, online communication is studied based on assumptions that online

interactions take the "from of focused social interactions that occur in particular physical spaces and involve easily identifiable participants with clearly defined roles and relationships" (Jones 2004:23). Online communication does not currently fit neatly into any of our theoretical classifications for communication such as oral, written, signed language, or possibly even a new genre that has emerged with new Web 2.0 technologies (Wanner 2008:126). However, interactions online challenge our most basic understandings of how space and participation function in communication in an online environment.

Previous research on the Internet (Ducheneaut, Yee, and Bellotti 2010; Murray and Sixsmith 1999; Dirksen 2005; LeValley 1997; Gluesing 2008; Wasson 2006; Fanson 2002; Maida 1998; Gray and Driscoll 1992; Boellstorff 2010) describes the space in which online communication occurs as "virtual" which traditionally has been placed in a dichotomy with "real" (Jones 2004:21). However, in my research I use the terms "online" and "in-person" as opposed to "virtual" and "real." The dichotomy of "virtual" and "real" suggests that the online environment may be simulated, imagined, or something less than real. However, online environments are extremely real and closely related to in-person interactions. In many cases, online interactions can be extensions of in-person interactions and the online can also construct interactions offline just as much as offline interactions can construct in-person interactions (Jones 2004:25). My use of "online" and "in-person" are not meant to present a dichotomy, but instead a description of the context in which an interaction took place without applying preconceived notions towards the "realness" of the interaction.

The space of an online environment also allows for new ways of participation. In in-person environments, typically participants are physically present during conversations and other participants can monitor their presence (Jones 2004:23). However, online participants don't have to be physically present to participate. The absence of physical participants also means there is an absence of physical cues such as facial expressions, indexical actions such as pointing or eye contact, and emotional reactions such as laughing, crying, or yelling. In some cases the lack of physical cues can make people more open online than they would be in-person. In others, the lack of physical cues can make the Internet an impersonal environment (Jones 2004:30-31). However, in online environments participants can use other cues such as emoticons[2] to take the place of in-person cues.

The Occupy Wall Street Movement

While many current social movements use Internet tools, I chose to focus on the Occupy Wall Street movement for several reasons. First, the Occupy movement is a large-scale movement present all over the U.S. and in other countries around the world. Second, because of the movement's desire to be as democratic as possible, the Occupy movement is easy to access. Finally, I have followed the Occupy movement in my free time since its early beginnings on the Internet and thus have previous knowledge of the movement.

For this study I chose two different groups within Occupy Wall Street to conduct my in-person ethnography with and to follow online. I chose a large city movement in New York City, New York and a small city movement in Flint, Michigan to compare and

[2] Emoticons are pictorial representations of facial expressions and emotions. Emoticons serve as icons of facial expressions and/or indexes of a reader's inner emotional state.

contrast how Occupy Wall Street groups exist in different locations and scales – the former, primarily because of its importance and centrality to the overall Occupy movement and the latter, because of its history and the persistence of the Occupy movement there.

The Occupy Movement

The origins of the Occupy Wall Street movement are somewhat controversial. The movement has clear roots in other social movements that have been concerned with the global economic crisis and the growing inequality in the world such as protests in 1999-2001 against corporations and globalization, the contemporary Students for a Democratic Society in the early 2000s, and the Zapatista Army of National Liberation in Mexico which started in the 1990s (Milkman, Luce, and Lewis 2012:1). Others trace ideology of the Occupy Wall Street movement to the hacktivism group, Anonymous, or other Internet groups that have opposed denials of freedom and corruption, and have been notoriously leaderless. Hacktivism is a combination of the two words *hack* and *activism* and describes groups of activists who use computers and the Internet for political means. Hacktivist groups utilize technologies to deface websites, steal information, and conduct denial-of-service (DoS)[3] attacks (to name a few) to produce results similar to conventional acts of protest, such as civil disobedience and protest.

While the idea for a protest like Occupy Wall Street can be attributed to many different groups and sources, the first plan for Occupy Wall Street started with members of *Adbusters*, an anti-consumerist magazine. The idea is largely attributed to Kalle Lasn and Micah White of *Adbusters.* On June 9, 2011 Kalle Lasn registered the

[3] The purpose of a denial-of-service attack is to make a website or service unavailable.

OccupyWallStreet.org web domain and shortly after Adbusters emailed the idea of a Tahrir-like protest in America to its subscribers. On July 13, 2011 *Adbusters* proposed the idea and plan for Occupy Wall Street in the blog post, "#OccupyWallStreet – A Shift in Revolutionary Tactics." In the blog post, the authors lay out the groundwork for Occupy Wall Street inspired by recent protests in Tahrir Square in Cairo, Egypt. They began with what they considered to be a simple formula for the Occupy movement: "we talk to each other in various physical gatherings and virtual people's assemblies…we zero in on what our one demand will be…and then we go out and seize a square of singular symbolic significance and put our asses on the line to make it happen" (Culture Jammers HQ 2011). The authors suggested Occupy use this strategy against Wall Street, which they consider to be "the greatest corrupter of our democracy" (Culture Jammers HQ 2011). The authors then proposed "the one demand" for the Occupy movement: "Barack Obama ordain a Presidential Commission tasked with ending the influence money has over our representatives in Washington" (Culture Jammers HQ 2011). This post also organized the protest to begin on September 17, 2011 in lower Manhattan. It told the movement to "set up tents, kitchens, peaceful barricades and occupy Wall Street for a few months" and to repeat "one simple demand in a plurality of voices" (Culture Jammers HQ 2011).

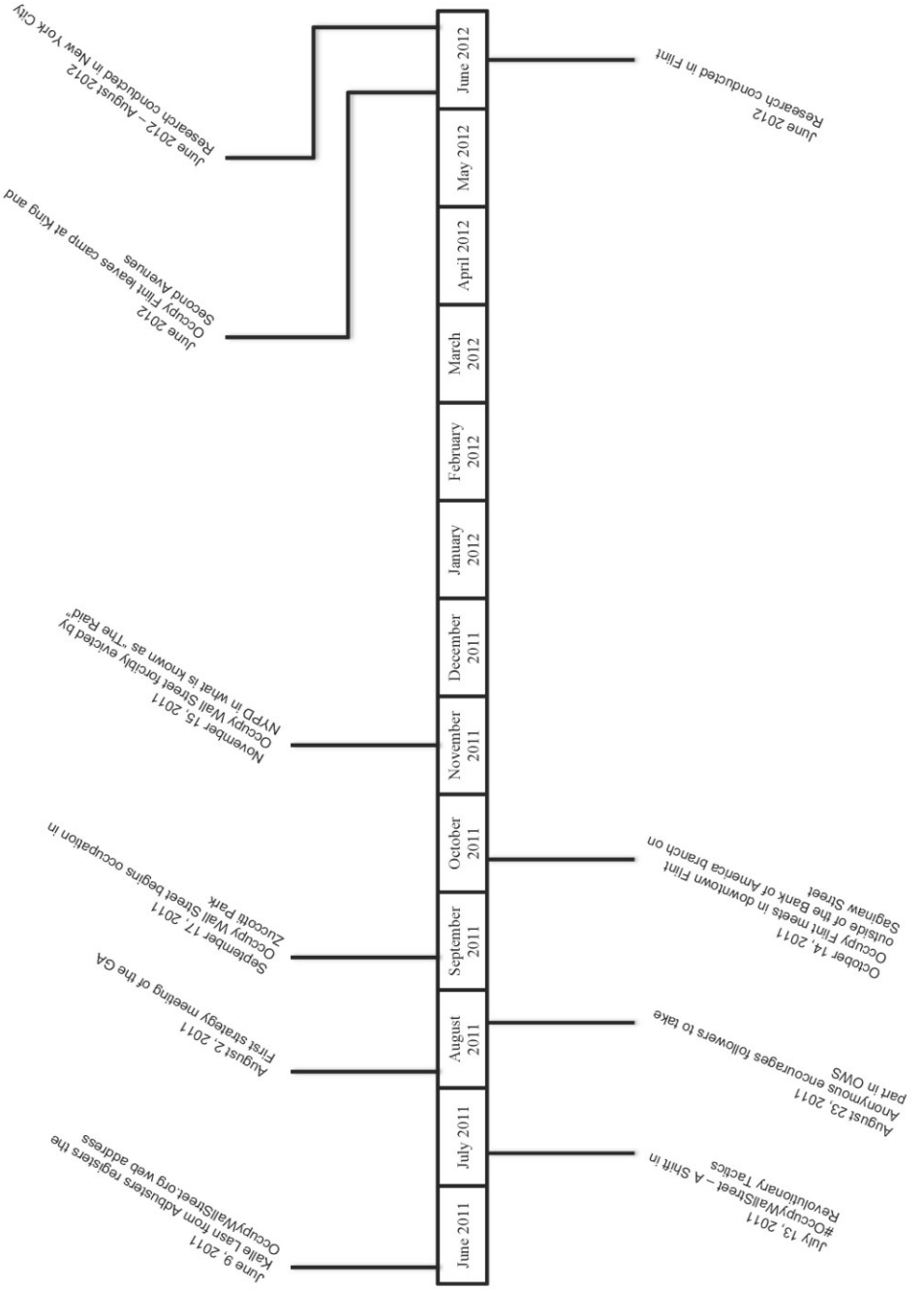

Figure 1: A timeline of important Occupy Wall Street events mentioned in this research.

In the months between the *Adbusters* blog post and September 17, people read this post and took action setting up websites, Twitter feeds, Facebook accounts, and calling for similar movements around the world. On August 2, the first strategy meeting of the Occupy Wall Street General Assembly (GA), "the movement's only official decision-making body" (Milkman, Luce, and Lewis 2012:5) was held in New York City to begin planning specific details for the on-the-ground Occupy movement. The Occupy movement continued to accumulate followers and attention in the following month. Occupy was helped by other organizations such as Anonymous, who promoted the movement through a YouTube video posted on August 23, 2011 entitled "Occupy Wall Street – Sep17" and through their own Twitter feeds and message boards.

On September 17, 2011, which also coincides with the anniversary of the signing of the U.S. constitution, over 2,000 people met on the streets of Wall Street to kick off the official beginning of Occupy Wall Street (Milkman, Luce, and Lewis 2012:1). Because of the wide popularity Occupy Wall Street had gained online, officials in New York City were aware of the protestor's intentions of occupying the streets of lower Manhattan's Financial District. In preparation for the Occupy protests, the NYPD fenced off the area to protestors prior to the beginning of Occupy Wall Street, so that business on Wall Street was not disrupted. Zuccotti Park, also known as Liberty Square, is located in Manhattan's Financial District. It is a "privately owned public space" meaning it is privately maintained and owned but is open to the public. Therefore, the police could not block this space off nor remove protestors from this area. It was in Zuccotti Park that Occupy Wall Street set up their encampment, which they occupied for around two

months. Their encampment included a 24x7 occupation with tents, bathrooms, a kitchen, library, media station and anything else members of the camp needed during their stay.

On November 15, 2011, the New York Police Department forcibly evicted Occupy Wall Street from Zuccotti Park overnight in what Occupiers commonly refer to as "The Raid." Eviction orders were based on claims the Occupy camp was unsanitary and a cause for health concerns. The eviction does not completely bar protestors from the park; it only stipulates that they cannot camp there. The Raid of Zuccotti Park weakened the Occupy Wall Street movement and was followed by a wave of Occupy camp evictions across the country. Since The Raid, many Occupy events are still held throughout the city in a variety of parks such as Bryant Park, Union Square, and Zuccotti Park. However, these meetings are small and most Occupiers have since moved on to other causes.

Occupy Wall Street classifies itself as a people's movement. "It is party-less, leaderless, by the people and for the people. It is not a business, a political party, an advertising campaign or a brand. It is not for sale" (General Assembly at Occupy Wall Street 2012). The movement is non-hierarchal. It has a horizontal structure with an equal distribution of power among members. All decisions and official stances of the Occupy movement are passed by the General Assembly, which is open to all, and Working Groups (WGs) are created to focus on specific tasks. Since its first meeting, the General Assembly has laid out the purpose of the Occupy movement: to protest the control of corporations and money in government (NYC General Assembly 2011).

The Occupy movement has maintained a strong Internet presence, despite the oft-heard declaration that the only official voice of the movement is the General Assembly,

which pays deference to physical gatherings in the streets and parks. Although most movement-related websites contain a disclaimer that they are not the "official" voice of the Occupy movement, the movement utilizes Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, blogs, and it's own websites. Occupy utilizes these web presences to organize events, collect supplies and donations, and spread information, furthering the movement overall.

New York City, New York

Occupy Wall Street has made New York City its central location since *Adbusters* suggested everyone congregate there in protest. Wall Street serves as a symbol, "the financial Gomorrah of America," and embodies the capitalist influence in our politics that Occupy is fighting (Culture Jammers HQ 2011). New York City is the largest city in the U.S. with a 2010 population of 19,378,102 and the population has continued to grow since (U.S. Census Bureau 2012). New York City is important to the Occupy movement symbolically because its Financial District, located in lower Manhattan on Wall Street, is the financial capital of the U.S. Wall Street is home to many of the corporations that the Occupy movement blames for corrupting the U.S. government. Some of the more iconic buildings on Wall Street and their representations of big business are The Trump Building, the New York Stock Exchange, and JP Morgan headquarters.

Figure 2: Occupy Wall Street at Union Square. Photo by author.

Although Occupy Wall Street protestors were kicked out of their original camp in Zuccotti Park, the movement has maintained a continuous presence in the city. Occupy still uses Zuccotti Park for events such as their General Assembly, but they also frequently utilize other parks throughout the city. They are out daily at Union Square handing out bagels and information about Occupy Wall Street and upcoming events. The attendance at in-person events in New York City was significantly smaller in June 2012 than it was in September, October, and November of 2011 before the Raid. However, the group continues to lead successful campaigns including Occupy Sandy, an ongoing relief effort for those who were affected by Hurricane Sandy in 2012. New York City is not the

only Occupy group that has managed to survive and OWS still maintains camps throughout the country, including a camp in Flint, Michigan.

Flint, Michigan

The city of Flint is located in southeast Michigan, 66 miles northwest of Detroit. It is a modest sized city with a population of 102,434 in 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau 2012). Downtown Flint is the remnant of a once prosperous city with several towers and many buildings in dire need of repair.

What makes Flint intriguing in regards to the Occupy movement is its history. Flint is the birthplace of General Motors (GM), which served as the major industry for the city and shaped much of its history. Flint was also the location of the infamous Flint Sit-Down Strike of 1936 and 1937. The strike played a significant role in forming the United Auto Workers (UAW), which still remains a constant force in the city. Flint reached the height of its prosperity between the 1950s and the 1960s. The start of the auto industry's decline in the late 1960s also marked the beginning of the decline of the city, seen in its demographics, its appearance, urban decay, and its increased crime rate. By 2002 Flint was in financial crisis. The state appointed Flint an emergency financial manager who took control of the local government and still has the power to remove elected officials, modify contracts, reduce pay, and outsource work (Longley 2011). Between 2000 and 2010 the city of Flint continued to decline. In a span of 10 years, Flint's population decreased by 18%, and 36.6% of Flint's population was below the poverty level (U.S. Census Bureau 2012). According to the FBI, Flint is currently the

most violent city in America with the most violent crimes per capita[4] (Harris 2011). Flint has been hit harder than most cities by the recent U.S. recession and the frustration of the residents is echoed in the complaints of the Occupy movement.

Figure 3: Downtown Flint. The large building shown on the left is the Genesee Towers (plural because the building consists of two towers stacked on top of each other). The towers were condemned by the city in 2004. Currently the streets around the towers are closed off due to the risk of falling concrete. Photo courtesy of Patrice Hatcher.

While Flint's rich history made it an important area to study, the Occupy movement in Flint was also an ideal example of a small city movement. Occupy Flint had

[4] In 2010 Flint recorded more than 2,400 violent crimes, the most per capita of any city with more than 100,000 residents (Federal Bureau of Investigation 2010).

one of the longest standing campsites in the state of Michigan (AlHajal 2012), lasting from October of 2011 until June 2012, despite the harsh winters typical of the city.

Figure 4: Private land on the corner of Martin Luther King Avenue and Second Avenue in downtown Flint. This lot was the location of the Occupy Flint camp. Photo courtesy of Patrice Hatcher.

The encampment itself was also complex and has been an inspiration for other Occupy movements around the state. The camp was located on private land on the corner of Martin Luther King Avenue and Second Avenue in downtown Flint. It was equipped with structures built of pipe, tarp, plywood, and Mylar for insulation with wood burning stoves, ventilation, and different areas for food storage and living space (AlHajal 2011). The camp had also utilized solar and bike powered energy. In addition to voicing many of the complaints of other Occupy movements, Occupy Flint also made efforts to improve

its own community by cleaning up graffiti, planning housing projects, and attending city meetings (AlHajal 2012). Like most Occupy movements, Occupy Flint utilized the Internet as a tool for activism. During Occupy Flint's occupation, they had a Twitter Feed, one Facebook page and two Facebook groups, along with an Occupy Flint website.

Outline of Thesis

This study holds the potential to be important in the field of anthropology because linguistic anthropology has yet to develop a consistent method for studying groups online. Previous work (Hill 2008; Jones and Schiefflin 2009) that have sought to study online language and communicative practices within a linguistic anthropological framework have relied heavily on methods that do not allow the researcher to interact with groups or cultural experts. However, as Hill (2008:46) demonstrates, sometimes abandoning ethnographic methods in favor of purely online data can be useful in examining phenomena that may be difficult to observe in everyday talk and interaction. This is something I found to be especially true in my analysis of leaders in a leaderless movement (Chapter 4). Yet, for the majority of my research I found that a consideration of both in-person ethnographic data and online data can provide a more exhaustive understanding of the Occupy movement. In this research, I demonstrate that a thorough ethnographic study of Internet groups that includes collecting linguistic data online in conjunction with participant observation and interviews is possible. By collecting "rich ethnograp[ic] data placed on a broad conceptual canvas" I gain "a deeper and more detailed picture than we have to date of the complex world of language, technology, and social change" (Cook 2004:112). My research improves upon current ethnographic

methods used for Internet research by demonstrating the importance of participant observation and interviews in understanding context within Internet communication.

In Chapter 1, I describe in detail the methods I used to collect my data. I used a mixed methods approach that included in-person ethnography and an online ethnography, which includes an archive a several websites. I then address issues concerning the magnitude and complexity of data available online that can overwhelm the researcher through the use of computer scripts. Scripts are written to automate and execute specified tasks in a computer software environment. Scripts are written to expedite tasks that could be completed by a human but would be painstakingly time intensive.

By using simple scripting tools that are easily accessible to the average computer user, I argue that linguistic anthropologists can greatly expand the breadth of information they are able to collect during Internet studies. These scripting tools greatly decrease the amount of time a researcher must spend collecting Internet data, while also increasing the amount of data they are able to collect. By collecting information more efficiently, the researcher can gain a more complete contextual understanding of the topic they are studying.

In Chapter 2, I describe the context within which my research took place in comparison with the context in which Juris' (2012) research on Occupy Boston occurred. I argue for the importance of including the context of research within ethnographic writings despite theoretical critiques of "thick description." I argue thick description provides the best method currently available to anthropologists for providing the reader with context.

In Chapter 3, I explore how participants in new social movements such as Occupy Wall Street reconcile differing ideas of authenticity between the individual and the collective. I ask who has the authority to determine the authentic identity of a social movement and how are ideas of authenticity distributed among new members of the movement? I answer these questions and examine similarities and differences between how Occupy Wall Street members express their authenticity within the movement online, as opposed to their expressions of authenticity in-person.

In Chapter 4, I examine Occupy Wall Street as a leaderless movement and what it means to be leaderless. I explore differing ideas of leaderlessness in online discussions and attempt to locate potential leaders within Occupy Wall Street by using their online Karma. Karma is a rating system of user discussion posts in which participants in a discussion board can provide positive or negative feedback points to another participant's discussion post. The points generated from the discussion posts are then used to calculate an overall Karma rating for an individual. By locating members with unusually high Karma ratings, I then look at their other activity online and examine their performance as a charismatic individual by looking at how they express emotion in an online environment.

In Chapter 5, I examine the role of space and place in a social movement within an online environment. I differentiate space and place by the attachment of cultural significance to a location (place), whereas spaces do not have cultural meaning (Casey 1996 and Basso 1996). I explain how space and place function differently online as opposed to in-person. I argue that Occupy Wall Street occupied an exemplary center (Wall Street) of those they were protesting against (the influence of money in politics)

and then established their own exemplary center on Wall Street (Zuccotti Park). I use Geertz's (1996:36) definition of an exemplary center as a political and ritual center of power for a group of people that presents a model doctrine of behavior that is imitated in other locations. The actions and customs practiced in Zuccotti Park were then replicated in Occupy camps around the country and around the world. However, once Occupy was evicted from their "sacred space" in Zuccotti Park, the movement was severely weakened and evictions of other Occupy camps around the camp followed.

Finally, in the conclusion of this thesis I emphasize the importance of ethnographic research in anthropological research and the benefits of studying both online and in-person activity when available. I argue that when a group maintains both and online and in-person presence, we must study both of these settings so we are not ignoring one aspect of the group and their activity. To demonstrate this I trace the Occupy Legacy and not just the impact the movement had on the U.S. in general, but the impact it had on individuals and communities in which it took place.

Chapter 1: Methods

Use of the Internet among activist movements presents challenges to any social research because of the sheer magnitude and complexity of the Internet (Zimbra, Abbasi, and Chen 2010:50). However, the Internet also provides the researcher with a range of tools to collect, organize, and archive data which can help resolve issues of magnitude and complexity (Zimbra, Abbasi, and Chen 2010:50). For my research I utilized an open source web archiving script to collect and store entire websites associated with Occupy Wall Street and any updates to those websites. Using the data I collected through my archive, I then analyzed the discourse patterns present on the websites to look for communicative patterns.

In addition to my online archive I also conducted an ethnography of Occupy Wall Street participants, using participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups to gather participant perceptions of the movement. In-depth ethnographic fieldwork of the Occupy Wall Street movement allowed me "privileged access to the lived experience of activists…as well as a window onto the "submerged" organizing, informal networks, protest activities, ideological difference, public claim-making, fear and repression, and internal tensions, which are almost everywhere features of social movements" (Edelman 2001:309-310). Occupy Wall Street is a huge movement spread across the U.S. and the world in both physical and online spaces. Conducting ethnographic research on the entire movement would be impossible. I therefore, narrowed my research to the Occupy movement in New York City and Flint, Michigan.

Online Ethnography

On May 17, 2012 I began archiving the Occupy movement's web presence every night at midnight until August 27, 2012. Because almost every one of over a thousand cities with an Occupy movement has its own web presence, I narrowed my focus down to only a few sites. I initially archived the websites of Occupy Flint, Occupy Wall Street, and the General Assembly including nycga.org, occupywallst.org, and occupyflint.org. However, during the course of my research I discovered occupywallstreet.net, Occupy Wall Street's news site, and began archiving this site in mid-June. My archive included both current information and past information on the websites. Every archive was stored on an external hard drive in folders under the appropriate date and then backed up on an additional external hard drive.

Archiving websites involves copying onto my hard drive every single file of the website including CSS, HTML (which can be processed as text files), and any image files present on the website. I used wget, a software package available free under the GNU General Public License, to collect my archive. Wget retrieves files using the more widely used Internet protocols such as HTTP, HTTPS, and FTP. The download for GNU wget is available on the GNU Operating System website at the URL <http://www.gnu.org/software/wget/>. For this project I ran GNU wget through Bash on Mac OS X, although it is also capable of running on most UNIX-like operating systems and Microsoft Windows. The original author of GNU wget is Hrvoje Nikšić and Fiuseppe Scrivano currently maintains the software (GNU 2011). By archiving websites in this way, I had a collection of rich data concerning the Occupy movement and their use of the Internet.

Wget through Bash is just one method of archiving data. Other scripting languages can produce similar results, however, this was the method I used because it is one David Anderson and I was most familiar with. David Anderson, a computer professional, was kind enough to help me create my scripts in both the archival process and the analysis process.

Through this process I was not obtaining any information that is not already public on the Internet. It merely allowed me to archive Internet data on a hard drive I owned locally in a quick and efficient way. An alternative method to archiving Internet data would be to visit every page and save them individually, which could take weeks or months. By using GNU wget I was able to limit this process to a couple of hours depending on the size of the site. For more details of the specific scripts I used in my research, see Appendix A.

While I collected data for four different websites, this study only draws from two of those sites. I excluded occupyflint.org and occupywallstreet.net from my research for differing reasons. Occupy Flint's website was inactive by the time I was conducting my research. While there were materials still available on the site, they appeared to draw from other sites from where I had collected. I excluded the site, occupywallstreet.net because it was primarily a news site for the Occupy movement. Many of the articles posted on occupywallstreet.net were also posted on nycga.net and occupywallst.org and therefore it did not provide me with any new data.

The two websites I did analyze in this study were nycga.net and occupywallst.org. Nycga.net is Occupy Wall Street's official site for the New York General Assembly. This site contains informational material such as how to get involved, general information

about the group, and a calendar of activities that includes dates, times, and locations of any Occupy Wall Street event. The site also contained user-generated content on Occupy news. This included blog posts that were then posted on the nycga site. The site also included it's own social network, in which users could register on the site with a profile, friend other members of the site, join groups, and participate in the discussion forums. My archive of nycga.net proved to be especially useful when nycga removed the majority of the data from their site at the end of February due to some technical difficulties. As of April 2013, their tech team has not yet been able to restore all data, however, my archive of the site preserved all data and this did not prove to be a setback for my research.

The other site I use primarily in this study is occupywallst.org, which identifies itself as the unofficial de facto site for Occupy Wall Street. This website is very similar to nycga.net in that it provides informational, user-generated content. Content posted on the site is first reviewed and then approved by those on their mailing list. This site also contains a discussion forum in which registered users on the site can participate.

While I strongly encourage anthropologists to consider the benefits this style of research may have for the future of our discipline, there are also some challenges that my method presents. Before embarking on such a project, I strongly suggest becoming very familiar with how computer scripts function, how web administrators may perceive Internet archival, and becoming intimately familiar with the websites included in your research.

While I was developing a method of Internet archival and data mining for this thesis I enlisted the help of an ingenious and talented computer professional named David Anderson. David was able to develop complex computer scripts to collect and analyze

my data that were beyond my skills and experience to create and was instrumental in the success of my research. However, my own experience and knowledge with computers, especially websites, was just as critical in this project. While I did not have the expertise or creativity to develop the scripts that David was capable of, I was still able to understand what the scripts were doing, how they worked, and what was possible. As an anthropologist and a researcher, it is important to understand the context of your research, which includes how the data is collected and how it is analyzed. A literacy of computer scripts within this methodological approach is vital in the understanding of the context of the research.

Another caution to other researchers is how web administrators may perceive Internet archival. The wget script visits all pages on a website and downloads each page by following links on the pages it visits. For smaller websites, such as the Occupy sites I was archiving, this could cause a dramatic increase in traffic to their website. This could be perceived as the mapping stage of a malicious attack (Mankad 2011). In fact, one of the sites I archived blocked our IP address from accessing their site for a few days. To avoid this misconception I highly recommend either slowing down and spacing out web collection across a longer period of time, or remaining in close contact with web administrators from the sites you are archiving about what exactly you are doing.

Another important step to consider before embarking on a study that includes Internet research is to become intimately familiar with the websites being studied. This not only involves a familiarity with the forward facing aspect of the site, but also the behind-the-scenes structure of the site. Once an archive has been collected, all files will be placed in folders that mirror the website's structure. For my research, my archive

included well over a million different folders, each containing at least one file. Without an understanding of where information is located on the website and the naming conventions used, it would have been nearly impossible for me to locate and analyze files and the information stored within them. The scripts I used often would produce results in the form of file names, which I would then have to go and find in my archive. My understanding of the websites' structures allowed me to find the resulting files of my scripts on which I wanted to focus.

In addition, my understanding of the activity and use of the websites gave my research direction. I spent a significant amount of time exploring each website and becoming familiar with the content and users participating on the site. Once I came across something that I thought might be significant, such as user karma ratings discussed in Chapter 4, I brought the information to David and together we devised a method for searching my archive for instances of the particular phenomena on the website. The anthropologist's insight and knowledge into the cultural, social, and linguistic aspects of a website is what gives this style of research directionality and informs what scripts will be appropriate.

In-Person Ethnography

Although the majority of my research focuses on data collected through my Internet ethnography, I also conducted ethnographic research on the streets where local Occupy movements were (and are still) found. In mid June and early July of 2012 I traveled to both Flint and New York to conduct an ethnography of Occupy Wall Street participants. I used participant observation and interviews to inform my overall understanding of the Occupy movement. Ethnographic fieldwork of the Occupy Wall

Street movement allowed me to grasp participants' point of view and realize "a more genuine appreciation of the lived experience of the movement participants" (Edelman 2001:309). The ethnographic data from this research provided insight into participant perceptions of the overall movement.

Fieldwork in Flint was problematic since the Occupy movement had practically disappeared by the time I arrived. Participants had moved onto other projects, such as urban gardening or medical marijuana communities. However, I was still able to find people who were willing to tell me about their experiences with Occupy Flint. I found these interviews very insightful in understanding the Occupy Flint movement, but unfortunately I was never able to observe or participate with them.

Discourse Analysis

Once the data from both my Internet research and ethnographic research were collected, I used discourse analysis to analyze my data. This entails studying talk and/or text and how they are constructed by aspects of social practices (Duranti 1985:195; Potter 1997:146) and is "used in participant observation, within the context of ethnographic fieldwork" (Farnell and Graham 1998:411). Discourse-centered methods in linguistic anthropology focus on "naturally occurring discourse" or interactions that occur in a specific social context and must be understood in relation to this context (Farnell and Graham 1998:411; Duranti 1985:195). In focusing thus, discourse-centered approaches seek to "discover the social meanings inhering in language forms and their relationship to social formations, identity, relations of power, beliefs, and ideologies" (Farnell and Graham 1998:413). To gather this information, one needs to conduct an ethnography of communication (Hymes 1972) in which speech is examined within a larger frame of

reference and in its original context. Along with other ethnographic methods, discourse-centered methods can help expose social beliefs, collective identities, and individual feelings found in the Occupy movement.

While I use all aspects of the sites I collected during my research in my analysis, my linguistic analysis primarily focuses on the discussion forums of these sites because they are more interactional and provide a wider range of perspectives than the articles posted on the site. Discussion forums are interactive "asynchronous forms of web-based discourse in which communication is public and organized within topic areas" (Wanner 2008:127). The topic areas are separated into themes and under each theme users can post discussion threads, which are discussions on specific subjects. Anyone who is registered on occupywallst.org or nycga.net can create a discussion thread and anyone registered is also allowed to participate. Each site also has moderators who police the threads. In the case of occupywallst.org moderators will remove posts that are too vulgar, off topic, or spam. While nycga.net does have moderators, their removal of posts, if any, are not made public, therefore it is difficult to tell exactly how much influence they have over postings. What is most fascinating about discussion forums is the way individuals interact with each other online.

In combining various data sets from in-person interviews, online websites, and online discussion boards for analysis, I gain a more holistic view of the Occupy movement. While the in-person ethnographic methods I use in this study are commonplace in anthropological traditions, I hope to demonstrate that there is value in pairing the data collected from these methods with the data collected online. The methods I use to collect my in-person data not only provide me with a rich data sample, my

methods also are practical and allowed me to efficiently analyze an extremely large and dynamic set of data.

Chapter 2: "I Swear to Tell the Truth, but Not the Whole Truth"

In Juris' (2012) introduction to *Reflections on #Occupy Everywhere*, an ethnographic study which explores links between social media and public space within the #Occupy Everywhere[5] movements, he begins with a "tale of entry" (Crapanzano 1992:62). In this tale of entry, Juris (2012:259) reports on his initial interaction with #Occupy Boston, both in-person and through social media, in which he hasn't yet entered completely into the world of those who will be the subjects of his ethnography.

> October 15, 2011. When I exited the T-station in downtown Boston on the day of global actions in support of #Occupy Wall Street and the burgeoning #Occupy Everywhere movements, I immediately accessed my Twitter account. The latest tweets displayed on my Android phone indicated a large group of protesters was on its way from the #Occupy Boston camp at Dewey Square and would soon turn a nearby corner. Minutes later, hundreds of mostly young, energetic marchers appeared, decked out in an array of styles ranging from jeans and brightly colored tees to black and khaki army surplus attired and various shades of plaid. I eagerly jumped into the crowd and joined in chanting, "Banks got bailed out, we got sold out!" followed by the emblematic "We are the 99%! We are the 99%!" We soon turned to onlookers and began interpellating them, "*You* are the 99%! *You* are the 99%!" After a few minutes, I moved to the sidewalk to take photos and observe the signs on display, which ranged in tone from the populist "End the Wars and

[5] Juris refers to the Occupy movements using the # symbol followed by the movements name. In doing so he is referring to the movement as it would be known in an online environment, such as on Twitter. I do not use the same naming convention when referring to Occupy because the movement does not exist solely online.

Tax the Rich!" to the inspirational "1000 cities, 80 countries Today!" and what could be interpreted as a slightly defensive "Our message is clear, read the fine print!"

Juris' "tale of entry" is significantly different from my own experience, which I will narrate at the end of this chapter. I will use the differences between Juris' and my own tale of entry to demonstrate the importance of context in ethnographic research. But first, I will begin with a comparison of Juris' introduction to Clifford Geertz's (1973b) tale of entry in *Deep Play* in which he uses "thick description" to provide his readers with context and also entertainment. I will follow this with a discussion of what thick description is, why ethnographic writing is important to anthropology, the problems inherent in this style of writing, and why, despite these problems, I will use ethnographic writing to tell my own tale of entry into the Occupy Wall Street Movement.

Geertz's section "The Raid," in his essay *Deep Play,* is a tale of entry in which he "is no longer in his own world, and he has not yet mastered the new world he will constitute through his ethnography" (Crapanzano 1992:61). Geertz (1973b:412) describes himself and his wife as being "intruders" and "invisible," that is, until he and his wife were present during the raid of a cockfight, which they then fled. After having fled "like everyone else" Geertz notes a change in the village: he is no longer invisible, but instead "the center of all attention," which *he* interprets as acceptance into the village (1973b:416).

Likewise, Juris uses a similar tale of entry in his ethnography of #Occupy Boston. In his writing, he reports his initial encounter with a group of #Occupy Boston activists.

At the beginning of this account, Juris uses the first person nominative singular pronoun, "I," which indexes him as a distinct and separate entity from the "energetic marchers." However, shortly after this he "jumps" into the crowd and joins in with the chants of the marchers and he shifts to the first person nominative **plural** pronoun "we," which hints that he has joined the group, even though there is no indication that the group has accepted his entry. As with Geertz (Crapanzano 1992:64), after the tale of entry, Juris completely disappears from the rest of the account. Tales of entry, such as the two mentioned here, have become a common characteristic in ethnographic writing (Crapanzano 1992:61). They are filled with thick description and are used to draw the reader in, sometimes offer humor, but more importantly, they provide context for the rest of the ethnography.

Ethnography as an Art Form

Geertz's (1973a) uses Gilbert Ryle's discussion of "thick description" to define a method of providing context to make behavior meaningful to others. Ethnographic research cannot be conducted like an experiment. Experimental research seeks to uncover an exact answer or law, whereas ethnographic research relies on interpretation and a search for meaning (Geertz 1973a:5). Therefore, an ethnographer must provide context in the form of thick description so the reader can have a deeper understanding of not just the behavior the ethnography is describing, but also the meaning behind the behavior and the anthropologist's interpretation.

However, Geertz's method of "thick description" and ethnographic writing can be problematic in the impossibility of the task placed on the ethnographer. Ethnographic accounts are fictitious and produce a "hierarchy of subjectivity" (Crapanzano 1992;

McCormack 1999). Some of the techniques used in thick descriptive writing can distract from the important details or lack thereof.

Ethnographic writing, in its nature, places the ethnographer in an impossible situation: she promises to include the context of her research, but she cannot possibly report on the entire context (Crapanzano 1992; McCormack 1999). Anthropologists cannot possibly see all as we conduct our research. We cannot possibly understand the entire point of view of those we study. Nor can we fully understand how our own presence affects the data we collect, or how our culture affects our interpretation (Crapanzano 1992). This impossibility is what Crapanzano (1992:69) refers to as Hermes' Dilemma. Hermes' promised Zeus "to tell no lies but did not promise to tell the whole truth" (Crapanzano 1992:69). Likewise, anthropologists seek to provide the most truthful account to their audience, but cannot possibly report the entire context of their research.

Ethnographic accounts themselves are also fictitious or fabrications of the anthropologist based on their own interpretation (Geertz 1973a:241; McCormack 1999:125). The word fiction is derived from the Latin word *fictio,* meaning something that is made up. Likewise, fabrication describes the process in which something is manufactured or made. Therefore, to say ethnographic accounts are fictitious or fabricated is not to say that ethnographic accounts are not factual, but instead the anthropologist creates ethnographic writing based on their own perceptions and understandings. Ethnographies are not "experiments;" they cannot be reproduced and another may interpret the experience differently than the anthropologist writing the account. However, ethnographic writing does not pretend to present absolute truths, but

instead present theories based on the context and interpretation of the anthropologist's account.

The ethnography also creates a hierarchy between the ethnographer, their audience, and the subjects of their study (Abu-Lughod 1991; Crapanzano 1992; McCormack 1999). Ethnographic writing gives authority to the ethnographer who must mediate between the worlds of those she studies and the world of their readers (Crapanzano 1992; McCormack 1999). In addition it creates separations between the author, their readers, and those they study (McCormack 1999:125). The ethnographer has the privilege and authority to interpret and write the ethnography, the audience has the privilege of reading and passing judgment on not just the ethnographer, but also the subjects of the ethnography. But where does this hierarchy of subjectivity leave the true cultural experts, the subjects of the study? Unfortunately, ethnographic writing tends to leave the subjects at the bottom of the hierarchy in which their voice is only heard as interpreted through the ethnographer.

Finally, the rhetorical strategies used in ethnographic writing that are meant to provide context and entertain the reader can distract from the overall data, or lack of data (Crapanzano 1992). For example, in Geertz's tale of entry in *Deep Play*, he interprets his acceptance into the community by the Balinese following the police raid without providing any evidence that the community reciprocates this acceptance. By using thick description and providing interpretations of how he sees or wants to see the Balinese experience, Geertz "blurs his own subjectivity – his experience of himself in those early Balinese days – with the subjectivity and the intentionality of the villagers" (Crapanzano 1992:63). In many cases, these techniques are used to provide entertainment to the reader

and do not offer any understanding of the subjects' experience or intentionality. A final rhetorical strategy used in Geertz's writing is his generalizations for an entire group. In Geertz's writing he generalizes the subjects of his writing by using the plural pronouns "they" and generalizing phrases such as "the Balinese." In doing so, Geertz is taking an experience that took place in a specific context and attributing it to an entire people.

However, despite some of the problematic aspects of ethnographic writing, anthropologists rely heavily on this writing style because it is, as of yet, the only tool anthropologists have available to them to relay ethnographic experiences. To counter some of the flaws in ethnography, postmodernist anthropologists have sought to shift how ethnographies are written to include more context-heavy accounts that include "ethnographies of the particular" (Abu-Lughod 1991) such as Abu-Lughod's (1995) essay *A Tale of Two Pregnancies*. Postmodern anthropologists include the specific time, place, and people being studied, the personal history of the author, the conditions of the fieldwork in their writing, and require authors to be aware of "issues of rhetoric, power, voice and perspective" that are present in ethnographic writing (McGee and Warms 2012:524).

Yet, postmodernist contributions to ethnographic writing do not solve all problems of ethnographic writing, especially the impossibility of reporting upon the entire context of the ethnography. However, this should not deter us from writing ethnographic accounts, as they still present cultural realities (Hanson 1989:560). Instead, we need to be more aware of our roles as ethnographers and the flaws that exist within our own writings. In this way we can strive to perfect our art form by making our readers

more aware of the imperfections within our own account and also seek to eliminate these imperfections when we can.

A Tale of Entry

Despite the previous flaws mentioned above concerning not just ethnographic writing, but also tales and entry and thick description, like Geertz and Juris, I will provide my own tale of entry into Occupy Wall Street. In part, my account is meant to provide some minimal entertainment to my audience, but its larger purpose is to provide an important example of context since it will be clear to my readers that my introduction to Occupy Wall Street differed greatly from that of Juris'.

Before I begin with my tale, I would like to point out one critical difference between Geertz's tale of entry and my own, which I believe will demonstrate an additional function of my own account. In Geertz's *Deep Play*, he was entering into a community in which most members were born into and the tale of entry in this case is fairly unique to the anthropologist. However, both Juris and myself were entering into communities, where all members had to seek out membership. In this sense, our tales of entry become not just an entertaining account of the anthropologist struggling to fit into a community, but they also become tales of anyone who has ever sought to become a member of Occupy Wall Street. This becomes an important distinction as it could potentially provide a better understanding of entry into an activist group. However, my account is still largely influenced by my own personal history and my own experience.

I arrived in New York City in June of 2012, about nine months after Occupy Wall Street first met in the streets. Not being used to the large city, I was initially overwhelmed by the crowds of people, the tall buildings, and navigating by foot or

subway rather than car. I was definitely out of my element and astounded by the big city atmosphere I had entered. However, despite my discomfort with my new surroundings, I was ecstatic to finally meet the people I had followed online for so long.

I had been following Occupy Wall Street for months online via their website, Facebook, and Twitter feed, but this would be my first opportunity to interact with OWS members in person. Based on the schedule posted to the New York City General Assembly's trainings page and calendar, I had noted down all the events they were having along with where and when they would take place. Using these notes, I created a schedule for myself that included the events I felt would be most exciting and beneficial to my research.

The first event I had planned to attend was Summer Disobedience School (OWSDS), which was to be held in Bryant Park. OWS describes OWSDS as a "training program that will empower us to map, target, and disrupt sites of capitalist injustice across the city with a wide range of creative tactics accessible to people [with] all levels of experience" (OccupyWallSt 2012). It was created as a program to help introduce new members into the OWS movement by pairing them up with mentors who can offer them moral support and technical guidance. Those who attend OWSDS become mentors themselves and replicate the training they received.

I arrived at Bryant Park about a half hour before OWSDS was scheduled to start and noticed instantly that this was not a typical day for the park. A large stage and lights were being erected in the center of the park and signs everywhere were advertising the Tropfest film festival which was to begin that evening. However, much of the park was

still accessible, so I began walking around and trying to find where OWSDS might choose to meet.

As time went on and I saw no groups gathering in the park, I began to worry. I sat down at a chair and used my phone to get online. I visited first the Facebook and Twitter pages for the New York City General Assembly and also the Facebook event that was created for OWSDS. Nothing had been changed. I then visited the NYCGA website and everything indicated that I was in the right place at the right time. I began walking the park again looking for any gatherings. I asked an employee of the park if they knew anything about OWSDS and was told they usually meet at the fountain. I went to the fountain, and no one was there, so I waited. After about an hour of waiting, I left disappointed and confused[6].

Later that same day I visited Zuccotti Park for the first time for a meeting of the New York City General Assembly that was scheduled to take place. I had slightly more success at this event. Occupy Wall Street had a small display table set up and there were protesters holding signs and shouting "arrest the corporate criminals" at the people walking by and the police who were there observing the activity.

As more people began to show up, they would greet each other and form little groups of conversation in which they talked about a variety of issues such as the latest gossip in OWS, how their lives outside of the movement were going, and even what kind of makeup they were wearing that day. It was clear that most people already knew at least one other person who was there.

[6] I later learned that an update for OWSDS had been posted on the Twitter feed of the instructor who I was not following. The event had been moved to Central Park.

We sat talking while we waited for the GA to start. After about a half hour past the announced start time of the GA I learned from other members who were gathered about "Occupy Time." Occupy Time is a joke but also a frustration among the members of Occupy Wall Street about how events never start on time. After an hour of waiting for the GA I became impatient with Occupy Time, as did those sitting near me. Finally, after almost two hours of waiting for the GA to begin, the person who had been managing the informational table announced that they were not going to be holding a GA that night. Saddened and frustrated by my unsuccessful day, I left Zuccotti Park like the other OWS members.

The next day I set out again with more events planned. My first stop was at Zuccotti Park for the tabling event[7]. When I arrived at Zuccotti Park, there didn't appear to be any OWS members there, not even the table was set up. But keeping in mind my lesson on Occupy Time the previous day, I decided to give it some more time. After spending a couple of hours in and around Zuccotti Park and finding no Occupy events, I approached the police, who seemed to be a constant presence in the park, and asked them "Where is Occupy Wall Street?" The two officers suggested that I might have better luck if I try Union Square since they had heard OWS had been spending a lot of time there.

Hearing this I got on the Subway and traveled North to Union Square. As soon as I entered the park, there they were. A group of about 15 Occupiers were sitting on the steps of Union Square behind a table that held fliers and bagels. Around the table someone had drawn chalk art on the sidewalk, which included a dove, and variations of

[7] Tabling is when a group sets up a table or stand with informational materials such as flyers, buttons, and/or bumper stickers. The purpose of a tabling event is to engage the public's interest and spread awareness of their group or their goals.

the Occupy Wall Street hash tag.[8] This group of Occupiers was a completely different group than the ones I had met the previous day in Zuccotti Park. As soon as I approached the table a man wearing "zombie glasses" engaged me in conversation[9]. He started piling fliers into my hands and excitedly telling me about OWS. I had finally found Occupy Wall Street! This is the group of Occupiers that I spent the majority of my time with and are the basis of my in-person ethnographic data.

It should be clear to the reader that there is a clear difference between Juris' reported use of social networking software to find #Occupy Boston, and my use of similar means to find Occupy Wall Street. In Juris' account "the latest tweets…indicated a large group of protesters was on its way from the #Occupy Boston camp at Dewey Square and would soon turn a nearby corner" and he was successful in finding #Occupy Boston as soon as he sought them out. However, I had much more difficulty and it took a day and a half of failed attempts to connect with them.

Again, this is not a critique of either Juris' or my own methods, but a difference in context. Juris' research took place in October of 2011, about a month after Occupy first began meeting in the streets. At this time, the Occupy movement was gaining momentum in the U.S. and around the world. However, by the time I was doing fieldwork in June of 2012, nine months after Occupy Wall Street began, the movement had lost most of its steam and did not have nearly the following or membership that the group Juris' studied had.

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[8] A hash tag is represented by the symbol # and prefixes a word or phrase. Hash tags are commonly used on social networking sites, especially Twitter, to group messages together so one can search for the hash tag and see a set of messages that use that hash tag.

[9] Occupy Wall Street has staged protests against "corporate zombies" in which members dress up as zombies in suits. This protest is Occupy's way of expressing the belief that corporations are like zombies. They have no heart, soul, mind, they walk around in a trance-like state trying to accumulate as much money as possible similar to the way that mythical zombies pursue brains.

In the case of these two ethnographies, the context of who, what, and when prove to be very important. Likewise, the context of my ethnography will greatly influence the results I collected and my own interpretations of these results. Bearing the criticisms of ethnographic writing and the importance of context in mind, I will strive to provide my readers with as honest and transparent an account as possible; however, this account also is based upon the context within which it occurred.

Chapter 3: "We Have Come Together As Individuals": Authentication Within the Occupy Wall Street Movement

While in New York City, I conducted ethnographic research of Occupy Wall Street that included collecting interviews, pictures, brochures they were handing out, participant observation, and the authentic Occupy Wall Street experience. One of the first questions I asked participants in my study was "what is Occupy Wall Street?" And, interestingly enough, I received similar answers from everyone. This answer was consistently something along the lines of "it depends on who you ask." I then would ask them to expand on that statement and explain what Occupy Wall Street was to them and other people. This would result in a diversity of answers demonstrating that it truly does depend on who you ask.

The second portion of my research included a study of Occupy Wall Street's web presence and generated similar results. Rather than getting a clear image of what Occupy Wall Street is and what it stands for, I received answers such as, "we welcome all," "our only affiliation is with the people," "it is party-less, leaderless, by the people and for the people," and a list of twenty-three "not all-inclusive" grievances which ranged from economic issues to animal rights issues.

The decentralized model and embrace of individual variation that I found is not unique to Occupy Wall Street. In fact, this sort of embrace of diversity within the group has become increasingly common among social movements in recent years. The spread of such a model in social movements and the lack of consensus I found in the Occupy Wall Street movement raises an important question concerning authenticity: how does something or someone undergo a process of authentication and become accepted and/or

distributed among members of the movement when a centralized leadership is absent? In this chapter I will provide a brief overview of what it means for something or someone to be authentic, I will explore how authenticity within a social movement can be performed within the heteroglossic nature of discourse both in-person and online, and finally I will argue that the mode of communication used— i.e. in-person vs. online —helps shape the way authenticity is expressed.

Authenticity

According to Lindholm (2008:2), "authentic objects, persons, and collectives are original, real, and pure; they are what they purport to be, their roots are known and verified, their essence and appearance are one." Values such as sincerity, naturalness, originality (Lindholm 2008:1), and genuineness are all important in determining authenticity; however, we must be careful not to use them interchangeably as none of these values are synonymous with authenticity. For something to be authentic it must have a real existence, it must have longevity, it must be original in a social or cultural context, it must be accepted within a community, and it must have cultural value (Coupland 2003).

Authenticity is socially constructed and constantly changing (Peterson 2005:1086). Due to the social and ever-changing nature of authenticity, "it clearly takes an effort to appear authentic" (Peterson 2005:1086). We actively seek out the authentic (Coupland 2003:417). This desire for the authentic experience is what draws us towards social movements and collectives that are "felt to be real, essential, and vital, providing participants with meaning, unity, and a passing sense of belonging" (Lindholm 2008:1). The process of authentication involves everyone within the collective (Peterson

2005:1091). For a thing to be authentic it must undergo some process of authorization in which it is accepted within the collective; that is, its authenticity must by properly vetted (Coupland 2003:419; Peterson 2005:1091). However, new social movements, such as Occupy Wall Street, are notorious for lacking centralized leadership and are dependent on individuals who identify with the movement. How does something undergo a process of authentication and become accepted and distributed among members of the movement when a centralized leadership is absent?

In this chapter I argue that, within the Occupy movement, authentication is achieved through "specific ways of speaking and patterns of discursive representation" (Coupland 2003:418). More specifically, authenticity is achieved using a heteroglossic or "double-voiced discourse" (Bakhtin 1981). Hill (1995) argues that, within one speech event (e.g., an event of narration), a speaker's particular deployment or manipulation of a range of different voices (as conceived by Bahktin [1981]) can be indexical of the narrator's moral position. The voice system, or the moral axis of the discourse, is constructed through rhetorical strategies.

The Occupy Wall Street Voice

In my data collected from Occupy Wall Street, movement participants use a voice system that includes "the voice of Occupy Wall Street" to morally align themselves with the collective movement. The Occupy Wall Street voice is the "linguistic construction" of Occupy Wall Street's "social persona" (Keane 2000:271). The Occupy Wall Street voice I am referring to can be found in traditional Occupy documents such as their *Statement of Autonomy*, *Declaration of the Occupation of New York City*, and *Principles of Solidarity*. I will be focusing on two different aspects of the Occupy Wall Street voice: a litany of

complaint like that in the Declaration of Independence (Urban 2001:102-142) and a rhetoric that places high importance on participation.

When the Occupy Wall Street voice is used, it can be "authentic*ating* for people who recognize [its] authenticity, as well as in [itself] being social authentic*ated*" (Coupland 2003:419). Therefore, in using the Occupy Wall Street voice, the speaker accomplishes two things: he authenticates himself as a member of the movement and he authenticates the voice of Occupy Wall Street.

The two interviews I will be using were collected from two different participants in New York City at an event in Union Square. I will be referring to my participants as Rob and Jimmy. In Transcripts 1 and 2 Rob and Jimmy use the voice of Occupy Wall Street to morally align themselves with the collective movement and, in doing so, authenticate themselves as members. Markers of the voice of the Occupy Wall Street movement include what Greg Urban (2001) calls a "litany of complaint." Its other distinguishing thematic feature is the importance of participation. Urban (2001:119) describes a litany of complaint as "a series of distinct complaints against some single other." According to Urban, a litany of complaint is a cultural element that dates back to the Declaration of Independence and possibly even earlier. It is a cultural element that has "moved through time and gradually been shaped into a specific form" (Urban 2001:121). Throughout US history this form has surfaced in various social movement secession documents, including Georgia's, Mississippi's, and South Carolina's, the women's movement's *Declaration of Sentiments*, (Urban 2001: 122-129) and Occupy Wall Street's *Declaration of the Occupation of New York City*.

The *Declaration of the Occupation of New York City* was created and published on the New York City General Assembly website on September 29, 2011 just twelve days after Occupy Wall Street first met in the streets. The New York City General Assembly is comprised of working groups that were created within Occupy Wall Street and "organize and set the vision for the #occupywallstreet movement" (NYC General Assembly 2012). The *Declaration* lists twenty-three complaints, two of which I have listed here as examples:

- They have taken our houses through an illegal foreclosure process, despite not having the original mortgage.
- They have poisoned the food supply through negligence, and undermined the farming system through monopolization.

As you can see, the complaints listed in Occupy Wall Street's *Declaration* take the grammatical form of "they have" and the past participle followed by a distinct complaint. Thus the rhetoric of the Occupy Wall Street movement echoes the litany of complaint present in the *Declaration*.

In Transcript 1 Rob's grammatical parallelism bears some similarity to that in the litany of complaint in the *Declaration*. However, instead of listing complaints against "they," the other is left ambiguous and the complaint is preceded by an expression of emotion. In line 1, Rob begins with an expression of affect, "I'm tired" which is then followed by a list of three complaints in lines 5 through 10, "corrupt cops," "corrupt governments," and "there not being any honest companies on the stock exchange." This

pattern is then repeated in line 11 with the emotional expression, “I get really bummed out,” followed by the complaints, “the war” and “everything is like turning to shit.” By performing this litany of complaints, the speaker is invoking the voice of Occupy Wall Street.

Transcript 1

1.	I’m tired of reading		
2.		about	corrupt cops
3.		about	
4.		a ya know	
5.			corrupt governments
6.		and uhm	
7.		ya know	
8.			there not being any honest companies on the
9.			on the
10.			stock exchange
11.	I get really bummed out		
12.		ya know	
13.			and the war
14.		(mumbling)	
15.			everything is
16.			like
17.			turning to shit

In Transcript 2 Jimmy employs two different voices — the voice of the other, which is “removed from the moral center of his text,” and the voice of Occupy Wall Street with which he morally aligns himself (Hill 1995:109). In lines 1 through 4 Jimmy cites the common understanding that Occupy Wall Street is just around the table in the park. That is a view from which Jimmy is distancing himself. He then further removes himself from this idea in lines 5 through 28 by using the voice of Occupy Wall Street to address this “misconception.” In these lines, Jimmy uses a rhetoric that places high importance on participation to indicate the voice of Occupy Wall Street. The concept of inclusion

through participation is a common theme in Occupy rhetoric that is present in interviews I conducted, postings online, and in their Statement of Autonomy, which declares, "if you have chosen to devote resources to building this movement, especially your time and labor, then it is yours." In correcting others' misconceptions concerning the Occupy movement and aligning himself morally with the movement, Jimmy is authenticating himself as a participant in the movement.

Transcript 2

1. But a lot of people think
2. ya know
3. the movement is
4. just around these tables
5. ugh
6. but it's really
7. throughout the whole park
8. I mean
9. it's just everybody
10. I think that's one of the
11. biggest misconceptions people have
12. I mean
13. I can walk ANYwhere in this park
14. right now
15. whether it's over here
16. or on the steps
17. or on this fountain
18. and
19. I mean
20. the majority of the people
21. have
22. come through and spent time
23. at this table
24. uhm
25. and helped out in one way or another
26. and would consider themselves to be
27. ya know (2)
28. occupy people

Online, I noticed a similar use of the Occupy Wall Street voice to demonstrate authenticity; however, I also observed this voice was more frequently paired with the individual voice of the author. The forum thread I will discuss was posted on the New York City General Assembly website under the Movement Building Forum and is entitled *An Open Letter to All 'True Occupiers', Anarchists, and Certain Members of DA and Other WG's*.[10] I chose this particular thread because it includes discussions from Occupy Wall Street members concerning what it means to be a "genuine" member of Occupy Wall Street or what the "authentic" Occupy Wall Street experience is. This thread begins as a letter to Occupy Wall Street written by sumumba criticizing the behavior of anarchists within the Occupy movement. What follows is a general discussion of sumumba's post in which a heated disagreement emerges between Dicey and sumumba with intermittent comments from other participants either supporting or criticizing Dicey or sumumba.

Sumumba on Forum Post: An Open Letter to All 'True Occupiers', Anarchists, and Certain Members of DA and Other WG's[11]

	1.	Who's 'name' did i call?
	2.	That's one thing…
Individual voice	3.	the other is this is a OPEN letter from ME
	4.	and I've stated that...
	5.	I've been putting in work since nearly the beginning
	6.	and have a right to speak my mind…
Collective voice	7.	you calling my statements 'ignorant'
	8.	and or 'arrogant'
	9.	proves many of my points…
	10.	dude i do this full time…

[10] DA and WG's refer to Direct Action Committees and Work Groups

[11] While the original data was taken from a forum post, I have broken the forum up into numbered lines to help emphasize the linguistic qualities of the text and for easy reference.

11. not even sure I know u
12. but i've seen some of your other comments on here..
13. so i would expect as much…
14. but no words will marginalize the TRUTH…
15. and if those in OWS wish NOT to see it
16. perhaps THEY need to come to the other GA's
17. with me to get another view

During my in-person interviews, participants often morally aligned themselves with the movement by using the Occupy voice but very little of an individual voice that would represent their own social persona. However, my online data demonstrate a more frequent use of "distinctive personal styles" (Parish 2009:140) combined with features of the "the Occupy Wall Street voice" such as the rhetorical emphasis on participation. According to Parish (2009:140), who is attempting to accurately represent the views of Lindholm, the reason an individual might draw on the collective to authenticate themselves is that, "in the end, authentic individuality is often pursued through uniformity, because often the only proof of authenticity is what others think." For example, sumumba states in lines 3 and 4, "this is a OPEN letter from ME and I've stated that" in which he is referring to the opening letter in this thread. In this statement sumumba is disassociating his previous statements from the collective by using his individual voice, which acts independently of the movement. However, he then follows this with a statement that emphasizes the importance of (his) participation, a statement that I have found to be common in the voice of Occupy (lines 5-10): "I've been putting in work since nearly the beginning and have a right to speak my mind…dude i do this full time." In supporting the argument performed using his individual voice with the voice of the collective Occupy movement, the author is not only morally aligning himself with Occupy Wall Street, he is also morally aligning his previous argument with Occupy Wall

Street. In doing so, the author authenticates himself as a "true occupier," while at the same time expressing opinions that may not morally align with Occupy Wall Street such as his belief that anarchists are not acting in the best interest of the movement.

In the examples I have provided we can see a stark difference between how authenticity is negotiated online as opposed to in-person. Those whom I interviewed face-to-face rely more heavily on the authentic voice of Occupy Wall Street, whereas in online OWS discussions, we hear the Occupy voice along with features representing a "distinctive personal style," which combine to support and authenticate the individual voice within the collective. The mode of communication plays a significant role. I collected my in-person data in a very public fashion. We were at an Occupy event and other members were sitting in close proximity and would often times interject themselves into the conversation so I was clearly not the sole member of the audience or the only evaluator in these interviews. However, in an online environment a veil of anonymity "empowers us to play with how we present ourselves, and to transgress boundaries that we experience in the face-to-face world" (Williams and Copes 2005:72). This drastic difference in communicative modality or environment does not just account for the way in which authenticity is achieved. Indeed, the fact that increasing parts of our social life are lived out online will also affect other areas of our social and cultural lives (Hughey 2008:530). Therefore, it is imperative that anthropologists begin including online data in their research when available.

Chapter 4: Leaders in a Leaderless Movement

Occupy Wall Street identifies itself as a leaderless movement. Occupy Wall Street is not the first or only leaderless activist movement, especially in recent years. Anonymous, a hacktivist[12] group which has participated with the Occupy Wall Street movement identifies as a leaderless movement and current Feminist and Gay Rights movements have favored a decentralized decision making model. It is not clear where Occupy Wall Street gets its inspiration as a leaderless movement. However, we may be able to attribute this to the growing trend of leaderlessness in new activist movements.

The identification as a leaderless movement first officially appears in the General Assemblies' *Statement of Autonomy* which was agreed upon and passed on November 10, 2011 and states "Occupy Wall Street is a people's movement. It is party-less, leaderless, by the people and for the people." However, what it means to be a leaderless movement is left largely ambiguous allowing individuals and observers to create their own definitions for this phenomenon. In my research, including both forum and interview data, I found three different definitions of a leaderless movement: a movement which has absolutely no leaders, a leaderful movement in which everyone is a leader, and a movement where decisions are based on consensus.

A leaderless movement defined as having no leaders at all is one that focuses on the power of the people. Within this ideology, leaders, even if well intentioned, overpower the voice of the people in a movement, which believes, according to one participant, that "every voice should be heard, and no one voice and no one way [should] be better or louder than another's." Occupy Wall Street is a "people's movement" which

[12] Hacktivism is a combination of the two words *hack* and *activism* and describes groups of activists who use computers and the Internet for political means.

means the movement should be controlled by the people. Having leaders inherently creates an inequality of the group and it is no longer the people or the group in charge, but the leaders. For Occupy Wall Street to have leaders would be to resemble too closely the capitalist society they are protesting, therefore, a leaderless movement is devoid of leadership, allowing every individual the power to speak and make decisions.

Similar to the idea of no leaders, some Occupy members believe in the idea of a "leaderful" movement, or a movement in which everyone is a leader. This idea locates the power of the movement with the individual and everyone within the movement has the power to make decisions, call GAs, or start their own Working Groups. This view of leadership does not deny the possibility of leadership within OWS, but instead denies the possibility of a recognized leader who is placed in a position of power among their peers.

Leadership as consensus is also a prominent idea of what it means to be leaderless within OWS. Consensus within a leaderless movement is the idea that decisions are made within the group with the consensus of the group. At the beginning of OWS, consensus was achieved within a General Assembly. When something was brought before the GA, the members present would be allowed to vote on the proposal. Initially a proposal would not pass without 100% consensus within the group. However, this policy was later changed to a majority vote as allowing one person to block a vote was attributing too much power to one individual and not enough to the group as a whole.

During my research, I observed a leaderless movement that combined ideas of all three ideologies. Occupy is a group truly without *a* leader, although to call them devoid of leaders would be grossly incorrect. Decisions within the group are made through consensus, typically at a meeting of the General Assembly. Anyone within Occupy can

call meetings of the General Assembly, organize events, organize working groups, and express their opinions and ideas. Occupy Wall Street's leaderless philosophy empowers anyone to lead, however, not everyone chooses to lead. Therefore, leaders do emerge in this setting but to argue that everyone in Occupy is a leader would be to overstate the equality of individuals within the group.

Inequalities within the group become more apparent as members of Occupy Wall Street begin assuming leadership-like roles. I experienced this leadership-like role at the first General Assembly I attended while in New York City. The General Assembly is a meeting held about once a week by Occupy Wall Street. Decisions about the movement are made at the GA through a process of direct democracy or consensus although this has recently changed from full consensus to a large majority. Any member of OWS can call a GA; however to vote at a GA you must attend at least a month's worth of meetings.

The first meeting of the General Assembly I attended never actually took place. Myself, along with at least twenty-five other people showed up for the General Assembly and waited patiently for the event to start. After about an hour of waiting for the General Assembly to begin, I was introduced to Occupy Time, or the joke that nothing within Occupy Wall Street begins when it's supposed to. After waiting for another hour, the General Assembly was cancelled. According to the member who made the announcement of the cancellation, the GA was cancelled due to an internal conflict over who had the authority to call a meeting of the GA. According to the announcement, one member of OWS felt that the GA was called by someone who cannot call a GA. Therefore he cancelled the event, despite the fact people had shown up for it. If we define a leader as someone who has social influence in which others follow, or they can enlist others to

support them, then this example is a pretty powerful indicator of leadership existing within Occupy Wall Street.

Occupy Wall Street and Leaders

In addition to difficulties in defining what it means to be a leaderless movement, members of Occupy Wall Street also disagree as to whether the movement should or should not be leaderless, and if leaders exist, to what extent. In following discussion threads concerning leadership on OccupyWallSt.org, I found there were three different opinions on leaders: we should have leaders, we should not have leaders, and we are all leaders.

To better understand internal views on Occupy Wall Street's leaderlessness I turned to the OccupyWallSt.org web forum. OccupyWallSt.org is "the unofficial *de facto* online resource" for the Occupy Wall Street movement. More importantly, this site is separate from the GA, which resembles the head leadership within Occupy Wall Street.

The following analysis pulls from forum threads that were directly related to leadership within Occupy Wall Street, such as "Ok, who is the leader of this protest? Nobody that's who.," "Need a leader," "OWS name a leader," "It is Going to Take a Leader," "Occupy Wall St. is not a leaderless movement," "Should their be a Leader to this Movement?," "Leader for the leaderless (poll)." Many of the discussion threads I examined were rather lengthy, containing multiple participants with multiple posts, and not all posts staying on topic. Therefore, the particular posts presented here are part of a larger conversation and are being singled out because they best represent opinions being echoed by other participants in the forum. Again, the examples I provide are not all-

inclusive of the views of Occupy members, but reflect the most common thoughts on the discussion forum.

There are two groups within the Occupy Wall Street forums who believe that OWS should not have leaders: those who are completely opposed to having any leaders, and those who believe every member or OWS are leaders and therefore it is unnecessary to appoint any leaders.

One of the main arguments for not appointing a leader is a leader can be offered up as a public figure that can be attacked.

> *LSN45 on Forum Post: OWS name a leader*
>
> Be careful about appointing a king - as soon as you do "Fox News" (an oxymoron) and the like will spend millions from their corporate war chest digging up dirt on the person in an effort to discredit the movement. I believe one of the reasons the opposition is having a hard time pinning down OWS is because it is such a moving target.

> *entrepreneur on Forum Post: Occupy Wall St. is not a leaderless movement*
>
> Not having leader is good for this occupy mission. 1% Folks are waiting to see leader emerge from various occupy missions only so that they can target him or her and find ways to put them behind bars or get them in various other legal traps. Not having leader is good for occupy and bad for 1%.

In this view, having a leader within Occupy Wall Street will make the movement vulnerable. In providing a single individual the movement can be criticized, attacked, and discredited for the actions of an individual. Individuals are not perfect, they can slip up or they may have made mistakes in the past and Occupy Wall Street fears the American media and politics will attack the movement based on the imperfections of an individual. This cautionary use of leaders also follows from the popular movie *V for Vendetta*, which

stresses the importance of ideas over leaders "because a man can fail. He can be caught, he can be killed and forgotten, but 400 years later, an idea can still change the world" (V for Vendetta 2005).

However, other activist movements such as Anonymous have found that leaders and a centralized leadership can make a movement vulnerable because then a movement can be held accountable for the actions of individuals. While OWS has remained a fairly peaceful movement, their have been incidents of members of OWS breaking windows and the overall group has tried to separate the actions of individuals in these cases with the actions of the group.

Others believe OWS should remain leaderless because they believe OWS is leaderful, i.e., that everyone in the movement is a leader.

> *bythepeople on Forum Post: Ok, who is the leader of this protest? Nobody that's who*
> Wrong. All are leaders here.
>
> Of the people, by the people. Enough with handing the power off to a chosen few. We have the ability to actively participate in our own governance directly.

> *ramous on Forum Post: Occupy Wall St. is not a leaderless movement*
>
> Exactly! we dont need a leader, every voice should be heard, and no one voice and no one way be better or louder than anothers.

> *thesoulgotsoldontheroadtogold on Forum Post: Ok, who is the leader of this protest? Nobody that's who*
>
> no leaders, we are each our own leader please please please don't repeat history again everytime people give their power away to someone else no good comes of it followers turn into zombies, and leaders can be bribed or killed, and replaced i'll say it again, please no leaders, we are each our own leader as soon as you appoint a leader you are cutting the movement's head off

This view reflects Occupy's *Statement of Autonomy* which describes the group as a "people's movement." Everyone in the movement should be equal; their voices should be equally heard, their goals should be equally important, everyone should have equality in decision-making, and no one should be more important than anyone else. The presence of leaders also breeds the presence of followers and "zombies," or those who blindly follow. In this view leadership makes the movement less powerful because it silences individuals and the movement may become less inclusive causing supporters to leave because the movement no longer aligns with their goals.

Those who believe OWS should have a leader believe a leader will provide legitimacy and respect for a movement. It will solidify the goals and aims and give the movement direction.

> *realcarrera on Forum Post: Ok, who is the leader of this protest? Nobody that's who*
>
> Simple words. NO LEADER, NO MOVEMENT.
>
> Without a leader this is aimless. Angry mobs don't achieve anything. Until a leader is appointed, the protest is not going to be taken seriously. Until Wall St. sees that ONE MAN OR WOMAN is ardent or passionate enough to lead THE PEOPLE to change...nothing is going to happen. Let's appoint a leader.

However, the idea of having a leader is controversial not only for the reasons mentioned above, but also in how this leader would come into being. Who would be the so-called leader of Occupy Wall Street? How would this leader be chosen, appointed, realized? Some names frequently came up as suggested leaders such as Oprah or Michael Moore while another member posted his vision for their future leader:

blackbloc on Forum Post: It Is Going To Take A Leader

> and it is not ron paul. i predict at least one emerges this spring/summer. a true leader. this person well be someone who is most likely under 35 and completely uncorruptable. one who is a true visionary and highly intelligent and imaginative. one who believes in the heart of humanity but is keenly aware of the intricate nature of the crisis facing not just america and and her citizens but the global crisis facing humanity. one who is neither politically correct, a conformist, or a hack with a static view. you may reject this leader because he tells you things that don't conform to your worldview. there will be at least one great leader this year the question is will you be bright enough to be lead.

Members of Occupy Wall Street have set high standards for their potential leader. However, their standards suggest a leader that embodies the ideals Occupy Wall Street movement such as "uncorruptable," a non-conformist, imaginative, visionary, highly intelligent, and young. As others added to this vision of a leader some stressed that a leader might be pushed to lead, they may not want to lead, it would be better if they didn't want to lead.

However, other members of OWS were less specific about what they see as a leader and instead believe "leaders will emerge organically."

TheMismatch on Forum Post: Ok, who is the leader of this protest? Nobody that's who

> I think leaders will emerge organically. People tend to write this movement off after only a month of existence because I think they're afraid of what it means if it *doesn't go away*. Give it time. The movement is still defining itself.

hairlessOrphan on Forum Post: Ok, who is the leader of this protest? Nobody that's who

> Leadership is emergent behavior. I think some of the leadership will eventually be chosen via a democratic process - and if it takes time, it's worth taking to legitimize the organization.

> But the face of the movement? The Person who ends up as the acting leader? That's an emergent phenomenon; it doesn't happen on a schedule.
>
> Movements, protests, resistances - the success of these things, like success in business, is subject to luck as much as it is subject to effort. Leadership emerges largely by chance - think of spinning a roulette wheel once a day, and waiting for it to hit 00. The movement will endure if the protesters have the will to stick it out long enough for leadership to emerge. The good news is it probably won't take years. The bad news is no one knows how long it will take.

Occupy Wall Street must patiently await their emergent leader. They cannot predict when he/she will come but instead must wait and endure until their prophesized leader emerges from their midst.

Charismatic Leaders

Occupy Wall Street is waiting for a "charismatic leader" (Weber 1946) to emerge from amongst their members. This charismatic leader will be an extraordinary person who embodies the ideals of the movement, and carries the movement forward towards social change. After nearly a year and a half and the serious decline of the movement, the emergence of a charismatic leader specifically for Occupy Wall Street now seems highly unlikely. However, in looking back on the movement and the discourse of its participants, it is possible we may see the beginning emergence of charismatic leaders within Occupy Wall Street.

The theory of charismatic leaders stems from Weber's (1947:358-359) work in sociology in which he defines charisma as follows:

> the term "charisma" will be applied to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional

> powers or qualities. These as such are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader…It is recognition of the part of those subject to authority which is decisive for the validity of charisma. This is freely given and guaranteed by what is held to be a "sign" or proof, originally always a miracle…But where charisma is genuine, it is not this which is the basis of the claim to legitimacy. This basis lies rather in the conception that is the *duty* of those who have been called to a charismatic mission to recognize its quality and to act accordingly. Psychologically this "recognition" is a matter of complete personal devotion to the possessor of the quality, arising out of enthusiasm, or of despair and hope.

Charismatic leaders possess "specific gifts of the body and spirit" (Weber 1946:245) which makes them uniquely qualified to lead and those who follow him do so because of these unique qualifications. Charisma is not dependent on structures, routines, traditions, or bureaucracies, but instead upon the recognition of the leader's extraordinary qualities which make them unequal to their peers.

Charismatic leadership also requires an interactional relationship between leaders and followers; no this relationship and validating the leader as possessing remarkable qualities (Weber 1946; Andelson 1980:730; Wasielewski 1985; Theobald 1980:85). Therefore, charisma does not rely on the individual but instead on the collective (Lindholm 2003). In the case of Occupy Wall Street a charismatic leader would need to rise as superior to others in a group that largely considers all members equals, and more

importantly, the collective of Occupy Wall Street would need to accept this unequal relationship.

However, scholars of charismatic leadership (Weber 1946; Lindholm 2003; Theobald 1980; Wasielewski 1985; and Andelson 1980) have primarily examined the phenomena of charismatic leaders after the fact, after the charismatic leader has already assumed a leadership role. Yet, very little research (with the exception of Csordas 1997) has looked at how these leaders emerge. The Occupy Wall Street movement and the data I have collected from their Internet presence provides a unique opportunity in examining how leaders may have, or might still, emerge from the group as charismatic leaders.

But how does one locate charisma? Csordas (1997) suggests charisma can be found in communicative practices of a group. Csordas (1997:140) also argues "charisma is rhetoric…a collective performative, intersubjective self-process." Charisma should be located not in a single quality but instead within the interactive actions that create charisma through a rhetorical process (Csordas 1997:145). Wasielewski (1985) suggests charisma can be located within emotion, because charisma is motivated primarily by emotions (Weber 1946; Lindholm 2003; Wasielewski 1985). Therefore, in the following analysis I will be examining the emotive cues within communicative interactions between potential leaders and other group members (Wasielewski 1985:208). In doing so, I will demonstrate what rhetorical devices demonstrate charisma within Occupy Wall Street discussion forums and how this can help us understand leaders in a leaderless movement.

Affectivity and Language

For the purposes of this thesis I will be examining affectivity in language rather than emotion. This is not to equate the terms with each other, but instead to recognize the

limitations of the word "emotion." Emotions are specific, nameable experiences such as happy, sad, or angry. However, affect encompasses a broader range of experience to include not just emotions but also feelings, attitudes, moods, and dispositions (Ochs and Schieffelin 1989:7 and Biber and Finegan 1989:94). In addition, the specificity of emotion does not recognize the multiplicity of experiences whereas "affective sign[s] may index several affective experience ambiguously, or different categories in different situations" (Besnier 1990:429).

While affectivity is an individual experience, it can also be interactional and "languages are responsive to the fundamental need of speakers to convey and assess" affect (Ochs and Schieffelin 1989:9). Therefore, language and communicative practices can provide us with an interesting look into affective experiences. Within language, affect can be expressed in many different ways. Within verbal communication, affectivity can be expressed using adverbial descriptors, parallelism, communicative actions such as laughing, weeping, and clapping as well as acoustic phenomena such as intonation and pitch (Ochs and Schieffelin 1989 and Besnier 1990). In addition, affect can be expressed in nonverbal forms of communication such as facial expressions, gestures, and body orientation (Ochs and Schieffelin 1989 and Besnier 1990). In addition, affect can be a group activity such as in the case of applause in political speech making in which the speaker and the audience coordinate responses to each other that can influence how their discourse co-occurs (Besnier 1990 and Wilce 2009).

However, many of the activities I just mentioned, especially laughing, weeping, clapping, intonation, pitch, facial expressions, and gestures, are not present, or at least not present in the same form, in written language such as online discourse. Perhaps this is

why it is generally "assumed that spoken language is universally more "involved," "emotional," and better suited for emotion representation (as opposed to presentation) than written language" (Besnier 1990:432). However, Besnier (1990:434) argues that forms of written discourse online, such as what he calls "e-messages" "have a more "emotional" texture than other types of discourse." As I will demonstrate in my analysis of affect in discussion forum posts, "emotion" is present in online written discourse, just not in the same way as face-to-face communication. Participants online find alternative ways of expressing affectivity such as emoticons (textual indexes of emotions such as :) to express smiles or happiness) to replace facial expressions or the use of bold, italicized, or capitalized font to replicate intonation, pitch, and emphasis. In my analysis, I will focus on the use of capitalization in discussion forums as a rhetorical device that demonstrates charisma. By locating charisma within text, I can demonstrate how a leader's use of rhetorical devices set them apart from their peers.

Karma

The challenge of locating leaders within a leaderless movement is they don't necessarily want to be identified as leaders. During my ethnographic research I could not simply ask to be taken to their leader or if they considered themselves a leader. Being a leader in a leaderless movement can be dangerous because it goes against the philosophy Occupy Wall Street was built upon. Those who identify as leaders or who are identified as leaders risk being ostracized by their peers. In addition, when I was conducting my ethnography, the Occupy Wall Street movement was decentralized, unorganized, and struggling to stay intact. The number of different groups scheduling meetings and events

at the time I was conducting my research may explain why I myself saw no signs of in-person leadership.

However, Occupy Wall Street's online presence allows researchers a different insight into the groups emerging leaders. Occupy Wall Street's New York General Assembly website uses BuddyPress, a social networking WordPress plugin which allows users to register with a profile on the website, post to forums, create events, and post on website blogs. Once a user profile is created on the website, information about the users activity becomes attached to the user. The New York General Assembly website uses the BuddyPress plugin Rate Forum Post, also known as Karma. Karma is a rating system based on discussion forum posts. When a user posts on a discussion forum, other members are allowed to rate that post with either a +1 or a -1. These ratings are then used to calculate a person's Karma rating. Karma is common on Internet sites that contain any social network aspect and is attributed largely to Slashdot (/.), a technology related news website, which dates back to 1997 (Dunlap 2005; Chai, Potdar, and Chang 2009; Cheng and Vassileva 2005). Even Facebook "likes" is a relative of the Karma rating system. Karma is based on user ratings and participation. Karma ratings provide other users with a number with which to judge and create preconceived notions of other user's reputation, trustworthiness and credibility on that website (Chai, Potdar, and Chang 2009; Cheng and Vassileva 2005; Malaga 2001; O'Murchu, Breslin, ad Decker 2004; and Neumann et al. 2005).

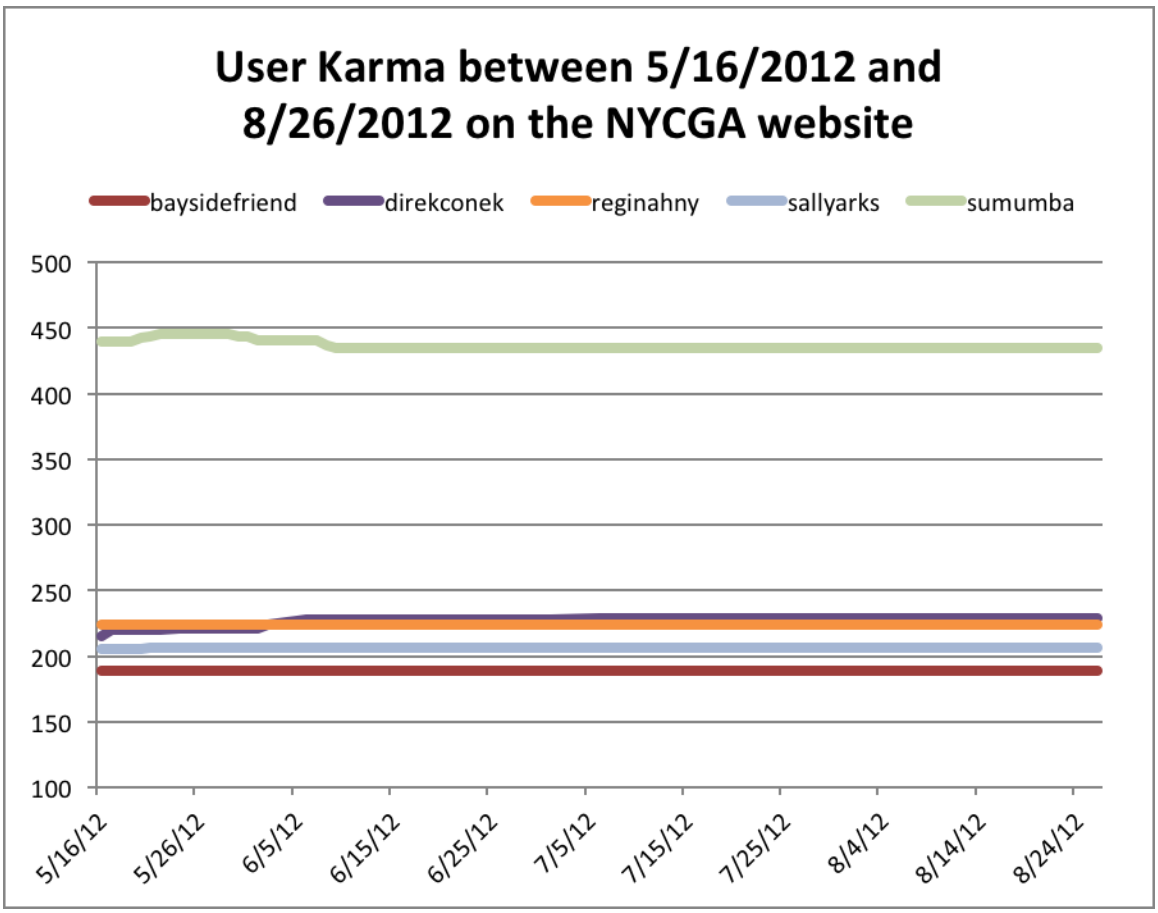

Table 1: User Karma ratings on the NYCGA website for the 5 highest users.

Not all Karma rating systems are exactly the same. On the General Assembly website, they use the Karma rating system developed for BuddyPress called "Rate Forum Post." The Karma generated through this rating system is based solely on a user's forum posts. Once they post on a forum, other users can give one point to that post, either a thumbs up or a thumbs down, indexical of positive feelings about a post or negative feelings about a post. The ratings on a user's post create a user's karma rating which is then displayed next to a user's name on their profile and any of their activities on the website.

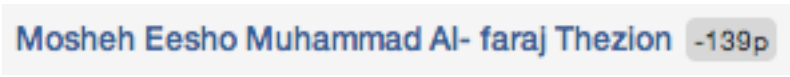

Figure 5: User Karma ratings are displayed next to their user names in discussion posts.

While the Karma rating system can be useful in a community based website it also creates inequality among users. Because a user's Karma rating is displayed next to their name anytime it appears on the website. The Karma rating can signal to other users and create preconceived notions concerning a user's credibility on that website. As a consequence of a low Karma rating, a user's posts may be ignored or disregarded whereas a user's post with a high Karma rating may be read more often and given more credibility. A user's Karma rating can also result in the Matthew Effect where the rich get rich and the poor get poorer. Users with a lower Karma rating "tend not to receive a deserving attention and to collect sufficient ratings to raise the "karma" level of their contributor" (Cheng and Vassileva 2005). Therefore, users with higher ratings tend to receive more "up-votes" whereas those with lower ratings tend to not receive votes or receive more "down-votes."

The Karma rating of a user can be a valuable tool in locating leaders within Occupy Wall Street because of the inequality the system creates, which is created based on other member's input. Because of the socially evaluative nature of the Karma rating system, we can track how users become "more equal" than others on the discussion forum based on the feedback from others.

I was able to track user's Karma using the archived data I collected over three months from the New York General Assembly website. Using the collected data from Karma ratings I located members who had significantly high Karma ratings, especially in

relation to other group members (see Appendices B-E). I was able to narrow my data from thousands of users to 10 users of focus. Of the top Karma ratings a user known as sumumba rose significantly above the ranks of others.

While the Karma rating of sumumba is intriguing, on its own it is in no way an indicator of leadership. However, a high Karma rating combined with leading multiple working groups and organizing multiple events on the General Assembly website are strong indicators that sumumba plays a leadership role in the General Assembly community.

In examining several of sumumba's forum posts, his unique writing style and use of capitalization leaps off the screen at the reader.

> *sumumba on Forum Post: The VISION STATEMENT of OCCUPY WALL STREET DOES ((NOT)) BELONG TO ((ONE)) AUTHOR or GROUP!*
>
> "After hearing about another tumultuous Vision and Goals meeting, where yet someone ELSE brought yet another of the OWN documents, I think we need to CLARIFY what were are doing here. UMMMMM folks, the Vision and Goals Statement is being written up, edited, sent for feedback to, for and by ALL of us.
>
> We've been put hundreds of hours into this Vision Statement and for people to come with 'BRAND NEW' documents and expect or DEMAND in some cases that theirs be THE VISION statement of OWS, is beyond irresponsible, but also a DISRESPECT to not only the V&G working group but even MORE the hundreds of people in Spokes, General Assemblies, AND Online who have sent in their thoughts and FEEDBACK.
>
> We all saying that we wish to see a 'NEW WORLD' but when I see people INSISTING or worse DEMANDING, that their document by the ONLY Vision statement or that we drop EVERYTHING we've worked on to include an entirely new document, I see the lessons of the 1% who have taught and showed us so well of how the EGO of INDIVIDUALS is MORE important than the SPIRIT of the COLLECTIVE!
>
> I'm sorry I wasn't at the meeting today, but I sure wish folks would learn to RESPECT the hard work of the COLLECTIVE, and this PROCESS, and mostly

> remember that this a MOVEMENT (not) INIDIViDUALLY created Vision document."

The use of capitalization in online discourse is an icon of yelling, an index of affective intensity; excessive use of this style of writing is generally frowned upon. However, the strategic use of capitalization in sumumba's writing gives it a power that it would not otherwise have.

In sumumba's writing, the use of capitalization fills the role of intonation and pitch that would normally be present in oral speech. The words visually stand out from the rest of the text in a similar way to how intonation and pitch make words audibly stand out from the rest of a series of spoken words. While the specific emotions expressed in sumumba's writing is unclear, the affect that is funneled into the capitalized words is felt by anyone who reads it.

However, the use of capitalization in sumumba's writing is not the sole source of its power. One other participant in the nycga discussion forum, Mosheh Eesho Muhammad Al-faraj Thezion, also uses capitalization within their writing, although not nearly to the same extent as sumumba. However, Mosheh Thezion has one of the lowest karma ratings on the nycga website; a rating of -132.

> *Mosheh Eesho Muhammad Al-faraj Thezion on Forum Post: The VISION STATEMENT of OCCUPY WALL STREET DOES ((NOT)) BELONG TO ((ONE)) AUTHOR or GROUP!*
>
> "All i suggest… is that once you think… you have a perfect document.. you would be wrong… and it must be open to amendment… and expansion.. and CLARIFICATION, AND THE DEFINING OF TERMS USED… not to mention.. adding issues.. or planks… which someone may propose…. at anytime.

> I responded to a complaint… about people offering up newer versions.. different texts.. and maybe different perspectives… for consideration.
>
> and once you do that… (cut off further input and debate) you must be deluded into thinking you have it perfect, and that is not likely.
>
> As long as its a work in progress… always.. then.. you will maintain an open mind, and I can only presume.. you all wish to have an open mind.
>
> I for example.. have many suggestions… but if I dared to share them.. to openly.. to loudly.. if i showed up.. and tried to address all this… i would meet a brick wall… in the form of those who think they do not need better ideas…. because they think.. they got a handle on it… which they clearly do not.
>
> -Mosheh Thezion"

Yet, these writers differ in their use of pronoun usage. Sumumba uses the collective pronouns "we" and "us" in opposition to "people" who expect "their [documents] be THE VISION statement of OWS." On the other hand, Mosheh Thezion utilizes the first person singular pronoun "I" in opposition to the second person pronoun "you," which refers to his general audience.

In *This Nation Will Rise* Up, Greg Urban's (2001:121) emphasizes the importance of pronoun usage in the Declaration of Independence and how the *Declaration's* particular use of first-person plural pronouns "we" and "us" was able to evoke and bring into being a new KIND of collective entity, the people of the United States. Urban (2001) argues the Declaration contains a series of first-person plural forms "we" and "us" in which one instance looks back on another while at the same time looking forward to subsequent instances. Similarly, the Declaration contains the pronouns "he" and "they" which are set in opposition to the first-person plural pronouns "we" and "us" and refer to specific earlier references, "the King of Great Britain" and "the British." Each pronoun

use "gains a specific meaning through its reference back to an earlier noun phrase…which…occurs in the object position with "He"…occurring as subject" (Urban 2001:99). This text thus prompts the readers to ask themselves if they are part of the collective "we" or "us" or if they have been wronged in some way by the oppositional "he" or "they." Therefore, the *Declaration of Independence* has a unifying power in that "the replication of 'we' would have to set its articulators, collectively in opposition to various 'they's' but particularly to a 'they" of the British' (Urban 2001:96).

Similarly, sumumba's use of the collective pronoun "we" in opposition to those who believe "that their document by [sic] the ONLY Vision statement or that we drop EVERYTHING we've worked on to include an entirely new document" invites readers to ask, which collective do I belong to? Do I belong to the collective "we" or the othered collective of "them"? In using the collective pronouns in his writing, sumumba is not simply stating his point of view, but he is also reaching out to the reader and inviting them to identify with his views.

While sumumba is not *the* leader of Occupy Wall Street his extensive influence and agency within the movement demonstrates qualities of leadership. While my in-person ethnographic data did not indicate any specific individuals who were assuming leadership roles within Occupy Wall Street, my online data demonstrated that in examining a users data online and their interactions with others, such as event creation and karma rating, we locate potential leaders in the movement. However, how do these leaders garner support in a movement that is leaderless? A case study of one individual, sumumba, in the Occupy movement demonstrates that affective styles, such as the use of capitalization, combined with the use of collective pronouns can illicit a positive reaction

through Karma ratings from other users, and thus gain an individual social support in a movement where all members are equal.

Chapter 5: The Importance of Place in a Social Movement

Place can play an important role in social movements. Social movements meet in places to organize, protest, and gain visibility. The places that social movements utilize gain symbolic significance for those within, for those who have been affected by, the movement. Social movements that use the Internet are taking advantage of yet another space or place that is available to their movement. However, space and place online do not function in the same way that they do in-person, which can pose challenges to our current theories of space and place.

The difference between space and place is the cultural significance, or lack thereof, attached to each. Space is a neutral location. It exists geographically but it does not have cultural meaning (Casey 1996; Basso 1996). However, as actions are performed in a space and that space gathers cultural meaning through experiences, meanings, histories, even languages and thoughts it becomes a place (Duranti 1992; Casey 1996; Basso 1996). Places are culturally constructed based on events that have occurred in a space. Spaces and their physical features – mountains, trees, rocks, etc. – exist prior to human interaction in and with them; but once humans interact with a space it gains cultural significance.

Ritual Centers

One way in which a space can become culturally significant is as an "exemplary center." Anthropologists and others have hit upon local theories of power, sacredness, and space. They have named these local theories "exemplary centers." Geertz's

description of the "Doctrine of the Exemplary Center" (1968:36) is an early example. He defines this local cultural doctrine as:

> the notion that the king's court and capital, and at their axis the king himself, form at once an image of divine order and a paradigm of social order. The court, its activities, its style, its organization, its whole form of life, reproduces, albeit imperfectly, the world of the gods, provides a visible likeness of an invisible realm. *And because it does this, it also provides an ideal toward which life outside the court, in the kingdom as a whole, ought properly to aspire, upon which it should seek to model itself, as a child models itself upon a father, a peasant upon a lord, a lord upon a king, and a king upon a god* (emphasis added).

Exemplary centers are thus political and ritual centers of power from which exemplary behavior radiates out in concentric circles of ever decreasing power and exemplariness. In Java, from which Geertz (1968) drew his example, the center is a physical location – a capital containing divine or semi-divine entities, such as the king and his court. The exemplary center presents a behavioral model for those who identify with it. While the practices of the exemplary center may be duplicated by others, practices and relations become looser as one moves farther away from the exemplary center (Errington 1998:24).

The role of place in OWS is similar to that in Java. Because OWS has no centralized leadership, the location itself becomes a center of power for the movement. Still, the literal locale-centered doctrine of the exemplary center as Geertz found it in

Indonesia, must be tweaked to remain relevant to contemporary global movements. As activist movements spread around the globe, their geographical distance from the original center (Wall Street) is not what affects the intensity of their adherence to the practices of the center. The concept of center must be metaphorized in order to account for the dynamics of ritual centers in conditions of globalization. An ideology may take the place of a physical center. Thus, it is as people move farther away from the exemplary center ideologically (not geographically) that their behavior becomes less like that of the center.

Silverstein's (2004:623) model of "ritual centers of semiosis" is more appropriate in addressing issues of geographical distance in global movements since it builds upon theories of exemplary centers to encompass "wider-scale institutional 'orders of interactionality,' historically contingent yet structured." According to Silverstein (2004:623) "ritual centers of semiosis come to exert a structuring, value-conferring influence on any particular event of discursive interaction with respect to the meanings and significance of the verbal and other semiotic forms used in it." The flow of value from spaces where discourse occurs is mappable as it moves amongst and is recontexualized in macrosocial spaces (Silverstein 2004:623).

Occupying a Ritual Center

The destruction or defacement of a ritual center can be a powerful act of resistance. Its destruction can be calamitous (Lundquist 1984; Brown 2005; Pitch 2005). In the case of OWS, the occupation of Wall Street was defacing a sacred center of capitalism by critiquing capitalism and performing acts, such as communal sharing rather than trading and the disheveled look of many Occupiers in comparison to the clean cut look of those on Wall Street. The occupation of Wall Street gave the Occupy movement

the momentum and power they needed to gain attention and support. Not dissimilarly, driving Occupy activists out of the sacred center, this severely weakened the movement.

In *Adbusters'* post, "A Shift in Revolutionary Tactics," the authors emphasize the importance of the place where Occupy will first meet. They instructed supporters to "seize a square of singular symbolic significance" on Wall Street which they considered to be "the financial Gomorrah of America," and occupy this place (Culture Jammers HQ 2011). The act of naming a specific place to occupy entailed recognizing the cultural importance of Wall Street. In choosing this place for their protest also sought to change the place's cultural meaning. In the meaning of capitalism's ritual center, Occupy sought to weaken, if not destroy, the capitalist's power in American society.

Wall Street's cultural meaning prior to – and, I would argue, continuing through – Occupy Wall Street was that of ritual center of capitalism. Wall Street is the locus of equity trading, not just in the United States, but also around the world and contains powerful symbols of capitalism such as the New York Stock Exchange, NASDAQ, and the New York Board of Trade.

The actions that take place on Wall Street demonstrate a "commodity fetishism" that exists within capitalism (Marx 1990). Commodity fetishism involves attributing agency, autonomy, and power to inanimate objects (Taussig 1980:31), or more specifically the attribution of human-like qualities to commodities that are produced by workers (Marx 1990 and Taussig 1980). Commodity fetishism on Wall Street can be seen most clearly through the language employed to describe the trading and capitalist system that is performed there, such as referring to capital as something that can grow, or describing the market as aggressive or bull-like (Taussig 1980).

Actually commodity fetishism not only involves attributing agency or vitality to objects; it also entails atomizing society and dehumanizing workers. Workers become slaves to capital and its production and, in a sense worship or sacrifice for commodities. Nowhere is the power of capital over people more obvious than on Wall Street where large sums of money are traded in the hopes that one's equity investment will eventually "grow." Nowhere is the cutthroat nature of American capitalism more clearly demonstrated than on Wall Street. It is there that we see most clearly the lengths to which people go, and the sacrifices they will make, for the sake of capital. Wall Street practices are replicated throughout the world in differing intensities.

Initially, Occupy Wall Street chose the "Charging Bull," also known as the Wall Street Bull, located in One Chase Manhattan Plaza to kick off their movement. The bull is an icon of the market aggressiveness of the power and wealth obtainable through the markets (Taussig1980:31) – i.e., an icon of capitalism, a fetishization of the commodity. The symbolic charging bull of capitalism on Wall Street and the square where it resides made it an ideal "square of singular symbolic significance" for protesting the greed and corruption of a capitalist system (Culture Jammers HQ 2011). However, Occupy Wall Street advertised their intention to occupy One Chase Manhattan Plaza well in advance of their initial protest on September 17, 2011 and the police had closed the plaza to protesters before they even arrived.

Figure 6: An advertisement produced by Adbusters for the initial protest of Occupy Wall Street at the Charging Bull.

With One Chase Manhattan Plaza closed, the Occupiers moved into Zuccotti Park, located not on Wall Street, but in New York City's Financial District. This small park is also known as Liberty Square because it is on Liberty Street. It is a privately owned public space meaning that it must be open 24 hours but is subjected to the rules of the owners, Brookfield Office Properties. In the past, Zuccotti Park has been a popular area for local tourists and financial workers. Because of the trees, benches, and food shops nearby, it is a great place to stop for lunch or to relax. It is also very close to

Ground Zero and was heavily damaged by the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. Following the 9/11 attacks, Zuccotti Park was used as a site to commemorate the anniversaries of 9/11 until the opening of the National September 11 Memorial and Museum. However, prior to Occupy Wall Street's occupation of Zuccotti Park, this small square was relatively unknown to those outside of New York City. By making Zuccotti a site of occupation, the Occupy movement gave the park new cultural significance as the ritual center of the Occupy Wall Street movement.

The occupation of Zuccotti Park set the pattern that has been replicated in the occupation of other public spaces around the world. Other practices pioneered by Occupy Wall Street included setting up extensive camps that included libraries, kitchens, and media stations. Some "franchise" organizations affiliating themselves with OWS – Occupy Flint, for example – even managed to devise ways of producing other comforts for their campers such as heat and electricity. The site of these extensive camps in urban squares became a feature of the Occupy movement.

In addition to their extensive camps, the Occupy movement also began using a People's Mic at Zuccotti Park. The People's Mic is a strategy for communicating in large crowds of people when other forms of amplification are not available. The People's Mic involves one person speaking a message that is then repeated in groups throughout a crowd until everyone present has had a chance to hear it. The People's Mic was adopted by the Occupy Wall Street movement when New York City police would not allow them to use any form of artificial amplification during protest events, such as the General Assembly. Since then, Occupy movements everywhere began using the People's Mic,

even when forms of electronic amplification were not necessary or crowds were not large enough to require this form of communication.

The New York City police's eviction of Occupy protestors from Zuccotti Park, also known as "The Raid," represented a destruction of Occupy's ritual center and, similarly to the destruction of ritual centers discussed earlier, this was devastating to the Occupy community (Lundquist 1984; Brown 2005; Pitch 2005). The Raid severely weakened the movement and was followed shortly thereafter by other evictions around the country. Since The Raid, the Occupy movement has struggled to find a new home and have begun spreading out to other parks throughout New York City such as Bryant Park, Union Square, and Central Park, although, the eviction only prevents Occupier's from camping in Zuccotti Park. Thus events such as General Assemblies are still held there. However, these others parks are significantly further away from the financial district of New York, and therefore, further away from the symbolic representation of what they are protesting.

Space and Place Online

Online "space" is data space on a server. It is created by humans in the form of empty data space that exists on a physical storage device, such as a hard drive or a server. Without data, it is a completely dead and empty space. Unlike geographical space, online space is initially created by humans and it is completely void until humans take action on that space. Geographical spaces like mountains, and features such as trees that define such spaces, are what they are, at least potentially, apparently without human intervention. By contrast, until humans act upon digital space by placing data there, or

beginning a process through scripts or coding which will place data there, such "space" is a vacuum.

Online space does not take on cultural meaning and become a place until it is assigned a domain name. A domain name is a humanly memorable name for an Internet Protocol (IP) resource such as a server hosting a website. Prior to a domain name being assigned to a space, the space is only identifiable as a series of numbers. By contrast, domain names take the form of letters, which can be combined, to form words, or culturally recognizable symbols, such as facebook.com or nau.edu.

Websites can acquire more cultural significance and meaning as people begin adding content such as images, text, links, and users to the site and other people begin visiting the site, very much like how geographical places acquire cultural meaning as human actions occur in that place. There are very few laws governing who can purchase which domains and create which websites. For example, the website navajotribe.org is not actually owned by the Navajo Tribe, but is used to mock Native American traditions. While this is terrible and insulting for many Native American tribes and especially the Navajo Tribe, whose name is being used, there is nothing illegal about this activity and often the process of recovering names in such a case can be lengthy, expensive, and even unsuccessful.

Fortunately, Occupy Wall Street has never encountered such an issue. However, the decentralization of the movement and lack of leadership is also apparent in the group's online web presence. Currently, there is no official site for the Occupy Wall Street movement online. I archived three different websites relating to the general Occupy Wall Street movement: nycga.net, occupywallst.org, and occupywallstreet.net.

However, many other sites exist such as occupywallstreet.org (*Adbusters'* Occupy Wall Street site), occupywallst.net (redirects to Timcast.com), occupytogether.org, wearethe99percent.tumblr.com, takethesquare.net, along with Wikis, various YouTube channels, Twitter feeds, Facebook pages, and Tumblr accounts. All of these sites serve different purposes, show a different side of the movement, and more importantly are not official sites of the movement or connect to a ritual center online for the movement.

Geertz's (1968) Doctrine of the Exemplary Center is a useful theoretical starting point in understanding the importance of place in recent global movements. Like old Javanese kingdoms, places can be the sites of behavior treated as exemplary – behavior that radiates to other locations where movement "franchises" appear. However, an ideological center, rather than a literal geographical center, best describes the importance of place in a recent global social movement such as Occupy Wall Street.

The removal of OWS from Zuccotti Park – the destruction of their ideological ritual center – severely weakened the movement, despite their strong presence in online places. In fact, the online places of OWS were never able to become ideological centers for the movement despite their importance to the movement overall. This is a result of how space and place function differently in online as opposed to in-person environments. The ease with which anyone can create a place and fill it with content significant to the Occupy movement online has resulted in a variety of different online presences, none of which are "official" to the OWS movement. Therefore, none of Occupy Wall Street's websites were ever able to gain the significance of physical places like Zuccotti Park. Despite Occupy's strong online presence, the destruction of their ritual center at Zuccotti Park was demoralizing to Occupiers and destructive to the overall movement.

Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis has been to demonstrate the value of, when available, data collected online as well as offline or face-to-face in ethnographic research. While, the methods I have demonstrated are not the only one's available, nor or they appropriate for every research project, they do allow new insights into the Occupy Wall Street movement. However, this is not to suggest in any way that in-person ethnographic techniques should be abandoned. In fact, eliminating in-person ethnographic techniques is detrimental to research. Instead, when both in-person and online data are available, they should be used together to open new ways of understanding those we study.

Internet research alone cannot adequately provide us with insight into a community of people that exists both online and in-person. Internet research can alienate us from the subjects of our research and depersonalize our research. In using only Internet methods, a researcher can study a group or a person without actually speaking to them or even meeting them. However, at the same time, the Internet can connect us with those who are hundreds of miles away or people we may never have met otherwise. As researchers we must be careful to not take advantage of the access the Internet can provide us to people's lives and to actually include those people in our research. Without our subjects participating in our research we risk them becoming just thoughts and ideas on a screen and we may miss important details of a group, or the individuals of a group. As I have demonstrated in this thesis, sometimes the data of an online study can produce different results from the in-person study. Without the in-person data I included in my research of Occupy Wall Street, my participants would have never had the opportunity to explain what Occupy Wall Street meant to them and their community. Without the data

from my in-person research I may have completely missed an important aspect of Occupy Wall Street: The Occupy Wall Street legacy.

The Success of a Movement

How will history remember Occupy Wall Street? Typically, the success of a movement is evaluated through specific measurable goals (Wells 1981:239) such as legislative and social change. For example, the success of the First Wave Feminist movement often points to the passing of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1920 granting women the right to vote, just as the American Civil Rights movement is considered successful in its efforts which resulted in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ending segregation.

It has only been a year and a half since Occupy first met in the streets. Yet, since The Raid in November of 2011, the movement has lost much of its momentum. We have seen no new legislation as a result of Occupy Wall Street and little if any social change as a result of their actions. Does this mean Occupy Wall Street has not been a successful movement? Will they go down in the history books as a movement of "dirty hippies" as they have so often been portrayed in the media? It is too early to tell exactly what long-term effects Occupy will have on our country and our world. However, these effects will not be a piece of legislature that we can point directly too, instead, Occupy Wall Street's legacy will be its effect on the U.S. national discourse and the connections and organizations that have since emerged from the movement.

Dirty Hippies

For many, the success of the Occupy Wall Street may not be easily visible and this may be in part due to the representation of OWS participants as "dirty hippies"

(Mitchell 2011 and DeLuca, Lawson, and Sun 2012:494) told by those who oppose the group and what it stands for. The dirty hippie discourse produced among media, pundits, and the public and describes Occupy as a group of lazy, freeloading, unkempt, pot-smoking, young people, who just like to complain. This discourse is used to dismiss the Occupy movement, and its message based on appearances without considering the merit of the movement. The dirty hippie discourse of the Occupy Wall Street movement is a form of negative political advertising that has become increasingly common in the U.S. (Hollihan 2009:155).

Like most political smear campaigns, the dirty hippie representation of Occupy Wall Street participants is based on some largely exaggerated facts. Many participants in my own research had long hair, dressed in clothing that looked old, or worn out, many of them were homeless or recently unemployed, and some of my participants were smoking marijuana[13] or cigarettes. The overall appearance of Occupy Wall Street is one that challenges the social norms of how one should dress, appear, or act in public especially the norms that so greatly contrast the clean cut look of those working on Wall Street. The dirty hippie narrative is an attempt to exclude them for their "unsightly appearance, [their] unwillingness to play by the rules" (Desjarlais 1997:123) Occupy Wall Street is also a decentralized movement lacking in leadership without specific demands and no clear plan for moving forward. This could contribute to ideas of them being lazy and complaining because without specific demands or a clear path forward, their awareness raising can be mistaken for complaint without solutions.

[13] In the state of Michigan medical marijuana is legal and my participants were legally smoking marijuana for medical reasons.

However, a study conducted by CUNY (Milkman, Luce, and Lewis 2012) of the Occupy Wall Street movement suggests the dirty hippie discourse surrounding the movement may not reflect an accurate picture of the movement's member base. The CUNY study suggests members of Occupy Wall Street in New York City are largely comprised of young, educated, white males. While the discourse of dirty hippies in Occupy Wall Street is prevalent in the U.S. this is an unfair way of identifying the movement as this discourse is largely based on such things as appearance and not on the actual goals of the movement.

We are the 99%

Dirty hippies or not, participants in the Occupy Wall Street movement played an important role in changing U.S. political discourse (DeLuca, Lawson, and Sun 2012:484 and Milkman, Luce, and Lewis 2012). Occupy Wall Street focused the country's attention on the growing socio-economic inequality in the U.S. and sparked a national conversation on this issue.

Occupy Wall Street popularized phrases such as "We are the 99%" and "the 1%" which have now become commonplace in American political discourse. Table 2 pictures a Google Trend, which demonstrates the increase in popularity of the terms "the 99%" and "the 1%." The Google Trends software shows what is popular on the Internet based on search terms inputted into Google Searches. As you can see from the chart below, searches for the terms "the 99%" and "the 1%" became increasingly more frequent in September of 2011, around the beginning of Occupy Wall Street meeting in the streets, and while interest has greatly decreased in the phrases in Google Searches, the still maintain a slightly high interest than they did prior to Occupy Wall Street.

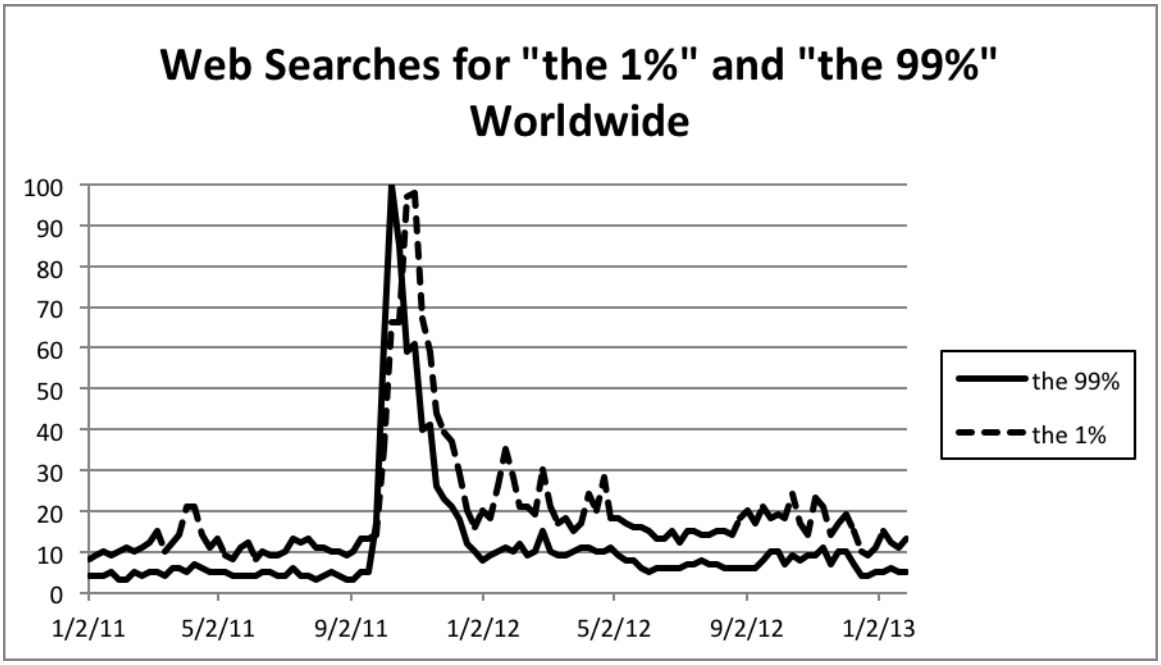

Table 2: Worldwide web Searches for terms "the 1%" and "the 99%." Graph based on data collected through Google Trends[14].

In addition, the news media attention to topics of inequality greatly increased during Occupy's occupation of Zuccotti Park (Milkman, Luce, and Lewis 2012). Similarly to phrases such as "the 99%" and "the 1%," mentions of inequality in the media fell significantly in the months following Occupy Wall Street's eviction from Zuccotti Park but still remain relatively high when compared to mentions of inequality in the media prior to Occupy Wall Street.

[14] Google Trends shows how often a particular search-term is entered into a Google search. To create a Google Trend, visit www.google.com/trends. Once a search term is entered into a Google trend, the data can be filtered to a specific date range, to produce results only in news searches, image searches, web searches, etc., and by country.

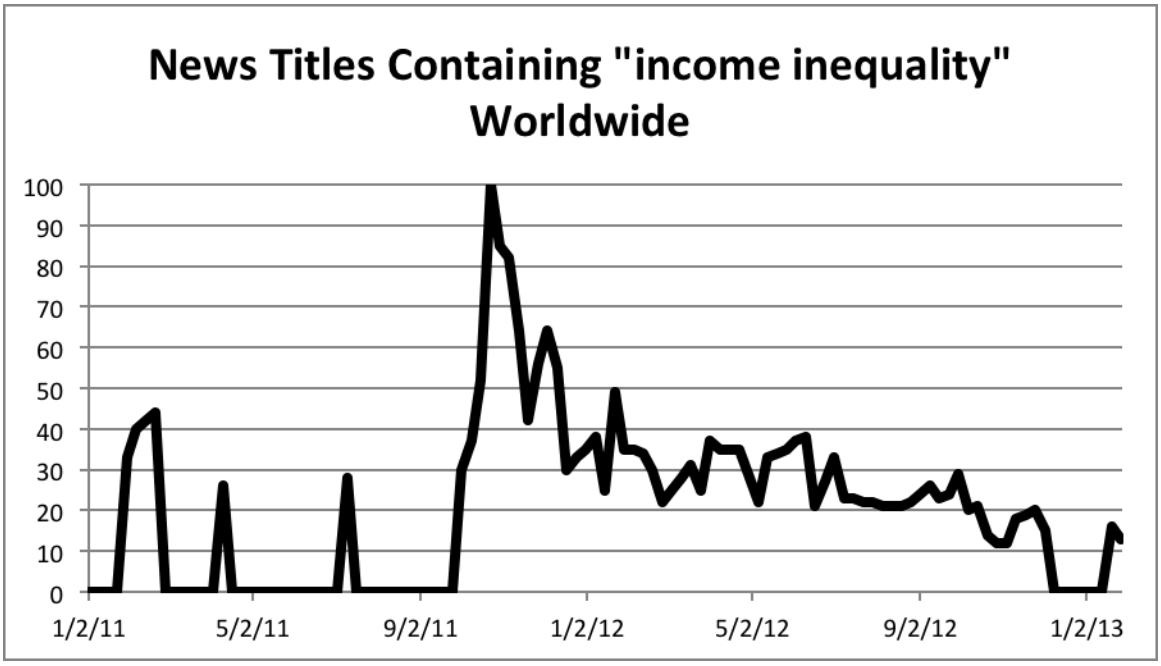

Table 3: News searches for "income inequality." Graph based on data collected through Google Trends.

Outside of the Internet and the news, the "broader political discourse continues to be peppered with ongoing references to "the 1%" and to other issues Occupy had raised" (Milkman, Luce, and Lewis 2012:38). Most recently the 2012 presidential election campaign between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney, the fiscal cliff in January of 2013, and the Sequester in March of 2013 indexed issues of "class warfare," "millionaires and billionaires," the wealthy, and the middle-class. Obama was very careful to avoid specific terms associated with Occupy Wall Street such as "the 99%" and "the 1%," as he addressed each of these events. However he often uses phrases such as "millionaires and billionaires" and the "super-rich" which are synonymous with the phrases of Occupy Wall Street without directly referencing them.

Benefits to the Community

While the dirty hippie discourse surrounding Occupy Wall Street and the change it has brought to American political discourse are large-scale effects of the movement, many of my participants shared with me narratives of what Occupy Wall Street meant to them and their communities. While these are the stories of individuals I find within them what is possible the greatest aspect of the Occupy Legacy: Occupy's ability to bring people together and help improve communities.

Occupy Wall Street attracted both those who were experienced activists and those who had never participated in political activity (Milkman, Luce, and Lewis 2012). In bringing these people together, Occupy not only transformed average citizens into political activists, it also forged "distinct networks of activists" that had never worked together previously (Milkman, Luce, and Lewis 2012:8). Adam, one of my participants, described the effects of the Occupy movement on himself and his own community in a Skype video interview as follows:

1. something's happened sort of out of tragedy
2. out of ya know just um
3. sort of the way the occupy happened
4. which I feel it kind of was more
5. intended to cause waves
6. that would touch each other
7. in ways that maybe it hadn't before
8. get people to network
9. ya know I sort of see it like
10. drips in a pond
11. ya know the circles that just
12. continue to get bigger and bigger
13. and they touch each other
14. it may not have happened otherwise without the occupy so
15. us getting this (referring to the New Market Fire Station)
16. and being able to start this
17. was almost a result of that
18. in a way so

19. and it really did help me
20. and a lot of other people
21. learn in town
22. who the other people were that we didn't really know before
23. so even though
24. it didn't like
25. like do anything
26. its ultimate purpose
27. when it was thought out long before it happened
28. still had its effect
29. even for Flint
30. we networked
31. we learned
32. new shit sprouted out of it
33. other people
34. ya know
35. figured out or realized who people were
36. ya know that maybe didn't know before
37. we got this place
38. so much happened
39. in such a weird little network
40. when the occupy popped up in Flint

For those involved in Occupy, the movement brought them together with people they had never met before. Connections were formed that didn't previously exist. And from these connections new movements and groups were able to form and address more specific issues that were important to the individuals who met during Occupy events.

Although many Occupy members have since left the greater Occupy movement, many have remained political activists within their own community and have built other groups that focus on more specific demands. For example, members of Occupy Flint have since started groups such as Peace Mob Gardens and the New Market Fire Station Compassion Center of Greater Flint.

Peace Mob Gardens is a grassroots movement in the city of Flint who seeks to create and live in a self-sustainable, higher quality of life in urban environments such as Flint. To accomplish this the group organizes community-oriented events that are geared

at teaching members of the community how to create urban gardens and educate them on healthy foods and living healthy lives. Recently, the group won a $2,000 online grant contest called Innovate Earth Day for GOOD. The group has proposed to use this grant towards a project to transform a city block in East Flint in which every home has been destroyed by fires and develop this area into an orchard for the community. This group continues to meet and grow within the community and make Flint a better place.

The New Market Fire Station Compassion Center of Greater Flint is a private membership organization for medical marijuana. They are not simply a medical marijuana dispensary, but instead they are a community-oriented club. As one of my participants, Adam, described the group "we work together, we grow together, cook together, teach each other how to grow…we're not just in and out the door like a lot of other places." Because medical marijuana has only recently stated to become legalized in states around the U.S. the subject and a community built around marijuana may seem a little taboo. However, the New Market Fire Station is providing a safe community of support for those who do need a legal drug to deal with various medical illnesses.

The legacy of Occupy Wall Street was not just in its ability to introduce socioeconomic inequalities into the national discourse or in its characterization as a group of "dirty hippies," but also in its ability to bring together new networks of activists and change the way in which activist movements organize. This important aspect of the Occupy Wall Street movement did not appear nearly as strongly in my internet research as it didn't in my participant observation and interviews I conducted with Occupy members yet, this concept is so crucial in understanding the social importance of the Occupy movement within our society. While Occupy did not lie out any specific

demands, change legislation, politics, or capitalism, as we know it, Occupy brought together a new generation of activists and opened the door to a new wave of social movements.

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Appendix A: Website Archive

The following scripts were used to archive the websites occupywallst.org, occupywallstreet.net, occupyflint.org, and nycga.net:

```
#!/bin/bash
date=`date "+%y-%m-%d"`;

url='occupywallst.org';
cd workspace/alex/ows;
mkdir ows_$date;
mkdir ows_ex_$date;
cd ows_$date;
wget --convert-links --domains $url -r $url &
cd ../ows_ex_$date;
wget --convert-links -l 2 -r $url &

url='www.occupywallstreet.net';
cd ../../ows_net;
mkdir ows_net_$date;
mkdir ows_net_ex_$date;
cd ows_net_$date;
wget --convert-links --domains $url -r $url &
cd ../ows_net_ex_$date;
wget --convert-links -l 2 -r $url &

url='www.occupyflint.org';
cd ../../flint;
mkdir flint_$date;
mkdir flint_ex_$date;
cd flint_$date;
wget --convert-links --domains $url -r $url &
cd ../flint_ex_$date;
wget --convert-links -l 2 -r $url &

url='www.nycga.net';
cd ../../nycga;
mkdir nycga_$date;
mkdir nycga_ex_$date;
cd nycga_$date;
wget --convert-links --domains $url -r $url &
cd ../nycga_ex_$date;
wget --convert-links -l 2 -r $url &

sleep 40000;
killall wget;
echo Done!;
```

This script downloads two copies of four different websites. The first makes a copy of the website recursively, but limits what it collects to the current website. For example, if there is a link to a page outside of the website, it will not follow the link. The second does follow links to outside websites, but will only follow two links in each direction before going on to the next link.

The first line tells the shell to interpret this script with bash. The second collects the current date and stores it in a variable that can be used later in the script.

```
#!/bin/bash
date=`date "+%y-%m-%d"`;
```

After this, create a variable to store the website being collected in. Then move to the location were the data is stored.

```
url='occupywallst.org';
cd workspace/alex/ows;
```

After this, create two directories, one for each type of collection. We've chosen the naming convention ows_<today's date> and ows_ex_<today's date> to name the folders we are placing our data into. The 'ex' is short for "external," since we will be storing the copy that has external links in there.

```
mkdir ows_$date;
mkdir ows_ex_$date;
```

Next, change directories into the first of the two storage folders and start the collection command. The collection command uses 'wget,' a Linux command that

download files from the web. The '--convert-links' flag tells wget to convert the links to 'relative links' when it is done, making it so the downloaded website can be navigated later from a browser. The '--domains' parameter limits the collection to only certain domains that are specified. In this case, we specified the variable '$url,' which we had previously set to 'occupywallst.org.' This will limit the collection to only pages on occupywallst.org. The '-r' flag tells wget to collect recursively. Without this flag, it would only grab the homepage and would not follow links. Towards the end, tell wget where to collect pages from – $url, which we have set to 'occupywallst.org.' The ampersand (&) at the end tells bash to run this command in the background. This allows us to start our next collect command without waiting for this one to finish.

```
cd ows_$date;
wget --convert-links --domains $url -r $url &
```

From here we move on to the next collection, which collects data from external websites it comes across as well, but only two links deep. First change directories back one level and then forwards into our 'ex' directory. After that, run the slightly modified wget command. Instead of using the '—domains' parameter, instead use the '-l' parameter. This allows wget to collect data from other websites that 'occupywallst.org' links to, but limits it to following two links at a time. Once again, use an ampersand at the end to continue the script without waiting for this command to complete.

```
cd ../ows_ex_$date;
wget --convert-links -l 2 -r $url &
```

Repeat this process for the remainder of the four sites. Lastly, set a time limit for these commands to run, so that they to not continue running for an unreasonable amount of time.

Use the ‘sleep’ command, which tells the script to wait for an arbitrary number of seconds before resuming. Since the commands are running in the background, they are not affected by the sleep command. In this case, we’ve decided 40000 seconds is a reasonable amount of time to let the wget commands run. This is a little over eleven hours.

```
sleep 40000;
```

After the sleep command has finished waiting, the script resumes. Tell it to kill all instances of the ‘wget’ command that is running on the system. This ends any remaining ‘wget’ scripts in one fell swoop. Lastly, print the word ‘Done’ to the screen. The collected data is now available in each respective folder.

```
killall wget;
echo Done!;
```

Appendix B: Get Metadata for a User

```
#!/bin/bash
#
# Name:          get_meta_for_user.sh
#
# Description:   Get meta data including highest karma, lowest
karma, and range for user in csv format
#
# Usage:    ./get_meta_for_user.sh <user>
# Example:  ./get_meta_for_user.sh sumumba
#
# 13-02-24
# David Anderson
# Northern Arizona University

user="$1";

lowest=$(cat user_karmas/${user}.csv | cut -d, -f2 | sort -g | head
-1)
highest=$(cat user_karmas/${user}.csv | cut -d, -f2 | sort -g | tail
-1)

range=$(echo $highest - $lowest | bc)

echo $user,$highest,$lowest,$range

            #FIN
```

Get metadata including highest karma, lowest karma, and range for a user and outputs the information.

Appendix C: Get Karma on All Days for a Single User

```
#!/bin/bash
#
# Name:          get_all_karma_for_user.sh
#
# Description:   Get karma for user across all days
#
# Usage:    ./get_all_karma_for_user.sh <user>
# Example:  ./get_all_karma_for_user.sh sumumba
#
# 13-02-17
# David Anderson
# Northern Arizona University

dates="hard_data_for_scripts/dates.txt";
user="$1";

while read date; do
      karma=`./get_karma_by_user_and_date.sh $user $date 2>
/dev/null`;      #Hide 'file not found' errors
      if [ "$karma" != "" ]; then
            echo "$date,$karma";         #Ignore days that don't
exist
      fi;
done < "$dates"

            #FIN
```

This script gets the karma for a user across all days that have been collected. The script runs the ‘get_all_karma_for_user.sh’ script on a user once for each day and outputs the karma for the user and the date that karma applies to.

Appendix D: Get Karma for a Single User on a Given Date

```
#!/bin/bash
#
# Name:          get_karma_by_user_and_date.sh
#
# Description:   Gets user's karma rating based on username and date
#
# Usage:         ./get_karma_by_user_and_date.sh <user> <date>
# Example:       ./get_karma_by_user_and_date.sh sumumba 12-08-21
#
# Note:          Dates are in YY-MM-DD format.
#
# 13-02-17
# David Anderson
# Northern Arizona University

user="$1";
date="$2";
path=/Volumes/OWS/Alex/nycga/nycga_"$date"/www.nycga.net/members/"$u
ser"/index.html

#Search for 'rfp-member-profile-karma' in '$path' and strip away
extra characters before and after karma rating.
grep rfp-member-profile-karma $path | cut -d\> -f3 | cut -dp -f1 2>
/dev/null        #Also, don't display error messages

      #FIN
```

This script finds the ‘karma’ for a certain user on a given day. On each page, the user’s karma is within html tags with the class 'rfp-member-profile-karma.' ‘grep’ is used to parse each file, looking for any lines that include 'rfp-member-profile-karma.’ Each line found is piped into two ‘cut’ commands the clip away any text before or after the actual ‘karma’ rating, leaving only the ‘karma’ rating to be outputted.

Appendix E: Get Karma for All Users by Date

```
#!/bin/bash
#
# Name:          get_karma_for_all_users_by_date.sh
#
# Description:   Get karma for all users across on a certain day
#
# Usage:    ./get_karma_for_all_users_by_date.sh <date>
# Example:  ./get_karma_for_all_users_by_date.sh 12-07-28
#
# Note:          Dates are in YY-MM-DD format.
#
# 13-02-17
# David Anderson
# Northern Arizona University

date="$1";

path=/Volumes/OWS/Alex/nycga/nycga_"$date"
users="hard_data_for_scripts/users.txt";

echo "Scores for users on $date";
echo;

while read user; do
      if [ -d "$path" ]; then
            karma=`./get_karma_by_user_and_date.sh $user $date 2>
/dev/null`; #Don't display file not found messages
            if [ "$karma" != "" ]; then
                  echo "$user,$karma";
            fi
      else
            echo "Sorry, information was not gathered for that
date.";
            break;
      fi
done < "$users"

            #FIN
```

This script retrieves the karma for all users on a certain day. It runs the 'get_karma_by_user_and_date.sh' script once for each user and retrieves the karma for each user on that day, outputting both the user and the user's karma for that day.

Appendix F: Get Posts for All Users

```
#!/bin/bash

user_list="$1";


while read user; do
      grep -IiRA 27 '<div id="topic-meta"' ../nycga/nycga_12-
0*/www.nycga.net/groups/ | grep -B 26 $user | grep '<h3>' >>
user_posts/$user.txt
done < $user_list
```

This script grabs each post for each user from the www.nycga.net group pages and saves them to individual text files, one per user.