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### Language

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The Occupy movement in the USA was launched on September 17, 2011, when a march on Wall Street developed into the occupation of Zuccotti Park nearby. Support for the 'Occupy Wall Street' protest camp increased, especially after the police arrested 700 people for blocking Brooklyn Bridge two weeks later, and spread to other parts of New York City and many other cities in the USA. The movement was characterised by lively debates about the injustices of the economic and financial system, coined the slogan 'we are the 99%' (opposed to the inordinate wealth and power of the 1%) and initiated various blockades, for example of the New York Stock Exchange. After two months police closed down the Zuccotti Park encampment, making 200 arrests, and several other cities did the same. By March 2012 there had been 6,700 arrests in 112 cities. The energy generated by the movement spread into related activities – as in Spain some activists engaged with the mortgage crisis, occupied foreclosed homes and undertook dramatic protests at courts and auctions of seized houses and apartments.

Occupy activists also turned to foreign policy issues and other social causes. In the radical environment of Oakland (an ethnically diverse working class city, where the unionised workers at the port are unusually militant, and the students at the nearby Berkeley campus have a tradition of activism) the Occupy movement gained strong support and called a general strike in November 2011. It also became the radical wing of the wider US movement, but by mid-2012 was in danger of alienating local support, particularly through its provocative demonstrations against the city police.

The early achievements of the Occupy movement were to influence the terms of national debate (polls suggested strong public sympathy for the basic message of economic injustice), demonstrate a participatory democracy in action and to have an international impact. The euphoria generated by the movement generated an immediate literature, referenced below. The longer term implications of the movement, as economic conditions begin to improve in the USA, are more uncertain.

Blumenkranz, Carla ; Gessen, Keith ; Greif, Mark ; Leonard, Sarah ; Resnick, Sarah ; Saval, Nikil ; Schmitt, Eli ; Taylor, Astra, [Occupy!: Scenes from Occupied America](#) [1], New York and London, Verso, 2012, pp. 224

Collection of brief accounts of events at Zuccotti Park encampment and initial assessments by writers from leftist New York media, plus extracts from speeches of visiting intellectuals and activists – Judith Butler, Slavoj Zizek, Angela Davis and Rebecca Solnit.

Byrne, Janet, [The Occupy Handbook](#) [2], New York, Back Bay Books, 2012, pp. 560

Includes discussion of why the 1% have such a dominant economic position.

Calhoun, Craig, [Occupy Wall Street in Perspective](#) [3], British Journal of Sociology, Vol. 64, issue 1, 2013, pp. 26-38

Argues Occupy Wall Street was 'less an organized effective movement' than a dramatic performance.

Chomsky, Noam, [Occupy](#) [4], London and New York, Penguin Books and Zuccotti Park Books, 2012, pp. 120

This book comprises five sections:

1. Chomsky's Howard Zinn Memorial Lecture given to Occupy Boston in Oct.2011;



2. an interview with a student in Jan 2012;
3. a question and answer session with 'InterOccupy';
4. a question and answer session partly on foreign policy; and
5. Chomsky's brief appreciation of the life and work of radical historian Howard Zinn.

There is a short introductory note by the editor, Greg Ruggiero.

Gitlin, Todd, [Occupy Nation. the Roots: The Spirit and the Promise of Occupy Wall Street](#) [5], New York, Harper Collins, 2012, pp. 320

Book by former radical student leader in the 1960s, providing a portrait of the movement.

Graeber, David, [The Democracy Project: A History, a Crisis, a Movement](#) [6], London, Allen Lane, 2013, pp. 352

Reflections on Occupy Wall Street movement and its beginning in the occupation of Zucotti Park, September 2011, from standpoint of an anarchist theorist.

Healey, Josh, [Whose Streets? Our Streets!](#) [7], Red Pepper, issue Apr/May, 2012, pp. 41-43

Examines Occupy Oakland, its potential and downside.

Social Movement Studies, [Occupy!](#) [8], Social Movement Studies: Journal of Social Cultural and Political Protest, Vol. 11, issue 3-4, 2012, pp. 279-485

This issue has several articles on Occupy. See:

- , [Tahrir Here? The influence of the Arab Uprisings on the emergence of Occupy](#) [9] Social Movement Studies: Journal of Social Cultural and Political Protest, 2012, pp. 302-308
- , [Why does Occupy matter?](#) [10] Social Movement Studies: Journal of Social Cultural and Political Protest, 2012, pp. 279-287
- , [Occupy Pittsburgh and the challenges of participatory democracy](#) [11] Social Movement Studies: Journal of Social Cultural Political Protest, 2012, pp. 288-294

Content overview: <http://tandfonline.com/toc/csms20/11/3-4?nav=tocList> [12]

Van Gelder, Sarah, [This Changes Everything: Occupy Wall Street and the 99% Movement](#) [13], Bainbridge Isle WA, Yes! Magazine, 2012, pp. 96

Contributors include Naomi Klein, David Korten, Ralph Nader and Rebecca Solnit.

White, Micah, [The End of Protest: A New Playbook for Revolution](#) [14], 2016, pp. 336

This is a book examining what strategy protesters should adopt and critical of some common leftist assumptions, but is based on the author's role in the Occupy movement. He discusses Occupy at length, outlining its origins and reflecting on the tactic of occupation, and the movement's failure to adopt additional approaches and develop a movement capable of promoting wider social change.

Writers for the 99%, [Occupying Wall Street: The Inside Story of an Action that Changed America](#) [15], Chicago IL, Haymarket Books, 2012, pp. 217

(Initially published by OR Books New York on print-on-demand and ebook basis.)



Detailed account of daily life at the camp by figures on the left.

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**Source URL (retrieved on 25/04/2024 - 10:26):**<https://civilresistance.info/section/campaigns-social-and-economic-justice/a8-resistance-financial-crisis-2008/a8c-occupy-usa>

### Links

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