Dear fellow Workshoppers,

Here is my paper for the May 12 workshop. In some ways it feels like a lot of evidence without a theory. There are two vectors of the argument, the first regarding the technological continuum with the claim that the newer technologies do not replace the old ones but complement them, and the second arguing that egalitarian relations of production within subgroups of media production embodied the horizontal and prefigurative ethos of Occupy.

Is this enough? On the other hand, is it too much? The paper is certainly somewhat long for publication in most journals, but given the variety of examples I don't know what I might cut out to make it shorter.

I will appreciate any comments both on the substance of the argument and the form.

Jack

Relations of Media Production in Occupy Wall Street

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Abstract

The Occupy Wall Street movement raised a protest against economic inequality and the power of financial institutions in the United States. It drew public attention to the cause and inspired offshoots occupying public spaces in cities and towns around the country. These occupations produced a profusion of media in a range of genres--print, graphics, video, social media, and live streams--to carry their message of opposition to corporate domination of economic and social life in the US, and in particular of the mass media.

This paper makes a fourfold argument: first, the content of Occupy media propounded the distinctive views that motivated the occupations and challenged the distortions and omissions of the mainstream media with respect to both the movement itself and the issues it raised. Second, occupiers produced works in word and image that ranged across an entire technological spectrum from low-tech (face-to-face oral communication) through traditional (print) to high-tech (electronic) media. The occupation occurred just as high-tech new media were becoming widely accessible. These new tools were used not as a substitute for live action, however, but to mobilize people for low-tech, face-to-face encounters and demonstrations. Third, occupiers were available and disposed to take part due to their social characteristics--they were young, educated, savvy in the new media. Many were aspiring professionals in media, the arts, and information technology and were facing a difficult labor market for their skills. The Occupy movement resonated with their values, and they had both the skills--creative and technological--and the motivation for participation. Finally, the teams producing works in various genres adopted a cooperative, nonhierarchical working style in which tasks were shared, experienced users trained novices, and groups rather than individuals were credited with the results, promoting ideals of nonalienated labor.

Occupy Wall Street burst into public consciousness when a small group of protesters occupied the sliver of lower Manhattan known as Zuccotti Park on September 17, 2011 and raised their protest against economic inequality and the power of financial institutions. They drew public attention to their movement and their cause and inspired hundreds of spinoffs occupying public spaces in cities and towns around the country. Planning on extended stays, they organized living communities on their occupation sites. And they produced an outpouring of symbolic representations in various media, demonstrating an abundance of creative energy.

In this paper I will examine the media of Occupy Wall Street (OWS), especially those that were produced by the occupiers of Zuccotti Park in New York, the center of the media industry in the United States. I will make a fourfold argument: first, the content of Occupy media expressed the movement's opposition to hegemonic discourses and propounded the distinctive views that motivated the occupations, as a challenge to what they believed were the distortions and omissions of the mainstream

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media with respect to both the movement itself and the issues it raised. Second, occupiers used a unique mix of high-tech (electronic), medium-tech (print and graphics), and low-tech (direct oral communication) media. The occupation occurred just as high-technology new media were becoming widely accessible. The new technological tools were mainly used, however, to convoke the gathering of occupiers in low-tech, face-to-face encounters and demonstrations. Third, occupiers were available and disposed to take part due to their social characteristics--they were young, educated, and savvy in the new media, but they faced a difficult job market for their skills. The Occupy movement resonated with their values, and their precarious employment status made them available for mobilization into the movement. Fourth, the teams producing works in a range of genres--print, graphics, video, social media, and live streams--adopted a cooperative, nonhierarchical working style in which tasks were shared and groups rather than individuals were credited with the results, embodying ideals of nonalienated labor.

The research reported in this paper consisted of participant observation and open-ended interviews with twenty people who were active in the production of the various media that emerged from the occupation. Most of the interview respondents gave me permission to quote them by name. I have chosen to do so; these mostly young respondents, inured by a lifetime of internet use, are less concerned with protecting their privacy than with expressing themselves, and many of them have written, given interviews, or made video presentations that are publicly available. Only by identifying them can I relate what they said to me to their public statements.[1]

Occupy Wall Street: A Brief History

The occupiers of Zuccotti Park were inspired by the Green Movement of 2009 in Iran, the Arab Spring that spread from Tunisia in 2010 to Egypt, Libya, Bahrain, Syria, and elsewhere in 2011; the occupation of the state legislature in Wisconsin protesting the curtailment of public employee unions; the May 15 Movement (M-15) in Spain and the Greek protests against austerity. In these protests, demonstrators, often summoned by electronic social networking media, filled an outdoor public space (except in Wisconsin) and proposed to remain indefinitely, day and night, until some demands were met.

These movements, though similar in form, did not have the same goals. Occupy Wall Street, though it attracted a diverse set of ideological elements, set its sights mainly on the increasing inequality in the capitalist economy. It drew attention to the economic gap between the superrich and the rest of the population which has been increasing since the 1970s.[2] It also protested the disparity of political power, exacerbated by the Supreme Court's decision in the Citizens United case (2010) that allowed unlimited corporate campaign contributions, and manifested in the multimillion dollar bailout of the banks in the financial crisis of 2008-2009 while millions of Americans lost their homes to foreclosure. With the slogan "We are the 99 percent" they hoped to unite the great majority of the population in opposition to the concentration of wealth and income.

The immediate spark for the occupation came from the Canadian magazine *Adbusters*, which in its July, 2011, issue called for an occupation of Wall Street, the symbolic heart of the US financial

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[1]People who are named as sources without bibliographic attribution are interview subjects.

[2]General accounts of Occupy Wall Street can be found in Bray (2013), Gitlin (2012), Gould-Wartofsky (2015), Graeber (2013), and Schneider (2013).

system, to produce a "Tahrir moment." Groups met throughout the summer in a "New York City General Assembly" to plan the occupation. When they struck on September 17, they had made no secret of their intentions, so Wall Street was heavily guarded. They proceeded instead to Zuccotti Park, a nearby privately owned public space, and set up camp. Once there, they proposed to stay indefinitely. Their agenda was similar to the occupations that inspired them except that they deliberately refrained from making any demands even as their manifestoes denounced financial-institution control of US politics and the inequality of wealth and income.

The occupation struck a responsive chord. It inspired hundreds of occupations, large and small, in cities and towns around the country, joining in the protest against escalating inequality. They formed a broad movement that was collectively labeled "Occupy Wall Street." The movement was decentralized and prided itself on being leaderless (or "leaderful," according to some--everyone was a leader). Each occupation was independent of the others, but they were in constant contact through electronic media. Though the movement resisted precise political definition, it became the most vibrant movement on the US left in decades.

Though the movement eschewed formal ideology, it was informed by an anarchist sensibility: a sort of twenty-first century anarchism focused not on smashing the state but on creating alternative institutions of mutuality and horizontal governance within the present society (Hammond, 2015a). Each occupation became more than a protest site; it became a space for living, where the round-the-clock presence gave rise to intense interaction and organization for a variety of tasks, some focused on the community at the site itself, some on communicating to the outside world in political mobilization and in media of communication. In all these tasks, occupiers attempted to practice what they called prefiguration: they intended their egalitarian interaction to anticipate the institutions of an unalienated future society within the confines of the present. A prefigurative movement tries to embody "within the ongoing political practice of a movement . . . those forms of social relations, decision-making, culture, and human experience that are the ultimate goal" (Boggs, 1977: 100). Prefiguration means "building the new society in the shell of the old" (Graeber, 2013: 190) by modeling the desired social relations, more fulfilling and less estranged than those typical of alienated capitalist society (Hammond, 2015a). As we will see, this principle, however imperfectly realized, was put into practice in media production as in other areas.

The occupation of Zuccotti Park lasted for two months. Occupiers held off an attempted eviction by the New York Police Department in October but succumbed on November 15, when police invaded the site without warning in the middle of the night and dragged the protesters out. They arrested some two hundred people in the park and the surrounding streets. They confiscated individual and communal property and carried it to a Department of Sanitation garage. Much of this property, including computers, other equipment, and several thousand books that had been donated for a People's Library, was destroyed. Before or soon after, most of the occupations around the country were also evicted, usually by similar massive use of force by local police departments.

The movement lost much of its steam after the occupations were evicted, and in the mind of much of the public it was over. Many initiatives continued, however, and new ones were undertaken--in New York City, new occupations which were either deliberately brief or aborted; support for a variety of political initiatives that preceded or arose independently of Occupy but were congenial to its leftist perspective; and production of ephemeral or more permanent media products by groups that had come together in the initial occupation (many of the media projects described in this article continued, though generally with diminishing intensity). Most strikingly, veterans of Occupy Wall Street were key in mobilizing volunteers and organizing relief operations after the devastating hurricane Sandy hit the

New York area in October, 2012.

Media Production in Occupy Wall Street

While many scholars have examined the coverage (or lack thereof) of social movements in mainstream media (for a recent survey, see Wolfsfeld, 2011), little attention has been paid to the media generated autonomously by social movements for their own consumption. Occupy Wall Street produced media abundantly. Across the country, but especially in New York, the movement promulgated its cause and raised its issues in words and images, live, in print, and electronically.

The US left has had a tradition of opposition media for decades. Many political activists believe that the mainstream media are biased and closed to their voices. Newspapers and television networks are limited by economic, political, and journalistic constraints, which affect their tone and style as well as their content. These constraints not only dictate their political positions, but more generally limit access to the press to a small elite. Other voices are marginalized, particularly the voices of those who would challenge existing power structures (Gamson et al., 1992; Gitlin, 1980; Herman and Chomsky, 1988; Ryan, 1991; Tarrow, 1998: 109-117).

To counter the distortions and omissions in the mainstream media, political movements create their own media, mainly in print publications and radio--and more recently in websites, online videos, and social media. They attempt to forge an alternative culture and offer forms that embody the movements' decentralization and internal democracy. Their publications and broadcasts have been referred to as "alternative media" or "radical media." The definitions and scope of these terms are not precise (for at least one author, the term "alternative media" is capacious enough to include NPR, formerly National Public Radio; Rauch, 2007: 1001). In general, however, the terms apply to media that offer a counterhegemonic political orientation, adopt nonhierarchical work relations among those who produce them, and include otherwise excluded voices (Albert, 1997; Atton, 2003; Downing, 2001; Mattoni et al., 2010; Rauch, 2007). Both the outlets and the analyses put varying emphasis on each of these components.

Alternative media often challenge the mainstream media's conventions in both content and style. Their antiestablishment orientation includes both specifically political and cultural components; they reject the commodification of everyday life at the same time that they challenge government policies.

They also attempt to embody an alternative culture in their production practices. Michael Albert, one of the leading practitioners as co-founder of *Z Magazine*, a publication which would rank high on most lists of alternative outlets, keys the definition of alternative media not to content or ideological orientation but to the form of organization, in which the process of production is characterized by egalitarian social relations (Albert, 1997). Similarly, John Downing's survey highlights the practice of internal democracy by many producers of radical media (2001: 69).

Further, they want to open their pages and airwaves to voices that are normally excluded. Adopting the principle of "citizen journalism," they aim to break down the distinctions between producers, subjects, and audience; their distinctive content and style are meant to appeal to those who are marginalized by traditional media outlets and to give them voice.

They identify with a broad leftist political movement. Many outlets were founded in times of heightened mobilization and found their early audience in the activists of a specific movement--for

example, Indymedia grew out of the global justice movement and the 1999 Seattle protests against the World Trade Organization (Atton, 2003). If they survive, they generally broaden their coverage to appeal to a variety of causes endorsed by a broad left, without identifying with any one movement. They also often find that they must surrender or at least modify their principles of open access and egalitarian social relations to yield to practical demands. For example, publications must enter into the marketplace and make money. They may have to adopt a division of labor in which some members exercise greater authority and some are paid, or are paid differentially (Downing, 2001; Elson, 2000).

OWS's media exhibited the same mixture of politically oppositional content, egalitarian organization, and openness to a spectrum of voices, in varying combination, and experienced the same tensions. Occupy's media were different, however, in that they claimed to embody the (never fully specified) values of the movement, and to speak for it--though, as we will see, the relation of any media project to the movement often grew complicated.

In addition, Occupy erupted just when the media landscape for social movements in the US was undergoing a dramatic transformation. A combination of technological and economic factors opened many new channels of communication, first with e-mail, then with the internet and social media, and most recently with the smartphone (or sometimes more elaborate equipment) and live streaming. The new media were credited with a major role in mobilizing the movements in North Africa, the Middle East, and Europe that inspired Occupy (Hammond, 2015c). Their importance is disputed, however; I will return to the question of how influential the social networking media have been and can be in mobilizing for political action.

Most of these technologies are inexpensive, and the mostly young activists of Occupy grew up with them and took them for granted. Occupy Wall Street not only rode the wave of the new media but to some degree helped to pull it forward. The new media are both more voluminous and more diverse in content than their predecessors. They open participation to a broad segment of the population--both as creators and as consumers of media--because the resources in money and skill required to use the technologies are incomparably lower than for traditional media. They facilitated and reinforced the democratic, free-for-all ethos of Occupy because they allow greater interaction between the formal producers of the media and the audience, and indeed audience members can become active participants. The timing and rapid spread of the movement in turn were propitious for innovations in movement-generated media.

At the same time, the media industry faced economic uncertainty. Traditional media companies faced increasing competition. Technological change and the recession that began in 2007 left traditional media with declining profits, while new media struggled to find profitable business models (Rosenstiel and Mitchell, 2011; Saperstein, 2014; Siles, 2012). These same uncertainties limited the career opportunities of young aspiring professionals, many of whom swelled the ranks of Occupy. With the crisis of the traditional ("legacy") media under the weight of increasing costs and loss of audience and advertisers, OWS became part--a leading edge--of experiments that attempted to offer a new model of journalism. Concentrated in the movement, the technologically skilled practitioners created innovations that put them in the forefront of developments in the new media.

In the age of YouTube and Facebook, blogs and crowdsourcing, the ability of activists to communicate with each other locally and over vast distances has multiplied enormously. Unlike the mainstream media, the new media are freely accessible; that ease of access, moreover, is culturally congenial to people who believe that everyone should have free access to information and to opportunities to communicate. Against the dictates of commodity culture, the movement asserts that

information must be free--free of cost and available to everyone without restriction.

Information media must also be open to input from everyone. The new media in particular are interactive, "many-to-many." Social media and many websites offer the reader or viewer the opportunity to respond and often generate extensive, multiparty dialogues (Juris, 2012; Standage, 2013). The forms of the new media support an ethos that is democratic, participatory, leaderless, and not beholden to large institutions or economic interests. The new media embody these cultural commitments because their low cost and ease of use allow for the openness in both production and distribution that the movement seeks to achieve.

This alternative culture, while embracing and taking advantage of modern communications technology, also adopts low-tech forms emphasizing face-to-face communication. Openness makes for uneven quality but it allows a marvelous creativity. The occupation has called forth a polyphonic (or cacophonous) outburst of originality and experimentation.

Most of the attention to media use in Occupy Wall Street, as in the contemporaneous movements around the world, has been directed at the electronic media, especially social networking. I will show, however, that while the social networks played an important role, production in more traditional media is equally impressive, and the social networks were not used independently of more traditional forms or of live action. High-tech media were deployed largely to promote nonhierarchical, egalitarian, but above all active participation in the movement's activities, interaction in real time and real space. They are not an end in themselves. The point is not to offer the media for consumption in private but to activate people on the ground. The new media are an instrument for face-to-face activism as much as a communicative end in themselves.

The use of new electronic media in Occupy was integrated with that of more traditional media, and their cultural specificity was reflected in more than their technology. Movement media, including those of OWS, have a different purpose than do the mainstream media. Mainstream media profess objectivity but are economically and politically constrained by their beholdenness to dominant economic and political interests. A movement's purpose is to shout out a commitment to a cause and use information in the service of that cause, and in the process shock the mainstream. The culture is free-spirited, defies authority, and insists on expounding alternative views.

The media used ranged from face-to-face interaction and low-tech means of facilitating it to print publications that took a traditional form, directed by a staff, to online social networks and crowdsourced media, to political video production and livestreaming of events.

Occupy's Genres

Face to Face. The most important medium of communication in the movement was actually unmediated communication, between people talking to each other. (Is it oxymoronic to call this a medium of communication?) The Occupy movement restored live interaction to political activism. For the preceding decade, much "activism" had been limited to sending e-mails and signing online petitions--what Evgeny Morozov calls "slacktivism" (2011: 189-191; cf. Mattoni et al., 2010: 12). Click a mouse, sign a petition; you have done your duty.

In striking contrast, the Occupy movement, while it depended heavily on the internet for initial and ongoing organizing, also recognized the internet's limitations. OWS understood that as important as electronic communication is, it achieves little unless it leads to face-to-face interaction in which

people do more than respond passively and reflexively. It is when people act together visibly that social movements can empower them and prefigure future social relations. On the sites (that is, not the websites but the physical locations of the occupations), people milled about, peddled their causes, talked and debated in informal groups and somewhat more formal committees. They met in a daily General Assembly to make collective decisions. They performed the tasks that kept the occupation going. They interacted in the public space where each person's actions were visible to everyone else.

At any occupation, a large part of the day was spent in intense conversations about political issues, personal troubles, the structure of the economy and the polity, and the future. Groups formed and dissolved as people switched back and forth from concrete tasks to deliberation and debate. These conversations were shared by full-time occupiers and others who just dropped in. All of them found the conversations energizing and liberating. The conversations took on an intensity and intimacy created by coming together with a common purpose. They constituted the basis of democratic participation: they reinforced the sense of equality and joint ownership because everyone could take part, everyone could share the experience. In talking to each other, occupiers and others who dropped in rehearsed their commitment to social justice at the macro level and personal empowerment at the micro level. This opportunity was what made the occupation of a physical space so important. They liberated space to create a Habermasian public sphere in which deliberation about goals and future plans could take place (Habermas, 1989).

Oral communication also went on in meetings, facilitated by the most innovative medium enlisted to support face-to-face communication: the "people's microphone." Using bullhorns in public in New York requires a police permit, so occupiers found an alternative: at mass meetings, a speaker paused after each phrase and the people near the speaker repeated it in unison to the crowd; if the crowd was big, a second circle of shouters repeated it. If it was even bigger than that, people on the periphery listened on their phones and shouted it to the crowd.

The people's mic was used in big meetings, and also to attract attention at an occupation site. Someone who wished to make an announcement, or just sound off, would shout out, "mic check!" Those nearby repeated "mic check!" in unison. The speaker shouted "mic check!" a second time and, if all went well, a larger group, now paying attention, repeated it. The speaker then went on to make the announcement, broken up into short bits that could be repeated by the crowd.

The people's mic does not lend itself to long or complicated presentations, a limitation which brings both advantages and disadvantages. A speaker must talk in short Twitter-like sound bites. Nevertheless it provided a sense of power: I can personally attest that if you say something and dozens of people repeat it, you have the feeling of really being listened to (cf. Costanza-Chock, 2012: 381; Kim, 2011; Reguillo, 2012). And for those playing the role of the mic amplifying a speaker's voice, the call and response is physically energizing and provides a strong sense of participation. If the people's mic was initially adopted as a form of resistance against regulations that occupiers regard as imposed to silence them, it became a source of joy: people took so much pleasure in using it that sometimes a small group that could hear perfectly well nevertheless went through the ritual of repeating each speaker's words.

Meetings also used a set of low-tech procedures to reach decisions in face-to-face gatherings. An elaborate protocol, known as consensus process, was devised to address any proposals brought before a General Assembly, the authoritative body of an occupation, drawing on practices that were originally developed by Quakers and have been widely used in anarchist and participatory-democratic movements (Cornell, 2009; Hammond, 2015a; Polletta, 2002). There was no chairperson, but a

"facilitator" (or, usually, two facilitators) who announced an agenda and stated a few rules of process. Someone was assigned to take a "stack," keeping track of people who raised their hands to be recognized. The stack was usually a "progressive stack," with people not necessarily recognized in the order they requested but giving priority to those who belong to traditionally marginalized groups.

Meetings to reach consensus were often long. A system of hand signals was adopted to minimize some predictable delays. When a decision was to be made, people voted (or registered a "temperature check," a straw vote prior to a definitive vote) with hand signals: each person raised one or both hands and wiggled fingers: fingers pointing straight up signified assent, fingers pointing down signified disagreement, fingers pointing forward registered neutrality or ambivalence. Anyone could use the same signals at any time to show agreement or disagreement with what a speaker was saying. Other signals were used in meetings: a triangle formed by the fingers signaled a point of process; rolling the hands meant "wrap it up," a polite way to say a speaker has gone on too long. Crossed arms in front of the body represented a "block"--the blocker was so strongly opposed to a proposal that he or she was willing to deny a consensus, which means that no action could be taken. Straight up-or-down votes were rare; the hope was that through discussion everyone would converge on a common position. But the process became unwieldy; it did more to create solidarity than to facilitate the taking of decisions.

Another low tech, participatory medium of communication was the handwritten sign. At demonstrations in recent years, sponsoring organizations (or competing sponsoring organizations) have usually printed signs for their supporters to carry. My union, the Professional Staff Congress of faculty members and other professional employees of the City University of New York, sponsors or cosponsors many demonstrations--some related to university issues like tuition increases and management's refusal to negotiate the renewal of a long-expired contract, others in cooperation with other unions and other political organizations for national causes like opposition to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Our contingent carries the union's printed signs with messages relating the cost of the wars to the underfunding of our university. These signs have a distinctive, bright red look, all in the same style. There is something comforting about their consistency (and they enable marchers to locate our contingent).

At Occupy demonstrations, however, such signs were outnumbered by demonstrators' handwritten signs. The signs announced specific grievances or paraded clever slogans. Many of them showed a self-reflexive humor, like one that said, "I'm so angry I made a sign" (this sign and others can be seen at <http://www.damncoolpictures.com/2011/10/best-signs-from-occupy-wall-street.html>). Here as elsewhere in the protest, occupiers showed a welcome light touch in their pursuit of serious business. The atmosphere these signs created was very different from one dominated by institutional, printed signs. They demonstrated that the carriers were not subservient to a hierarchical organization. The preference for them was of a piece with the leaderless, anti-institutional ethos of the Occupy movement.

At Zuccotti Park, there were also many people standing around the edges holding their own handmade signs. Many of these signs were very large, with closely packed print and very detailed messages. Their relation to the occupation was not always clear, especially since some of them were promoting causes that many occupiers would locate on the lunatic fringe. But in the spirit of openness that guided the occupation, their presence was tolerated.

Another unique low tech medium was the drum circle. Drumming symbolized for many the energy of the movement and for others its intrusiveness. When drumming went on late at night at

Zuccotti Park, neighbors complained and the General Assembly forged an agreement to limit it (Greif, 2011).

The use of low-tech media was in part a practical response to the circumstance of the occupation: public parks lack electrical outlets and bullhorns require a permit. On the day of the initial occupation, organizers preferred to distribute instructions on paper or by voice rather than use the internet, to maintain secrecy. But as Nathan Jurgenson (2011) points out, the rejection of technological fixes is a symbolic act with political meaning: an implicit critique of consumerism and capitalist globalization.

The Printed Word. If the most interesting medium of communication was at the lowest level of technology (the human voice, amplified only by repetition by other human voices), occupiers were also masters of the new media and avid producers and consumers of the old. Occupation sites and subgroups within them produced many print publications. The *Occupied Wall Street Journal*, an attractively produced broadsheet, published several issues in New York, with contributions by movement journalists and such luminaries as Cornel West and Barbara Kingsolver. *Occupy! An OWS-Inspired Gazette* published longer articles mostly by occupiers, some analytical and others diary-like, recounting experiences in the occupation; many of them were reprinted in an anthology (Taylor et al., 2012).[3] Occupations in other cities produced newspapers reporting their own events and targeting the local mainstream press.

Other groups produced general print publications designed and bound like newspapers and magazines, as well as the ubiquitous fliers calling on people to attend meetings or demonstrations or publicizing points of view. Some appeared on line and in print; some appeared only as blogs, continuously updated, usually by multiple contributors. They addressed the immediate issues burning in the movement or the longer view; they sometimes reproduced articles and discussions from other sources. The magazine *Tidal* (subtitled *Occupy Theory/Occupy Strategy*) was founded during the occupation and continued to be published afterward. Occupy Comix produced graphic novels (a.k.a. comic books), later reprinted in a bound book (Moore, 2014).

Occupations in New York, Boston, and elsewhere created libraries, with donated books, printed on actual paper. Professional librarians and others who joined the occupations catalogued them and recommended texts relevant to the movement's organization and goals in the occupations and on the website of the People's Library at Occupy Wall Street. (The People's Library had to restart twice after the police raided the park and confiscated and destroyed many of the books.) After the occupation its collection was in storage, with a selection brought out for display at occasional gatherings.

Arts. There was an enormous outpouring of artistic production as well. Artists working with Occupy not only produced artworks. They called into question the economics and esthetics of the formal art world in its capital, New York City, as serving the interest of the one percent. They challenged the practice of artistic production in the hierarchical, profit-oriented world of high art,

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[3]Both publications had ambiguous relations to the occupation; in some sense each was perceived as being of, or belonging to, Occupy Wall Street but they established their distance. OWSJ was editorially independent of the General Assembly and raised its own funds; the group that produced the *Gazette* was largely drawn from the staff of the magazine *N+1*, and the periodical presented itself as a product of *N+1* rather than of the occupation. Nevertheless both were often taken as officially representing the occupation.

seeking to demystify the formal art world's pretensions to high culture and the economic function of art as a certification of cultural capital and a store of investment capital.

Against it they counterposed a collaborative production process which was open to multiple participants, regardless of formal training or technical skill, and which would produce works that were meant to be accessible (artistically as well as economically) to the broad public. The process was often more important than any product. Most showed little concern to collect or preserve their work.

Among those attempting to make art that was inexpensive and popular in concept was the screenprinting group at Zuccotti Park. Silkscreening in the park began incidentally. According to Jesse Goldstein, cofounder of the group, screenprinting has "a very low barrier to entry: a very easy technique. Once you have all the tools together, actually printing on somebody's clothing is simple. It is very well suited to public engagement: printing in public is very easy." Experienced printers and novices worked side by side, and printing turned into a full-time activity.

The group silkscreened t-shirts and other surfaces with slogans of Occupy Wall Street. The screenprinters' area became a tourist attraction, according to Goldstein: "something to do when you went to visit Zuccotti Park." They charged nothing for their works. Visitors provided their own t-shirts to be screened, and many made donations which were reinvested to buy new supplies.

The Arts and Culture working group, most of whose members were practicing or aspiring artists, was formed soon after the occupation. Several subgroups grew out of it, engaged in producing artworks that would convey the message of Occupy and play a role in its actions to demystify the world of high art as an elitist, capitalist enterprise, and to expose and improve the working conditions of art workers. The Occupy Museums group "occupied" the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in January, 2012, unfurled a large banner, and marched through the museum conducting a general assembly that moved from gallery to gallery. The group took up as a cause the art handlers at Sotheby's auction house, locked out of work for ten months. The Occupiers denounced the handlers' low salaries, especially in contrast to the multimillion dollar prices paid for the works sold in Sotheby's auctions. The MoMA protesters particularly targeted two MoMA board members who were associated with Sotheby's (Pollack, 2012; Thrasher, 2012).

Artists created posters to broadcast the message and the activities of occupations across the country. These came to be collected by the Occuprint group, created when the cofounders of the screenprinters were asked by the *Occupied Wall Street Journal* to curate a selection of posters for an issue that would be devoted entirely to graphics. They put out a call and got an overwhelming response from around the country, so many contributions that they produced the issue and then created a website, occuprint.org, where many original posters of varying themes and quality could (and can still) be seen. Occuprint accepted all manner of prints, according to Goldstein. They did not select based on the style or quality of the offerings: "We were interested in letting people's self-expression define the visual esthetic." Acknowledging the uneven artistic quality, he eschewed the use of the term "art" in favor of "images" that emanate from a "social movement culture" (Goldstein, 2012: 7). In an interview and an article, he expressed his satisfaction that the visual esthetic predominating in the posters was more positive than the political art of recent years. not "resigned to . . . gloomy prognoses. . . . [T]he work . . . is too honest, too full of care and conviction, too concerned with its own self-expression" (Goldstein, 2012: 10),

Other groups of artist also declined to adopt a uniform artistic style; nevertheless, as with much political art, a clean line and bold figures predominated--visually striking images good for outdoor

presentation and reproduction in photographs and on electronic screens, rather than the kind of detail that calls for contemplative observation in a museum. As with other media production activities, the production of art was often a collaborative process which endeavored to break down the hierarchies that normally prevail in the art world.

The Arts and Labor group, which grew out of the Arts and Culture group, was especially concerned with the conditions of work in the art world. It produced art to accompany Occupy's marches and other activities. Arts and Labor members' attitude to their work was striking. Though the core of the group consisted of professional artists, they incorporated untrained artists on an equal basis. They showed surprisingly little concern for preserving their works: they were produced for a specific occasion and designed to be ephemeral. According to Patrick Conlon, "it is not the physical banner that matters but the message; once the message has been put out there, the banner doesn't matter."

The posters collected by Occuprint, however, had a different destiny. Occuprint selected 31 posters and prepared a portfolio with museum-quality printing which was offered for sale to museums and cultural institutions in 2013. It was acquired by the same Museum of Modern Art that the Arts and Culture Group had occupied the previous year. The irony was not lost on Occupy's artists, but they did not all see it the same way. Molly Crabapple, one of the artists whose work was included in the collection, said, "I'd way rather have it acquired by Moma than by Morgan Stanley and put in their lobby." But Jim Johnson, writing on the "(Notes on) Politics, Theory & Photography" blog, called it "very, very depressing news" (Holpuch, 2013; Johnson, 2013).

This was but one of the debates over the nature and political role of art that went on in Occupy. They discussed what constitutes art, their relations as artists and activists to the high-powered, high-priced institutional art world, and whether it is legitimate to make do art when the world is so rife with problems demanding their full-time commitment that creation is a luxury. Most believed fiercely in the potential contribution of art to making a better world; others disparaged the value of art's contribution, while nevertheless pursuing it.

They also debated what kinds of objects and images they should propagate. How to create objects that would convey a political message to the public, whether that message dictated a rejection of traditional forms or only of traditional art market relations, and how the contribution of those without formal training should be valued--all these were called into question by the creation of a space in Zuccotti Park where a new kind of art could be envisioned (Cobb, 2013; Goldstein, 2012; Mason, 2012; McKee, 2013; Newton, 2013).

Electronic media. Occupiers excelled at the electronic media. Occupations and occupiers created thousands of websites. Some were local to a specific occupation city. Some were informational, giving announcements of events. The website of the New York City General Assembly, for months after the eviction, listed events for every day, open to all comers. Some websites were issue-specific within an occupation site, while others were issue-specific but attempted to extend more widely in space. Some were simply celebrations of the movement's spirit, in prose, poetry, and art. Some were used to raise funds: the New York City General Assembly received $700,000 in donations through the fundraising website of a fiscal sponsor.

Occupy happened at a crucial moment in occupiers' biographies. With a virtual revolution going on in the media industry, compounded by the economic crisis following the recession of 2008, full-time career opportunities in the arts, communication, and information technology were disappearing and aspiring young practitioners (many of whom had recently emerged from higher education saddled

with debt) found only precarious employment as freelancers or part-timers, so that their career aspirations went unfulfilled. They came from the growing "precariat," a class of people, mostly young and many well educated, without access to stable employment. Global shifts in capitalism have driven large numbers into this class around the world (Milkman et al., 2013).

The tumblr blog, "We are the 99 Percent" <http://wearethe99percent.tumblr.com/> went on line before the occupation of Wall Street, inviting people to post a photograph of themselves holding a handwritten poster telling the story of their economic difficulties (what today would be called a selfie[4]). This blog spread the word--and the ideas--of the coming occupation. People posting to the site tell their stories in a medium which combines the high tech of the internet with the low tech of the handwritten account in poster-sized letters. It received thousands of messages and new ones continued to appear as late as October, 2013.

Mike Konczal, writing on October 9, 2011, analyzed the first entries. He found that the most common concerns, in order, were student debt, children, health care, and jobs. He found that raw concern with economic survival predominated, with little attention to organization or structural change. "The 99% looks too beaten down to demand anything as grand as 'fairness' in their distribution of the economy. There's no calls for some sort of post-industrial personal fulfillment in their labor--very few even invoke the idea that a job should 'mean something'" (Konczal, 2011). The 99% blog invited sad stories and self-pity--rightly so, considering how the financial crisis had hurt. But it was uncharacteristic of Occupy's media messages, which much more commonly celebrated the opportunity for human connection and collective action and showed a lively sense of humor.

On the other hand, the theme of "99 percent" was a powerful slogan, compressing into a single concept the grievances that Occupy wanted to publicize and redress. Because it helped reporters encapsulate in a pithy phrase the occupiers' claim, it migrated from the movement's media to the mainstream. Fred Shapiro, the Yale law librarian, put "We are the 99 percent" in first place on his annual list of the ten best quotes of the year for 2011 (Christofferson, 2011).

Social networking media. Twitter, Facebook, and other social networking media came into their own in the half-decade before Occupy Wall Street. They were credited with playing key roles bringing people to the streets in the revolts in North Africa and Europe that preceded Occupy. In these protests, and in Occupy, they were used to maintain communication with an occupation and within particular task-oriented groups in an occupation, as well as to give firsthand reports of major events, especially those involving confrontations with the police (Penney and Dadas, 2014). After the initial Adbusters call, during the next two months Twitter and Facebook were primary recruiting grounds. Websites claiming to represent Occupy mushroomed: by November, 2011, there were at least 400 Facebook pages with 2.7 million followers, and many continued to be updated after the occupations ended.

Sarah Gaby and Neal Caren analyzed the messages posted on Facebook group pages identified with Occupy during the first month after the occupation of Zuccotti Park. These group pages were open to posting by any user. Gaby and Caren summarize the purposes for which Facebook was used: for recruiting, sharing news stories, requesting resources, telling narratives of past movement experiences,

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[4]It is a testament to the rapidity of technological change in the media during this period that the word "selfie," today an everyday term, was not current in 2011 and was not used for the photos on the tumblr blog.

and communicating instantly across long distances (2012: 368).

It was Twitter, however, that was the platform most closely associated with Occupy. Initially created to allow casual communication among friends, Twitter was rapidly recognized to be highly suited to organizational purposes. Messages are brief (a maximum of 140 characters per message) and transmitted instantaneously, giving it a flexibility ideally suited to both strategic messaging and extended interactive discussion. A Twitter message, or tweet, can be located by hashtags. A hashtag is a hashmark (#) followed by an identifying word or phrase; the same hashtag used across tweets and Facebook posts marks a fixed name or topic that can be found and followed easily and can be counted to tell what topics are trending. Many tweets respond to other tweets, linked by hashtags, opening a conversation and expanding it over vast geographical reaches. The first Occupy-related Twitter account was created on July 14, 2011, and had 30,000 followers within two weeks. During the occupation, Twitter messages ("tweets") were averaging between 400,000 and 500,000 a day, reaching a peak of two million on November 15, the day occupiers were evicted from Zuccotti Park (Chen and Pirolli, 2012: 423; Penney and Dadas, 2014; Preston, 2011a; Theocharis et al., 2015; Tremayne, 2014).

According to Justin Wedes of the OWS social media team, Twitter allows for widespread and instantaneous communication of strategic and tactical plans as well as for broader communication about the purposes of the occupation. Many occupiers were more accustomed to getting information from interactive electronic media than from print or broadcast, so they were naturally receptive. These media are in the control of the users. They are democratic, participatory, and nonhierarchical. Anyone can contribute and no one can dictate what anyone else says.

Twitter quickly became a standard tool. One major use was logistical and strategic: announcing events, presenting a line of march at a demonstration, requesting needed supplies or support for actions. calling for help in urgent situations, especially involving confrontations or expected confrontations with the police during demonstrations. Jennifer Earl and her colleagues, discussing an earlier protest, argue that in a confrontation the asymmetry between police and demonstrators is strongly in favor of the police; by allowing instant communication among large numbers of demonstrators, Twitter offers at least a partial rebalancing (Earl et al., 2013).

Extended discussions about the issues confronting the movement also occurred, though truncated because of the limited message length. Nevertheless, many tweets contain links and draw attention to broader discussions. Joel Penney and Caroline Dadas (2014), Jilin Chen and Peer Pirolli (2012), and Yannis Theocharis and colleagues (2015) all point to the multiple uses of Twitter in Occupy and other global protest actions: to start discussions among activists, to spread news, and to build networks among geographically dispersed groups. Its ubiquity and ease of access also maintain the decentralized, horizontal character of those networks. A risk is that openness of access on the internet may permit surveillance. Many of these uses demonstrate that electronic communication is not an end in itself but promotes interaction and participation on the ground.

The mobilizing power of the social media has been debated since the uprisings in the Middle East and southern and eastern Europe were called "Twitter revolutions." There are two issues here. One has to do with the relation of virtual to in-person participation, and the other with the nature of social movement organization in the electronic age. Enthusiasts claim that by reducing the cost of participation, electronic networks potentially increase the level and scope of activism (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012; Bimber et al., 2005; Earl and Kimport, 2011). Skeptics, in contrast, argue that internet activism becomes a substitute for other forms of activism and limits political activity to routine, nondisruptive forms--in Morozov's term,"slacktivism" (2011, 189-191; cf. Gladwell, 2010).

The second, related issue has to do with the nature of social movement organization. Some argue that the electronic media are not only effective but essential given the demise of centralized political formations and the decay of ideological commitments in the present age--indeed, that the networks that they organize constitute a new model of political activity, "organizing without organizations" (Shirky, 2007; cf. Bennett and Segerberg, 2012; Bennett and Segerberg, 2014; Bimber et al., 2005). In the limit, this observation can be taken to suggest that with the opportunity for electronic participation, social movements do not even need activists to be present in the same space (Earl and Kimport, 2011).

This argument stretches the definition of social movement well beyond conventional usage. But in its extreme form, the argument plainly does not apply to Occupy Wall Street; its irrelevance (not only to OWS but to the movements of 2011 that inspired OWS and later movements that have imitated it) suggest a challenge to the argument overall.

As Paolo Gerbaudo argues, those on both sides of this debate have an essentialist view of social media (2012: 5). Electronic media have indeed become an important, even essential, tool for convoking people; their accessibility and openness are congenial to horizontal political forms that eschew rigid organization. But they achieve little unless they succeed at producing live interaction in which people do more than respond reflexively. Electronic networks were indeed an essential tool for organizing the occupations. But occupation requires the mobilization of large numbers in the same space ("copresence"). Electronic communication is effective only to the extent that it draws people out into public spaces--and not only for the moment of a public demonstration; occupation lasts a long time. Occupiers, in their physical presence, restored face-to-face interaction as a fundamental element of political activity (Hammond, 2012: 239; cf. Costanza-Chock, 2012: 378; Gerbaudo, 2012; Gould-Wartofsky, 2015).

No one controlled the network. It amplified all voices and transmitted them widely. Many young activists felt disenfranchised by the stagnant economy and a political system that they felt excluded them. The opportunity to speak through the social media created a sense of power. "Remember those old operator switchboards?" Wedes asked me. "It's like a crowdsourced switchboard; instead of having one person connecting everyone, everyone is connecting everyone with the people who need them." There were many participants at great distances from any occupation, whose only participation was through social media, but who spent time supporting the networks because they wanted to support the movement. The social networks were a tool for collaboration in a consensus-based movement as well as for organizing.

Occupiers used social networking to publicize upcoming events and draw crowds (as in the protests in Tehran in 2009 and the Middle East, Europe, and the American midwest in 2011 that inspired the Occupy movement, and later, the massive demonstrations across Russia in 2012 protesting fraud in the elections in which Vladimir Putin's party claimed victory). Again, the electronic media were not used in isolation. They drew protesters into the real action of these contemporary protest movements, in public spaces where people interact in multitudes. As an editor of the *Occupied Wall Street Journal* (who spoke anonymously because he also worked for a mainstream publication) told me in an interview, social media "became a tool for action as opposed to a reason to stay on the couch." To Occupy, these media were not ends in themselves but means to convoke people to real-time actions.

Video. Activists captured everything on video and immediately posted it to YouTube and their own video sites. Video clips on line documented police abuses at demonstrations, chronicled the visits

of celebrities to Occupy sites, and allowed people to communicate across locations and participate vicariously. Many clips showed public actions, especially those that challenged the boundaries of legitimacy. These demonstrated to viewers that they, too, could take over public space and violate formal rules that they believed constrained true democracy and communication. Their actions were publicized to encourage others to undertake similar acts of transgression. The fact of transgressing was itself empowering, proving to people that by acting they can overcome rules that they regard as unjust.

The New York media team, centralized in Zuccotti Park and later in a nearby office, would dispatch a video crew, or several, to an event. Katie Davison, a member of the team, explained, "We had to figure out how many cameras to send on each of the marches; at the beginning we had two marches a day. We had to make sure we had all the elements of the march covered. It was difficult with limited resources; we had no walkie-talkies to coordinate, and we never knew where violence would break out."

Immediate transmission made videos and social media (and live streaming, discussed next) the preferred channels for reporting on the frequent police abuse of occupiers. The video crews operating offsite were uniquely exposed to police violence, both to record it and to suffer it. That contributed to the collaborative process, according to Davison: "A bunch of us got arrested on the Brooklyn Bridge, a bunch got hit at Union Square; we started being targeted by cops. That creates camaraderie: you feel you are in battle. It created a community you don't often see in the arts."

When a crew returned with urgent news, like a police attack, the raw footage would be uploaded to YouTube immediately. A group working on laptops in the park would then edit it further, and within a very short time--as little as twenty minutes--upload a more polished version. With somewhat more lead time, a video using segments taken over a longer period of time would be put together, commented on by members of the media team, edited further, and then uploaded. Others who were not part of the team but filmed the event with camera or phone were invited to contribute footage, and many did.

Police use of force against demonstrators captured on video paradoxically reinforced the protesters' sense of power, because it showed that their actions forced authorities to respond, and because they were able to publicize the abuses. Even better, sometimes the police were obliged to stand down. Overreaction by the police was a key factor in generating public sympathy for the occupations around the country. In effect, the police "operate as a public relations arm for Occupy Wall Street," as a *New York Times* reporter ironically suggested (Bellafante, 2011). The use of pepper spray against peaceful demonstrators in two early marches converted a broad swath of the public from sympathetic amusement to active support of the protest.

Public sympathy benefits a movement, but, as I have argued elsewhere, it could also be a distraction. Sympathy based on rejection of police abuse may place the protesters in a position of victimhood, and arrests, or violence (from whatever source), can also deflect attention from the substance of the protest to the dramatic and controversial aspects of the event itself (Hammond, 2013; cf. Smith et al., 2001: 1406). I will also suggest below that the Occupy movement's use of its media to highlight encounters with the police was an example of the movement's tendency to talk mainly to itself rather than to a broader public.

Live streaming. Today's technology permits transmitting live action images of any event through the internet in real time to the whole world. Live streamers operated on many occupation sites, transmitting the proceedings at Occupy Wall Street, Occupy Boston, Occupy Seattle, etc. Many

occupations broadcast all general assemblies over the internet; some had live streaming around the clock or at least during waking hours. Live streaming was especially important to convey the reality of life in an occupation and to capture in real time the brutality inflicted by the police on occupiers who were not behaving illegally but exercising their legitimate rights of free speech. It transmitted their activities to the entire world.

During the fall of 2011, the Global Revolution website <www.globalrev.org> aggregated the live streams from many occupations and provided links. Key actions--important pickets, encounters with police--were broadcast in real time. International solidarity took on greater meaning as people witnessed repression of distant comrades at the moment that it was happening. Acts of repression against many Arab Spring demonstrations and Occupy sites in the US attracted large audiences.

Like many new communication techniques, live streaming was prohibitively expensive for most poorly funded volunteer groups until recently, but today it is practically free. All it requires is a smartphone. More elaborate equipment may be used, ranging from a camera-equipped computer to actual video cameras, but the cheaper, more readily available and portable equipment can also be used to stream small meetings or public events of interest to a following unable to attend. It made the conference call among Occupy sites across the country a matter of routine. Some conference calls were not restricted to the active group but were on the internet for all to see and announced by Twitter and Facebook.

Live streaming technology was a novelty in 2011. Techniques were invented or improved through the occupation process itself. Many of the streaming websites and software were developed as social media, for video games, or for other commercial purposes. Livestreamers in Occupy put them to political use. Occupy streamers adapted the technology, pioneering the combination and transmission of livestreams. Streams from all over the world were combined on a single screen so that viewers could pick and choose what they wanted to see. OWS's livestreamers made important technical innovations for distributing live streams on the internet. Streaming on Livestream.com and Ustream.com, two main commercial livestreaming websites, in the fall of 2011 was so frequent (with more than 700 Occupy-related channels on Ustream alone) that it expanded their audience and helped establish their commercial viability. Ustream even donated equipment to some of Occupy's more effective livestreamers (Preston, 2011b).

Livestreamers were sensitive to a number of issues that do not arise, or are less important, for other kinds of media production. One issue was the right to capture people on camera: do they have the right *not* to be shown on a live stream? In a discussion at the Left Forum in New York on March 18, 2012, different views were expressed. Streamers were aware that their streams are being observed by the police to use as a basis for intervention or, possibly, later prosecution. Lorenzo Serna of the OWS technology operations group said that he always made people aware that they were being streamed, but at the same time felt that with many people streaming any event, it was impossible to offer guarantees.

Because confrontations with the police were frequent and intense, both during and after the occupation, and because those confrontations played a major part in defining the image of the occupation for the public (Knuckey et al., 2012); all the electronic media--social media, video, and live streaming--paid special attention to them. Instant transmission made these media particularly important for spreading knowledge of these events rapidly and directly.

Bat Signal. The high point, literally, of high tech communication was the projection of the "Bat signal" on the Verizon building in downtown Manhattan. It was also one of the high points of

creativity. The building is a 32-story windowless monolith, visible from the Brooklyn Bridge; Mark Read identified its surface as the ideal screen for the projection of a light show for thousands of demonstrators marching across the bridge on November 17, 2011. It showed a circular image (imitating the light projections in the Batman movies) flashing several Occupy slogans and then in rapid succession, "Occupy" with the names of about a hundred cities where occupations were happening, ending "Occupy everywhere."

The visually arresting projection can be seen at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CxG4g62rnd8>. It was pronounced "the year's most emblematic work" in a yearend wrapup of artworks (Davis, 2011). But the story of its creation is also emblematic of media production in Occupy, featuring humor, collaboration, and an integration of advanced technology with low-tech improvisation. Read and some friends found a woman living in a neighboring housing project who offered her apartment for a projection booth. They carted in a massive projector, worth $10,000. According to Read, interviewed by boingboing.net, "The whole thing was a combination of high tech and super jerry-rigging on the fly. The Modul8 software we were using can do amazing things: sense the angle you're projecting at, even if it's extreme, and modify the image so it looks straight. But then, we held the [projector] in place with gaffer tape, a broomstick, some baling wire. We only had 20 minutes to get it ready" (Jardin, 2011). As on other occasions, the use of electronic media does not trump the real world, One can almost hear the triumph in Read's account--virtual reality has not completed displaced material reality, at least not yet.

Not only an amazing feat of technological creativity, the projection of the bat signal was also another example of the pervasive lightheartedness and humor in the Occupy movement. The Batman movies satirize the notion of superhero and the Bat signal as it appears in the films is a technological fantasy. Its use here satirized the hype of the superhero image but also, Read told me in an interview, was meant to put that hype in the service of the agenda of Occupy, from 99% to "Occupy everywhere," with the message that "we are our own hero, we are our own salvation." In the winter of 2012, with a donation from Ben Cohen of Ben and Jerry's ice cream, Read bought a truck and projector to carry the bat signal to neighborhood events around the city.[5]

To repeat, no one owned OWS or its media projects. No central authority created Occupy websites or artistic creations or dictated their content. In keeping with the spirit of the Occupy movement, anyone could join, could do anything and claim to be representing the movement. Anything published with the label Occupy could be recognized by the movement as just as representative as any other contribution. The range of media and genres together with the content of their messages reveals the creativity that the occupation unleashed. Other innovations at the intersection of art, communication, and technology which I have not discussed here came from the Technical Operations group which created a range of tools for use by the movement and advocated for free, open-source software (Balkind, 2013; Hammond, 2015a: 300).

Relations of Media Production

I have reviewed OWS's media, based in face-to-face interaction and in texts and images produced for public distribution in print or on the internet.[6] I have suggested that each type took a form

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[5]The Bat Signal survives as the Illuminator; it is still used regularly in New York (along with partner groups similarly equipped in other cities) to light up nighttime political events.

[6]I have not discussed the production of music and performances by Occupy activists, which deserves

that embodied the nonhierarchical, participatory, leaderless ethos of Occupy. In the case of group efforts, that ethos was also embodied in a process of production rooted in norms of voluntary activity and horizontal collaboration. They strove to realize the ideal of cooperation and creativity entailed by the ideal of prefigurative social relations, anticipating in the present the triumph over alienation that would characterize a society of human emancipation--an ideal that sometimes came close to reality.

Whether high tech or low, the means of production were in the hands of the movement. Activists were aided by new technology, which made it possible to produce works of at least satisfactory quality with relatively inexpensive equipment, equipment that in many cases activists already possessed. The uses of high tech media and low tech, unmediated interaction were integrated. The work done in all these media involved self-creation, in most cases by collaborative work teams in production and in distribution that were committed to equality among participants. In other words, they facilitated unalienated labor in the production of communication. As Katie Davison explained, "this moment allows people to connect, to get out from behind computers, to create community in this space [Zuccotti Park]. The end goal of this technology is to smash the technology and create a system where it is no longer necessary."

The desire for unalienated labor and the belief that technology, while a useful tool, must be subordinate to political purposes were derived from the social circumstances of typical occupiers. In New York, many young people, the ones most attracted to Occupy Wall Street, were free spirits. Some made their living by freelancing, often in media-related work. As I have said, many of them were highly skilled and experienced in journalism or media production. Many were well educated but left school to encounter sour economic prospects and tens of thousands of dollars in debt. Others lived off the land to avoid jobs and other entanglements with the capitalist economy. Some joined the occupation who had relatively little education, no identifiable skill and no fixed domicile.[7]

In the occupation, distinctions among the well and poorly educated, the salaried and the free counted for little. People became engaged in tasks as the tasks arose. Many of these were tasks that in other contexts would be labeled logistics, administration, or maintenance (from cleaning up to keeping the books on donations). Many occupiers were mobilized for political events on the occupation site or elsewhere. When something had to be done, there was always someone who stepped forward to do it. In performing tasks, including media production, they worked together on a plane of equality. Occupiers started out thinking of themselves as a leaderless movement; they came to prefer the designation "leaderful."

The refusal to bow to any leaders in the occupation as a whole was mirrored in the technical teams, where skilled professionals and novices worked side by side. Conscious efforts were made to integrate newcomers and cultivate their skills. The production of videos involved rapid delegation and rapid production. People who were highly skilled and people who were just learning worked together. According to Katie Davison, "as more volunteers who didn't have skills [showed up] we tried to incorporate them. [We got them to] do some running first, power stripping, then come on a shoot with me, carry batteries, guard."

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separate treatment. I have discussed certain kinds of performance elsewhere (Hammond, 2015b).

[7]As I have argued, this combination made them uniquely receptive to the anarchist sensibility that prevailed in Occupy Wall Street (Hammond, 2015a), manifested in the prefigurative impulse, the effort to create unalienated relations of production, as well as in other ways.

Media production, according to Davison, who worked in film production before joining the occupation, "has always been a hierarchical institution. You have the director, the producer, someone calls the shots. A lot of us were coming from that background, so it was different to work in an environment that wasn't like that, to figure out how to have everyone's voices heard."

The spontaneity of work organization itself opened opportunities. Michael Fix of the media team, a professional cameraman, explained, "If you made yourself available, within two or three days you are the go-to person. They call it a leaderful movement." The experienced producers took charge of cultivating the skills and judgment of novices who volunteered, giving them responsibility as quickly as they were willing to take it on. Throughout the process, the professionals and the novices would collaborate, share criticisms, teach and learn.

The group made collective decisions about production style and artistic identity. There was some controversy about including the OccupyTVNY "bug" (the logo) identifying the video group on the screen. According to Fix, some objected that it was too commercial--"it looked like Fox"--but it was agreed that the group wanted an identifiable look, or brand, especially since video links can migrate across the web and viewers may lose sight of their origin.

Those working in art also worked collectively. According to Maria Bick of Arts and Labor, "so much of the art we make in Occupy Wall Street is collaborative; we do it in a group. For me that is so much more where art resides than in the final product." They consciously rejected the hierarchy and star system that dominated professional artistic production in New York and elsewhere.

The group that maintained the Twitter account @OccupyWallStNYC called itself the Tweetboat. It was not formally constituted until after the eviction but began tweeting in the first days of the occupation. It also incorporated novices and trained them to provide and edit tweets. At the Yippie café in the East Village, it offered training in the social media to the interested public as well. Most of the Tweetboat crew were involved in other activities within the occupation as well, and they brought in news and proposed topics to cover. The @OccupyWallStNYC account won the 2011 Shorty award for activism presented by the Real-Time Academy of Short Form Arts & Sciences.[8]

The *Occupied Wall Street Journal* had a five-member editorial group in charge but it also had an army of volunteers to write, help with production tasks, and distribute the paper. At the same time, the norm of equality prevailed to such an extent that members of the editorial group also went out into the city to hand the paper out on the subway or elsewhere.

These structures mirrored the structures of the occupation as a whole: people volunteered--often without formally volunteering but simply by picking up a tool, whether a broom or a computer, and using it to perform a needed task--and they were trained to perform more specialized tasks. The learning curve was very steep: from very early on, those who were persistent and willing to stick around to continue helping out found themselves promoted to positions of responsibility very quickly, but the principle of horizontality and equal voice was maintained.

On site full time or at least during waking hours, some people willingly put in ten or twelve hours or more a day at their chosen tasks. When people are working voluntarily they can work twice as

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[8]In the course of this research I became part of the Tweetboat, participating from 2012 to 2014.

long and twice as hard as when they are being paid; this is a sign of genuinely unalienated labor. The spirit of equality, commitment, and solidarity that pervaded the occupation provided the incentive to perform at the top of their capacity.

The media producers in Occupy did not necessarily claim objectivity for their work. They were openly engaging in advocacy. This did not mean disdain for accuracy ("we fact checked the crap out of this issue," said an editor of the *Occupied Wall Street Journal*). The purpose was to inform but in a distinctively persuasive context. They argued, of course, that the mainstream media do the same, but more covertly.

There were some who claimed that they showed an objective truth. Tim Pool, a livestreamer, accompanied occupations in New York and elsewhere intensively. He did not regard himself as an occupier, he told me, but as an observer who remained independent of the movement to maintain an objective view. Interviewed on WBAI Radio in New York, he argued that the livestream is purely objective because it transmits exactly what is happening. Echoing a longstanding debate, others argued that by the choice of what to stream, the placement of the camera, and other interventions, a videographer influences viewers' interpretation of an event. Vlad Teichberg, founder of the Global Revolution website, said in an interview that "the fact that you have instantaneous transmission of what is happening on the ground creates a situation where it is very hard to argue it is edited or manipulated," but that at the same time "truth does not exist as one being, one entity, one perspective; . . . We can create a lot of different perspectives and out of them approximate truth."

Media operations cost money. While all the groups received donations from outside parties-- whether of equipment, workspace, or simply cash--some also drew on the large pool of money donated to the occupation itself. In a nominally leaderless movement in which authority rested in a General Assembly of indeterminate membership, disagreements often arose when a project requested a share of the funds, leading to disputes about whether the media represented the movement. Controversy over the way the General Assembly distributed its funds led some of the projects to raise any needed money independently so as not to be beholden to it.

Participatory media have their drawbacks, and so do movements for which they are the primary means of communication. Open participation takes up a lot of time. Oscar Wilde reportedly said that the problem with socialism is that it would take too many evenings (Walzer, 1970: 230). In Occupy it was even worse: committed activists had to be free for virtually full-time participation. Most people cannot occupy, permanently, anywhere, and therefore must remain on the periphery when an occupation is the heart of a movement. Freelancers and free spirits are more available than others for participation, among other reasons, because they do not have the obligations of a regular schedule.

Moreover, communication processes intended to guarantee everyone the right to participation and equal voice can nevertheless leave some out. Just as the demand for intense participation excludes those who have other commitments or simply do not want to meet such intense demands, it allows others to dominate participatory processes through their louder voices or their greater patience to sit through meetings and wear others down (Freeman, 1972-73; Hammond, 2012).

The intensity of interaction and the absence of rewards, in money or hierarchical distinction, can lead to burnout and occasionally explosive conflicts. Two of the people who were most engaged in the media team and told me about the collaborative endeavor with greatest enthusiasm nevertheless both left after conflicts with other members, although they did not abandon the movement but assumed other tasks.

Conclusion

I began writing this paper intending to give a mainly technical description of Occupy's media work, discussing the use of face-to-face, print, and electronic communication, and highlighting the high degree of compatibility between the forms and the purposes of the movement. As I proceeded, however, I discovered that one cannot discuss them in exclusively technical terms. The media and the politics are inseparable; the form of communication is a political choice. If Occupy used the electronic media more systematically and intensively than earlier movements, that was in part because they had recently become more widely available and cheaper, but also because they allowed widespread and uncensored participation and thereby served the movement's goals of open access, horizontality, and rejection of formal rules. In other genres as well, the movement chose a visual and rhetorical style and work relations both of which expressed and reinforced its prefigurative and collaborative ethos.

The way the movement represented itself is of a piece with the way it pursued its objectives. Many within the movement believed that its mission was not to take political stands but to stand outside and force the political system to notice it. Its media self-presentation did not reach out to a public that was not necessarily disposed to accept its message, or that was sympathetic to the cause but offended by the style in which the message was presented. Instead, the content of OWS media was on the whole directed at occupiers and sympathizers. It often seemed indifferent to what the world outside thought. Perhaps this indifference was in the spirit of propaganda of the deed, the dramatic gesture intended to awaken the consciousness of others and compel them to act. It succeeded at drawing in similarly situated young activists around the country, Occupy spread to hundreds of places. On the other hand, its message was not calculated to reach all of the 99 percent.

Nevertheless, it is a tribute to Occupy's openness that in a collaboration between practitioners of varying levels of training and talent, working on a plane of equality, taking credit collectively rather than individually, it generated output of such great variety. Even though much of the work was intentionally ephemeral, it had memorable results.

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