Occupy Images:

Examining Identity and the Occupy Movement

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On September 17 2011, an occupation of Wall Street in New York City began in protest of the influence of the power elite, namely multinational corporations and major banks, over the democratic process of the United States and over the lives of people worldwide. This occupation and the group of citizens engaging in it came to be known as Occupy Wall Street (OWS). Shortly after OWS's inception, solidarity movements sprang up internationally, all under the name of Occupy. By October 15th 2011, Occupy was in 951 cities in 82 countries (Foster et al 2011). These groups are united in their efforts against the power elite, whom they identify as the 1%, meaning the wealthiest 1% of the country who Occupy names as controlling more than a third of the nation's total wealth (Flank 2011: 1-10). They are also united in their efforts to reclaim power and justice for the 99%, meaning the rest of the nation. Furthermore, all of these groups engage in a form of participatory democracy known as the "General Assembly" or "People's Assembly" (Flank 2011:93).

Participatory democracy is a decision-making structure that, as Rawls tells us, requires citizens to

"exchange views and debate their supporting reasons concerning public political questions. They suppose that their political opinions may be revised by discussion with other citizens; and therefore these opinions are not simply a fixed outcome of their existing private or nonpolitical interests" (Rawls 1999: 138).

Also known as deliberative democracy, this structure gives equal weight to all voices participating. Though there have been variations to the process made by local groups, for the most part the structure used by Occupy is the same one adopted by OWS in

September 2011. This process itself is inherited from anarchist networks in the Northeast (Graeber 2009).

Among the extensions that sprang up in Fall 2011 were a number of groups in Florida, including Occupy Tampa, Occupy Saint Petersburg, Occupy Orlando, Occupy Gainesville, Occupy Miami, Occupy Tallahassee, and Occupy Jacksonville (more commonly known as Occupy Jax).   As their names indicate, each of these groups were focused on reclaiming power and space for their communities and on making positive change for the 99% of their cities.

This exploratory research investigates the perceptions Florida Occupiers have of themselves and their movement, the collective identity, and the perceptions that are depicted by the mass media, alter identities. It then examines the congruency between these two sets of perceptions in the hopes of creating a more cohesive understanding of the collective identity. This work draws from Daro et al (2008) in recognizing that collective identities are "continually emerging, forming, and reforming between people and groups in multiple sites and places" (99) and that "dialogic processes of 'orchestrating' multiple discourses and versions of the self are central in the cultural production of collective identities" (100). Thus, collective identities are shifting and amorphous. I define collective identities as participants' shared understandings about membership, boundaries, and activities of the movement as a force of change. Doubtlessly, these conceptions are constantly renegotiated as participants shape and direct their movement in changing contexts. In thinking of social movement organizations as the participants that form them, the perspectives and conceptions of those people become the shaping forces of the movement. . Diving even deeper into

human perception, this research used images as its primary media. Data included visual images produced by Occupy groups in the state and those produced by the national and local media sources.

In order to contribute to a better understanding of Occupy and identify points of interest for future research, I conducted participant observation and image-based research with six Occupy groups across Florida which suggests that the participants' dialogic, shared sense of the movement, the collective identity, includes elements that are identified by theorists as characteristic of New Social Movements and that media depictions of the movement, alter identities, have failed to communicate the multivocality and the focuses on process and space inherent to the movement. In other words, Occupy groups across the state of Florida reproduce themes in their conception of the movement through the deployment of symbolic capital that fit theorists' criteria for a new social movement.

Over the last thirty years, the growth of new forms of collective action, particularly those in Europe and the US, has prompted theorists to respond with a reconceptualization of the meaning and dynamics of social movements (Gusfield 2009: 3). These new forms of collective action and the theories that respond to them have come to be known as new social movements (NSMs). The theories surrounding these movements are diverse in their analysis but, generally speaking, they have identified seven characteristics of NSMs. These attributes are as follows: (1) centrality of the collective identity; (2) centrality of values; (3) a causal claim that links NSMs to contemporary social organization; (4) politization of everyday life; (5) cultural, symbolic

forms of resistance alongside or in place of traditional forms; (6) discursive organization forms; and (7) a more complex social base. I will elaborate on each of these further.

Additionally, NSM theories understand contemporary movements as being shaped and contextualized by modern social formations. Though there is much disagreement as to the nature of that relationship, and how it has changed in recent decades, these theories identify an important characteristic of modern movements. Theorists identify the relationship between modern social organization and new social movements as fundamentally different than it has been in previous centuries (Buechler 2011: 159).   The changing global environment has transformed the goals and tactics of social movements. Contemporary social movements must be dynamic as they take on power structures whose manifestations are flexible and dynamic (Nash 2005:1). Production and distribution centers, for example, have become battlegrounds for modern social movements that seek increased economic equality, political and cultural autonomy, and justice, while also redefining environmental conservation and human rights (Nash 2005: 3-5). This is not to say that classic Marxian conflict between workers and capitalists is not still a central struggle. Rather, this conflict has become enveloped in struggles with multinational corporations whose vast networks make social movements' tasks even more difficult; the Hecatonchires of global capitalism. Thus, in their essence, NSM theories tell us that the power structures of the world are changing shape and thus those groups who oppose them are changing as well.

Literature Review

In order to understand my approach to studying the Occupy movement, it is necessary to understand the multiplex history of the study of social movements. Here I briefly outline the study of social movements as it has existed in Western social science academia. This review aims to help readers better understand Occupy by contextualizing Western conceptions of social movements. Furthermore, this historical perspective should augment readers' understanding of collective and alter identities and, therefore, why I have employed those concepts here.

The study of social movements in modern Western thought begins with Marx. In identifying central contradictions in capitalism, Marx illustrated the ability of social relations, in this case the mode of production, to foster contradictions and subsequent conflict. In exploring the crises and responses that may result from those conflicts, he also provided a theory of group formation and thus accounted for both structural and cultural forces in the origin of mobilizations (Buechler 2011:22). His writings on class-consciousness gave consideration to group identities, thus making his work the precursor to modern conceptions of collective identities. Following Marx, Weber, with his analysis of symbolic meanings and cultural beliefs, and Durkheim, with his explorations of social disorganization, ritual, and emotion, both contributed theoretical frameworks that influenced the study of social movements in the 20th century.

The Chicago School branch of sociology drew from each of these theorists in shaping the study of social movements. From about 1920 into the 1950s, social science analysis of social movements was considered a subtopic of collective behavior and studies within that topic were largely concerned with social psychology, organization, and ecology (Buechler 2011:72). Much of the literature understood movements as

products of nonrational, irrational, and unbridled affect (Stryker et al 2000: 1). The rise of political sociology somewhat shifted the theoretical tide and social movements came to be studied as a form of political contention. The Chicago School's micro-level focus paved the way for future investigations of identity formation, including those that led to the formation of concepts employed here.

In a sharp contrast to the Chicago School's emphasis on group dynamics and interpersonal interstimulation, researchers of the 1950s harkened to Marx and Weber and honed in on questions of macro-level processes, and connections between movements, classes, ideologies and parties (Buechler 2011: 89). In the 1960s, with the revitalization of Durkheimian thought and the rise of structural-functionalism, macro-level strains became causal explanations of social movements for many theorists. At the same time, social psychology was explaining the development of grievances as fostered by relative deprivation (Buechler 2011:92).

Perhaps in part because of the relationship between the academic community and social movements and in part because of the relative plethora of contemporaneous movements, the early 1960's ushered in a paradigm shift embodied in resource mobilization theories (Stryker et al 2000: 2). It also departed from collective behavior traditions and cast social movements as patterned, normal, political challenges by rational and aggrieved groups, and divorced the studies of collective action from conceptions of deviance and social disorganization (Beuchler 2011: 111). Out of this paradigm shift came political process theories that were conceptually distinguished from resource mobilization in the late 1970s. In his excellent text, *Understanding Social*

Movements, Steven M. Buechler explains the differences between resource mobilization theories and political process theories, respectively:

> "The former emphasizes formal organization, elite sponsorship, external resources, rational actors, interest group constituencies, entrepreneurial leadership, and manufactured grievances. The latter underscores diverse organizational forms, informal mobilizing structures, solidarity, and group consciousness within the mass base, indigenous resources, a more nuanced image of rationality, challengers outside the polity, shifting repertoires of contention, and the central role of opportunity" (Beuchler 2011: 140).

Both these models highlight organizational and political variables while countering social psychological variables. Yet, as with all academic pursuits, overarching theoretical shifts redirected the attention of social movement theorists. In this case, trends brought cultural questions of meaning and signification to the forefront and thus highlighted certain flaws of previous social movement theories. As Strkyer et al point out, in *Self, Identity and Social Movements,* resource mobilization and political process theories assume "the essential equivalence of all persons entering movements" in order to give focus to "structural constraints and opportunities and resource mobilization" (Strkyer et al 2000: 4-6). This equivalence, termed the "rational man model," had limited the study of social movements by assuming that all people have access to the same amounts and kinds of information. In investigating Occupy, it is vital to employ theories that encompass the individuals comprising the respective groups and the interactions between them. The necessity of this viewpoint is warranted by the spontaneous nature by which many Occupy groups arose across the country. In

wanting to support Occupy Wall Street individuals across the country came together to form local extensions and thus create the international movement known as Occupy. As was the case with all of the Occupy groups I interacted with, local extensions were started by one or a small group of individuals suggesting an informal meeting to their community members.

This more encompassing view was initiated when social movement theorists began employing social constructionist approaches by incorporating micro-level analysis and turning to questions of perception and belief and their translation to political collective action. Shortly after Fireman et al (1982) introduced a reconsideration of social-psychological variables, Benford et al (1986) incorporated Goffman's (1974) conception of framing. In this analysis, "frames" are interpretive schemata, or contexts, that are employed to organize experiences, guide actions, as well as to render meaningful, identify, and label events (Buechler 2011: 146). These theories have been presented as complementary to resource mobilization and political process theories because the former addresses major shortcomings of the later, and vice versa. Snow et al (1986) identify frame alignment -the connection between an individual's frame and the social movement's goals, actions, and ideologies- as being a fundamental challenge confronting social movements. Though Marx's theory of class formation and class-consciousness had been employed as a wider theory of group formation, it was not until framing was introduced and used as a theoretical tool that explicit considerations were given to participants' perceptions of their movement and their relationship with it. As Buechler explains, "The identity component of collective action frames refers to definitions of "we" and "they" that recast abstract issues as caused by an adversary that

"we" can challenge" (Buechler 2011: 152). Thus, with the introduction of frames as an analytical tool, consideration of collective identities became central to the study of social movements. Overall, social constructionist approaches identify framing and collective identities, in addition to mobilization and political opportunities, as socially constructed. As Daro et al suggest, "Collective identity entered the social movement literature as an early recognition of the importance of meaning-making in shaping movement participants and shaping movement actions" (95). In this vein, Taylor and Whittier (1992) argued that movement identities are constructed through interactional dynamics and accomplishments, shortly before Benford et al (1994) argued that framing identifies protagonists, antagonists, and audiences, or neutral observers. Thus, in a response to theoretical shortcomings and contemporaneous movements, social movement theorists began to incorporate macro and micro level analysis by employing resource mobilization and political process theories, and framing and social constructionist approaches respectively. A consideration of both macro and micro forces is particularly useful in examining the Occupy movement, because, as I discuss below, Occupiers themselves emphasize structural forces as the source of their political contentions and interpersonal dynamics as vital to their movement.

Recent trends in social movement theories have been multiplex. Some of these theoretical strands have been woven into new social movement (NSM) theories. New social movement theories are European in origin. While the US was shifting from collective behavior to resource mobilization theories, as discussed above, European scholars were experiencing a contemporaneous shift from Marxist traditions to new social movement theory, instigated by emerging movements like the May 1968

Movement in Paris and Los Desocupados in Spain (Buechler 2011: 158). Members of Los Desocupados were majority young, well-educated urban individuals whose concerns were removed from labor issues that had previously dominated political contention circles. These young people were unemployed and thus their concerns revolve more around a lack of opportunities that resulted from economic and political structures.

NSM theories identify social structures as fostering types of social movements and thus the claim of newness is a classification of modern social structures as much as a description of contemporary movements. Crossley in his book Making Sense of Social Movements explains;

> "The central claim of new social movement theorists is that societies of the post 1960s era have entered a new stage of social development in their history in which the contradictions which dogged earlier eras have been displaced into new forms of conflict" (Crossley 2002: 14).

For example, wealth and power disparity, consequences of growing global capitalism, have instigated conflicts around the word as people mobilize to protect their cultures, economic viability, lands, and political autonomy from the influences of capitalist investments, production, and markets in new regions (Nash 2005: 1).

As there are sharp contrasts in traditional theoretical styles between American and European scholars, the incorporation of new social movement theories has been met with limited success in the US (Buechler 2011:158). However, both American and European theorists identify common characteristics of NSMs that distinguish them as a

category. As I have said, these attributes are as follows: (1) centrality of the collective identity; (2) centrality of values; (3)a causal claim that links NSMs to contemporary social organization; (4)cultural, symbolic forms of resistance alongside or in place of traditional forms; (5) politization of everyday life; (6) discursive organization forms; and (7) a more complex social base. I will elaborate on each of these attributes further in my analysis. Beyond these central characteristics, that are also shared by Occupy groups in Florida, NSM theories have a few themes that unite them but are otherwise diverse.

Despite the eclecticism that exists in contemporary social movement theory, many recent analyses of social movements have maintained the central importance of collective identities in their theoretical approaches. In some cases, like that of Eyerman and Jamison (1991), this conception has been intertwined with cognitive praxis, or the active construction of connections of formerly disparate ideas in the rhetoric of a movement. Essentially, this synthesis creates a conceptual identity of the movement. For these researchers, cognitive praxis, and therefore collective identity fostering, is the fundamental activity of a social movement and cannot be reduced to a secondary task precisely because the modes of understanding generated are constitutive of movements themselves. Italian NSM theorist Alberto Melucci also gives collective identity a primary role in movement activity in depicting it as an ongoing accomplishment, and in some cases as the reason for a movement's existence (Buecheler 2001:168). Often this increasingly important role of collective identity conceptions has been part of an effort to "bring culture back in[to]" the study of social movements (Daro et al 2008: 96) (Buecheler 2011:181, 202). Researchers employ collective identity to illustrate participants' sense of belonging, as Jasper and Polletta

(2001) who define collective identity as "an individual's cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community...It is a perception of a shared status or relation" (285). Collective identity is also understood as a basis for collective action, as with Melucci who defines collective identities in part as "the process of 'constructing' an action system" (Melucci 1996: 70). The conception that participants have of themselves and their movement are central to understanding the very nature of the movement itself. As a former Occupy LA participant told an audience in a discussion of social movement activism at the 2012 American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, one "must think about organizations as the people that were in them." In thinking of social movement organizations as the participants that form them, the perspectives and conceptions of those people become the shaping forces of the movement.

In viewing social movements as "multiple sources of cultural discourse competing to inform the everyday actions of movement participants" (97), Daro et al (2008) take a decentered approach to collective identities. This approach recognizes that collective identities are "continually emerging, forming, and reforming between people and groups in multiple sites and places" (99) and that "dialogic processes of 'orchestrating' multiple discourses and versions of the self are central in the cultural production of collective identities" (100). Thus, collective identities are shifting and amorphous. I draw from Daro et al (2008) in defining collective identities as participants' shared understandings about membership, boundaries, and activities of the movement as a force of change. Doubtlessly, these conceptions are constantly renegotiated as participants shape and direct their movement in changing contexts. Though I define the collective identity as shared understandings I do not mean to imply that there are not individual

interpretations of these conceptions. Rather, the group reinforces and reproduces certain conceptions (thus creating an identity) though individuals have their own understandings of those concepts because of their personal contexts. An inherent attribute of Occupy that theorists also identify as characteristic of NSMs is consensus-seeking efforts that allow for multivocality. This multivocality does not preclude the existence of a collective identity but rather is enveloped within it.

In their analysis of three social movement case studies, Daro et al (2008) also consider "alter versions" of identities that are produced and reproduced outside of the movement itself (95). Melucci incorporates external perspectives of the movement in his concept of collective identity by understanding it as a process of negotiation between constantly changing forces (Melucci 1995:52). These forces include constantly interacting perceptions of the movement held by participants and by outsiders. Daro et al consider those perceptions to be engaged in continual dialogue as well but conceptually separate the collective identity with "alter versions" of the identity that I term "alter identities". To term them "alter identities" is not to diminish the interaction between internal and external perceptions. Rather, the distinction is employed in this research not only because the term is more simple and convenient, but also in order to highlight the possibility of discrepancies between the two strands of dialogue.

Thus, the diverse history of social movement studies has yielded some useful insights and analytical tools for the study of Occupy. The more recent interweaving of macro and micro level approaches is particularly useful in conceptualizing the way that participants view their movement, as responding to macro-level structural forces with a movement that gains strength from its micro-level interactions. Furthermore, the blend

may be useful in considering the conception that Occupy is a manifestation of the perhaps clichéd slogan "Think global. Act local." In addition, this review contextualizes collective and alter identities as analytical tools. I employ them here because this exploratory research aims to highlight common themes of Occupy in Florida. In an investigation into the nature of a social movement, identity conceptions are useful as traceable ideological manifestations of a movement. In other words, I have employed collective and alter identity conceptions in this exploratory research because they encompass the nature of the movement as a whole and are flexible enough to allow conceptual trends to manifest themselves.

Image Analysis

The theoretical foundations for anthropological or sociological image-based research are very limited. For the majority, images have been included in social science research as forms of documentation or illustration rather than as media or data. Prosser (1998) speculates that this tendency stems from Western thought's word-oriented focus that sees the written word as the most legitimate form communication (97-98). However, in the limited literature on image analysis that does exist, there has been consensus on the culturally embedded nature of images. That is to say, images of all kinds are produced and interpreted within cultural systems that shape the forms of their existence and understanding (Prosser 1998:91). Eric Wolf in his book Envisioning Power elaborates on this concept in his discussion of communication;

"Both modes of communication (verbal and nonverbal) provide vehicles to convey ideas, but messages first have to be cast in appropriate cultural and linguistic codes…Codes arrange the constituent elements of the message in

particular ways, in order to convey which notion or notions are to broadcast to an audience and how it should decode the messages heard" (parenthesis added) (Wolf 1999: 6).

This is not to suggest that individuals do not employ their own political, cultural, and philosophical understandings in interpreting images' latent content. Rather, to identify a culturally embedded nature of images is to confirm that images depend on their context for interpretation.

Images were employed in this research because they are material manifestations perceptions whose forms, content, and context are shaped by cultural standards. They are deployed by both journalists and Occupiers as depictions of the movement and thus their similarities should reveal aspects of the respective producers' perceptions.

Methods

To investigate the elements of the Occupy movement's identity in Florida I used two distinct approaches, with two distinct questions of identity. I investigated both an internal perspective of the movement, the collective identity, and an external perspective of the movement, the alter identity. Drawing from Daro et al and Stryker et al, I define collective identity as participants' shared understandings about membership, boundaries, and activities of the movement as a force of change (Daro et al 2008: 97) (Stryker et al 2000:6). In other words, I investigated participants' shared sense of the movement through visual media.

The second approach, which I identify as external, addresses the question "What are elements of Occupy alter identities?" Again drawing from Daro et al, I define alter

identities as perceptions of the movement in terms of membership, boundaries, and activities, which the group does not produce (Daro et al 2008:106).   I focus on alter identities produced in the mass media in part because the short history of Occupy has given little chance for other alter identities to manifest themselves and in part because the alter identities produced in the media are intended to inform the wider public and thus would theoretically interact with the collective identity more directly than other alter identities.

Collective Identity

Using participant observation and image analysis my research took place over eight months with the Occupy groups in Saint Petersburg, Tampa, Orlando, Tallahassee, Gainesville, Miami, and Jacksonville in order to answer the question; "What is the collective identity of Occupy in Florida?"   In order to assess the statewide characteristics of the movement each Occupy group was chosen for their population size and impact on the state movement in order to assess characteristics at a broad level. All of these groups have been chosen based on the relative sizes of the populations of the cities in which they are located and on their potential effect on the perceptions of Occupy across the state. With the exception of Gainesville, these are six of the largest seven cities in the Florida. The only excluded large city is Hialeah, which does not have an Occupy group possibly because of its proximity to, and practical in-distinguishability from, Miami. Occupy Gainesville has been included because of the group's presence and impact on the other Occupy groups in the state. In fact, the first declared regional gathering, the South East Regional Convergence of Occupations (SERCO), took place in Gainesville the 23rd through the 25th of March 2012. Thus, my

inclusionary criteria has been potential impact on the overall identity of Occupy in the state; choosing groups by relative size and interaction.

I conducted participant observation research with groups in Tallahassee, Tampa, Orlando, Gainesville, Saint Petersburg, and at Occupy organized events that put me into contact with groups from across the state and nation. These included Occupy DC McPherson Square's kick-off weekend to National Occupation, the South East Regional Convergence of Occupations in Gainesville, and the slew of events across Tampa Bay that were collectively billed as Resist the RNC. Furthermore, I attended a number of events across Tampa Bay hosted and organized by a group called AWAKE whose events are attended by current Occupy groups and by many former Occupy participants. AWAKE is a more recently formed group aiming to raise awareness about budget cuts in Florida. In addition to mapping occupation sites and taking pictures, I spoke with participants on site and took part in group activities like marches, protests, meetings, workshops, panel discussions, and serving food.

Because the aim was to understand the perspectives and interactions of individuals participating in Occupy groups in Florida, I reviewed images that groups themselves produced. Images were gathered from pages, groups, and websites dedicated to and maintained by local Occupy factions and from printed literature gathered during participant observation. The pages and groups included Facebook.com, Flickr.com, Tumblr.com, and Blogspot.com, sites extensively used by Occupy groups internationally in efforts to inform the wider public and thus garner support. In addition to collecting images on social media sites, I also included websites created specifically for the use of Occupy groups. Such sites include Occupytampa.org,

occupystpete.org (the Saint Petersburg group's), Occupyorlando.org, occupygainesville.org, Occupymia.org (the Miami group's), Occupytally.org (the Tallahassee group's), and Occupy-jax.org (the Jacksonville group's). I reviewed media produced after October 1st 2011 and before October 1st 2012. This year, from October 2011 to October 2012, begins less than a month after the beginning of Occupy Wall Street protests in New York City and, as such, incorporates the inception of the movement in Florida (Flank 2011: 15). It also includes the intra-movement communication before, during, and after the nation's first proclaimed statewide Occupy gathering, held in Orlando, and the nation's first proclaimed regional Occupy conference, SERCO.

Alter Identity

To investigate the alter identity, I collected and analyzed images from popular media sources that were intended to depict the movement or a particular Occupy group. To do so I reviewed images from major newspapers, magazines, and their website counterparts. I also reviewed coverage produced by television stations on their websites which included short clips and still images that accompanied articles. These were chosen for their wide circulation as well as their focus on contemporary national, state, and local news. In the Tampa Bay area, this included the Tampa Bay Times, the Tampa Tribune, Tampa Bay Business Journal, New Roots News, FOX 13 news, the Crow's Nest (a student newspaper), The Oracle (also a student newspaper), Creative Loafing, and Tampa Bay Online. In Orlando, my review focused on the Orlando Sentinel, WFTV9, and Fox35. In Gainesville, I reviewed coverage by WCJB TV-20 and the Gainesville Sun. In Miami, my research included the Miami Herald, the Miami New

Times, and WSVN. In Tallahassee, my data focused on coverage produced by WCTV, theBlaze, and Sunshine State News. In Jacksonville, this included WTEV and the Jacksonville Sun. National sources included TIMES, Harper's Magazine, The Huffington Post, the New York Times, Al Jazeera English, CBS News, and NPR. This review was largely online publication. As with the images collected from Occupy media sources, the mass media images collected were published after October 1st 2011 and before October 1st 2012.

Image Analysis

After compiling images from mass media and Occupy sources, I analyzed them for common elements. The aim was to discover any continuity that may exist in the symbolic capital. As images are deployed as representations of the movement, similarities among them are indicative of the perception the producer holds of the movement. Images collected were first coded according to sources and then chronologically within those categories. After analyzing the images in conjunction with my participant observation, certain thematic elements became clear, which I will discuss further in my analysis, and then images were re-coded according to those elements. I later realized the elements I had identified from my two data sources were identified by scholars as characteristics of New Social Movements.

By no means are my results and conclusions drawn solely from the manifest content photographs. All of the images I collected, from both Occupy and news media sources, were analyzed in their published context, meaning that any text, captions, and symbols that accompanied them helped inform my analysis of the images. Furthermore, the context of a particular website or page as a whole shaped my analysis. Participant

observation in reality and online networks, and the contexts in which all images were found served to inform my analysis of the images and, in turn, my understanding of the movement. Because the context of the image was central to my analysis, I have included links to internet media rather than inserting the images individually. For readers to understand better my analysis it is more appropriate for them to view examples in their discovered context.

To be clear, I am not trying to speak for the movement. Participants are very clear that no individual may do that. In that sentiment, I am not suggesting that the elements and perceptions I explore are held by the majority of Occupiers; there are a vast diversity of opinions within the movement from what I have encountered. Rather, my exploratory research aims to identify common themes reproduced within (the collective identity) and outside (the alter) of Occupy which are consistently associated with the movement. In part, I hope to contribute to a better understanding of what Occupy is, and, in part, I aim to identify points of interest for future research.

Speculative Improvements

Were I to continue this research, I would include photo elicitation and categorical responses from Occupy participants. That is to say, I would ask Occupy participants to provide me with three to six personal photographs that they felt represent the movement and/or their experiences with it. In accompaniment, I would request a brief description of why each image is representative. I would seek submissions from any members of the Florida groups listed above. After visiting the respective groups and seeking submissions in person, I would post requests for images on the groups' websites and Facebook groups. In this way, I would be able to incorporate a greater variety of

perceptions to represent the multivocality present in the movement even more accurately.

Furthermore, I would chose images that were representative of each of the elements I identified. After making sure that their sources could not be immediately identified, I would ask local journalists, including those who had written articles about Occupy groups, to tell me if any of the images were representative of the Occupy movement. I also would ask journalists if they saw any of the elements I identified in any of the images presented. Not only would this lend improved accuracy to my interpretation of the images, it would also reveal their perception of the movement even more.

If future research were to be conducted on the collective and alter identities of the Occupy movement, it may also be useful to create and conduct a survey that would be administered to journalists, Occupiers, and lay people and which could cross-reference respondent's perceptions of representative images and their demographic characteristics. Particularly, I would be interested to see if there were trends among people of a certain age group, occupation, political orientation, gender, or ethnicity. These speculative improvements would augment the image-based and participatory methodologies I have employed by highlighting correlations among a range of variables.

Results

This section begins with a discussion of elements of the collective identity and then continues to discuss its congruence with alter identities produced in the media. For

the sake of convenience, local Occupy groups will heretofore be referred to by their city names.

99%

Occupiers are very clear about who they are, as anyone who has ever attended an Occupy action knows. "WE! ARE! THE NINETY-NINE PERCENT! WE! ARE! THE NINETY-NINE PERCENT!," was chanted at every Occupy march or protest I attended. The phrase "we are the ninety-nine percent" is also used in Occupy group's online description of themselves[12] and in social media communication, often in illustrating a point about the nature of the movement[3]. In fact, the phrase is encountered almost endlessly in interactions with Occupy, in conversation with Occupiers, on printed and online literature of all kinds, integrated into artistic forms, etc. This identity is symbolically represented by the number and the percent sign(99%). The digits 99, used with and without a percent sign, have become the most powerful and recognizable symbol of the movement. On shirts[4], printed literature, integrated into other images[5], on protest signs[67], posters, encampment decoration[8] and more one can find the 99% symbol. The symbol reminds viewers that the wealthiest 1% of the country controls

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[1] http://www.facebook.com/OccupyMiami/info

[2] http://www.facebook.com/OccupyTampa/info

[3] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=113656048741841&set=a.11364426540968 6.19898.113644132076366&type=1&theater

[4] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=426804874048675&set=pb.216843850443 26.-2207520000.1355010627&type=3&theater

[5] http://www.facebook.com/groups/OccupyGainesville/?fref=ts

[6] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=383125171700682&set=pb.283505574995 976.-2207520000.1355010287&type=3&theater

[7] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=352780208068512&set=pb.283505574995 976.-2207520000.1355010546&type=3&theater

[8] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10151083035241761&set=oa.49751320360 1365&type=1&theater

more than a third of the nation's total wealth. Gainesville[9] has integrated the 99% into their banner image, meaning the image that takes up the top half of their profile's webpage, on their Facebooks. Miami and Tallahasse had done this as well, but have since changed their images.

Other groups, like the Service Employees International Union, use the 99% symbol to signal their solidarity. Individuals express solidarity with, or identify themselves as part of, the movement with the 99% symbol on pins, bumper stickers, t-shirts and their internet profiles. In a discussion on the Occupy movement at the Society for Applied Anthropology annual meeting, anthropology professors from across the nation agreed that in addition to being the most potent symbol of the movement, the success of the symbol indicates a triumph of impact on national political discourse. Rather, Occupy is distinguished from the rest of the 99% as a social movement representing their interests and creating space for their concerns.

Inclusivity

Inclusivity is an overarching concern that Floridian Occupy participants have addressed with online and print media, hand signals, and workshops. In their efforts to create space for all of the 99% to be heard, Occupiers address divisions between social groups in the broader society. At the South East Regional Convergence of Occupations (SERCO), a hand signal called the "privilege check," was introduced to me as a variation of a symbol used across the country. This signal is used to indicate to a speaker that other participants find something the speaker is saying to be the result of

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[9] http://www.facebook.com/groups/OccupyGainesville/?fref=ts

the speaker's perspective being shaped by their privileged place in society. There are a variety of situations that could call for a privilege check but, to illustrate, one example might be a young white participant suggesting a certain interaction with law enforcement officers, like aggressive tactics, that older black participants would find absurd simply because the two demographics have been treated differently by the criminal justice system in the past. By using a privilege check, participants remind one another to remain inclusive and strive to overcome barriers that divide the 99%, like institutional oppression.

At SERCO, workshops were dedicated to training participants to deal with situations and each other in manners that did not deter others from participation. Organizers dedicated almost two full days to training participants to be consciously more inclusive to Occupiers and other members of the 99%. In one workshop, we broke into four working groups in which we discussed different situations of oppression that could divide an individual or group from Occupy, and which could happen during an Occupy event. My groups' hypothetical situation was about a recently incarcerated man walking up to a protest and hearing a protester ask an officer, "why don't you go down the street and arrest the real criminals?," and feeling uncomfortable and leaving. We answered questions; what kind of institutional oppression was he facing?; what effect might this have on his participation?; and something like- how could this go differently? People in the group talked about being non-aggressive and calm, not creating divisions in the group, about being inclusive, and how the statement assumes there are any real criminals, and that laws from the past are so different from current laws that their change implies strong subjectivity. In other words, they indicated that changes in the

legal system in the past was evidence that it would, and should, continue to change and that therefore no judgments should be made on individuals simply because they have had interactions with the criminal justice system. After coming back into the larger group, we made a list of ways people, groups, and the movement can limit oppression and consciously improve inclusivity. The workshop concluded with individuals making commitments to promote inclusivity on personal, group, and movement levels. Other exercises emphasized sensitivity to oppressed peoples and lifestyles and included breaking into groups to brainstorm proper responses to hypothetical situations.

Furthermore, despite the high number of negative interactions with law enforcement and the anti-police media that circulates through Occupy circles, the police are also considered part of the 99% and are invited to participate as such. In Gainesville, members of the local police department frequently participate in Occupy actions. During their Occupy the Courts march, one officer marched in full uniform[10]. In Tallahassee, officers assisted the group logistically, by providing much needed supplies, like boots and blankets, and by helping Occupiers determine the best routes for their marches.

Resistance to the Status Quo

Occupiers recognize that power structures have shifted form in recent history and in acknowledging their fluidity recognize that people, including themselves, may change social structures. Some participants pointed to the Arab Spring as evidence of malleable power structures. Others pointed to the Information Revolution and still others have

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[10] http://www.flickr.com/photos/68356042@N02/6734299229/in/photostream

identified to me looming future changes that may result from the challenges borne of overpopulation and global warming. Still others have pointed to history as evidence. Their sense of this fluidity, whether presently or previously acquired, unites and distinguishes them. In this, that sense of fluidity may be considered an intrinsic part of the Occupy collective identity.

Beyond recognizing the fluidity of power structures, Occupiers seek to change them[11]. In creating Occupations, they create space to empower the 99% who has been oppressed by existing status quos. They see a need to get involved to create a new society that gives voice and opportunity to the masses who have been silenced. Occupiers identify the wealthy as having an influence in governance and social formations which is disproportionate to that of other individuals. Jacksonville has integrated a visual display of this concept into their Facebook banner, under the heading "All roads lead to Wall St[12]." Visual displays and images of all kinds reference the one percent and the influence they have on the rest of the country[13][14][15][16][17]. References to the Monopoloy man, greed[18][19][20][21], pigs[22][23], puppets and puppet

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[11] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=496542030376954&set=a.268963733134786.75352.267684163262743&type=3&theater

[12] http://www.facebook.com/OccupyJax

[13] http://www.flickr.com/photos/anomalous/6269883561/in/pool-1832190@N22

[14] http://www.flickr.com/photos/canoeguru/6331707669/in/pool-1771552@N20/

[15] http://www.flickr.com/photos/canoeguru/6332485116/in/pool-1771552@N20/

[16] http://www.flickr.com/photos/tudophoto/6316756260/in/pool-1771552@N20/

[17] http://www.flickr.com/photos/tudophoto/6316753302/in/pool-1771552@N20/

[18] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=271595052871654&set=a.268963733134786.75352.267684163262743&type=3&theater

[19] http://www.flickr.com/photos/68356042@N02/6309585117/in/photostream/

[20] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=383125125034020&set=a.323799267633273.85158.283505574995976&type=3&theater

[21] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=294770903881291&set=pb.274754642549584.-2207520000.1355023489&type=3&src=http%3A%2F%2Fsphotos-a.xx.fbcdn.net%2Fhphotos-snc7%2F308232_294770903881291_1413064748_n.jpg&size=662%2C960

masters[24], plutocracy[25], and oligarchy all harken to the one percent and their role in society. The corporate flag, an American flag with the symbols of major corporations in place of starts, has been present at every Occupy event I have attended[26].

Attacking the status quo is the role of the 99% versus 1% rhetoric. As an informant from Occupy St Pete emphatically told me, "All we want is a seat at the table." The information sheet Occupy Tallahassee composed to explain their movement and their purposes reads, "WE UNITE BECAUSE OUR POLITCAL SYSTEM STIFLES OUR VOICE!" Though there is no doubt that Occupiers hold and address a vast range of concerns, as a movement Occupy identifies modern power structures as the overarching cause of many, if not all, of these concerns. The "1%" they target is the apex of these power structures and Occupiers view them as having a huge impact on the daily lives of the 99%. That impact is manifested in their perceived influence over the political system, over the media, and over the economy. The same Tallahassee flyer referenced above reads "(the 1%) use their vast funds to "buy" our political process and the votes of our elected representatives…their influence allows them to commit gross injustices against the peoples of the world and the environment AND THEY ARE NOT HELD ACCOUNTABLE" (parentheses, quotations, and capitalization in the original).

Symbolic Resistance

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[22] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=116131425160970&set=pb.113644132076366.-2207520000.1355023131&type=3&theaterb
[23] http://www.flickr.com/photos/71842515@N05/6491609689/in/pool-1792729@N23/
[24] http://www.flickr.com/photos/deltona2003/6316405025/in/pool-1771552@N20/
[25] http://www.flickr.com/photos/anomalous/6270612254/in/pool-1832190@N22
[26] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=379049652108234&set=a.283710144975519.77550.283505574995976&type=3&theater

Floridian Occupiers perceive themselves as resisting the domination of 1%. The image of the rising fist is demonstrative of this sentiment of resistance. Like the 99%, the rising fist is used in print literature, internet media, t-shirts, and protest signs and is considered a signifier of the movement. The Monthly Review, when publishing a timeline of the movement, indicated their solidarity with a small image of the fist on corner of the cover of late 2011 and early 2012 issues. Variations of the rising fist exist, some coupling with the 99% symbol and others depicting an open palm[272829]. The image is always shown upright, as if the hand is rising above the individual's head[30]. At least in part due to cultural associations, the image is reminiscent of resistance and solidarity. These connotations are also true for the use of the Guy Fawkes mask as a symbol in the Occupy movement[31]. Another indication of resistance sentiments among the group, the mask is often worn by Occupy demonstrators and protesters but also appears in various print and digital media[3233]. Though also adapted and integrated into other artistic forms, much like the 99% and the rising fist, the mask is less common than the other symbol but still potent[343536]. The Occupy group in Jacksonville, for example,

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[27] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=294770743881307&set=a.29477021388136O.78685.274754642549584&type=3&theater

[28] http://www.flickr.com/photos/68356042@N02/6734307633/in/photostream/

[29] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=341673479228482&set=a.216848691710962.57267.216848385044326&type=1&theater

[30] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=469433909754433&set=a.268963733134786.75352.267684163262743&type=3&theater

[31] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=426803554048807&set=pb.216848385044326.-2207520000.1355010627&type=3&theater

[32] http://www.flickr.com/photos/canoeguru/6320336563/in/pool-1771552@N20/

[33] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=285720541441146&set=a.285718174774716.78070.283505574995976&type=3&theater

[34] http://www.flickr.com/photos/deltona2003/6438877643/in/pool-1771552@N20/

[35] http://www.flickr.com/photos/canoeguru/6697830107/in/pool-1771552@N20/lightbox/

[36] http://www.flickr.com/photos/canoeguru/6697843481/in/pool-1771552@N20/

has integrated the mask into their logo[37]. The Guy Fawkes mask has also been worn to every Occupy action I have attended[38]. Beyond traditional forms of resistance, like occupations, protests, and marches, Occupiers engage symbolic forms of resistance.

Occupy groups in Florida also employ a variety of creative forms of resistance. These include skits, like the Bill of Rights and Death of Democracy Funerals[39][40][41], and songs. Upon arriving at the demonstration in Saint Petersburg against the RNC kick-off event (billed as "The World's Largest Cocktail Party"), the first thing I saw was Occupy Saint Petersburg holding a funeral for Democracy, with some members wearing shirts from Occupy Lakeland. All members were dressed in black, some carried parasols painted with "Occupy St Pete," others carried the black coffin and still others carried tombstone protest signs which said things like R.I.P Democracy, and conveyed why they were a funeral procession in the middle of a protest. One man carried birds in a cloth and released them when the march arrived at its destination.

Another unusual display at the Saint Petersburg RNC event was a giant silver spoon that appeared to be made out of duct tape and which read, "Romney is the 1%." One group of about four women had put together a giant paper mache Romney carrying a bag of money and wearing a name tag that read "King of the 1%." This was similar to the display put together by Occupy Gainesville for their Occupy the Courts

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[37] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=493004620712736&set=a.283505738329293.77491.28350557499595976&type=1&theater

[38] http://www.flickr.com/photos/canoeguru/6332470580/in/pool-1771552@N20/

[39] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=320247188000329&set=a.320246351333746.82554.274754642549584&type=3&theater

[40] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=320247591333622&set=a.320246351333746.82554.274754642549584&type=3&theater

[41] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=320247068000341&set=a.320246351333746.82554.274754642549584&type=3&theater

demonstration which was part skit and part visual representation[42]. A giant paper mache display representing a multinational corporation was used alongside paper props to present a skit illustrating the influence corporations have on government. In Tampa, the multitude of events collectively billed as "Resist the RNC" included a variety of symbolic displays including street skits and puppet shows. In Tallahasse, a donated school bus became the site of Occupier's artistic expression as they painted it with resistance symbols and other artwork.

Nationally, the Occupy movement abounds with symbolic forms of resistance as well. Though their group is not Floridian, participants of Occupy DC at McPherson Square told me that when they heard news of their encampment's eviction, they built "a barn-like structure" in resistance to the eviction and the enforcing authorities. Furthermore, when I arrived for the kick-off weekend to National Occupation in March 2012, music was playing, people were dancing, carnival style booths that were clearly homemade had been set up on the northwest half of the square. The booths were oriented around social critiques. A mirror with phrases and pictures on it and attached to its edges which highlighted, and argued against, negative body images. A tossing game with the names of banks labeling the targets (holes) and a fake wad of money for throwing. There was a corporate flag, meaning an American flag that uses symbols of corporations instead of stars. These have appeared at every Occupy organized or supported demonstration I have been to. Letters on sticks stood behind the performance area (a mike stand and speakers) reading "Resistance." And shortly after a young woman began a hula hoop making workshop, a man called for volunteers to make a banner to be flown over the space the next day which read "eviction free zone."

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[42] http://www.flickr.com/photos/68356042@N02/6734311337/in/photostream/

They had miniature tents set up, too small for human or domestic animals, that had writing on them or signs attached to them that said they were symbolic and commemorative of the occupation that had been going on before the police "brutally" (as Occupiers described it) dismantled it. Near some were anti-police signs that said things like PIGS depicted as an acronym.

In addition to the wide variety of symbolic forms of resistance, my research also revealed a wide variety of visual forms in Occupy's symbolic capital. I have encountered photographs, drawings and paintings in many mediums, political cartoons, artistic publicity materials, and more. The mulitplicity seems to speak to the multivocality inherent in Occupy's conception of participatory democracy.

Participatory Democracy

Occupy groups pepper their events with this call and response, usually at top volume; "SHOW ME WHAT DEMOCRACY LOOKS LIKE!" "THIS IS WHAT DEMOCRACY LOOKS LIKE!" Occupiers consider themselves part of 99% engaging in direct democracy through their deliberative process that revolves around the "General Assembly," or the forum by which all participants deliberate as a collective. This form of democracy is considered "true" democracy by participants and stands in direct contrast to the representational democracy the American government employs [43]. As David Graeber's book Direct Action an Ethnography illuminates, this consensus process is inherited from anarchist groups in New York and mimics the direct democracy process used by groups around the world, like Ya Basta! and the 2012 protesters occupying

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[43]http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=273373896027103&set=a.270494602981699.75696.2676841632627
43&type=3&theater

Madrid (Graeber 2009:287-358). This structure is a form of horizontal decision-making and though Occupy's form of the process has its immediate history in anarchist groups, horizontal decision making has been engaged by various social movement groups since the 1960's when communist groups used it (Papapavlou 2012). In the 1970s and 80s forms of horizontal decision-making processes were used by anti-nuclear, peace, and feminist movements. In the 90s, DIY movements, encuentros, Zapatistas, and environmental groups engaged the structure, and in the early 2000s alter-globalization movements used it as well. In recent years, anarchist and anarcho-feminists have been the primary proponents of horizontal decision-making (Papapavlou 2012).

The meeting process, originally adopted by Occupy Wall Street, is designed to facilitate consensus (Flank 2011: 92-99). Any single member of the group may prohibit the progress of consensus, and therefore further action, of an Occupy group by "blocking" a motion. However, it is considered highly inappropriate, and is often therefore ignored, if a member blocking consensus is doing so because of preferential or non-vital concerns. If a member is not in complete agreement but does not have a serious concern, they are encouraged to "stand aside" which is to say they will not personally support further action but do not have serious enough concerns to prohibit the group from acting. In Tallahassee, demonstrators told me that the point of the meeting process used by Occupy groups is to have all voices heard "which means creating space for the meek." For a more complete description of this process put together by Occupy Boston, see Appendix A. I have chosen to include Occupy Boston's description because it is thorough but also available online to readers who wish to investigate further the procedure. The majority of Occupy groups in Florida have

created thorough printed descriptions rather than intensive online ones because they have found it useful to have references on site for participants.

Hand signals are used to indicate the sentiment of members during General Assembly[44]. This includes when participants of the crowd agree, disagree, will block a motion, have a response to a speaker, desire to speak, and a host of other actions. Print and digital media exists among all the reviewed Occupy groups which outlines and explains the hand signals and meeting process. Additional hand signals have been developed regionally. Printed literature abounds with images of proper hand signals, but it is surprisingly lacking online.

Some participants expressed difficulties in using the process. In Tallahassee, some members withdrew from participation because of their frustration with the process, though they continued tactical occupation. One participant, Tom[45], told me that those members had withdrawn because they felt their ideas had been shut out of the discussion. Tom said this was because they were not familiar with the meeting procedures, particularly the hand gestures that indicated members' sentiments. He also said that facilitators with "strong personalities" sometimes instigated conflict in the group. Because of the facilitator's role in "directing the flow of a meeting," they had an opportunity to orient meetings around their own interests but for the process to work properly, "they must be fair." Another Occupy Tallahassee participant, Joe[46], told me

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[44] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=383124581700741&set=a.323799267633273.85158.2835055749959 76&type=3&theater

[45] Name has been changed to protect participant.

[46] Name has been changed.

that "curbing some people is part of the process" and that Occupy Tallahassee needed to "keep some people in check to balance all voices."

Though Occupy groups exist that have never, or no longer, maintain a physical tactical occupation, there are no groups I have encountered that call themselves Occupy without engaging the horizontal decision-making structure. This structure is inherently bound with one of the goals of the movement; to be a space for discovering, generating, and implementing solutions to cultural and societal problems.

The tactics and organization of Occupy groups unite them as an international movement yet also create space for participants to harness energy and solutions for wide variety of social problems. For example, the January 9th General Assembly of Occupy Tallahassee identified ten areas of concern: government, economy, environment, energy, education, employment, human rights, healthcare, foreclosure, and disinformation. One printed and distributed Occupy DC May Day poster included a list of aims; "Destroy Racist Unemployment; Stop Mass Incarceration & Stop Deportation; End Imperialist Wars; Workers of the World Unite; Smash Sexism; Education & Jobs For All; Housing Is a Human Right!" This wide range of issues is characteristic of Occupy groups. As one speaker at a rally in Saint Petersburg said, "How can we have one message when there are so many things wrong?"

While some social and cultural conditions were identified by Occupy Wall Street and thus were carried throughout the movement, Occupy's open structure created space for participants to identify and address other social ills. Thus, Occupy was able to unite global and local issues; initially identifying wealth and power disparity as symptomatic of social structures and cultural trends while later implementing local

actions to counter manifestations of these perceived ills.   More often than not, targeted local issues were manifestations of larger trends of wealth disparity. In Tallahassee, participants focused on reducing foreclosures and tackling state legislation that affected foreclosure processes. In Tampa, participants clashed with city officials over homelessness issues. Local issues connected Occupiers with other organizations, like the strong Food Not Bombs presence in Occupy Tampa.

Reclaiming Public Space

Because it requires them to live in public space, tactical occupation forces Occupiers to politicize every moment as they publicize their private lives. In this, they inherently blur the boundaries between public and private.   Yet the name Occupy is more than a declaration of tactics and more than a blurring of public and private. As Cindy Milstein of the Institute for Anarchist studies said in addressing the attendees of SERCO, Occupy was about "people reclaiming public space" and, thus, "taking back their communities." I remember her talking about watching people learn how to organize and run their communities efficiently. Like when some members created a cigarette rolling working group, and when the food group decided they were only going to make three meals a day rather than cooking on demand. She hearkened this back to the Arab Spring; talking about how demonstrators in Cairo had to figure out trash collection, among many other needs, and did so. Operating, as she said, like "little autonomous cities". As Richard Sennett speculates in a recent edition of the Nation, Occupy brought "questions about public space- who owns it? who can use it?-" to the attention of the American people and highlighted "an ambiguity in the distinction between 'public' and 'private' in urban areas" (Sennett 2012: 24).

The logos of Occupy groups often convey this sentiment of reclaiming public space by incorporating silhouettes of the skylines of their cities[47][48][49][50]. The informational flyer produced by Occupy Tallahassee referenced above included these phrases; "WE UNITE IN PUBLIC SPACE BECAUSE IT IS OUR SPACE! WE UNITE IN OUR SPACE TO TAKE BACK OUR VOICE!" As a pamphlet distributed to Occupy Gainesville by Occupy Wall Street and produced by an anarchist group, A New World in Our Hearts, called "Your Guide to the International Occupation Movement of 2011," reads "We occupy everything because everything is ours. We demand nothing because they have nothing to give us.[51]"

Congruence of Alter Identity

Occupiers hold and address a huge range of concerns. To name a few, these include LGBT, feminist, environmental, and economic issues. By creating space to deliberate social ills and implementing a process that intends to hear all voices, Occupiers can address a huge variety of concerns, and it is the creation of that space and the empowering of voices that Occupiers sought in the first place. Thus, their emphasis on inclusivity and use of horizontal decision-making structures are designed to aid them in achieving that goal. This has resulted in a discrepancy between collective and alter identities. Alter identities have been unable to portray the multivocality

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[47] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=273794855985007&set=a.267706573260502.74924.267684163262743&type=1&theater

[48] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=377801695566363&set=pb.283505574995976.-2207520000.1355023067&type=3&theater

[49] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=231280190260487&set=a.225587150829791.59470.225579744163865&type=1&theater

[50] http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=280654381959610&set=pb.274754642549584.-2207520000.1355023551&type=3&theater

[51] This has been visually represented: http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=403062259756270&set=pb.216848385044326.-2207520000.1355012073&type=3&theater

inherent in the movement. Unless they are commenting on the movement "not knowing what they want[52]" or being "disorganized[53][54]," journalists usually describe the movement as "protesting economic inequality[55]" or "greed[56][57]." Depictions of the movement in the media focus on demands and actions of the movement and overlook the discovery and generation of solutions[58]. This may be because journalists expected Occupy to have viable alternatives to current social ills that participants would be prepared to present and fight for. To discover that Occupiers were more concerned about creating space for all voices to equally deliberate social ills and possible solutions may have presented a problem for media outlets. A product is likely a clearer story than a process.

Furthermore, despite the obvious 1% versus 99% rhetoric there has been confusion over what Occupy stands for and "who their enemy is[59]." In some cases, the media has resorted to superficial pieces on Occupy groups[60]. Furthermore, images focus on individuals[61], especially those holding a microphone[62], or small groups, especially those posing for pictures, rarely do photographers attempt to capture the crowd and I have not seen a mass media produced image that captures the entire attendance.

Media portrayals of movement membership stray from their conceptions among participants. I have yet to encounter a news media source that mentions the online

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[52] http://www2.tbo.com/business/business/2011/oct/14/menewso1-movement-seeks-focus-ar-271876/
[53] http://www.miaminewtimes.com/2011-10-20/news/occupy-miami-protests-for-something/
[54] http://www2.tbo.com/news/breaking-news/2011/oct/07/menewso1-protesters-assail-greed-ar-270191/
[55] http://www2.tbo.com/news/breaking-news/2011/oct/05/3/group-to-tout-peace-condemn-greed-in-downtown-tamp-ar-262926/
[56] http://www.wsvn.com/news/articles/local/21005786131414/occupy-miami-protesters-march-to-bank/
[57] http://www.wftv.com/news/news/local/orlando-protesters-rally-end-corporate-greed/nD2fg/
[58] http://www.myfoxorlando.com/story/18324746/orlando-to-be-site-of-floridas-first-occupy-convention
[59] http://www.tampabay.com/opinion/columns/article1208689.ece
[60] http://www.tampabay.com/news/humaninterest/of-occupiers-protest-and-oatmeal/1209536
[61] http://www.tampabay.com/specials/2011/photo_galleries/occupy_tampa/
[62] http://www.miaminewtimes.com/slideshow/occupy-miami-35365570/#27

extension of the movement with the exception of a single article by the Tampa Bay Times[63]. Yet this extension of the group is clearly considered part of the collective. There are individuals in Saint Petersburg, for example, who are considered by the group as active, founding members yet who have never physically attended an event. Instead, these individuals contribute through media production, group organization, publicity, and a variety of other online activities. In this sense, it seems that group membership is determined by participants in terms of efforts given and time spent rather than physical participation. However, the news media describes and graphically depicts the Occupy group as the members physically performing demonstrations[64]. Coverage by CBS, for example, depicted the movement as "staging a comeback" with their national action on May 1st 2012, while participants view this as a continuation of ongoing activity (Montopoli). This demonstrates that popular media has considered the movement diminished because of the decrease in size of physical encampments while participants have not correlated the decline of the movement with the decline of encampments but rather with the decline in number of participants. Perhaps because of this perception of the movement's decline, many media outlets ceased coverage of Occupy. For the Miami Herald, this ceased coverage began after two articles about Occupy Miami's initial inception despite the fact that Occupy Miami still exists and performs actions in the city.

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[63] http://www.tampabay.com/news/humaninterest/year-old-occupy-tampa-lives-and-connects-online-and-marches-on/1254190
[64] http://www.actionnewsjax.com/content/topstories/story/Is-Occupy-Over/hXzJtFBvYEaG__q3-0KQcg.cspx

Interestingly, Occupiers identify and refute alter identities. This is most commonly done through their protest signs, but it also occurs on social media communication[65][66][67][68]

Conclusion

It is much more difficult to understand fully the nature of the Occupy movement without understanding its relationship to other modern global social movements. In addressing the changing nature of social structures and the social movements, some theorists have turned to new social movement theories. As mentioned previously, though new social movement (NSM) theories are diverse in their analysis of the causes and successes of social movements, they have identified a set of attributes that are generally considered characteristic of contemporary social movements. These attributes are as follows: centrality of the collective identity; centrality of values; a causal claim that links NSMs to contemporary social organization; politization of everyday life; cultural, symbolic forms of resistance alongside or in place of traditional forms; discursive organization forms; and a more complex social base. These elements define the emerging category of new social movements and are particularly relevant to this discussion of Occupy. As Gusfields et al (2009) explain, new social movement theories "refers to an approach rather than a theory; it is not a set of general propositions that have been verified empirically but just an attempt to identify certain common characteristics in contemporary social movements and develop analytical tools to study them" (6).

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[65] http://www.flickr.com/photos/canoeguru/6320899152/in/pool-1771552@N20/
[66] http://www.flickr.com/photos/tudophoto/6316231017/in/pool-1771552@N20/
[67] http://www.flickr.com/photos/69110608@N08/6277959911/in/pool-1771552@N20/
[68] http://www.flickr.com/photos/canoeguru/6332485116/in/pool-1771552@N20/

New social movement theorists consider collective identities central to NSMs. As Buechler explains, for some theorists the formation and negotiation of the collective identity can be the reason for the movement's existence (Buecheler 2001:168). Though there are many elements to Occupy's collective identity in Florida, Occupiers position their identity as the 99% as central to their movement. Occupiers' conception of themselves as part of 99% and as working for the 99% is a collective identity that is central to the movement.

A focus on values is another theme common to NSM theories. Despite discrepancies as to what kind of values NSMs share, the centrality of values to NSMs is generally agreed upon, and is considered to reduce the possibility of cooptation (Buechler 2011:160). Gusfield et al explain, "(NSMs) are associated with a set of beliefs, symbols, values, and meanings related to sentiments of belonging to a differentiated social group; with the members' image of themselves; and with new, socially constructed attributions about the meaning of everyday life" (parenthesis added) (Gusfield 2009: 7). Though individuals hold a huge range of values, as a collective, inclusivity is the strongest overarching value my research identified. This concerted inclusivity unites Occupy's collective identity as the 99% and their participatory democracy structure. Inclusivity is a value they seek to create and augment in the larger society; they wish to be included more in the decisions and processes that shape their lives. The conception of participatory democracy as "true democracy" highlights this. In their eyes, the "correct" way to govern is to include those being governed in the process of decision-making. By engaging participatory democracy they not only create space

governed by this value, they demonstrate its viability and confirm its importance as a value.

In addition to modern social formation being the context for modern movements, writings on NSMs suggest a causal claim between the contemporary social organization and the existence of modern social movements. For Occupiers, the primary problem with modern social organization has been increased power disparity as the elite widen their sphere of influence on society. Occupy groups across Florida see themselves reclaiming power for the 99%. Their participatory democracy structure returns the power of governance to the collective while also giving the individual absolute freedom over their own actions and opinions. The physical Occupation reclaims public space as belonging to majority, an act in itself of reclaiming power, and then turns that space into a place where all members are empowered. While these forms of reclamation are movement goals in themselves, Occupiers do not stop there. They resist modern social formations in demanding increased power be given to all of 99%. The sentiment of resistance my research highlighted is indeed resistance to the status quo that, as Occupiers see it, has distributed power away from the majority and into the hands of the power elite. Thus, Occupiers see modern social formations as the instigating cause of their movement and target it as such.

NSM theorists identify cultural and symbolic forms of resistance as thematic to contemporary movements (Buechler 2011:161). As my results documented, Occupy groups in Florida employ a wide variety of creative forms of resistance in addition to traditional tactics of resistance.

In addition to traditional and creative forms of resistance, NSM theorists consider discursive organizational forms a signature characteristic of modern movements. As Buechler elaborates, "organization is less a strategic tool than a symbolic expression of movement values and member identities" (Buechler 2011:161). This is an excellent lens for understanding Occupy's participant democracy structure. This organizational structure unites Occupy groups through time and space more than any other practice. Researchers commented at the annual meeting of the Anthropological Association that "Occupy is this bizarre and amorphous thing" that lives regardless of who or how many people are involved (Grove 2012). Their organizational structure unites Occupy groups as a "thing" and furthermore is a direct expression of their value of inclusivity.

In addition to being an expression of inclusivity, participant democracy encompasses a sense of individuality and mulitvocality. As Occupy Boston's description of the process in Appendix A states; "Everyone's voice is equal, but we cannot all speak at once so we use a procedure to organize our contributions." In addition to valuing all voices, Occupiers give the individual absolute freedom. The use of blocking and stand asides demonstrates this sentiment. Furthermore, individuals are never under obligation to support consensus measures with their own actions. As there are no hierarchical forms of authority, no individual can be coerced into action. The process is centered on consensus building and as such is inherently discursive. Clearly, Occupy satisfies this contention of NSM theorists.

The "politicization of everyday life" is also a theme common to NSMs that researchers identify (Taylor and Whittier 1991:28 qtd in Gusfield et al 2009:168) (Buechler 2011: 160). In this, the blurring of lines between public and private, and

individual and collective comes to have an association with identity and lifestyle politics (Buechler 2011:160). This theme is highly relevant to the Occupy movement, whose very name indicates an overlap of public and private spheres. In addition to publicizing every moment of their private lives in tactical occupations, Occupiers come to create a lifestyle that drastically differs from their former day-to-day lives. Initial research on the movement has led some to claim that Occupy creates a "new everyday" for participants (Papapavlou 2012). The reclaiming of power in public space and the empowerment of the individual through engagement of participatory democracy changes the very nature by which participants engage each other and the world around them. In efforts to reclaim power for the 99%, Occupiers must reexamine their everyday engagement with the social formations that have disempowered them. This has led early research to suggest a distinction between Occupy as a lifestyle and Occupy as a tactic (Grove 2012).

NSM theories also consider the social base of contemporary social movements to be complex and to transcend the structural roles of participants. As Gusfield et al elaborate in their book New Social Movements, "There is a tendency for the social base of new movements to transcend class structure" (Gusfield et al 2009: 6). Though there are certainly trends in Occupy demographics, there also exists a huge variety[69]. The greatest trend has been among, as David Graeber put it, "well-educated, middle class white" individuals (Graeber 2012). This trend is common to new social movements, despite their transcendence of class structures. Gusfield et al write, "the constituencies for most of these "new movements" are the educated middle class" (Gusfield et al 2009:

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[69] For a fuller discussion on these demographics and an interesting visual representation please see:
http://thesocietypages.org/graphicsociology/2011/11/17/occupy-wall-street-demographics/

93). However, a wide range of ages, races, and ethnicities, as well as sexual and political orientations, has been represented among Occupy participants. Obviously, their focus on the 99% supersedes many identity and structural roles that may have previously considered divided. As their number has been declining of late, it is difficult to determine to what extent this variety still exists, but it is likely that the spectrum has narrowed.

Thus, Occupy groups across the state of Florida reproduce themes in their conception of the movement through the deployment of symbolic capital that fit theorist's criteria for a new social movement. The mass media has failed to communicate the sentiments of Occupiers as multivocal and as having an emphasis on the process of generating solutions to perceived social ills. My participant observation and image-based research with six Occupy groups across Florida which suggests that the participants' shared sense of the movement, the collective identity, includes elements that are identified by theorists as characteristic of New Social Movements and that media depictions of the movement, alter identities, have failed to communicate the sentiments of Occupiers. It is my hope that this exploratory research has identified points of interest for future research and contributed to a better understanding of Occupy.

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Appendix A

The following description was produced by Occupy Boston. It outlines the General Assembly process that is used by Occupy groups across the nation. Some groups have introduced their own variations, but the usually the attributes explained below are maintained. The description below can also be found here: http://occupyboston.wikispaces.com/General+Assembly

General Assembly

Every night at 7:00pm Occupy Boston gathers for either discussion groups or a General Assembly (GA), its core decision-making body. A second GA may be scheduled in the morning, if needed.

GA is open to all who want to participate in its defined process, described below. Whether you're camping with us or just stopping by, your voice is welcome! Everyone's voice is equal, but we cannot all speak at once so we use a procedure to organize our contributions. To offer proposals remotely to GA, submit them here: GA Process Proposals.

There are no governing authorities in the General Assembly, but a trained Facilitator directs an established process. Facilitators guide the GA process without imposing their views on the group. Facilitator training is offered regularly for anyone interested in volunteering in this role. Check the calendar or listen for announcements to become a trained facilitator. Trained Floor Monitors may also help participants find the right time in the process to raise their point. More information about the GA process is available through the Facilitators' page and a document at Google Doc

General Assembly Process

A typical order of GA business might be:

1. Facilitator reviews consensus process, techniques and the order of the meeting.
2. Working Groups and Individuals make their proposals for GA approval.
3. Working Groups and Individuals give their announcements.
4. Individuals or groups present proposals by adding their names to the "stack" of people waiting to address the GA.

At any time, a person may interrupt with a Point of Process if the process is not being followed or a different process applies. For instance, sometimes GA approval will be requested for something that the GA has previously agreed to. Someone can interrupt

with a Point of Process to explain that there is no need to continue with GA approval in this case. If there is disagreement about this Point of Process, the Facilitator or possibly the entire GA will make a decision about how to proceed.

Each announcement or proposal is discussed by the entire group before moving on to the next one. Announcements may be followed by some discussion of questions and additional information. Useful hand signals for this open discussion process include:

- Clarifying Question - Raise hand and curve fingers in the shape of a "C."
- Point of Information - Raise hand and point index finger straight up like an "I."
- Point of Process - Raise both hands with index fingers pointing at each other and touching.

Proposals are handled by a consensus process.

Consensus Process

When someone makes a proposal at GA, there is a process for the assembled group to share thoughts and work toward a consensus. The Facilitator directs this process and may modify it, as agreed by the group. Any member of the GA may speak up in any section, but we make an effort to not repeat things that have already been said. Each question or statement only needs to be made once for the whole group.

Discussion Process

1) A proposal is stated or read. Ideally, a copy of the text is distributed at or before the meeting so people can consider it closely, especially if it is a complicated or important proposal.
2) Clarifying Questions (hand signal = "C") are raised by anyone in the group.
3) Points of Information (hand signal = "I") are raised to add information that has not yet been covered.
4) Strong Concerns or Objections are voiced.
5) Friendly Amendments are proposed.
6) The proposers consider what has been said and, for each of the questions, concerns and amendments, whether to:
   a) withdraw the proposal,
   b) adopt any suggested amendments, or
   c) keep the proposal as is and respond to the concerns.
7) If any changes have been made, the amended proposal is stated and discussion steps 2 - 7 are repeated.
8) If no changes are made to the proposal in discussion step 6, then it is ready for the decision process.

Decision Process

1) Blocks are explained, if someone believes that the proposal poses a danger to the group's purpose or cohesion that is serious enough that the person would consider leaving the group. The hand signal to indicate a block is to cross arms at the wrist and hold them up in front of you so they can be seen.
    a) A vote of 75% must agree that the block is a sincere and legitimate statement, whether or not they agree with the block. If 75% agree that the block is a fair statement, a vote is taken to see how many people agree with the block.
    b) A vote of 10% must agree to support the block to make it effective. A blocked proposal is tabled and may be reconsidered at a later time.
2) A show of support is requested using hand signals to show support, uncertainty or disapproval. (See Temperature Check, below, for a description of the hand signals.) If counting is required, raised hands may be used, or people may be asked to stand on one side or another to determine a count. 75% approval is a common threshold for consensus.
    a) If Consensus is reached, the proposal is adopted.
    b) If Consensus is **not** reached, but the Proposal is not Blocked, there may be a move to Indirect Consensus.
    c) If timely Consensus cannot be reached, the Facilitator may ask the proposer to:
        i) submit a revised proposal at a later meeting or
        ii) submit the proposal to a Working Group before returning it to GA.

See a typical GA process here.

Indirect Consensus
Indirect Consensus involves the following optional steps:

1. Debate: Three Debaters **For** and Three Debaters **Against** will each speak for 30-120 seconds;
2. The proposal is restated, and the GA is asked for a Temperature Check;
3. If Consensus is not reached, a Facilitator asks for Strong Objections to be stated;
4. The GA breaks into **Small Group Discussion** for 5-15 minutes;
5. The GA returns to Step 2 of the Decision Process.

Useful Techniques
People's Mic
The People's Mic serves as amplification when there is no bullhorn or microphone. It is typically begun by someone yelling "Mic check!" Everyone who hears this is expected to reply loudly in unison: "Mic check!" The speaker then dictates a few words at a time, pausing for the crowd to recite each phrase. For large crowds, there may be a second echo of each phrase by those farther out in the group. This is a way to amplify one voice

by using many voices together. On top of the fun factor, it has the added benefit of giving people time to make sure they hear and understand what's said.

Temperature Check

To informally assess support for a proposal or idea, the Facilitator may request a "Temperature Check." All GA participants then show agreement by wiggling their fingers in the air ("twinkling") or disagreement by wiggling their fingers pointed down ("squid fingers.") Those who are undecided may wiggle their fingers horizontally, parallel to the ground.

Hand Signals
To help communication in a large group, some hand signals are often used, shown below.

a. Yes/Agreement

c. Point of Process – a valued interruption

b. No/Disagree

d. Block –This action will stop a proposal from being