Camp residents voiced anger this week as clergy and councilors alike threatened legal action to force them from a public square.

Between 200-300 campers from Occupy London Stock Exchange have held St Paul's Square for more than a fortnight after police barred them from the privately-owned Paternoster Square directly outside the exchange.

But both St Paul’s Cathedral and the City of London confirmed late last week they were seeking an eviction order to break up the camp on grounds of obstructing a public highway.

City of London said in a statement they believed protest was “an essential right” in a democracy – “but camping on the highway is not.”

“We believe we will have a strong highways case because an encampment on a busy thoroughfare clearly impacts the rights of others,” it read.

Meanwhile the Cathedral said only that legal action had “regrettably become necessary.”

“The Chapter only takes this step with the greatest reluctance and remains committed to a peaceful solution,” the Cathedral’s ruling Chapter said in a statement. **

CHURCH & STATE SEEK LEGAL ACTION

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Stacey Knott
occupy brighton has begun actively hosting their first general assembly saturday — an estimated 130 protesters gathering at the protest camp in victoria gardens. the times’ brighton correspondent described the session as “spirited.”

authorities across america have continued to crack down hard on occupation camps: new york’s fire department had confiscated occupy wall st. generators and fuel as the times went to print, citing a fire risk; while police in oakland, san diego and atlanta broke up local protests with baton, tear gas, flashbang grenades, rubber bullets and kettling, ending in dozens of injuries and arrests.

in an occupied times exclusive, a street medic and member of alice, but the library refused checks in with her own account of police brutality.

sat 1

11am / anna minton: “ground control – private takeover of public space and how to win back the commons”

12-1pm / aoi daily: “fighting prejudice against children and young people”

2.30pm / 6-pack policy with 15m movement: “european economic policy”

5.30pm / international democracy panel, with jeo larazus, class bellfray & richard seymour

sunday 2

12-3pm / john christensen, tjn & rev. michael taylor: “democracy by and for the corporation: london’s square mile.”

monday 3

7pm / tom murtlay, former banker: “the creation of debt and democratic capitalism.”

wednesday 4

4pm / day of action – solidarity with the student anti-austerity protests. speakers to include george mordet, polly tobybave, richard hall, alex caltonissou & dave hill

please check in at tentcity university for more dates and details, to suggest a speaker, or to let us know of a topic you’d like to see addressed.
When I was little, my grandfather took me on his knee and explained the market to me. In theory, it was a way for people to invest in businesses and commodities that they saw had a future in the economy. For a handful of bills, we could own a tiny slice of a business. However, in the last decade this simple act has exploded into complexity, with over-the-counter derivatives, futures contracts, currency speculation, or tax credit default swaps. Market finance became a new form of worship. What would the market think? What would the market say? Without even knowing why, the common person was suddenly exhorted to care very deeply about how the market “felt” about something. If the market was upset, something unspeakably terrible would happen! Better to offer up our flesh and blood as sacrifice, cut social spending and our children’s futures short so that the market might be pleased. The high priests of power encourage us to trust them and to simply let them act in our best interest—whether or not we understand what is going on.

“Why”, might we ask, “is it so important to develop an understanding of the market and of neoliberal market theory”? There are two answers to this. First, it is not difficult to understand what is going on. There might be very confusing terms thrown about, but the confusion boils down to simple concepts. Secondly, the “Occupy” movement is a movement directed against the neoliberal agenda, although it does not always articulate its opposition in these terms. In order to cure an illness, we must first diagnose it. Only then will we be able to formulate the proper medication needed to get better. Neoliberalism can be a confusing term. David Harvey defines it as “a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade.” To put it simply: the market must be free, without government interference beyond enforcing private property laws. The confusion sets in when we remember that with all these bailouts, tax and social programs, the market isn’t really free at all. If anything, it is now intimately connected with the state. So neoliberalism is something that is inherently contradictory in its stated ideology.

Yet until we understand neoliberalism as an ideology that encourages the accumulation of assets and power through the free market, state involvement by way of bailouts and austerity cuts suddenly seems more reasonable to prevent a growing imbalance between the marginalized many and the powerful few. Neoliberalism assumes that the state has a new role in our lives. Instead of being something that is slacked by and for the people, it is now an institution that is the protector/enforcer of the market and its ethos. In return for protecting the free market, the state gains an incredible amount of power. Under the auspices of “protecting private property”, governments now have the legal ability to intrude on your life in ways never before imagined. Neoliberalism started out by attacking the most vulnerable among us: those who live hand-to-mouth in the third world, the poor, the mentally ill, the cold, and the hungry. Yet just as neoliberal capitalism demands more access to markets in order to expand, it also demands that new populations live according to its logic. The United States is a fantastic example. A reckoning for the sins of the father came upon the United States in the form of rotting houses in New Orleans, empty factories in Detroit, and homeless veterans freezing to death in the streets of New York. The wealth gap grows so vast that those who jobs grow scarce. Suddenly, we began to notice that our social safety net had been cut from under us. No health insurance, unemployment compensation at $120 per week, houses being foreclosed on, and retirement accounts that suddenly became worthless. As social security and education are hobbled by the off-shoring and free trade, the! chipping blocks, forces that the US government helped to unleash consume our future.

Yet the most dangerous part of neoliberalism is that it pursues an amendment of social policy. According to that logic, society is simply made up of individualists who are then driven by self-interest. The only real social responsibility is consumption. This individualization of humanity cannot not only a very specific consumer culture, but also ended up isolating us to an astonishing degree. The true achievement of the Occupy movement has been a reclamation of public space and human solidarity. When was the last time you stood around and spoke to complete strangers about how the world should be run? The Occupy movement has begun to refocus our attention on non-monetary values. The potency of these discussions is evident. This is why skulls get cracked in New York, flash bangs and gas get thrown in Oakland, and why the police parade around with machine guns have resorted to.

It is the simple act of gathering and independent thinking that constitutes the biggest threat to the status quo. If the people have found a way to excuse themselves from their responsibilities of producing, feeding and caring for each other, the system of speculative profit begins to collapse.

Therein lies the real threat to the 1%: concerns about health and sickness violations, about fire codes or the loss of tourist money merely mask the much bigger jeopardy to the status quo: A people who are self-actualized and connected to one another will never be able to repress the endless cycle of consumption. It is precisely in those ruptures that we may find a cure to the disease of neoliberalism.
FEEDING THE MASSES

Alessandro Petruzzi has become a familiar face to participants of the London occupation, whom he feeds daily. Working from a small camp kitchen, a tent tucked on the right side of St. Paul's Cathedral, he provides at least 400 meals a day using food donated by supporters of the movement.

A trained Italian chef, Alessandro runs the kitchen in an unorthodox but professional manner. He worked in some of Milan's top restaurants, and now lives in London working nights at a security firm and spending his days running the kitchen. The maku-shift kitchen is in a gazebo, with gas cookers, long tables and a washing-up section. And it's not only the occupiers he has been feeding. Alessandro has had homeless people and tourists as well as business people stopping by for nourishing meals.

The kitchen usually has snacks, like bread, spreads, fruit or biscuits laid out, and the staff are often seen bent over gas cookers making rice dishes, lentils, soups or pasta when trying to provide 3 hot meals a day. As he is fully trained in kitchen health and safety, the kitchen meets all the requirements needed to operate. "Safety in the kitchen is very important, we have danger in every corner, we have knives, we have fire, everything," he said. City health inspector has come around to check out the kitchen a few times since its inception and has found it up to standard each time, something to be expected, Alessandro said.

He always has an eye on what all his voluntary staff are doing, and coordinates them as needed. He also enforces rules that are found in any professional kitchens, like no smoking requirements, hair covered and tied back and clean and tidy clothing. "I don't want to make myself responsible for eviction because of the kitchen; the kitchen is safe," Alessandro told Occupied Times.

The kitchen is always in need of donations, and they are grateful for all offers. If you want to meet Alessandro or any of the dedicated, hard-working volunteers working in the kitchen come down to St. Paul's Square. We're open!

STOCK EXCHANGE MONOPOLY

The "Capitalism Is Crisis" banner might have come down, but there is a new centerpiece of (self-) expression at the St. Paul's camp: A giant monopoly board that plays on discussions of greed and bailouts. The piece was donated to the camp by an unnamed artist ahead of the Monopoly Bike Ride on October 27. Since then, several pieces of art have been added to the original installation, including a mock get-out-of-jail card with the tags of the street artists Banksy and Zeza. The Occupied Times spoke with several people who indicated that the art had indeed been donated by Banksy.

"Monopoly" began its history as an educational game titled "Landlord's Game" in the early 20th century. The original creator, a woman named Elizabeth Margie, wanted to use the game to explain the benefits of a single tax on land that would have made it less costly to run individual businesses and more costly to amass large amounts of land in private hands.

During the Great Depression, the idea caught the eye of American economics students. They adjusted the rules to allow players to link properties and construct buildings. The emphasis of the game shifted. Instead of discouraging the monopolization of land, the successful gameplay now depended on the ability of players to monopolize color and space. The game was re-named "Monopoly" and first sold during the 1934 holiday season.

Only in the 1970s did someone try to return the game to its original idea. Economics professor Ralph Anspach won an out-of-court settlement in 1974 that allowed him to sell his own game under the name "Anti-Monopoly" - which is just what you would expect: A "game which is against monopolists," according to Anspach.

True to its message, the St. Paul's board has already begun to evolve from installation to message board. Political graffiti covers most of the art while the adjacent Tent City University hosts regular discussions and lectures about economics, politics, and justice.
Earlier this year, the economist Michael Norton from Harvard Business School and Duke University’s behavioral economist Dan Ariely published a study with the title “Building a Better America—One Wealth Quintile at a Time.” In it, they asked a representative online panel two simple questions:

1. What is the distribution of wealth in America today?
2. What should the distribution of wealth be like?

Respondents to the survey predicted that the top 20% of Americans controlled close to 60% of overall wealth, and that the bottom 40% of Americans controlled close to 10% of wealth. When asked to outline their ideal wealth distribution, respondents came up with an almost egalitarian scheme that would give the top 20% control over 30% of wealth, and give the bottom 40% around 25% of wealth.

The results were rather surprising, even to the two researchers: Both wealth distributions were far off the statistical data that they had gathered about actual wealth distribution. In contemporary America - the land of opportunity, of the American Dream, Hollywood and social mobility - the top 20% control over 80% of wealth. The bottom 40% control less than 20%. That’s two percent of wealth, for forty percent of the population - a staggering level of inequality that has been growing rather rapidly since the mid-1970s.

What do you make of those numbers? Norton and Ariely conclude that we tend to be overly optimistic about social mobility (especially in the United States) and often under-estimate the level of inequality in the world. At the same time, we intuitively reject excessive inequalities. When asked about our moral intuitions, the vast majority of us are close egalitarians.

Those numbers are specific to the US and cannot be superimposed on the British context. But a recent non-representative Guardian poll (indicating that 88% of respondents support Occupy LSX) provides indication that our intuitions are not all that different. In the UK, the top 10% control one hundred times as much wealth as the bottom 10%, according to the National Office of Statistics data.

Here, too, a large majority of people are shocked to realize how wide the socioeconomic gap between rich and poor has become – and is at least vaguely sympathetic to a movement that has arisen in response to these inequalities. They are concerned about the effects of that gap on those who struggle in their daily lives, and on society at large - a concern that is evident in conversations around the Occupy LSX camp every day, with passers-by, tourists, bankers, and the scores of people who stop for a quick chat and leave with a deeper sense of awareness of the enormous strains of inequality.

We, too, are close egalitarians. But increasingly, we are coming out of the closet. Current levels of inequality have simply become economically, politically and morally unsustainable. Some of us are anti-capitalist, some are anti-corporatist, some are anti-corruption, we are participatory democrats, left libertarians, social democrats, liberal socialists, or environmental activists. But on the question of inequality, we speak with one voice.

"My job is to help people become financially secure, to protect their families and income and ensure they are not just relying on the government financially when it comes to their retirements. I've seen how some people have been quite frustrated with what's been going on in the last few years with the markets and the way things are run here, and reckon it was only a matter of time before a protest like this happened. If you want to make a statement you've got to do it somewhere the world can see, and St Paul's is one place in London to do just that. I do believe there will be a change, to a certain degree - just look at how much media interest there has been. I feel sorry for Canon Dr Giles Fraser though - because he's been placed under a huge amount of pressure and he probably never though that something like this would happen! After all that's happened, people who were undecided about these sorts of issues are now finally seeing that there is another side to the coin, and that perhaps there is some truth in what you're saying after all..." - Kristian Win - Financial advisor
In 1968, social scientists and politicians alike lamented the "end of ideology", a declining public interest in politics. Likewise, at the end of the 20th century, immediately before the rise of the anti-globalisation movement and its "coming out" party in the streets of Seattle in 1999, pundits focused on the institutionalisation of previous social movements into bureaucratised organisations and the "anti-political" stance of a new generation that was supposedly without precedent. Society, coming out of periods of relative quiet, rarely sees the next wave of contentious collective action on the horizon. Genuine social movements, interject energy into an environment characterised by political inertia. The streets become vibrant only when we know that institutional politics is failing us. The present moment and the events we have witnessed during the course of the last twelve months are no different. Protest movements have historically varied in dimension and duration. Yet there are a few common characteristics that unite rather than divide them. As Sidney Tarrow wrote, protests frequently coincide with "a phase of heightened conflict and contention across the social system that includes... a quickened pace of change in the forms of protest; a combination of organised and unorganised participation; and sequences of intensified interactions between challengers and authorities which can end in reform, repression and sometimes revolution".

All that one can establish at the outset of any new "cycle" is that what seemed established is once again in motion. According to one activist collective, "social movements come into being by creating problems; or perhaps we could say, movements form as they make specific issues into problems that must be addressed."

The occupy movement can be seen in this light as well. Those who complain about the lack of concrete demands or deem the movement irrelevant because "it lacks focus" fail to understand that this is precisely the nature of protest movements in their early stages. Contemporary public debate has lost its grasp of real grassroots movements. Social movements are no lobby groups, they do not issue written demands on the nuances of public policy or acclaim cardinal bulls about how to revitalize economic growth. They are not think tanks or political parties. They are none of these things. Instead, social movements transform specific issues - unemployment, underemployment, privatisation of public services and space, high energy prices, high inflation, over-priced public transport, a feral 1 percent of financiers and politicians, tuition fees, the surveillance state, a supremely undemocratic political and electoral apparatus, low pay - into problems that must be addressed."

The rectification of current problems will take time. That is not necessarily a bad thing. After all, the formulation of demands offers a rare glimpse into the inner working of democracy. As Manuel Castells writes, "political democracy, as conceived by the liberal revolutions of the eighteenth century, and as diffused throughout the world in the twentieth century, has become an empty shell." According to Castells, "the new institutional, cultural, and technological conditions of democratic exercise have made the existing party system, and the current regime of competitive politics, obsolete as adequate mechanisms of political representation in the network society."

Today, we have realized the shortcomings of the current system. And in our collective memory, we know the importance of preventing "tyrants from occupying the vanishing space of democratic politics. Citizens are still citizens but they are uncertain of which city, and of whose city."

The uncertainty is perhaps beginning to fade. Things are in movement and times indeed are changing. We have reached a historical watershed moment. From Athens and New York to Cairo, London and Oakland, problems are being articulated. We have started a discussion that has been long overdue. And this is only the beginning. Indeed: We live in interesting times.
OCCUPIED TIMES: So Ben, let’s talk money.

BEN DYSON: Money is at the root of all the social problems that we’re facing today. Poverty is a lack of money; the lack of jobs is because there’s not enough money moving around the economy.

OT: We’ve seen some ‘Positive Money’ signs around the camp. What’s the Positive Money campaign all about?

BD: We think there’s a huge problem with allowing the private corporations that we all know as ‘banks’ to create the nation’s money supply. When you take out a loan from a bank, the money you borrow doesn’t actually come from anyone else’s savings. Instead, the bank just opens up an account for you in its computer system, and compete the numbers in. Last year alone the banks created £110 billion of new money, according to Bank of England figures, and pumped most of this into pushing up house prices and speculating on commodities (i.e. oil and food prices). And if you ever wondered why there’s so much debt, it’s because almost all of the money we use to run society has to be borrowed from the banks.

OT: What are the social implications of this?

BD: For one thing, inequality is made worse because we as the public have to pay interest on the entire money supply, and most of that interest gets redistributed to the highly-paid guys who are based in the City. Also, because we don’t have control over how our actual savings are used, then our society and the economy ends up reflecting the short-term priorities of the banks – so without most people realising it, we have pacifists funding bombs, and environmentalists funding Canadian tar sands. Think what kind of impact it could’ve had if just half of that money had gone into say, reducing poverty, or investing in switching to clean energy.

OT: What brought you to this position?

BD: I simply couldn’t understand where all the money was coming from to fund all the credit cards, and personal loans that banks were pushing on people. One day I stumbled across a book, The Grip of Death by Martin Rowbotham, and that explained how banks are able to create money out of nothing when they make loans. When I realised that actually all this money was just being created out of nothing, it seemed like a huge problem that needed to be talked about.

OT: Should we be paying off our debts, as David Cameron suggests?

BD: Well, that’s a truly stupid suggestion from the Prime Minister. This is an example of people in power not understanding how the monetary system works. Remember how I said that banks create money when they make loans? Well when someone repays a loan, the opposite happens – the money basically disappears. So if everyone started paying down our debts, it reduces the amount of money in the system – it’s like sucking the life blood out of the economy. What we need is to put new money into the economy without increasing the level of debt at the same time, and the only way that can be done is if the government takes back the power to create money from the banks.

OT: Does ‘positive money’ currently exist in any form?

BD: No, unfortunately the vast majority of countries in the world use the same debt-based, privatised money system as the UK, and as a result the vast majority of countries are sinking under the weight of all the debt. The existing system is tried and tested, and every time it’s been tested, it has failed. That said, this idea of stepping the banks from creating money has been tried in the past. It was tried on a small island about 170 years ago, where the government of the day stopped banks from printing their own paper money, and said that only the state would be allowed to print paper money. The small island was called Great Britain, it was in 1844, and it was a Conservative Prime Minister who passed the law. So there might be hope for the present government!

OT: How would the reforms you suggest help stop people going into poverty worldwide?

BD: Don’t forget that all this money is just numbers in computer systems, which means that if we could reclaim the power to create money from the banks, then we could cancel much of this ‘third-world’ debt without any of the big banks losing even a single penny. On top of this, you could reach the Exchequer for a day, what’s your first bit of legislation?

OT: Simply to take the power to create money away from the banks, and make sure that newly-created money is used for the public benefit instead of the benefit of the bankers.

WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?

Christian camper writes...

Poor old Church of England. They were hoping to get away with another 100 years of not saying anything at all about anything at all, then Occupy! comes and lands on their doorstep.

What a pickle they’re in. What’s that coming and lands on their doorstep.

That’s something about the masses, concentration of wealth and power, to how this is going on. Should we say something?

It’s terrible, but finally a couple of senior church figures spoke out. George Carey, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, cast his loving arms about the protest, and branded it “opportunistic and cynical”. Carey cried out against the injustice at the heart of the occupation: that ‘yet another battle’ was being fought against Christian worshippers who can’t get into the cathedral to pray. Because, don’t forget, there aren’t any other empty churches in central London.

His sentiments chimed with the Bishop of London, who summoned up every last ounce of charity in his bones to say: “The time has come for the protesters to leave, before the camp’s presence threatens to eclipse entirely the issues that it was set up to address.” Yes. “We wouldn’t want a few dozen tents and some homemade banners eclipsing the impending global financial collapse.” Good point, Bishop. To be fair to both these venerable clerics, it’s likely that in their busy lives as churchmen they’ve never managed to find time to read the Bible. If they had, they would have seen Jesus telling his disciples: “Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven” (Mark 10:21). They’d have heard him say he had come “to preach good news to the poor” and “to set at liberty those who are oppressed” (Luke 4:18).

To many Christians, the closing of St Paul’s and the chilly reception from senior clergy, has been a real crisis of faith – a “scandalon” in the ancient Greek. There’s a schism growing, between those who would cast out the protesters, and those who are scandalised by the moral weakness of the Church. Christian Tony Glossing of Bristol says that: “many would be shocked that you have to perp修理a cathedral, so that the poor – whom Jesus’ ministry was all about – are excluded from the temple! Extraordinary.”

He also notes that irony that there is evidence St Paul’s himself was a tentmaker. St Paul’s chapter are supposed to be stewering the land using Christ’s teachings and looking after those dispossessed. The people there in the tents have come because they have been shut out of the democratic process.

And coming there, we find ourselves facing eviction. And with a former Archbishop condemn their “self-indulgence” for being there. Jesus Christ must be spinning in his grave. Oh no, hang on...
What is OccupyLSX? Something exciting has happened. A wave of loosely affiliated occupations are springing up across the Western world, drawing thousands of people to the streets in hundreds of cities expressing dissatisfaction with the current economic order. We are creating a network of unignorable reminders to those in charge that we demand better from them, while at the same time finding ways to relate on a direct and human level, forming closer and more meaningful bonds of communal cohesion than government can provide. Occupation is the word of the moment. We are reaching a point where the idea of occupation has taken on a mythical quality, divorced from the act itself, and the meaning is becoming distorted and confused.

The word has spread from the streets to new domains, as people heed the call to occupy everywhere. In that spirit, the website www. OccupyTheBoardroom.org declares "WE HAVE ADDRESSES. THE 99% HAVE MESSAGES" and provides the contact details of various Wall Street allies to facilitate their personal harassment at the hands of the disgruntled.

Perhaps most impressive is the work of studentvote.ca, encouraging people to improve voter turn-out and "Occupy the Ballot Box". There are very few certain commonalities between the different occupation movements, but perhaps the most obvious is the lost faith in established democratic processes and the creation of new ways for their voices to be heard. Telling them to return to Parliamentary voting, even under the trendy guise of "occupying the ballot box", is to miss the point entirely.

Furthermore, the more ubiquitously the word 'occupy' is used, the more it becomes the default verb for any kind of political engagement, the more meaningless it is. Put simply: to #occupyeverywhere is to occupy nowhere.

So, what is occupation? Traditionally the word occupation has been used to denote; the act of inhabiting and controlling a space; university buildings, workplaces, government buildings, shops or anything else (rather than just dwelling in it). Sometimes this is to cause as much disruption as possible in order to create a bargaining chip when making demands. Sometimes it is simply because people feel they have put a space to better use than those who currently own and run it. When protest is inspired, as it is now, by the effects of austerity and when those involved do not have the luxury of their own space, taking control of new areas from which to organise is essential. Whether undertaken to disrupt or to re-order, occupation is a truly radical act. Among the many ironic images to have come out of Greece in recent months, the six story banner dropped from the roof of the Finance Ministry in Syntagma Square which proclaims to the world that it is OCCUPIED perhaps best shows the escalating power of the protesters. Personally, when I hear the word 'occupation', I think instantly of the 2010/11 actions of student protesters in the UK, but walking around the camp, veterans of the anti-war movement have been quick to remind me that 'occupation' is what the British and American military did in Iraq (or the Nazis did in France).

So what is occupation? Though dogmatically peaceful and avoiding causing any damage, The occupation is a defiant and antagonistic action and we, started to properly acknowledge that when we decided to stay after St. Paul's asked us to leave. There had been a mood around the camp while we nominally had the Church's blessing to be there that we were guests, making a protest without causing any trouble. Now we more fully recognise that the existence of an occupation is a point of conflict between the property owners and the occupiers, and that we are in a rebellious position. During the first days, I heard someone advise us not to risk our camp's future by responding to the provocations of the 1%; but the camp is a response, and by being here we take the first steps towards fighting back. We are radicals, though some are still struggling with the process of realising that. The more we reject the interferences of outside influencer, the more we resist the inference of authorities, the more we control the space as our own, the more we are an occupation.

### From Occupy Wall Street to St. Paul's Occupation

"I've had enough" says Tim Saunders. "Enough of this grotesque greed and fraud on a massive scale. Enough of spiralling education costs and watching my mother scraping by on a meagre pension. Enough of the claim that the banks are too big to fail." Forty-five year-old, renowned accountant Saunders joined to the occupation outside St Paul's Cathedral in his lunch-break and his discussion with other protesters drew a small crowd. As a middle-class father of two of his eloquent anger struck a chord and people cheered him enthusiastically as he finally headed back to the office. "I only came down for a sandwich" he shrugged. "But I'll be back tomorrow." Saunders was back the next day, and the next, and the next. He may not fit the template of the typical protester but that is because the occupation does not fit the template of a typical protest. Instead it is part of a wider global movement which is articulating the anger and frustrations of the so-called '99 per cent' who do not belong to the world's wealthy elite.

Having recently returned from a trip with Occupy Wall Street, I can report that in a short amount of time the London occupation compares favourably to its sister occupation in New York. Both have successfully occupied a central site which provides a crucial practical and symbolic focal point for the movement. Both are using outreach to spread their message and are expanding to more sites across the city. Both have established working groups to support specific initiatives ranging from food, medical, and legal committees to media and technical support. The Occupy Wall Street's working group on art. Banking includes bankers, a professor of financial law, veterans of the anti-war movement, and we, the students. We resist the inference of authorities, the more we control the space as our own, the more we are an occupation.

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Mike Czech

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THE OCCUPATION IS OUR REFUSAL TO FORGET

or lives are based on forgetting. We forget the misery of low-wage work in the UK when we casually spend more than the cashier’s hourly wages on a sandwich and a coffee than get angry because they did not smile. When we applaud the athletes preparing for the Paralympics, we forget the disabled people driven to suicide as their benefits are wrongly stopped by a cruelly stupid system created and administered by the company sponsoring the Games. We marvel at our shiny new gadgets and the glittering icons distract us from the plight of those who labour in inhuman conditions to make these devices. All is not for the best in the best of all possible worlds. Our riches are built on the misery of others and too many of our good causes are used to whitewash the evil done by those with wealth and power. We are encouraged not to think of these and countless other injustices every day. It makes life easier to do so. The occupation is our refusal to forget. Our libraries are closing, our universities are stripped of funding, our health service is being offered up for sale. Wages are frozen while the cost of everything goes through the roof. The poorest are attacked and threatened with homelessness. And over and over again a small clique of obscenely rich men and women sneer and tell us that we’re all in this together as they use a crisis caused by those that fund them as an opportunity to further increase their wealth.

This is why people occupy. The claims made about the occupiers are many. The occupation has many voices, many faces. This makes it almost impossible to understand. Outside commentators pick the voices that fit their prejudices and pretend that those views alone are what it is really about. Some here want celebrity endorsements, others are sick of rich people cashing in on their fame. When some will be happy to walk away when asked to go, others insist that they will have to be dragged kicking and screaming away when the time comes. Some are upset to be called anti-capitalists while others are outraged by calls to remove the “Capitalism is Crisis” banner. A few at St Paul’s are in open communication with the police and have stated they would be willing to hand over others “to save the occupation”. Others view such behaviour with total disgust. There is something here for everyone to hate, there is something here for everyone to love. It is maddening, frustrating, slow and messy. And it is beautiful.

The occupation is many things, one thing it can never be is harmonious. If the majority the movement terms “the 99%” all agreed, then those called “the 1%” would never be able to maintain their hold. Can such manifestly different points of view ever be reconciled into a set of demands on which all can agree?

The occupation is a chance to experience politics as lived experience, as a self-determining body of people living together and engaged in discussing both the things that affect our immediate experience, like food, shelter, health and sanitation, but also to discuss the possibilities of applying the lessons learned here to the larger world. It is not an economic blockade. It is not direct action. It is not an attempt to create a position of counterpower from which to negotiate with power. This is what people mean when they say the occupation is its own demand. Even if there is no consensus here as to what should replace the global system of systemic inequality, whose latest crisis has provoked this and countless other protests worldwide, the occupation is still a collective “no” to those in power.

It is a refusal to forget that the solutions proposed by politicians are more of the same things that caused the crisis in the first place. The occupation is the beginning of a conversation the whole world needs. Whatever happens, we cannot not until we have built a world based on mutual respect for all in which no one is forgotten.

“There is something here for everyone to hate, there is something here for everyone to love. It is maddening, frustrating, slow and messy. And it is beautiful.”
**ST. PAUL PRINCIPLES**

LONDON 2012

The shard teems large
New flats grow from the Marshes,
Swathesport treats in new consumer
pick-a-mix
Overall, Lord Sab Coe of the London Olympics,
New laws in place, a dying welfare state,
Did the Mayans predict this?

Tories back in power again
Disorders in the Tower again,
Bang Bang, Duggen’s dead,
Police bullets in his head,
They want to blame the blacks again,
Take us back to that again,
Trap us like lab-rats again,
Experiment in how to take the piss –
Fuck the poor and help the rich,
Evit the gypsies, tax the beggars,
Relieve Chelsea of congestion charges,
I want to slap these elegant Machiavellians,
All FR men and the shit they’re selling them.

Moral messages with twisted policy,
Liberty costs money, forget equality.
No fraternity, it’s been like this for fucking eternity.

But it’s a condition of my assistance
To deny them my compliance,
I am the science of resistance,
The crash of thunder and dread,
I am the blood red under your bed,
I am the scorpion in your sheaths,
The venom built beneath your moisturised sheen
The skin of truth under your perfumed cleavages,

The piles of squatter and the sum of our grievances,
I read about these pharaohs in their summer palaces,
Erecting oriental chalets of Marakesh fantasies,
The locals hit the road, work as guards at their homes,
Keep their own apart from this tasteless opulence
Makes me want to burn the whole crew in their piggy monuments.

Please understand, I never had a problem with authority,
But authority seems to have a problem with me,
Can’t take the rejection
It checks on me and demands my attention,
Cos I know of a world where we don’t need laws,
Work together, not for profit, build for the cause.
It doesn’t take a genius to know why they feel threatened
Termites in their oak panel, ivy in their walls,
The hum of the mosquito, the tapworm in their bellows.
I know we’ve all heard what the meal will,
And mission seems impossible,
But numbers ARE unstoppable,
Tyrants ARE toppable,
Combined and collective Immune to their rhetoric,
We’ve all seen the film and learnt from past lessons,
Invisibility lessoned,
See where their weapons get them.

These four principles were devised by American activists resisting the 2008 Republican National Convention.

1. Our solidarity will be based on respect for a diversity of tactics and the plans of other groups.
2. The actions and tactics used will be organized to maintain a separation of time or space.
3. Any debates or criticisms will stay internal to the movement, avoiding any public or media denunciations of fellow activists and events.

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**POEMS**

**A FRIEND IN DEED**

NATALIA SANDHEZ-BELL

STEVEN MACLEAN

As the Cathedral caretaker explained the impact the occupation was having to the gathered crowd, he was on the verge of tears. We were, he said, disrupting a number of plans and activities that normally took place, including the children’s fair and a wedding complete with horse and carriage.

Such inconveniences, the flock of protesters tentatively argued, could not be put on a par with the suffering of the 99% they were here to represent. Just then, the caretaker saw a familiar face within the expanding crowd, “I know you James, we’ve been feeding you for years.” He came back the reply in a distinctly Liverpudlian accent, “and you’ve never once asked me how I am. Then all these beautiful people turned up and now I’m not alone anymore.”

The local among occupying activists was James McMahon, 48. Homeless for over twelve years, he’s spent the past ten living around St Paul’s, and is now a familiar face at the camp. “I split up with my wife in Liverpool in 2005, I came to London as a coach. After sleeping rough in different locations, I came to stay at St Paul’s. When we first arrived, James was the first one to say he was not sure what we were all doing here, ‘I thought you were something to do with the church. I didn’t know what was a demonstration at first,”

“I don’t read newspapers, and I don’t listen to radio. I’ve just been living a free spirit life. I spoke to a chap later on who explained about the cuts, and tax dodging and the gambling of the banks. Anything that needs to be done, they shout this thing called ‘mic check’ and then everyone gets involved,”

“They all run round, get together, and it’s done within minutes. It doesn’t matter what it may be, it’s done in a loving, humble way, together as a community.”

While St Paul’s consider the ‘community’ that has sprung up in its shadow an inconvenience, for James it has been a lease of life, “For me to refuse to be part of it I’d be a fool. They’re so loving and understanding. I’ve accepted most of them as friends.”

But it isn’t just new friends James has found, “Working in the kitchen shows me what I’m capable of. It’s been a great path for me to play my part and be involved.”

The experience hasn’t been entirely positive though, “I think over the course of this week I’ve been a bit stressed out.”

Hundreds of relatively privileged strangers suddenly pitching up on your patch would certainly agitate most of us, but that isn’t what is making James tense. Instead, it’s some of the general public “passing comments as they walk by.”

If they do come to a general assembly they’d really understand, “James feels the church, despite its kindness, also lacks some understanding at times, ‘The Church has been kind, but not so kind.”

“They know of me sleeping here, but I think they are annoyed to see me in a sense. They come to move me at six thirty in the morning to clean the stairs and other people’s mess. They could clean around me,”

“It’s not the community church, it’s a cathedral, a tourist attraction. I don’t think they want people to see me. London is a wonderful city; I don’t think they actually want to accept that there’s homelessness here. People have offered me money in kindness, but I would rather them sit down and talk with me, or any of the rough sleepers.”

The homeless are at the foot of the 99% either ignored or abused by society’s socio-economic elite. Though new to this movement, the words ‘involved’ and ‘understanding’ pepper James’ rhetoric; “I wish people would understand who I was and what I am. I’ve been writing a book for four and a half years. If people don’t know, how can they really help?”

James knows exactly how he’d like occupants to help, “I’d like you all to stay there until Christmas. If you stay here until Christmas it means I have a beautiful big family to have a turkey with.

“We could crack a few crackies, maybe have a few glasses of wine up there and grab a back for dinner.”

“See where their weapons get them.”

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**KARIZMAH - OPEN MINDS**

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The venom built beneath your moisturised sheen
The skin of truth under your perfumed cleavages,
Anarchism, FOR & AGAINST
The Great Debate: Last week we weighed up the ‘for’ and ‘against’ arguments for being portrayed as anti-capitalist. This week, anarchism is our topic. As political philosophies go, anarchism is one of the most misunderstood, but could it contain the answers to the world’s problems?

FOR / DONNCHA DE LONG

Do you like being told what to do with your life? Do you appreciate it when politicians, bosses and experts seem to think that they know more about what you should do than you do yourself? If you do, then stop reading now.

If, on the other hand, you think you are the best person to decide about you and that the same is probably true of most people, you’re on your way to becoming an anarchist. Anarchism is based on the idea that true freedom is only possible where people are in control of their own lives. Anarchists argue that our lives are controlled by coercive authorities and imposed hierarchies that control our lives both politically and economically. That is why most anarchists oppose both the existence of the state and of capitalism. As Bakunin argued, ‘Liberty without socialism is privilege, injustice; and… [socialism without liberty] is slavery and brutality.’

Anarchism, as its developed as a political movement over the last 150 years or so has been a key element of the fight for women’s rights, for gay rights, against racism and other forms of oppression. It has helped build the radical trade union movements that gained workers the basic rights they now enjoy. Inspirational figures like Albert and Lucy Parsons, Howard Zinn and Noam Chomsky are just some of the names in the anarchist tradition. Unlike other political viewpoints, anarchism is a conversation over the ages, not tied to specific doctrines or one thinker.

Anarchism has a bad reputation, misrepresented as a violent terrorist creed by bomb-throwing anarchists in the past and black-clad vandals in the present. These aspects do exist, but have never represented the majority of anarchists – who can be found everywhere. Some anarchists are teachers, doctors, trade unionists – the people who spend their time working to make life better for everyone inspired by an idea of a future free from oppression and inequality, a world based on free distribution of the things we need and free association of autonomous individuals.

AGAINST / BRIAN O’FAOLAIN

The anarchists can’t see us now. As the global economy went into meltdown in 2008 a British anarchist group took to the streets and called for the system to collapse. Anarchist practice can be both logical and helpful.

For me this event captured all the worst aspects of a movement that increasingly has nothing to say about important events beyond gibber sleight.

The anarchist movement is amorphous, made up of vast and varied groups that have never coalesced into one banner, united by their ideology of opposition to the state. There are many positive elements, I won’t deal with them here.

This year’s London anarchist bookfair posed the question ‘Is Capitalism destroying itself? And can we replace it?’ The unfortunate answer is no.

As capitalism taxes our society faces a choice of socialism or barbarism, yet many anarchists still place their faith in spontaneous insurrections, naively hoping capitalism might topple itself so they can pick up the pieces.

They praised the recent riots as a cop-out of a society fighting back, where a more appropriate analysis would see them as neo-liberal riots against a backdrop of a defeated working class.

Elsewhere anarchists, lacking a real analysis of the current situation, have blamed the financial crisis on the ‘barkers’, missing a trick by allowing the inherent failures of capitalism off the hook.

There are huge parallels to be drawn between the anarchists and the Occupy movement and serious questions to be had about the two.

The Occupy movement has uncannily taken some of the worst aspects of anarchism and put them on board, adopting the consensus decision making process and fetishising form over content.

The usual failings of the consensus model are clear: meetings drag on, informal leaderships emerge and frustrated anarchists are left with the worst parts of the late 60’s counter-cultural libertarian movement.

The anarchist focus on direct action has helped to keep the movement interesting but all too often leaves them stuck in a cycle of activity for the sake of it.

If the goal of the Occupy movement is to take advantage of a perceived historic rupture and begin the work of changing society their first job should be to pack up the tents and go back to your communities.

Learn the historical lessons of anarchism, step-petitioning the city and the hard work of building a real political movement.

A debate is scheduled at Tencity University after the GA on Wednesday, Nov 2nd for us to carry on this debate in person. See you there!

PIRATES
ST. PAULS, AND THE ROOTS OF ANTI-CAPITALIST PROTEST
KESTER BREKIN

In May 1724, in a small bookshop just a stone’s throw from St Paul’s, Captain Charles Johnson’s A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the most notorious Pyrates went on sale, and became an instant hit. Though pirates’ bodies were hung in gibbets along the banks of the Thames to frighten those who thought of mutiny, it now became an instant hit. Though pirates’ bodies were hung in gibbets along the banks of the Thames to frighten those who thought of mutiny, it now became an instant hit. Though pirates’ bodies were hung in gibbets along the banks of the Thames to frighten those who thought of mutiny, it now became an instant hit. Though pirates’ bodies were hung in gibbets along the banks of the Thames to frighten those who thought of mutiny, it now became an instant hit. Though pirates’ bodies were hung in gibbets along the banks of the Thames to frighten those who thought of mutiny, it now became an instant hit. Though pirates’ bodies were hung in gibbets along the banks of the Thames to frighten those who thought of mutiny, it now became an instant hit. Though pirates’ bodies were hung in gibbets along the banks of the Thames to frighten those who thought of mutiny, it now became an instant hit. Though pirates’ bodies were hung in gibbets along the banks of the Thames to frighten those who thought of mutiny, it now became an instant hit. Though pirates’ bodies were hung in gibbets along the banks of the Thames to frighten those who thought of mutiny, it now became an instant hit. Though pirates’ bodies were hung in gibbets along the banks of the Thames to frighten those who thought of mutiny, it now became an instant hit. Though pirates’ bodies were hung in gibbets along the banks of the Thames to frighten those who thought of mutiny, it now became an instant hit. Though pirates’ bodies were hung in gibbets along the banks of the Thames to frighten those who thought of mutiny, it now became an instant hit.

One such spectacle was the hanging of the notorious pirate William Fly on 12th July 1726. Fly was given an opportunity to speak. Having complained at the poor workmanship of the executioner and refused his own noose, he went to his death unrepentant, using his moment to speak to warn that all Masters of Vessels should pay sailors their wages when due, and treat them better. We think of pirates as thieves, yet the truth is far more complex.

Sailors aboard Royal Naval ships and merchant vessels were some of the worse paid, most abused. In a machine from which there was no escape, bar desertion, incapacitation, or death as one writer of the day put it. These merchant ships were the engines of the emerging global capitalism, yet the sailors themselves were utterly excluded from the wealth they worked to generate. The decision to ‘turn pirate’ was thus a decision to wrestle back some autonomy, and when they did, life on a ship changed dramatically. Officers were democratically elected. Food was shared equally amongst the crew. When booty was collected the Captain only took two shares where the lowest took one – income differentials that would make modern CEOs faint. Loss of a limb would be met with a payment of around £20,000 in today’s money – an amazing form of early healthcare. So, far from being simple thieves, pirates were perhaps the original anti-capitalist protesters. The reason they hunted down and suffered such savage public executions was because the powers of the day were Petrified of the consequences of the pirates’ ethos. Historian Marcus Rediker writes:

‘Pirates abolished the wage relation central to the process of capitalist accumulation. So rather than work for wages using the tools and machines (the ship) owned by a capitalist merchant, pirate commanded the ship as their own property and shared equally in the risk of their common adventure.’ It is this ‘equal sharing’ that the banks and the state fear. Yes, they want nationalise debt, but profits must remain private and enclosed. Interestingly, this is how views of the Anglican Church too – the 38th Article of which reads

‘The Riches and Goods of Christians are not common… as certain. Anabaptists do falsely boast.’ Appropriately, pirates emerge whenever ‘the commons’ is under threat of enclosures into private property. They rose up to battle the crown-censored publishing monopolies of the 17th century. They rose up as Levellers to defend the poor as they were turfed off common land and forced into vagrancy. They rose up in the 1960’s as pirate DJs when the BBC refused to play Rock and Roll. Look around. Piracy is everywhere. The Jolly Roger is to be found on baby bottles, t-shirts, children’s clothes, skate boards. Why? Why do we send our children to pirate parties, but not ‘aggravated robbery’ ones?

The reason, I believe, is this: deep down, we know that pirates say something to us about freedom from oppression, about standing up to systemic violence, and about taking back free access to that which has been enclosed and privatised by the wealthy. We are not much brutalised, nor often beaten or left unpaid, but our lives are no less reduced, narrowed and controlled by powerful forces far beyond our control. So now, more than ever, we need voters to rise up against the princes, the captains and merchants, raise the Jolly Roger, and resist to life some democracy, some fairness… and not a little merriment. That’s exactly what Occupation is about, so, again, occupiers, stay strong and mutiny! Kester is a teacher and writer from South East London.
DEMOCRACY WITHIN TENT

OCCUPY LONDON

GEORGE PEARSON ON TWITTER