

# OMNI OCCUPY WALL STREET MOVEMENT NEWSLETTER #5, December 29, 2011, Compiled by Dick Bennett for a Culture of Peace

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## RESISTANCE FOR CHANGE

### Elizabeth Warren, “Protecting and Promoting Equality”

Elizabeth Warren, Blue Mass Group, Dec. 16, RSN

Warren writes: "This is our moment in history. From marriage equality to investing in public education, from sensible financial regulations to environmental protections, we must decide what kind of people we are and what kind of nation we are going to build. All across the Commonwealth and the country, people want to create a better future for their children and their grandchildren. They want an America in which every kid has the opportunity to succeed."

READ MORE <http://readersupportednews.org/opinion2/275-42/8932-focus-protecting-and-promoting-equality>

### “The Four Occupations of Planet Earth How the Occupied Became the Occupiers”

By Tom Engelhardt, TomDispatch.com Dec. 18, 2011

On the streets of Moscow in the tens of thousands, the protesters chanted: “We exist!” Taking into account the comments of statesmen, scientists, politicians, military officials, bankers, artists, all the important and attended to figures on this planet, nothing caught the year more strikingly than those two words shouted by massed Russian demonstrators.

“We exist!” Think of it as a simple statement of fact, an implicit demand to be taken seriously (or else), and undoubtedly an expression of wonder, verging on a question: “We exist?”

And who could blame them for shouting it? Or for the wonder? How miraculous it was. Yet another country long immersed in a kind of popular silence suddenly finds voice, and the demonstrators promptly declare themselves not about to leave the stage when the day -- and the demonstration -- ends. Who guessed beforehand that perhaps 50,000 Muscovites would turn out to protest a rigged electoral process in a suddenly restive country, along with crowds in St. Petersburg, Tomsk, and elsewhere from the south to Siberia?

In Tahrir Square in Cairo, they swore: “This time we’re here to stay!” Everywhere this year, it seemed that they -- “we” -- were here to stay. In New York City, when forced out of Zuccotti Park by the police, protesters returned carrying signs that said, “You cannot evict an idea whose time has come.” And so it seems, globally speaking. Tunis, Cairo, Madrid, Madison, New York, Santiago, Homs. So many cities, towns, places. London, Sana’a, Athens, Oakland, Berlin, Rabat, Boston, Vancouver... it could take your breath away. And as for the places that aren’t yet bubbling -- Japan, China, and elsewhere -- watch out in 2012 because, let’s face it, “we exist.”

Everywhere, the “we” couldn’t be broader, often remarkably, even strategically, ill defined: 99% of humanity containing so many potentially conflicting strains of thought and being: liberals and fundamentalists, left-wing radicals and right-wing nationalists, the middle class and the dismally poor, pensioners and high-school students. But the “we” couldn’t be more real. (99%:

[http://www.tomdispatch.com/post/175480/tomgram%3A\\_barbara\\_ehrenreich\\_and\\_john\\_ehrenreich%2C\\_the\\_fall\\_of\\_the\\_%22liberal\\_elite%22/](http://www.tomdispatch.com/post/175480/tomgram%3A_barbara_ehrenreich_and_john_ehrenreich%2C_the_fall_of_the_%22liberal_elite%22/) )

Click here to read more of this dispatch. [http://www.tomdispatch.com/post/175481/tomgram%3A\\_engelhardt%2C\\_restless\\_planet/#more](http://www.tomdispatch.com/post/175481/tomgram%3A_engelhardt%2C_restless_planet/#more)

*The Catholic Worker* (Dec. 2011) contains 3 essays supportive of Occupy, and a related essay in support of Tim DeChristopher, who has been imprisoned for civil disobedience in defence of the environment.

### *MOTHER JONES SUPPORTS WALL STREET OCCUPIERS*

The Jan.-Feb. 2012 no. of *Mother Jones magazine* has a half dozen articles gathered under the title "Occupied Washington" (referring to the takeover of our democracy by GOP right-wingers). The best I have seen in short space on the sources of right-wing money.

### *Z MAGAZINE SUPPORTS OCCUPIERS*

Z has 3 articles in its Jan. 2012 number, and many other articles closely relate.

### *EXTRA! MAGAZINE SUPPORTS OCCUPIERS*

The magazine that scrutinizes corporate media has two articles about corporate media and police mistreatment of Occupiers.

### BOOK

David McNally. *Global Slump: The Economics and Politics of Crisis and Resistance*. PM, 2011. Rev. *Z Magazine* (Jan. 2012): "McNally writes on behalf of those who are the least at fault for the crash and are in the crosshairs of a 'decade of pain.'"

### Occupy Atlanta: Life After Eviction

Jin Zhao, Op-Ed: Post-eviction, Dec. 22, 2011, NationofChange. Occupy Atlanta increasingly organizes its actions to engage local communities and other progressive groups. For instance, a group of Occupiers started a bike-sharing cooperative at the Peachtree-Pine Homeless Shelter that lets people use bikes in exchange for service to the Occupation or the homeless shelter. READ | DISCUSS | SHARE <http://www.nationofchange.org/occupy-atlanta-life-after-eviction-1324570852>

### Occupy Movement Steps Up Activism in Iowa

Amy Goodman, Video Report, NationofChange, Dec. 22, 2011: "The Occupy movement is making its presence felt in Iowa ahead of the Iowa caucus, the nation's first nominating contest for the 2012 presidential elections. Demonstrators have targeted the Iowa Democratic Party headquarters and the 'Obama for America' office in recent days, protesting measures being considered in Washington dealing with defense spending, a planned oil pipeline and jobless benefits. Next they plan to focus on Republicans who will be crisscrossing the state in the next two weeks seeking voters' support." READ | DISCUSS | SHARE <http://www.nationofchange.org/occupy-atlanta-life-after-eviction-1324570852>

### "Journalistic "Objectivity" Sours Wall Street Reporting"

*Michael Tracey, Michael C. Tracey, RSN, Sept. 25, 2011*

Michael Tracey writes: "Stelter said in response: 'I used the word 'battle' in an attempt not to judge either side.' Let's think about this. 'In an attempt not to judge either side,' Stelter characterized both sides as 'battlers.' How is that not a judgment in and of itself? There is clear evidence that police attacked protesters, but no evidence that protesters attacked police, yet Stelter casts both in exactly the same light because he presumably feels that upholding a sacred standard of impartiality is his prime journalistic duty. Even with video evidence available, Stelter shies away from accurately conveying what transpired, because

it's of paramount importance to remain 'impartial,' no matter what, always."

[READ MORE http://readersupportednews.org/opinion2/276-74/7589-journalistic-objectivity-sours-wall-street-reporting](http://readersupportednews.org/opinion2/276-74/7589-journalistic-objectivity-sours-wall-street-reporting)

## Bank of America to Pay Record Settlement Over Countrywide Abuses

John Dunbar, News Report, NationofChange, Dec. 22, 2011. : Bank of America will pay \$335 million to settle allegations of discrimination at Countrywide Financial Corp., the troubled lender it bought in 2008. Countrywide was the nation's largest subprime lender and came to symbolize the real estate collapse that led to the nation's economic meltdown. The Justice Department said Wednesday that the agreement is the largest fair lending settlement in the department's history. [READ | DISCUSS | SHARE http://www.nationofchange.org/bank-america-pay-record-settlement-over-countrywide-abuses-1324569648](http://www.nationofchange.org/bank-america-pay-record-settlement-over-countrywide-abuses-1324569648)

## CHANGING THE ECONOMIC SYSTEM

Gar Alperovitz. *America Beyond Capitalism: Reclaiming Our Wealth, Our Liberty, & Our Democracy*. New 2011 ed. with Foreword by James G. Speth. Calls for an economy rooted in communities and committed to the democratization of wealth. A practice roadmap for changing the system.

### "Mass Arrests Of Occupiers At Duarte Square"

Josh Harkinson, Video Report, Dec. 18, 2011, NationofChange: "For weeks, Occupy Wall Street has been talking about occupying a vacant lot next to Duarte Square in SoHo. On Saturday, it walked the talk. At about 3:30 p.m, several hundred marchers left the square along with two large wooden ladders concealed beneath banners. They circled the block and converged at the lot's northwest corner, where they hoisted one of the ladders up to a tall chain-link fence. The first person over was retired Bishop George Packard, who writes at Occupied Bishop." [READ | DISCUSS | SHARE http://www.nationofchange.org/mass-arrests-occupiers-duarte-square-1324226582](http://www.nationofchange.org/mass-arrests-occupiers-duarte-square-1324226582)

## OCCUPY OUR HOMES

A proposal to the General Assembly of Occupy Wall Street from Michael Moore

**Occupy Our Homes**. Sorry, banks, a roof over one's head is a human right, and you will no longer occupy our homes through **foreclosure and eviction** because well, you see, they are our homes, not yours. You may hold the mortgage; you don't hold the right to throw us or our neighbors out into the cold. With almost one in three home mortgages currently in **foreclosure**, nearing foreclosure or "underwater," the Occupy Movement must form local "Occupy Strike Forces" to create human shields when the banks come to throw people out of their homes. If the foreclosure has already happened, then we must help families move back into their foreclosed homes -- literally (see this clip from my last film to watch how a home re-occupation is accomplished). Beginning today, Take Back the Land, plus many other citizens' organizations nationwide, are kicking off **Occupy Our Homes**. Numerous actions

throughout the day today have already resulted in many families physically taking back their homes. This will continue every day until the banks are forced to stop their fraudulent practices, until homeowners are allowed to change their mortgage so that it reflects the true value of their homes, and until those who can no longer afford a mortgage are allowed to stay in their homes and pay rent. I beseech the news media to cover these actions -- they are happening everywhere. Evictions, though rarely covered (you need a Kardashian in your home as you're being evicted to qualify for news coverage) are not a new story (see this scene I filmed in 1988). Also, please remember the words of Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur of Toledo (in 'Capitalism: A Love Story'): "Do not leave your homes if the bank forecloses on you! Let them take you to court and then YOU ask the judge to make them produce a copy of your mortgage. They can't. It was chopped up a hundred different ways, bundled with a hundred other mortgages, and sold off to the Chinese. If they can't produce the mortgage, they can't evict you." From: "Michael Moore" <[maillist@michaelmoore.com](mailto:maillist@michaelmoore.com)>

## 2011 OCCUPY MOVEMENT IN US HISTORY: EMMA GOLDMAN

Vivian Gornick. *Emma Goldman: Revolution as a Way of Life*. Yale UP, 2011. See Gornick's essay "Emma Occupies Wall St.," *The Nation* Dec. 26, 2011. "If ever there was a life that embodied the spirit that is driving the Occupy Wall Street Movement it is that of Emma Goldman." Also see: "Why Greater Equality Strengthens Society" by Sam Pizzigati, *The Nation* (Dec. 26, 2011).

## US CAPITALISM

### INEQUALITY

#### Even the Ancient Roman Empire Wasn't as Unequal as America

Gus Lubin, Business Inside, Dec. 17, 2011, RSNr

Lubin reports: "Some 1,500 years after the fall of the Roman Empire, the supposedly advanced and progressive United States of America is plagued by even worse income inequality. Tim De Chant at Per Square Mile reached this conclusion based on a study by historians Walter Schiedel and Steven Friesen. Rome's top 1% controlled 16 percent of the wealth, compared to modern America where the top 1% controls 40 percent of the wealth."

READ MORE

<http://readersupportednews.org/news-section2/320-80/8956-even-the-ancient-roman-empire-wasnt-as-unequal-as-america>

#### 6 Members of Walton Family Have More Money Than 30% of Americans

<http://www.alternet.org/story/153385>

There's been a constant stream of headlines about the widening gap between rich and poor for months now, but this latest one is pretty remarkable.

#### The 10 Greediest Americans of 2011

Sam Pizzigati, NationofChange, Dec. 17, 2011 You don't have to make millions to rate as an all-star greedster. You do have to be ruthless, self-absorbed, and insensitive to others. Here's my list of the 10 greediest Americans of 2011. Starting with #10: Michael T. Duke, Wal-Mart CEO Duke takes home his millions — \$18.7 million in the company's latest fiscal year — by squeezing workers. READ |

DISCUSS | SHARE <http://www.nationofchange.org/10-greediest-americans-2011-1324167294>

END OCCUPY NEWSLETTER #5