ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Occupy Wall Street on the Public Screens of Social Media: The Many Framings of the Birth of a Protest Movement

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Amid a dizzying array of social media, the ground of activism has fractured into decentered knots creating a cacophony of panmediated worlds. Our analysis of Occupy Wall Street (OWS) offers a preliminary charting of the fragmenting of the old media world into a proliferation of social media worlds. On old media, OWS was stillborn, first neglected, and then frivolously framed. On social media, OWS's emergence was vibrant, its manifestations much discussed, celebrated, and attacked. Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube create new contexts for activism that do not exist in old media. Plus, social media foster an ethic of individual and collective participation, thus creating a norm of perpetual participation. In OWS, that norm creates new expectations of being in the world.

A ragtag coterie of citizens camping amid the concrete canyons of New York City have managed to shake the elite denizens of Wall Street and Washington, DC. *The New York Times* financial columnist Andrew Ross Sorkin relayed this telling anecdote:

> I had gone down to Zuccotti Park to see the activist movement firsthand after getting a call from the chief executive of a major bank last week, before nearly 700 people were arrested over the weekend during a demonstration on the Brooklyn Bridge. "Is this Occupy Wall Street thing a big deal?" the C.E.O. asked me. I didn't have an answer. "We're trying to figure out how much we should be worried about all of this," he continued, clearly concerned. (Sorkin, 2011)

This concern was echoed in political circles. After nearly 3 weeks, President Obama felt compelled to weigh in, "The protesters are giving voice to a more broad-based frustration with how our finance sector works . . . The American people understand that not everybody's been following the rules." Republican frontrunner Mitt Romney was more antagonistic, "I think it's dangerous, this class warfare" (Neal, 2011). Romney's warning was a mild form of the hostility on conservative

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radio, where Rush Limbaugh warned of riots and Glenn Beck saw the protesters as the vanguard of a new Third Reich: ''We are entering the days of Weimar . . . . That is what preceded Nazi Germany, and it became vile. It became exactly what we're doing now'' (''Sex, Drugs and Criminals,'' 2011).

The mainstream media was just as dismissive if less paranoid when they finally deigned to notice the protests. On 1 October *The New York Times* ran stories titled ''Wall Street Occupiers, Protesting Till Whenever'' (Kleinfeld & Buckley, 2011) and ''Hippies and Hipsters Exhale'' (Blow, 2011). Occupy Wall Street (OWS) managed to reach beyond these rarefied circles, to the 99% they claimed to represent, and in the first month spawned protests across America and the world. Occupy encampments arose in Boston, Seattle, Atlanta, LA, Denver, Tucson, New Orleans, Salt Lake City, London, Seoul, Rome, Manila, Berlin, Mumbai, Amsterdam, Berlin, Paris, and Hong Kong. Estimates range from 750 to over 2,500 Occupy sites.[2]

OWS also reached citizens in general. With respect to Internet search traffic, the Google Politics and Elections Blog noted that ''Search interest for [Occupy Wall Street] jumped ahead of the [Tea Party] on September 24, and hasn't looked back. In a historical context, when viewing the snapshot of their nascent birth, we can see the peak of [Occupy Wall Street] has slightly more interest in America than searches for the [Tea Party] did during the groups' peak in 2009'' (Parrillo, 2011).

Most significantly, in a mere few weeks, OWS changed the national conversation despite the initial neglect and dismissive framing by traditional mass media organizations. The Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism noted that in the first full week of October, ''The economy reclaimed its perch at the top of the news agenda as the No. 1 story last week, largely driven by dramatically increasing media attention to the Occupy Wall Street demonstrations. Overall economic coverage accounted for 22% of the newshole from October 3–9, up from 14% the week before (when it was No. 2) . . . The protests largely aimed at Wall Street constituted the largest single thread in that coverage, making up about one-third of the economic storyline. That amounted to roughly 7% of the overall newshole, or nearly four times the amount of protest coverage from the week before'' (Holcomb, 2011).

Compared to the economic conversation in the summer, which was dominated by deficit reduction talk, OWS-inspired economic conversation turned to economic inequality and jobs. *Politico*'s Ben Smith declared that ''Occupy Wall Street is Winning'' (Smith, 2011). Nobel laureate and *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman noted after the first weeks of OWS, ''Inequality is back in the news, thanks largely to Occupy Wall Street'' (Krugman, 2011). *Businessweek* acknowledged, ''The protest against income inequality that has taken over a park near Wall Street and public squares around the world is also occupying the U.S. political debate'' (Deprez & Dodge, 2011). Even Matthew Continetti, opinion editor of the conservative *Weekly Standard*, admitted, ''Over the last few weeks the ground of American politics has shifted to the left . . . . The Congressional Budget Office then released a report highlighting increased income inequality and seeming to prove Occupy Wall Street's

claim that the top 1 percent of Americans might as well live in a different country''
(Continetti, 2011).

How did this happen? How, in a mere month, did a marginalized menagerie of
political protesters manage to shake the banking and political foundations of the
United States and transform the political debate of the nation? A simple answer is
''social media,'' but such simplicity needs nuance. The discussion of social media
is too often simplified into a debate between techno-utopians and techno-cynics
about how activists use the media. While some proclaim a brave new world of
Twitter revolutions, others nostalgically defend the sanctity of embodied protests. In
response to the 2009 Iranian protests, *Atlantic* blogger Andrew Sullivan declared ''The
Revolution Will Be Twittered'' (Sullivan, 2009) and former U.S. National Security
Council official Mark Pfeifle recommended nominating Twitter for the Nobel Peace
Prize (Snol, 2009). In *Foreign Policy* Golnaz Esfandiari astutely if rudely pointed out,
''Simply put: There was no twitter Revolution inside Iran . . . . Through it all, no one
seemed to wonder why people trying to coordinate protests in Iran would be writing
in any language other than Farsi'' (Esfandiari, 2010). Malcolm Gladwell piled on
in ''Small Change: Why the Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted,'' wryly asking, ''Are
people who log on to their Facebook page really the best hope for us all?'' (Gladwell,
2010). Social media advocate Clay Shirky fired back in ''The Political Power of Social
Media'' (Shirky, 2011). Evgeny Morozov (2011) dedicates his blog and book, *The Net
Delusion: The Dark Side of Internet Freedom*, to tempering cyber-utopianism.

This is likely to be one of those perpetual debates impervious to easy answers, like
the question of whether or not video game violence causes violence. The embodied
versus social media debate sets up an ideal dichotomy that does not exist, akin
to the virulent debate on reality versus virtual reality. For us, there is no possible
demarcation between the mediated and the real. Mediated worlds are real and reality
is always mediated (by media, language, culture, ideologies, and perceptual practices).
Similarly, for centuries, all social protests have involved bodies and media. Activists
always use the tools at hand. In Paris, the May 1968 protesters used their bodies
and cobblestones and posters and photographs. The Yippies at the 1968 Chicago
Democratic National Convention used bodies and the porcine presidential candidate
Pigasus and television and Mayor Richard Daley's obtuse pride. All protests are mixed
media. Activists today will not stop using social media out of some romantic ideal of
pure, embodied protest. Activists today, including OWS, will continue to use social
media and their bodies. Like cameras and cobblestones, activists will use Facebook
and Twitter, even if toward unintended ends, ''cause every tool is a weapon—if you
hold it right'' (as Ani DiFranco reminds us). Activism is akin to *arrangiasti*, the art of
making do in civic spaces, improvising with the tools at hand. Those tools are never
perfect, but sometimes they are enough.[3]

Given that available tools will be deployed despite academic debates, there are
more productive questions to ask. For us, the questions will concern what happens
when social media become ubiquitous tools for activism and start transforming con-
texts. When thinking of how a medium contributes to transforming an environment,

a basic criterion is ubiquity. In its introductory stage, a medium is just a tool for specific tasks within an environment created by other media and cultural practices. So, for example, that was the case for mobile phones in the early 1990s and smartphones around 2005. If diffusion accelerates enough, however, the medium reaches saturation and a tipping point and moves from being a tool within an environment to helping create the environments within which we operate. Cell phones have reached that tipping point and now smartphones are reaching it, also (Dediu, 2012; Degusta, 2012). As Castells, Fernandez-Ardevol, Qiu, and Sey (2007) demonstrate, "Wireless communication has diffused faster than any other communication technology in history" (p. 7). With the spread of smartphones, space and time cease to be barriers to living in a mediated world all the time. We need no longer go to a medium or find an Internet connection, for they are in our pocket, a part of us. When people widely adopt and deploy in expected and unexpected ways a new medium such as smartphones, they transform a host of practices and contexts, including activist, business, consumer, interpersonal, journalistic, leisure, organizational, parenting, and pedagogical practices. In a widely noted example, the mobility and computing capabilities of smartphones enable people to always be on call for work, even in the car or on vacation. To be always connected means to be never out of reach. In short, the capabilities of smartphones enable people to translate cultural practices into new forms that create new contexts—the car becomes a workspace. In the United States, OWS is the first large-scale activism saturated with smartphones. When most of the activists are armed with smartphones, how do social media transform the public screens on which activists act? How does today's experience of panmediation through smartphones empower social movements to be a presence in the world? Does the eclipse of traditional mass media centers by proliferating decentered knots of social media enable activists and others to create multiple framings of social movement activism?

In this essay, we will consider these questions through the case of OWS. More specifically, we will look at the coverage of the first 30 days of OWS by the traditional mass media organizations and on social media. By the phrase traditional mass media we mean the dominant media (print and broadcast television) before the Internet and personal computers became popular, which, to date it roughly, occurred between 1996 and 2000. In this essay, we are comparing traditional mass media to social media, which characterize the era of Web 2.0. These concepts go by different terms. Others use the distinction of old media and new media, as in Henry Jenkins's (2006) book *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. In *The Wealth of Networks*, Yochai Benkler (2006) prefers discussing the commercial mass media of the industrial information economy in contrast to the open platform computational media of the networked information economy. Prolific proponent of the network society Manuel Castells (2011) describes mass media being displaced by mass self-communication. Despite the terministic muddiness, the distinctions are significant. Traditional mass media tend to be centralized, one-to-many in form, commercial, professional-produced, and proprietary. Social media tend to be decentralized,

many-to-many, nonmarket, peer-produced, nonproprietary, open-source platforms, commons based, and free or inexpensive in access and distribution.[4] Comparing the textual evidence in traditional mass media and social media contexts moves us beyond merely speculating on the differences in these contexts to exploring how OWS is made manifest in markedly different ways in the traditional mass media and social media. As we will document, in the world of traditional mass media organizations, for weeks OWS faintly registers as a monochrome caricature. In the worlds of social media, OWS is a riotous profusion of hopes and fears, with nearly as many manifestations as there are bloggers, Tweeters, and Facebook users. These different constructions and framings provide multiple renderings of the OWS activists that clash and contest and enable OWS to exert myriad resonances and forces in these worlds. People Twittering and Facebooking transform the geography of world-making. Where once *The New York Times* and *CBS News* could decide the boundaries of the world and the narratives of history, now social media make possible the proliferation of places that can be decentered knots of world-making.

OWS's delayed presence: Invisibility, dismissal, and derision in traditional mass media

As many theorists have noted, a complex media matrix (consisting of technologies embedded in economic, political, and cultural practices) constructs the social worlds in which we live (Angus, 2000; Benkler, 2006; Castells, 2000, 2011; McLuhan, 1964). These worlds are not singular and they are not always or even often complementary. The media matrix itself is always in flux, an ever-changing combination of myriad media, from writing and print and photography to television and radio and cinema to the Internet and laptops and smartphones. This flux we term "panmediation." Media, especially today, are rarely in isolation, but rather in most societies a plurality of media coexist and interact. This point, suggested by McLuhan's (1964) observation that "the 'content' of any medium is always another medium" (p. 23), is usefully extended by Bolter and Grusin's (1999) discussions of remediation. Remediation is "the representation of one medium in another" (p. 45)—for example, websites such as Vimeo and Hulu that air video. Remediation is not a linear process and "older media can also remediate newer ones" (p. 55). Remediation culminates in the concept of panmediation, which suggests that with the emergence of smartphones we live in and access mobile spaces of multiple media immersed in the wi-fi cloud (DeLuca, Sun, & Peeples, 2011, p. 146). With a smartphone in her pocket, an Occupied activist camping in Zucotti Park or Chicago or Oakland can become a panmedia outlet, a decentered knot of video, photographs, and blogging that documents and creates and circulates the Occupied events. At the speed of the Internet, events move from one person's tent to millions of people throughout the Twitterverse and Facebook and YouTube and the world. NYPD Deputy Inspector Anthony Bologna pepper sprays two protesters and becomes an international villain.[5] After a photo of UC Davis Police Lieutenant John Pike pepper spraying student protesters is posted to Reddit, Pike is transformed

into the global meme "Casually Pepper Spray Everything Cop."[6] Panmediation is a crucial process in the new social media worlds of the network society.

Public screens are the portals of these new worlds (DeLuca & Peeples, 2002; DeLuca, Sun, & Peeples, 2011). Originally anchored to traditional mass media such as television, with the advent of smartphones and social media, public screens are now mobile and everywhere, from our televisions to our computers to our pockets in the forms of iPods, iPhones, and Androids. Where once public screens were something we went to, a destination, they are now always with us, a part of us in the form of our smartphones. And they communicate everything, from words to music to images. And although there is a certain commercial bias, through their ubiquity via smartphones public screens enable the transformation and translation of multiple forms of discourse, from the commercial to the political to the athletic to the educational to the environmental to the activist. To live, to be an event, activist groups must have presence on the world's public screens in the media matrix. Although social media offer a multiplicity of places for activism, traditional mass media organizations still have an untoward influence on what is allowed to have presence. As a consequence, this analysis begins with the belabored delivery of OWS onto the public screens of mass media, especially the major newspapers of the United States: *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *USA Today*, and *The Wall Street Journal*.

Although media power dynamics have changed with the emergence of the Internet and social media, traditional mass media organizations remain consequential in determining the presence and the reception of activist groups. Not surprisingly, they have a vested interest in preserving the world as it is, in perpetuating the status quo. As a result, activist groups advocating social change have strained relations with traditional mainstream mass media, as numerous media scholars have noted (Gitlin, 1980; McChesney, 1999). Such organizations use two predominant strategies to marginalize activist groups. The first is ignoring them, dooming them to invisibility and nonexistence. The second is to frame them negatively. Both strategies were widely deployed in the first month of OWS's existence.

Invisibility

OWS started as a fundamental challenge to the status quo corporatocracy that controls the American political system through the form of free speech known as money. Not surprisingly, mass media organizations responded to OWS with malevolent neglect. OWS started 17 September in Zucotti Park, formerly named Liberty Plaza Park. For its first 8 days, OWS was subject to a total major newspaper blackout. This blackout was for a protest of one of the major issues of our time in the heart of the world's financial district in the most important city in the world's only superpower. OWS finally made it onto the pages of *The New York Times* on Sunday, 25 September with "Gunning for Wall Street, With Faulty Aim" (Bellafante, 2011), but it was a modest appearance—a story from the Metropolitan Desk in Section MB. OWS remained a local story restricted to the inside pages of the paper until 1 October, when the

story "Wall Street Occupiers, Protesting Till Whenever" appeared on the privileged front page (Kleinfeld & Buckley, 2011). OWS fared worse in the other four major papers. *The Washington Post* did not cover OWS until 3 October, over 2 weeks after the occupation started (Dobnik, 2011). Not until 15 October does OWS make the front page, and only in a story about President Obama's attempts to harness anger against Wall Street for his reelection campaign (Wallsten, 2011). The *Los Angeles Times* chimed in on 30 September in a front-page story that worried about the future of the movement (Susman, 2011). OWS suffered a belated October 11 arrival in the headlines of *USA Today* (Hampson, 2011). The newspaper of the financial community, *The Wall Street Journal* was committed to ignoring the protests at its doorstep, waiting until 1 October to focus on an erroneous rumor about Radiohead appearing, "Ready to Rock but No Band" (Reddy & El-Ghobashy, 2011, p. A17). That article was one of only three in the first 25 days of OWS—none on the front pages.

What makes the details of this major newspaper blackout more revealing and damning is that from much earlier on the OWS protests were deemed worthy of international news coverage. On 19 September England's *Guardian* ran the story "The Call to Occupy Wall Street Resonates Around the World" (White & Lasn, 2011) and followed that up 2 days later with "Occupy Wall Street: The Protesters Speak" (Harris, 2011). *The Agence France-Presse* covered OWS's first action on 17 September: "Protesters Blocked in Bid to 'Occupy' Wall Street" (Andrade, 2011). China Daily reprinted the AFP story on 19 September. Twelve days later China Daily journalist Chen Weihua criticized the dearth of U.S. media coverage: "One of the best-kept secrets in the United States over the past two weeks seems to be the protest on and near Wall Street in New York. More than 1,000 people protested on the first day, September 17, marching and chanting slogans. Yet the demonstration, known as Occupy Wall Street, did not appear on the major networks' evening news or in major newspapers the next day" (Weihua, 2011).

Besides the problem of OWS being invisible in the traditional U.S. mass media organizations, the missing of the origins distorts the story. So, for example, both the *Guardian* and *AFP* stories note that the original idea was to literally occupy Wall Street: "Plans by protesters to turn Lower Manhattan into an 'American Tahrir Square' were thwarted when police on Saturday blocked all the streets near the New York Stock Exchange and Federal Hall in Lower Manhattan" (Andrade, 2011). Only after "the New York police thwarted their efforts temporarily, locking down the symbolic street with barricades and checkpoints" (White & Lasn, 2011) were they forced to retreat to the privately owned Zuccotti Park. So, the beginning of the OWS protests and their forced sequestering in Zuccotti Park were malevolently midwifed by the police violation of the First Amendment "right of the people peaceably to assemble." OWS did not actually occur on Wall Street because it started from day one with police repression.

The invisibility of OWS on the pages of the nation's major newspapers was repeated on the major television news corporations. There was no mention of OWS

on any major television station for the first 10 days of the protests. NBC News had a story on 27 September and CNN followed on 28 September. There was not extensive television news coverage until 2 October, the day after 700 protesters were arrested on the Brooklyn Bridge.

Frivolous framing

After the old media blackout dissolves, the question becomes, ''How were the OWS protests framed?'' This is such a crucial issue because once one's existence is certified by media coverage, the form of one's existence is impacted through media framing. Media frames suggest the contours and meanings of groups such as OWS and of actions such as protests. In a world populated by a ceaseless circulation of public screens on TVs and smartphones and iPads and computers, framing is a form of creation, so that to a large extent an event like OWS is created through media frames. In research on the student protests of the 1960s, sociologist Todd Gitlin (1980) concisely defined frames as ''persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse'' (p. 7). The ensuing decades have engendered extensive research on frames, media, and social protests. A glimpse of extant studies shows the role of framing in the media construction of social reality.

Framing research has looked at how political actors, media professionals, interest groups, and social activists construct and contest media frames as the legitimate representations of various social issues (Callaghan & Schnell, 2001; Jamieson & Cappella, 1998; Terkilden, Schnell, & Ling, 1998). Others examine how public members as social actors organize various aspects of their own life-world—forming political attitudes and value judgments (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Iyengar, 1991; Shah, Domke, & Wackman, 2001) with the aid of interpretive frameworks embedded in media messages. Studies also show how members of the public actively and strategically engage themselves in public affairs by utilizing symbolic resources to understand public issues (Gamson, 1992), coordinate collective actions (Snow & Benford, 1992), and participate in public deliberation (Pan & Kosicki, 2001; Simon & Xenos, 2000). Framing, therefore, offers a rather broad and integrative perspective on how public life is constructed, in and through a sociocognitive process wherein cognition, discourse, and practice play out in a dynamic way (Pan & Kosicki, 2005). Frames offer ''schemata of interpretation'' for individuals to ''locate, perceive, identify, and label'' occurrences and events (Goffman, 1974, p. 21). In general terms, frames work by contextualizing individuals' meaning construction. Upon successful enactment, frames evoke as well as constrain the interpretative activities of audiences (Pan & Kosicki, 1993).

So, how were the OWS protests framed by mass media organizations? In a paradigmatic framing analysis, we will focus on two pivotally placed early stories that introduced *The New York Times* coverage. These two stories do not represent the only framing of OWS by mass media organizations, but they serve as paradigmatic examples that set the early tone and represent the initial negative framing that

represented the protesters as hippies and flakes and the OWS movement as frivolous and aimless. Besides disparaging OWS and the activists, this framing also obscured the obvious issues that OWS was raising: income inequality, Wall Street crimes and greed, and the corruption of politics by corporate money and paid-for politicians. The first story, from the metropolitan desk, which ends the 8-day traditional mass media news blackout, is titled, ''Gunning for Wall Street, With Faulty Aim'' (Bellafante, 2011). As researchers have noted, headlines are the ''most powerful framing device'' (Pan & Kosicki, 1993) and this headline suggests that the movement is misguided or frivolous. This impression is excessively reinforced and elaborated upon in the opening paragraph:

> By late morning on Wednesday, Occupy Wall Street, a noble but fractured and airy movement of rightly frustrated young people, had a default ambassador in a half-naked woman who called herself Zuni Tikka. A blonde with a marked likeness to Joni Mitchell and a seemingly even stronger wish to burrow through the space-time continuum and hunker down in 1968, Ms. Tikka had taken off all but her cotton underwear and was dancing on the north side of Zuccotti Park, facing Liberty Street, just west of Broadway. Tourists stopped to take pictures; cops smiled, and the insidiously favorable tax treatment of private equity and hedge-fund managers was looking as though it would endure.

The intense derision in this negative framing is striking. After 8 days of ignoring the OWS protests at its doorstep, *The New York Times* comes up with an angle and framing worthy of a hormonally addled teenage boy. That the OWS activists are framed negatively is no surprise, because activists tend to get framed as deviant and unruly disturbers of the established order. Zuni Tikka and her topless performance were perfect for such a framing, but *The New York Times* choice of Zuni to frame OWS reveals more about the goals and interests of *The New York Times* than it does about OWS. The rest of the article works to reinforce this negative frame and ends with a dismissive quote from a New York Stock Exchange Trader. In short, the reporter derides both the activists and the activism in a relentlessly negative framing that is so over-the-top that it functions almost as a parody of the news convention to frame activism negatively. *The New York Times*' first front-page coverage echoed the negative framing of their first news story, as evidenced in the headline: ''Wall Street Occupiers, Protesting Till Whenever'' (Kleinfeld & Buckley, 2011). The opening lines reinforce this negative, frivolous framing: ''A man named Hero was here. So was Germ. There was the waitress from the dim sum restaurant in Evanston, Ill. And the liquor store worker. The Google consultant. The circus performer. The Brooklyn nanny. The hodgepodge lower Manhattan encampment known as Occupy Wall Street has no appointed leaders, no expiration date for its rabble-rousing stay and still-evolving goals and demands.'' The names alone label the activists as deviant.

As we will explore in the next section, in contrast to the mass media blackout and negative frames, social media provided different spaces for different voices to create a diversity of framings.

Social media and OWS: Alternative public screens, alternative frames

While there were only a handful of articles in major U.S. newspapers covering OWS during the first month of the protest, a search using Google Blog Search for blogs mentioning "Occupy Wall Street" between 17 September and 17 October, 2011 yields over 10 million results. For the purposes of qualitative analysis of framing, this wealth of source materials is both a blessing and a curse. As only a relatively small sample of posts can be subject to close reading, our method of blog selection follows that of other, similar studies, especially Hargittai, Gallo, and Kane (2008) and Benkler and Shaw (2010). Our selection was based on combining the results of three existing rankings of top U.S. political blogs from Technorati,[7] Wikio News,[8] and eBizMBA.[9] Any right- or left-leaning political blog that appeared on two of the three lists was included, followed by any right or left blog from any one list until there were five sites of each type for 10 total sites. Blogs affiliated with traditional television or print media outlets were excluded. The final selection of blogs is provided in the Appendix.

Next, we employed the search engine optimization (SEO) features of the search engine Blekko.com to focus our attention on each blog's 5–10 most influential OWS-related posts published within the first month of the protest. Each blog was searched with Blekko for mentions of "Occupy Wall Street" and the SEO features of Blekko were used to rank the results based on the number of times each post was linked to from another website. A total of 65 posts were selected for analysis, 37 from right-leaning and 28 from left-leaning political blogs. Each post was read and coded for various aspects of its framing of OWS, including who the protesters are said to be, what their demands or goals are said to be, why they are said to be protesting, who their supporters are, and how they are conducting the protest.

A number of previous studies have confirmed the phenomenon of "cyberbalkanization," in which political blogs tend to link overwhelmingly to other blogs of the same political persuasion (Adamic & Glance, 2005; Hargittai et al., 2008; Hindman, 2007). What's more, right- and left-leaning political blogs tend to use the blog platform in different ways (Benkler & Shaw, 2010), as well as citing different news sources and engaging with different topics of interest (Adamic & Glance, 2005). Our study elucidates the importance of these differences in usage, linking, and citation patterns by exploring the differences that emerge when right and left political blogs focus on the same event, in this case the OWS protest. It is no exaggeration to say that in the two alternative worlds of right and left political bloggers, these decentered knots of world-making, the OWS protest is a wholly different event. If social movement activism exists only insomuch as it is a media event, then the multiple, fragmented framings of OWS that emerge from traditional and social media mean that OWS is itself multiple and fragmented. It is not one event but many, and not just because of its geographical dispersion.

The remainder of this section describes two faces of the OWS protest as depicted by right and left political blogs. With practically every feature of OWS perceived differently in the alternative online worlds of right and left political bloggers, the only

consistent area of agreement between the two worlds is that traditional mass media organizations have exhibited bias in their coverage of OWS. Yet even then, there is fundamental disagreement about the nature of the perceived bias. Right-leaning blogs accused the "liberal media" of bias in favor of OWS; left-leaning blogs accused "corporate media" of bias against OWS.

Right-leaning blogosphere

Perhaps the biggest issue of concern addressed by both right- and left-leaning political blogs is the identity of the protesters. Who are these thousands of people who have taken to the streets? Are they as diverse as they claim? Are they really a spontaneous, grassroots, leaderless movement? As one would expect, right- and left-leaning political blogs have provided very different answers to these questions, with right-leaning political blogs' framing of OWS protesters during the first month of the protest focused on challenging the authenticity and legitimacy of protest participants and organizers.

First, several right-leaning blogs challenged the protesters' authenticity by challenging claims that OWS represents a diverse grassroots movement. For example, conservative commentator Michelle Malkin's blog and Andrew Breitbart's *Big Government* blog both accused the protesters of being "astroturfers"—that is, a fake, manufactured grassroots movement meant to deceive. Malkin described the protesters as an example of "the Left's standard practice of renting non-English-speaking protesters to represent the 'grass-roots'" (Malkin, 2011). Similarly, a post on Breitbart's *Big Government* claimed that "While the President, liberal Democrats, union leaders and some in the media have tried to convince Americans that this is a grassroots movement . . . the truth of the matter is that this is the usual bunch of suspects" (Martin, 2011). First among the "usual suspects" identified by right-leaning blogs as the true force behind OWS were labor unions in general and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) in particular (Confidential, 2011; Gabbay, 2011; Jessup, 2011b; Karl, 2011b; Martin, 2011; MRCTV, 2011; Seidl, 2011; Sexton, 2011).

Labor unions are, of course, a favorite target of the right and therefore stir immediate negative sentiment among the target readers of right-leaning blogs. Although overall favorability ratings of labor unions have dropped considerably among Americans in the last several years ("Favorability Ratings," 2010), it is fair to say that most Americans would not immediately identify unions as illegitimate or dangerous political organizations in the same way that many on the political right do. Thus, right-leaning blogs' respective lists of "usual suspects" included groups more likely to be seen as illegitimate or even dangerous. Chief among these were "revolutionaries" (lithamcongal91, 2011; longtimeconservative, 2011; Martin, 2011) working on behalf of socialist, Marxist, or communist organizations like the Workers of the World or the Communist Party USA, as well as anarchists (Gabbay, 2011; lithamcongal91, 2011; longtimeconservative, 2011; Martin, 2011; Reason.tv, 2011; Sexton, 2011). Also among the "usual suspects" were several antiwar activist groups,

including Code Pink and International A.N.S.W.E.R. (Confidential, 2011; Martin, 2011; MRCTV, 2011). A couple of bloggers even went so far as to claim that anti-Semitism was rampant among OWS protesters (Confidential, 2011; Publius, 2011).

In addition to seeking to delegitimize OWS protesters by linking them to dangerous political groups or ideologies, many right-leaning blogs sought to delegitimize the protesters by framing them as nonproductive, degenerate, or dangerous members of society who should therefore not have a voice. Echoing the Republican Presidential candidate Herman Cain's admonishment that the unemployed should blame themselves, not Wall Street, for their situation (Stewart, 2011), many right-leaning blogs drew from the ideology of rugged individualism and self-reliance not only to question the intellectual capacities of protesters but also to call into question their value as members of society. A number of right-leaning bloggers portrayed OWS protesters as an undifferentiated ''mob'' (Karl, 2011a; Malkin, 2011) who do not think for themselves and are therefore uninformed (Confidential, 2011; Karl, 2011a) and prone to believe conspiracy theories (Jessup, 2011c; Reason.tv, 2011). Most common, however, was to portray protesters as freeloaders, immature, and irresponsible individuals who are a drain on society (Brookhaven, 2011; Confidential, 2011; Karl, 2011b; Martin, 2011; Meyers, 2011; Wertz, 2011). As evidence, several right-leaning bloggers noted the presence of unemployed and even homeless individuals among the protesters (Reason.tv, 2011). For many right-leaning bloggers, the existence among protesters of people who are homeless or unemployed, or students concerned about crushing student loan debt, is not evidence of legitimate concerns or of a broken political-economic system, but rather that the OWS message can be ignored because its messengers, the protesters, have proved themselves to be a drain on society and thus unworthy of having a voice.

Right-leaning bloggers' framing of protesters ranged from identifying them as dangerous on one hand to name-calling and efforts to diminish their significance on the other. While right- and left-leaning blogs both described protesters as ''angry,'' for right-leaning blogs this was usually identified as a cause for concern—that is, protesters' anger was seen as illegitimate and potentially dangerous (Martin, 2011; Meyers, 2011; Portnoy, 2011a; Sexton, 2011). Others claimed that protesters were composed of dangerous ''hooligans'' and criminals, including illegal immigrants (lithamcongal91, 2011; Malkin, 2011, Portnoy, 2011a; savejersey, 2011), but many right-leaning bloggers simply resorted to name calling and the deployment of common stereotypes by dismissing the protesters as ''dirty hippies'' (Confidential, 2011; Portnoy, 2011a; Powers, 2011a; savejersey, 2011; Wertz, 2011). Only one right-leaning blog post among the 37 analyzed admitted that there were educated, legitimate members of society among the protesters. Nonetheless, that very same post reassured readers that OWS is not a cause for concern because ''the crowd [of protesters] was relatively small'' (Reason.tv, 2011).

Right-leaning bloggers also challenged the authenticity and legitimacy of OWS protesters by selectively highlighting some of those individuals and organizations who had publicly professed their support for OWS. They further challenged the

authenticity of OWS as a leaderless, grassroots movement by highlighting statements of support from President Barack Obama or the Democratic Party (Jessup, 2011b; Karl, 2011a, 2011b; Martin, 2011; Portnoy, 2011a, 2011b; tbrickert, 2011; The New Ledger, 2011). One headline on Breitbart's *Big Government* proclaimed that ''Obama Appeases #OccupyWallSt Professional Protestors to Boost Reelection Chances'' (Martin, 2011), while another announced a ''Budding Love Affair Between the Obama Administration, the Media and the #OccupyWallSt Movement'' (The New Ledger, 2011). A post on Glenn Beck's site, *The Blaze*, approvingly quoted Rush Limbaugh's assertion that '''There's no doubt in my mind that the White House is behind this,' he said. 'Obama is setting up riots. He is fanning the flames. Occupy Wall Street is his base,' he said. 'Those are his foot soldiers''' (Gabbay, 2011). A blogger for *HotAir.com* highlighted statements of support by Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez to challenge the legitimacy of OWS with a headline that read, ''Chavez Sides With the Filthy #OccupyWallStreet Freeloaders'' (Wertz, 2011). Those Republican politicians or wealthiest Americans, such as Senator John McCain and Warren Buffet, who broke ranks and expressed understanding of or support for OWS were roundly criticized for doing so (Powers, 2011a, 2011b). After John McCain said that he understood the protesters' frustrations, a contributor to Michelle Malkin's blog wrote that ''When it comes to political menopause, John McCain leads the pack in hot flash mood swings'' (Powers, 2011a).

   With the protesters framed as dirty, degenerate, and dangerous, it is not surprising that right-leaning blogs were generally unsympathetic to protesters' concerns, as well as either dismissive or fearful of their goals. The most common argument in response to protesters' expressed frustration with banks and the influence of the super rich on American politics was to argue that ''Obama is the problem, not Wall Street and not Capitalism'' (longtimeconservative, 2011). Several right-leaning blogs note the president's support of bank and corporate bailouts, as well as the campaign contributions he received from individuals with close ties to Wall Street. This, combined with their perception that the president is secretly fomenting the protest, is used by right-leaning bloggers to argue that OWS frustrations are not only misplaced but also hypocritical (Gabbay, 2011; Karl, 2011b; lithamcongal91, 2011; longtimeconservative, 2011; MRCTV, 2011). For example, several right-leaning bloggers pointed to President Obama and former Vice President Al Gore as prime beneficiaries of the ''crony capitalism'' condemned by OWS protesters. A contributor to *RedState.com* wrote:

> The corporatists in Wall Street—who are sympathetic to crony capitalism, not free market enterprise—are to blame for our nation's financial woes. Interestingly enough, these protesters have no complaints about them or their ties to the Obama Administration. Nevertheless, these Occupy Wall Street hooligans routinely blame capitalism for their problems. (lithamcongal91, 2011)

   Ironically, these bloggers are (inadvertently to be sure) agreeing with a central concern expressed by the OWS protesters—that is, crony capitalism—but see leading

Democratic political figures as the true cause of the problem. If the purity of capitalism has been sullied, for right-leaning bloggers it is their erstwhile political opponents, the socialists-in-capitalist-clothing Democrats, who are surely to blame, not the true believers on Wall Street. Thus, even though right-leaning bloggers condemn the OWS protesters for the hypocrisy of having a leader (i.e., the president) who is himself in bed with Wall Street, some still warn that the true goal of OWS protesters (and presumably the president too) is to overthrow capitalism and replace it with socialism (lithamcongal91, 2011; Martin, 2011; Powers, 2011b). In general, however, most of the right-leaning blog posts that we analyzed repeated the traditional mass media framing, which is that the goals and demands of the OWS protesters remain unclear, which provided further reason for right-leaning bloggers to be dismissive (Confidential, 2011; Harsanyi, 2011; lithamcongal91, 2011; longtimeconservative, 2011; Malkin, 2011; Martin, 2011; Portnoy, 2011a, 2011b; Reason.tv, 2011; Seidl, 2011; Sexton, 2011; tbrickert, 2011).

Right-leaning bloggers also challenged the legitimacy of OWS by framing the protest as a violent riot that is carrying out "general mayhem, destroying private property and battling the police in the streets" (Martin, 2011). In doing so, they drew a sharp distinction between OWS protesters and Tea Party rally participants (Brookhaven, 2011; Burguiere, 2011; Portnoy, 2011a; tbrickert, 2011). A common theme of these comparisons is to portray OWS protesters as lazy, immature, and irresponsible freeloaders looking for a government hand out, while Tea Partiers are hard working, self-reliant, and want the government to stop taking their hard-earned money (Brookhaven, 2011). Breitbart's *Big Government* summed up the sentiment best,

> This is not a movement but a public display of children behaving badly, and this astroturf will never have the legitimacy of a pure grassroots movement like the Tea Party, which is a diverse group of Americans seeking to strengthen individual freedoms for the benefit of all Americans, including those who seem to be confused by the role of government in our lives. (Martin, 2011)

Instead of comparing OWS to the Tea Party, one blogger argued that the better comparison was to the history of socialism and communism, which were "defined by collective farms, redistribution of wealth, poverty, pogroms, and nonexistent human rights. Is this the alternative they seek?" (lithamcongal91, 2011). Not all right-leaning bloggers were as apocalyptic in their vision of OWS's future and impact. A more common theme was to argue that the OWS protest of Wall Street had become a drain on small business and, therefore, "a headache for main street" (Jessup, 2011a; see also Karl, 2011a; Wertz, 2011).

Left-leaning blogosphere

The main point of difference between right- and left-leaning blogs is found in their interpretation of the authenticity and legitimacy of OWS, its participants, and supporters. While right-leaning blogs challenged the authenticity of OWS,

left-leaning blogs maintained that the movement was truly grassroots and populist ("Penn Badgley," 2011; Fung, 2011; metamars, 2011). This difference is most clear in the two groups' interpretation of labor union involvement in and support of OWS. Although right-leaning blogs saw participation by labor unions as evidence of OWS being inauthentic or illegitimate, left-leaning blogs were not shy about noting the participation of unions. This is most likely because of their differing initial perceptions of the value and legitimacy of unions. In fact, for many left-leaning bloggers, increased participation by and support from unions was welcomed as a means of increasing the visibility and legitimacy of OWS. For example, on 4 October, 2011, a contributor to *DailyKos* reported that more unions were adding their support to the cause, including the Amalgamated Transit Union, the Communications Workers of America, and the Transit Workers Union (Clawson, 2011a). Other left-leaning blogs noted support from SEIU and the New York Metro Area Postal Union (Sledge, 2011), as well as Michigan state employees (part of the United Auto Workers) traveling to New York City to show their support for OWS (Shakir, 2011). For some left-leaning bloggers, the involvement of unions was actually seen as helping to overcome other possible contradictions on the part of OWS. Several right-leaning blogs claimed that OWS was hypocritical for accepting the support of Amalgamated Bank (Hoft, 2011; Seidl, 2011), but *DailyKos* was clear to point out that the $300,000 in donations collected by OWS during its first month was being "kept in the *union-owned* Amalgamated Bank" (Clawson, 2011b).

Differences in perception and interpretation of OWS participants and supporters do not end with labor unions. Although some right-leaning bloggers claimed that OWS was hiring non-English-speaking protesters, even illegal immigrants, some left-leaning bloggers argued that "Latinos and blacks [are] missing in Occupy Wall Street" (Lopez, 2011). Although right-leaning blogs saw OWS protesters as angry and therefore dangerous, left-leaning blogs tended to see this anger as legitimate and not dangerous. For left-leaning bloggers, the participation in OWS of the unemployed, students burdened by educational debt, and even the homeless, was seen as evidence of the justness of the OWS cause, not as evidence that OWS is made up of immature, irresponsible freeloaders. Where right-leaning blogs focused on support from individuals and organizations that they saw as illegitimate or dangerous, left-leaning blogs noted statements of support from mainstream political leaders like the president and former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (Fung, 2011), acknowledged that OWS was emerging as a new venue for supporters of nontraditional political candidates like Lyndon LaRouche and Ron Paul (Stirland, 2011), and highlighted a number of celebrity endorsements of OWS ("Penn Badgley," 2011; Berry, 2011; Derrick, 2011).

The left-leaning blogs that we analyzed identified a much longer, more comprehensive list of grievances motivating OWS protesters, most of which were economic. They included bank bailouts, corporate greed, a sense that the American dream is no longer attainable, the ongoing economic crisis, the repeal of the Glass-Stegall Act, rising income inequality, increased homelessness, lost homes and jobs, a lack

of effective financial regulations, the influence of corporate money in the political system, the mortgage crisis, cuts to government spending on social programs, and skyrocketing student loan debt. Several posts also mentioned the antiunion efforts of Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker as an example of increasing injustice for working-class people in the United States (Borosage, 2011; Sledge, 2011). Finally, tangentially related issues such as the recent execution of Troy Davis and the ongoing detention of WikiLeaks suspect Bradley Manning were identified as reasons motivating some OWS protesters (''80 People Arrested,'' 2011; Stirland, 2011).

In general, left-leaning blogs were not shy about acknowledging that OWS still had an unclear message and goals and were just as aware of this criticism of the movement as right-leaning blogs, but they also sought to help clarify OWS goals and argued that the fundamental message of OWS was, in fact, clear (Borosage, 2011; Yglesias, 2011). For example, writing for the *Huffington Post*, Robert Boroage of the Institute for America's Future said, ''No one is confused about the message. Wall Street got bailed out; Main Street was abandoned. The top 1% rigs the rules and pockets the rewards. And 99% get sent the bill for the party they weren't even invited to'' (Borosage, 2011). Others pointed to general goals of the movement, including the promotion of a more democratic and equitable society (Clawson, 2011a; Dayen, 2011; Sledge, 2011), policies that focus on rebuilding Main Street as opposed to Wall Street (Clawson, 2011a), and the reclamation of public space for public uses like protest (Berry, 2011). Some even offered more specific goals and policy recommendations, including breaking up the largest banks and reforming executive pay structures (Dayen, 2011). Despite the fears of right-leaning bloggers, none of the left-leaning blog posts that we analyzed called for the overthrow of capitalism, and certainly not for anarchy or communism.

Although right-leaning blogs portrayed OWS as an angry, violent mob, left-leaning blogs emphasized that OWS protests were both committed to and succeeding at being nonviolent and law abiding (''80 People Arrested,'' 2011; Boothroyd, 2011; Borosage, 2011; Bowers, 2011; Clawson, 2011a; Stirland, 2011). It is in that spirit that some noted the ''circus-like atmosphere'' of the protests, which at times included protesters singing and doing yoga (Stirland, 2011). Although right-leaning blogs focused on OWS activities at physical protest sites in New York and elsewhere, some left-leaning blogs noted the other forms of action being taken by OWS to affect change, including an OWS-led campaign to encourage people to close their accounts at the large banks and instead transfer their money into local credit unions (metamars, 2011). Although one left-leaning blogger noted that real change ultimately requires physical protest (Berry, 2011), left-leaning bloggers were more likely to take note of the online protest actions of OWS and their ''hacktivist'' supporters from the online collective Anonymous.

One site in particular, the *DailyKos*, assisted in coordinating online protest in the wake of the first widely publicized incident of police use of pepper spray against protesters. In one post, we see an example of two tactics that have become central to OWS activities. The first is what hacktivists call ''d0xing,'' which refers

to a distributed, online effort to find and release someone's personal information or "docs." In this case, *DailyKos* reports the result of the "d0xing" of the NYPD officer who pepper sprayed protesters. After a number of images and videos of the officer were posted online, *DailyKos* proudly reported that "The perpetrator has been identified as Deputy Inspector Anthony V. Bologna of the NYPD Borough Manhattan South." The next tactic involves the use of social media (in this case a blog post) to encourage the email and telephone equivalent of a distributed denial of service (DDoS) action. Where DDoS on the Web involves flooding a website with traffic to cause it to collapse (sometimes as a form of protest, sometimes as extortion), OWS has often used social media to rally supporters to call or send emails en masse to city officials. In response to officer Bologna's pepper spraying of protesters, *DailyKos* called on readers to "Take a couple of minutes to fill in some online complaint forms. Flood these offices with your smart, well articulated outrage." Those included the offices of Mayor Michael Bloomberg, NYPD Commissioner Ray Kelly, and the New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board. The post ended by exclaiming, "May the emails rain like the Letters to Santa in *Miracle On Thirty-fourth Street!*" (noise of rain, 2011).

As with right-leaning blogs, left-leaning blogs also compared OWS and the Tea Party, focusing primarily on the perceived hypocrisy of conservatives who had supported the Tea Party but who spoke out against OWS. After House Majority Leader Eric Cantor accused OWS of "pitting Americans against Americans," *Think Progress* shot back by asserting that Cantor himself was already guilty of such behavior because of his endorsement of the Tea Party (Seitz-Wald, 2011). Similarly, *Talking Points Memo* noted that while Karl Rove had been a one-time critic of the Tea Party for not being "sophisticated . . . well-organized, coherent, or ideologically motivated"—a popular criticism of OWS—with the appearance of OWS, Rove described the Tea Party as "mainstream" and made up of "a constitution loving law abiding people," as opposed to OWS's "left wing nuts whose goal it is to violate the law" (McMorris-Santoro, 2011). Where right-leaning blogs were primarily concerned with comparing OWS to the Tea Party, left-leaning blogs also offered comparisons between OWS and other historical and contemporary protest movements, including 19th-century populist movements, the civil rights movement, the Indignados in Spain, and the Arab Spring (Borosage, 2011; Lopez, 2011; Stirland, 2011).

The most important impacts that left-leaning blogs attributed to OWS during its first month included educating the public about and raising awareness of economic inequality in the United States (Yglesias, 2011) and calling attention to the use of police brutality to repress political dissent ("80 People Arrested," 2011; Borosage, 2011; Clawson, 2011b; Jilani, 2011; noise of rain, 2011; Rayfield, 2011; Sledge, 2011). Even before the more dramatic, violent, and nationally coordinated crackdowns of November 2011, left-leaning bloggers saw the incidents of repression and police brutality visited upon OWS during its first month as a powerful visual confirmation of the protesters' claims that American society had become unjust and undemocratic.

Social media and possible futures

Amid a dizzying array of public screens, the ground of activism has fractured and multiplied into multiple decentered knots creating a cacophony of panmediated social worlds. Our analysis offers a preliminary charting of the fragmenting of the mass media world into a proliferation of social media worlds. In the world of traditional mass media organizations, OWS was stillborn, first neglected, and then frivolously framed. On the public screens of social media, OWS's emergence was vibrant, its multiple manifestations much discussed, analyzed, celebrated, and attacked. Before protests can be championed or condemned, they must first exist—they must have presence on the myriad public screens that constitute our social realities. In this essay, we refrained from weighing in on the debate over the role of social media as tools for activists or taking sides on right-wing versus left-wing blogs on OWS. Our point is more fundamental: Social media create new contexts for activism that do not exist in the world of traditional mass media organizations. With social media, the grounds of possibility for activism have been multiplied and transformed.

Simple math highlights the point. In the first month of OWS protests in arguably the United States' five most important newspapers a total of 104 stories appeared (*The New York Times* 46, *The Washington Post* 23, *Los Angeles Times* 17, *The Wall Street Journal* 10, and *USA Today* 8). On social media, OWS created a torrent of activity. According to the social analytics company PeopleBrowsr, mentions on Twitter of OWS were already at 4,300 on the first day of protests; 9,466 on 25 September; 25,148 on 2 October; and 47,856 on 14 October, nearly a month into the occupation protests. After 3 weeks, *The New York Times* acknowledged the social media activity. They cited the founder of Trendrr noting that on 7 October "the Twitter conversation was producing an average of 10,000–15,000 posts an hour on Friday about Occupy Wall Street" (Preston, 2011). The same article estimated at least 10,000 OWS videos on YouTube after 3 weeks. After 3 months that number had reached about 91,400.

Numbers cannot tell the entire story, but they reveal the transformation of the context for activism. Quite simply, the corporate domination of mass media documented by Bagdikian (1987) and McChesney (1999) has been effectively challenged, even defeated, by social media. This is not to say that the ownership on social media is not corporate. It is to a large extent—think Google, Facebook, and Twitter. That said, there are two points to make. First, those corporations are not the same as General Electric and Westinghouse. To homogenize all corporations as the same and as the enemy is to reduce the variegated terrain of the corporate landscape to an undifferentiated plateau, but such a move misses the myriad opportunities for resistances and alliances amid an uneven terrain of distinct corporate players with different goals and strategies. Second, owning the architecture is one thing. Providing and controlling the content is another. Twitter and Facebook are more like Ma Bell than General Electric or Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. While the latter preclude massive public participation, the former depend on it. Certainly, the architecture

channels forms of participation in significant ways (Lanier, 2010), as do moderating protocols. Yet as they do not provide content, in practice Twitter and Facebook only exist as the continual creation of millions of participants. They depend on an ethic of individual and collective participation and creation. As the whole notion of Web 2.0 suggests, social media foster a norm of perpetual participation (Benkler, 2006; Castells, 2011; Jenkins, 2006; Palfrey & Gasser, 2008; Rheingold, 2002). As we can see in OWS and the Arab Spring and the social media responses, that norm creates new expectations of what it means to be a citizen and a person and a democracy.

Possibilities of participatory media are beginning to be realized as people deploying decentered knots of social media create a kaleidoscopic collage of social worlds across a vast array of millions of public screens. Social media do not guarantee a politics, only the possibility of creating new social worlds. The future offers an excess beyond calculation, and therein lies the hope. The advent of social media shows that something different is not only possible but happening. Time to act.

Acknowledgments

Notes

1   DeLuca and Lawson are co-first authors.
2   See http://directory.occupy.net/occupations;
    http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2011 /oct/17/occupy-protests-world-list-map;
    and http://www.meetup.com/occupytogether/.
3   Cammaerts provides an instructive overview of the limits to political participation in
    Web 2.0. Although at pains to temper excessive exuberance, Cammaerts acknowledges
    that the Internet ''also makes resistance possible, as is demonstrated by, among others,
    Indymedia or other activist media'' (Cammaerts, 2008, p. 372).
4   Benkler (2006) most clearly delineates these differences (pp. 1−32, 59−67, 209−219).
    Prominent examples of types of social media include Twitter, Facebook, YouTube,
    Reddit, Tumblr, Vimeo, Project Gutenberg, Wikipedia, LinkedIn, the GNU Project,
    Linux, and Mozilla Firefox.boo.
5   Bologna's use of pepper spray has close to 900,000 views on YouTube
    (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TZ05rWx1pig).
6   See http://knowyourmeme.com/ memes/casually-pepper-spray-everything-cop.
7   Retrieved 17 October 2011, from http://technorati.com/blogs/directory/politics/
    uspolitics/.
8   Retrieved 17 October 2011, from http://www.wikio.com/blogs/top/politics#.
9   Retrieved 17 October 2011, from http://www.ebizmba.com/articles/political-websites.

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Appendix

Selection of political blogs

Left

The Huffington Post—http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ (Technorati, eBiz)
Think Progress—http://thinkprogress.org/ (Technorati, Wikio)
Daily Kos—http://www.dailykos.com/ (Technorati, eBiz, Wikio)
Talking Points Memo—http://talkingpointsmemo.com/ (Technorati, eBiz)
Firedoge Lake—http://firedoglake.com/ (Wikio)

Right

Big Government—http://biggovernment.com/ (Technorati, eBiz)
Red State—http://www.redstate.com/ (Technorati, Wikio)
Michelle Malkin—http://michellemalkin.com/ (Technorati)
The Blaze—http://www.theblaze.com/ (eBiz)
Hot Air—http://hotair.com/ (Wikio)