

## What's next for the Occupy movement?

Joe Ferullo | Nov. 15, 2011 NCR Today

It was a scene everyone knew would come: New York City police entering Zuccotti Park to clear out Occupy Wall Street protestors. This is a movement with no method beyond making itself heard: It made that point long ago, bringing income disparity out into the economic open. But to grow beyond that it had to move forward or get moved out.

Without a new set of specific goals after making its voice heard in the initial media splash, Occupy became simply an open-ended occupation: We are all camping out here until ... until ... well, until we don't want to camp out here anymore. That is not a political statement to which anyone in power can respond -- and often-sympathetic big-city mayors find themselves in a bind very similar to the one that handcuffed New York's Michael Bloomberg.

[An NPR report this morning](#) [1] delivers a bleak look at the yet-unevacuated Occupy protest in a park in front of City Hall in downtown Los Angeles. Here, the movement has already become stratified: one part of the occupied park now calls itself "Skid Row" after the down-and-out streets filled with homeless a few blocks away. Another section is dubbed "Westwood," the name of a tony L.A. neighborhood surrounding the UCLA campus. Demonstrators there say they are driven by politics and passion, unlike the chronic homeless who have also flocked to the Occupy site.

One woman interviewed by NPR comes down to the site each evening from her job at an art gallery -- but she finds herself confused these days. Nothing, she says, is getting done -- she wonders if they all wouldn't be more effective working from their homes at night, using the phones, email and social media to spread information and agitation. To her, Occupy has settled into an encampment without a real cause -- it has not moved forward, it has not created anything out of the initial burst of energy that sparked the movement.

I'm guessing it is the same for people in general: Many citizens who were initially gripped by Occupy Wall Street now turn the page in their newspapers each morning, skip past the headline online. We all know the story now; there is nothing to add. Protests are a start of something, not the endgame. Occupy has achieved something solid: It brought inequality into the conversation. But now that we are all talking, what do we actually DO about it?

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### Links:

[1] <http://www.npr.org/2011/11/15/142336166/occupy-la-divides-protesters-homeless>