

Declaration of Occupy Modesto

We, the People of Modesto, California, United States of America, have awakened. Awakened to find 1% of people owning 42% of everything. Awakened to a nation that spends nearly half its taxes on wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. A county in which many can't keep their homes because 15.1% are unemployed, and many more under-employed. A country which bails out corporate moguls, but not average citizens, in which people can't afford to see their doctors or obtain needed medications.

Occupy Modesto - people from all walks of life, ethnicities, ages, religions, political backgrounds, social values, races, genders and orientations - says "enough." We are peacefully dedicated to changing mass systematic injustice.

Our nation has enough money for war but not for the poor. Enough illegal, unethical and immoral corporate greed. Enough fear tactics. Enough police brutality. Enough Big Brotherism disguised as national security, enough war on drugs and personal liberty. We ask "more." More accountability, appropriate allocation of money for quality education, health care, peace, communities, and families.

Statement of Solidarity

We, the people of Modesto and Stanislaus County, stand in solidarity with Occupy Wall Street organizations across the country. In doing so, we unite for justice, peace and equality. A people united will NEVER be defeated!

ACTION: Join the movement! Visit <http://www.occupymodestoca.org/> to sign up for Occupy Modesto's email list.

Ten Ways the Occupy Movement Changes Everything

Many question whether this movement can really make a difference. The truth is that it is already changing everything. Here's how.

By SARAH VAN GELDER, DAVID KORTEN, STEVE PIERSANTI

Before the Occupy Wall Street movement, there was little discussion of the outsized power of Wall Street and the diminishing fortunes of the middle class.

The media blackout was especially remarkable given that issues like jobs and corporate influence on elections topped the list of concerns for most Americans.

Occupy Wall Street changed that. In fact, it may represent the best hope in years that "we the people" will step up to take on the critical challenges of our time. Here's how the Occupy movement is already changing everything:

1. It names the source of the crisis.

Political insiders have avoided this simple reality: The problems of the 99% are caused

in large part by Wall Street greed, perverse financial incentives, and a corporate takeover of the political system. Now that this is understood, the genie is out of the bottle and it can't be put back in.

2. It provides a clear vision of the world we want.

We can create a world that works for everyone, not just the wealthiest 1%. And we, the 99%, are using the spaces opened up by the Occupy movement to conduct a dialogue about the world we want.

3. It sets a new standard for public debate.

Those advocating policies and proposals must now demonstrate that their ideas will benefit the 99%. Serving only the 1% will not suffice, nor will claims that the subsidies and policies that benefit the 1% will eventually "trickle down."

4. It presents a new narrative.

The solution is not to starve government or impose harsh austerity measures that further

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Annual Modesto Peace/Life Center Holiday Party Potluck & Song Circle

Friday, December 9, 2011
6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

At the home of Dan & Alice Onorato
1532 Vernon, Modesto

Bring your festive spirit and food to share!
Information: 526-5436

Green Tips for a Green Planet: 'Tis the season for giving, sharing and caring

By TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

The holiday season is the time for all good folks to light up the dark days of winter with the light of sharing, the joy of giving and the gratitude of receiving.

The intention of this Green Tips for a Green Planet is to inspire you to "pay it forward" throughout the year as you partner with others in stewardship of planet earth and all its inhabitants. We hope these ideas spark you to create even more ideas and lots of action as you light up your holidays with the joy of "give-ting".

Some of the most green and appreciated holiday gifts are those created at home with your own hands using those items we all have around the house that fall under the category of "too much stuff." There are countless sources online to get ideas for reducing, reusing and recycling "stuff." Gathering the family together to create wonderful ornaments, decorations, and useful gifts from "stuff" has all the makings of holiday joy!

Gift Giving Ideas

"Stuff" might include last year's holiday cards, bows, bags and boxes, which may be reused this year. Unmatched socks are always great to stuff and form into any number of soft, cuddly toys for the new baby or pet. Scraps of old soap bars can be gathered into net balls for use in the shower and broken crayons can be melted onto paper and scratched through to create different designs. Beads are for stringing, as are macaroni and popcorn and cranberries.

Food gifts from the kitchen can offer opportunities to make cookies or cake from the pumpkin or persimmon puree you froze last month, make jelly from pomegranate juice, or use up the last of the instant coffee to make homemade Kahlua. The list of kitchen creations is endless and always appreciated...well, maybe not last year's recycled fruitcake, even if it is still "perfectly good."

If you are wrapping and decorating at home, look through all those piles of "stuff" headed for recycling in the green

can...paper bags, colorful comic sections, flyers and junk mail into strips for paper chains, pine cones, gently faded hydrangea blossoms, dried grass tufts, holly and pyracantha berries, and all manner of natural and manufactured buttons and bows and packaging do dads. Don't forget those foam peanuts, bubble wrap, air filled protective plastic bags, and "stuff" that comes in those mail order boxes for packaging or donating to your nearest mail center for reuse.

There are many ways to give without having to use lots of new wrapping paper and over-priced gift boxes. The easiest, especially for gifting to those far away, are gift cards, which can be slipped into a holiday card or sent online. Gift credit

cards allow the recipients to spend the money any way they choose.

A gift remembrance to peace, justice and/or sustainable environmental organizations in the name of the recipient is a gift of joy for both the donor and the honoree. For those who wish to honor others, especially those who already "have it all," Gifts to the Heifer Project, Sierra Club, Habitat for Humanity, Nature Conservancy, ACLU, NAACP and thousands of other humanitarian and global peace, justice and green-friendly organizations are gifts that keep on giving.

Wishing you a joyous holiday season and a healthy, happy, open and accepting 2012!

The Best Thing about January in Modesto

By LUELLA COLE

Yes! There IS something to look forward to in a Central Valley January besides rain, fog and freezing temperatures. On January 24, 2012, less than two months from today, John McCutcheon will be warming the Modesto Church of the Brethren venue with his unparalleled mix of folksong and storytelling.

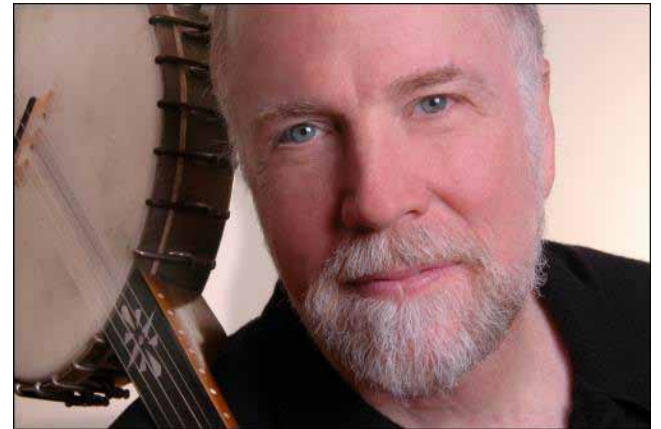
John's dedicated fans who have enjoyed even one of his ten previous Modesto concerts are looking forward to another evening of John's mastery of a multitude of instruments, his gently humorous storytelling, and his repertoire of songs, both his own and those of folk legends such as Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie, Si Kahn and Tom Paxton. Perhaps this time, John will include parts of his outstanding performance in Joe Hill's Last Will, Si Kahn's one-man play in support of workers' rights.

Friends of the Modesto Peace/Life Center who appreciate John's musical forays into national politics such as "Hail to the Chief" will enjoy his latest blog observations on the national scene. Doubtless John will not disappoint those hoping for new political satire. From his April blog post:

Speaking as a topical songwriter, I'm begging the Republican Party to please, please, please nominate Donald Trump. Or Michelle Bachman. Now that ... Sarah's 15 minutes seem[s] to have expired, I'm concerned that the entertainment value of the campaign might wane.... I miss the "songs handed to me on a silver platter" of the last decade. And, believe me, there are treasure troves to be mined in the daily adventures of political gadflies with eager microphones pushed in their faces 24/7.

So, on behalf of all America, we need more humor and less hubris. More parody and less polarization. The campaign is going to be ugly, nobody expects less these days...and we never get more than the least, it seems. So, for Pete's sake, throw us songwriters a bone. I promise you we'll deliver up some funny. You do your part, we'll do ours.

Save the date: Tuesday, January 24, 2012. Come expecting to be entertained and inspired. And for those who attended last year's concert: Whatever happened to Barbara Kingsolver's book, *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*? Come to the 2012 concert and find out!



TICKETS are \$20 in advance, \$23 at the door and youth 18 and under are \$5. Groups of 10 or more are \$15 per person. Tickets can be purchased by check or cash at the Modesto Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave., 523-1438 or at Anderson Custom Framing, 1323 J St., Modesto, 579-9913. Out-of-towners can call the church to arrange to purchase tickets by mail. Also consider giving tickets as a holiday gift.

Stanislaus CONNECTIONS

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Where Does Occupy Wall Street Go From Here? ... a proposal from Michael Moore

Friends,

This past weekend I participated in a four-hour meeting of Occupy Wall Street activists whose job it is to come up with the vision and goals of the movement. It was attended by 40+ people and the discussion was both inspiring and invigorating. Here is what we ended up proposing as the movement's "vision statement" to the General Assembly of Occupy Wall Street:

We Envision: [1] a truly free, democratic, and just society; [2] where we, the people, come together and solve our problems by consensus; [3] where people are encouraged to take personal and collective responsibility and participate in decision making; [4] where we learn to live in harmony and embrace principles of toleration and respect for diversity and the differing views of others; [5] where we secure the civil and human rights of all from violation by tyrannical forces and unjust governments; [6] where political and economic institutions work to benefit all, not just the privileged few; [7] where we provide full and free education to everyone, not merely to get jobs but to grow and flourish as human beings; [8] where we value human needs over monetary gain, to ensure decent standards of living without which effective democracy is impossible; [9] where we work together to protect the global environment to ensure that future generations will have safe and clean air, water and food supplies, and will be able to enjoy the beauty and bounty of nature that past generations have enjoyed.

The next step will be to develop a specific list of goals and demands. As one of the millions of people who are participating in the Occupy Wall Street movement, I would like to respectfully offer my suggestions of what we can all get behind now to wrestle the control of our country out of the hands of the 1% and place it squarely with the 99% majority.

Here is what I will propose to the General Assembly of Occupy Wall Street:

10 Things We Want

A Proposal for Occupy Wall Street

Submitted by Michael Moore

1. Eradicate the Bush tax cuts for the rich and institute new taxes on the wealthiest Americans and on corporations, including a tax on all trading on Wall Street (where they currently pay 0%).
2. Assess a penalty tax on any corporation that moves American jobs to other countries when that company is already making profits in America. Our jobs are the most important national treasure and they cannot be removed from the country simply because someone wants to make more money.
3. Require that all Americans pay the same Social Security tax on all of their earnings (normally, the middle class pays about 6% of their income to Social Security; someone making \$1 million a year pays about 0.6% (or 90% less than the average person). This law would simply make the rich pay what everyone else pays.
4. Reinstatement of the Glass-Steagall Act, placing serious regulations on how business is conducted by Wall Street and the banks.
5. Investigate the Crash of 2008, and bring to justice those who committed any crimes.
6. Reorder our nation's spending priorities (including the ending of all foreign wars and their cost of over \$2 billion a week). This will re-open libraries, reinstate band and art and civics classes in our schools, fix our roads and bridges and infrastructure, wire the entire country for 21st century internet, and support scientific research that improves our lives.
7. Join the rest of the free world and create a single-payer, free and universal health care system that covers **all** Americans **all** of the time.
8. Immediately reduce carbon emissions that are destroying the planet and discover ways to live without the oil that will be depleted and gone by the end of this century.
9. Require corporations with more than 10,000 employees to restructure their board of directors so that 50% of its members are elected by the company's workers. We can never have a real democracy as long as most people have no say in what happens at the place they spend most of their time: their job. (For any U.S. businesspeople freaking out at this idea because you think workers can't run a successful company: Germany has a law like this and it has helped to make Germany the world's leading manufacturing

exporter.)

10. We, the people, must pass three constitutional amendments that will go a long way toward fixing the core problems we now have. These include:

a) A constitutional amendment that fixes our broken electoral system by 1) completely removing campaign contributions from the political process; 2) requiring all elections to be publicly financed; 3) moving election day to the weekend to increase voter turnout; 4) making all Americans registered voters at the moment of their birth; 5) banning computerized voting and requiring that all elections take place on paper ballots.

b) A constitutional amendment declaring that corporations are not people and do not have the constitutional rights of citizens. This amendment should also state that the interests of the general public and society must always come before the interests of corporations.

c) A constitutional amendment that will act as a "second bill of rights" as proposed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt: that every American has a human right to employment, to health care, to a free and full education, to breathe clean air, drink clean water and eat safe food, and to be cared for with dignity and respect in their old age.

Let me know what you think. Occupy Wall Street enjoys the support of millions. It is a movement that cannot be stopped. Become part of it by sharing your thoughts with me or online (at www.OccupyWallSt.org). Get involved in (start at <http://howtooccupy.org/>) your own local Occupy movement. Make some noise. You don't have to pitch a tent in lower Manhattan to be an Occupier. You are one just by saying you are. This movement has no singular leader or spokesperson; every participant is a leader in their neighborhood, their school, their place of work. Each of you is a spokesperson to those whom you encounter. There are no dues to pay, no permission to seek in order to create an action.

We are but ten weeks old, yet we have already changed the national conversation. This is our moment, the one we've been hoping for, waiting for. If it's going to happen it has to happen now. Don't sit this one out. This is the real deal. This is it.

Yours,
Michael Moore
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www.MichaelMoore.com

stanislaus
CONNECTIONS

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Cast Iron – the Ultimate Nonstick Cookware

By JENIFER WEST

I recently started experimenting with making sourdough English muffins. Which, of course, is how I became interested in reviving some old cast iron cookware we had hanging around the house. So I went online, and found a lot of conflicting information... Finally, I found some seasoning instructions I could live with: Heat the cast iron utensil in a 200-degree oven for about 10 minutes, rub down with flax oil (preferably organic), wipe off as much of the oil as possible, put the skillet, griddle or whatever back in the oven (upside down), turn the heat up to 450, and bake for an hour. (You'll probably want to turn on the fan, to let the odor escape.) You may need to do this several times. When your skillet or griddle is properly seasoned, it will have a wonderful nonstick surface.

Cast iron cookware has a number of advantages over its modern, non-stick counterparts: First, cooking in it isn't hazardous to your health. More recent non-stick inventions give off hazardous fumes – if you keep birds as pets, you'll know you can't use nonstick cookware in the house with them. Also, if you tend to be on the anemic side, it can actually impart small amounts of iron to the foods cooked in it. Unlike modern non-stick cookware, which lasts only a few years, properly cared for cast iron cookware will last for generations. Finally, cooking in cast iron brings out the flavors in foods, in a way that no other cookware can.

When my skillets were ready to use, I put them on the stove to heat while I mixed up some sourdough pancake batter. Although I learned to cook using my dad's cast iron skillet, it'd been so many years since I'd cooked with it, I'd forgotten how. It should be heated slowly, and takes very little heat. And things will stick to it, until they're cooked enough to be turned. So I managed to nearly cremate the bacon, and had an awful time getting the heat regulated. But that experience prepared me for the flapjacks. This time, I started out with



the lowest heat setting. It took almost the entire batch, but I finally got the hang of it again.

Having fallen in love with cast iron cooking again, I ordered a new Lodge griddle, and a Dutch oven, online. While waiting for them to arrive, I stopped by the Army surplus store. Just my luck – they carry the Lodge brand. I was disappointed to see that their "pre-seasoned" cookware is fairly rough – I couldn't imagine how a surface like that would be non-stick. But I decided to reserve judgment until I had a chance to experiment with the new ones that were already on their way.

The new pieces arrived, unfortunately every bit as bumpy as the ones in the Army surplus store. I scrubbed them, in case they had the wax coating I've read about being on new cast iron cookware, and seasoned them twice before frying a batch of chicken in the Dutch oven. (We were pretty strict vegetarians for a lot of years, but we've loosened up a bit these days...) Since I started working with cast iron again, I'd wanted to make some good, old-fashioned fried chicken (which I'd actually never done before). Some of my fondest

childhood memories center around my grandparents' house, where the scent of chicken frying was as much a part of the welcome to a Sunday dinner as the hugs. So I broke out the eggs, milk and flour, and went to work. The coating didn't have quite as much flavor as I would have liked, but at least I managed to avoid the common pitfall of well-done crust over nearly-raw chicken, which I felt pretty good about. And I was pleasantly surprised by how easy it was to clean the new pan. It did take a little more effort than would have been needed for nonstick pans, but only a little. (The literature that came with it warned that things might stick the first few times it's used, and recommended cooking relatively high-fat foods like the chicken and bacon at first, to help complete the seasoning process.) I have since used it, and the griddle, several times, and have found that things really don't stick – so long as they're cooked well enough before turning.

Cast iron gets better over the years, so long as it's cared for properly. That means no soap or metal utensils, clean it while it's hot, or at least warm, and towel dry immediately. A good, natural bristle brush is generally recommended, but instead I like a trick I read about online – the mesh bags that things like onions and oranges come in. Cut about a four-inch strip – works wonders, without scratching, for all kinds of things! Heat the freshly cleaned pan for a few minutes on the stove, and wipe on a very light coat of cooking oil. Oh, and put a paper towel in it before you store it. That will absorb moisture – the enemy of cast iron. Use it frequently, and treat it well, and your cast iron cookware will be cooking up tasty treats for generations to come.

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It's Your World.
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MLK Commemoration to feature Dick Gregory

By JAMES COSTELLO

To keep Martin Luther King, Jr.'s vision fresh and provocative locally, for the last 17 years a committee of community groups including the Modesto Peace/Life Center, the City of Modesto, Modesto Junior College, and California State University, Stanislaus has offered our community an inspiring Martin Luther King Commemoration.



We invite you to co-sponsor our 18th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration on Saturday, January 21, 2012 at Modesto Junior College's Main Auditorium-Performing and Media Arts Center on East Campus at 7:00 p.m.

The long-time Civil Rights activist and comedian Dick Gregory will speak. Mr. Gregory has had an illustrious career as an entertainer and activist for justice marching with Martin Luther King.

Our speakers bring Dr. King's philosophy of nonviolence into our contemporary reality by reflecting on their own experiences and social commitments. They connect the past with the present to inspire us to act for a more just and peaceful future.

The event is free so as many people as possible can attend. But our costs are considerable. We depend solely on donations of money or services from our initial co-sponsors and from caring groups, businesses, and individuals like you. Will you help us bring Dick Gregory to our community? Donors who give \$100.00 or more will receive preferred seating and an autographed copy of one Mr. Gregory's books.

ACTION: Make your tax-deductible check payable to "Modesto Peace Life Center-MLK." Send it to Jim Costello, 1849 Richard Way, Ceres, CA 95307-4504. The Peace Life Center is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. Our tax ID # is 94-2800825. Information: jcostello@igc.org



What will you stand up for? Who will you stand up with? Will you stand up or stand by?

By MIKE & JANA CHIAVETTA

What will you stand up for? Who will you stand up with? Will you stand up or stand by?

These were the fundamental questions that confronted the 90 high school students who attended the 3rd Annual Social Justice Youth Leadership Conference held on Saturday, September 24th at the Modesto Church of the Brethren. Students representing several different area high schools came together to learn, focus and commit to a core value of the Modesto Peace/ Life Center: Civil Rights.

The conference opened with a wonderful testimonial by the founder of Guide Dogs for the Blind, Rev. Brian Ralston. He was followed by the awesome sounds of a local band from Oakdale, Television Sky. The highlight of the morning session was the dynamic keynote address by federal district Judge Frank Damrell, Jr. His address was a brief history of the civil rights movement and then a challenge to the students in attendance that the fight for equality and civil rights is still happening today. Judging by the response of the students, his message was well received.

In the afternoon the students were engaged by dynamic workshops that focused on contemporary civil rights issues. Jana Chiavetta led a workshop that focused on prejudice, stereotyping and judgmental behavior. Bill Dotinga, the President of PFLAG, led an emotional and powerful workshop on the hot button issue of bullying. Emily Gelb of Free the Children described her organization and challenged participants to find a cause that they can believe in. All in all it was an enlightening and challenging day for the students in attendance.

In addition to the thought-provoking workshops, students had the opportunity to interact and potentially volunteer with local organizations that are involved in environmental, community service, and social justice issues. All participants were treated to a delicious breakfast and lunch that was put together by Deborah Roberts and her crack team of volunteers. The afternoon included a "yoga break" that was led by Modesto High's Jennifer Pereira. Judging by the response of the students, this was an invigorating experience. Also, a special shout-out to the Yogurt Mill for their donation of 150 servings of frozen yogurt for the afternoon snack.

The culmination of the conference was a moving experience as students were asked to "Stand Up" for who or what they believed in. As students stated whom they would be an advocate for, others joined them in solidarity. The students' final act was to sign the banner that simply said "I Will Stand UP" and state their commitment. It was a moving and beautiful moment as the assembled group sang "We Shall Overcome" with the final verse being "I will stand up"!

And now, a word from the sponsor: The 4th Social Justice Youth Leadership Conference is scheduled for the last Saturday of September, 2012, with the theme "War and Peace". We are hoping to secure an Iraq or Afghanistan war veteran to be our keynote speaker and then to have workshops that focus on the impact war has on students and their future. The Modesto Peace/Life Center Board is committed to this conference as one of its key outreach programs, and as an investment in the future of the peace movement and the PLC. But it is expensive. The cost this year was about \$1400. We could use your help! Give generously so that we can continue this worthy event. Your donation can be sent to the Modesto Peace/ Life Center, 720 13th Street, Modesto CA. 95353.

On the following pages are two letters from participants in the 3rd Annual Social Justice Youth Leadership Conference, describing their experiences.

New season of Song Circle has begun

By KEN SCHROEDER

Our new season of Song Circle began on Friday, Oct. 14 and continues every 2nd Friday thereafter. That's 12/9, 1/13, 2/10, 3/9, 4/13 and 5/11. Please let us know if you would like to host a Song Circle evening at your home and Shelly Scribner will follow up with you.

Dec. 9 is hosted by Dan and Alice Onorato, 1532 Vernon, Modesto, and combines the annual Modesto Peace/Life Center Holiday Party Potluck with Song Circle. The hosts provide drinks, plates, cups, forks, etc. and everyone brings food to share. We meet around 6:30 P.M., eat together and then sing.

In these challenging times, let's remember the value of raising our voices in song.

Reach Shelly Scribner at shellys833@aol.com, or 521-6304.

Directions to the Onorato's: <http://mapq.stU169R>

Even in 2011...

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1st & 3rd Tuesdays 7-9 PM
Emanuel Lutheran Church
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info@pflagmodesto.org

3rd Wednesday 7-9 PM
1425 West "H" St., Oakdale
pflagoakdale@dishmail.net



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The Social Justice Youth Leadership Conference

PHOTOS: Jim Costello, Raymond Nichols



By ALISON GRIFFIN

My experience with the Social Justice Youth Leadership Conference was incredible! I enjoyed every moment of it, and especially enjoyed being able to see each volunteer group in the area all in one spot. It was very informative and fun. I especially loved the small pins that were handed out. They were fun, exciting, and now are proudly displayed on my outfits whenever I get a chance. The food was delicious and wholesome, especially the soup. I really did like the vegetables mixed in, and the grilled cheese sandwiches that came along with it were superb. I definitely encourage whoever catered to come back next year, as well as give me her recipe. Overall, it was a thoroughly exciting and a great experience to discover.





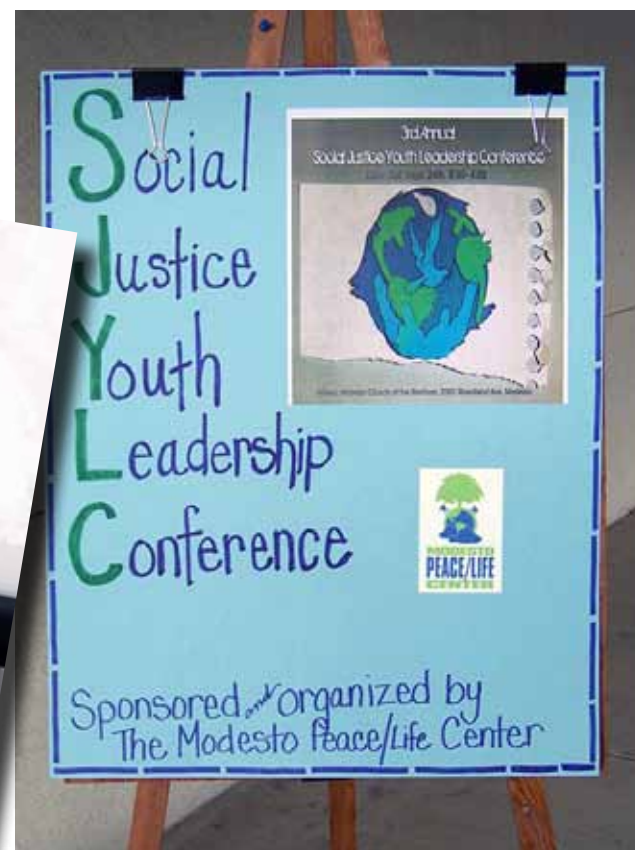
By CLARE CONROTTO

If I had to describe the Social Justice Youth Leadership Conference in just one word, I would have to choose the word enlightening. Meeting with over a hundred like-minded young people to learn about current social injustices was indeed, an experience I'll never forget. Divided into several large groups, we traveled from station to station, gaining incredible insight into this year's topic of choice—bullying. I was astonished by the wealth of knowledge offered by the presenters; whether it was an activity that guided us, vicariously, into the lives of the bullies or the bullied, or one that showed us how we could take the lead to end such injustices, we learned a tremendous amount.

The activities that promoted bonding among conference-goers were also fantastic. Doing yoga in the moist grass bordering the church, eating delicious frozen yogurt, and harmonizing to “We Shall Overcome”, the anthem of the civil rights movement in the 1960s, I felt that the large group connected in a profound way that, even now, escapes description.

And in all, it was more than just a day of education – it was a day in which we learned compassion, in which we were inspired to take action and contribute to positive transformation in our society. We were encouraged to be the change we would like to see in our world, to borrow the wise words of Gandhi.

The Social Justice Youth Leadership Conference was an amazing event, and I am grateful that I had the opportunity to attend.



Why the 1% Love “Anarchist Violence”

By STEVE WEISSMAN

Reader Supported News | Perspective

From the trashing of downtown Oakland after the General Strike to burning cars and looting in Rome during a huge anti-capitalist demonstration by the Indignati, no one should be surprised by the militant vandalism of self-described Anarchists dressed in black - or by the police violence they provoke. Protesters of a certain age have seen the pattern too many times, especially in the violence that paid provocateurs created in the 1960s as part of the FBI's Counter-Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO). Hopefully, today's nonviolent mass movements can learn from our mistakes, as many in Occupy Oakland seem to be doing.

Strange as it might now seem, many of our problems in the past grew out of the complexities of the civil rights movement, where so many of us got our start. While the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. and others had strong philosophical commitments to Gandhi's principles of nonviolence, large numbers of southern blacks owned hunting rifles and shotguns that they used to defend their families against attacks by white vigilantes. Most often, this armed self-defense coexisted with the public nonviolence of the marches and voter registration drives. But sometimes the disconnect showed.

The best-known example involved Robert Williams, a veteran of both the Army and Marine Corps who headed the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in Monroe, North Carolina. Williams led armed black activists in driving off the local Ku Klux Klan, and spoke openly of what he called “armed self-reliance,” which he saw as necessary when the nonviolent marches had ended and the television cameras went home. Fearing the loss of white liberal support, NAACP officials suspended Williams, worked with the FBI to discredit him, and convinced the NAACP convention in 1959 to vote overwhelmingly to confirm his suspension.

The FBI subsequently accused Williams of kidnapping, falsely as it turned out, and he and his wife fled to Cuba in 1961 and later sought refuge in China. His book “Negroes With Guns” appeared in 1962, and greatly influenced Huey Newton and the Black Panthers. Both Malcolm X and Rosa Parks also sided with Williams, who became an icon to black nationalists.

Williams was a fascinating character, and his lynching by the NAACP dramatized an obvious truth. Dr. King's non-violence, though undoubtedly sincere, served as a control mechanism to assure whites, especially those in power, that he would hold their worst fears at bay. With King on top, the 1% of the day could hope to contain a massive black revolt and a violent backlash by whites, all displayed to the world on international television.

For young white activists, this Realpolitik strengthened our tendency to see nonviolence as a pragmatic choice of tactics, not a philosophic commitment that most of us never embraced. Our stance faced an interesting test at Berkeley just before the Free Speech Movement's big sit-in on December 2, 1964. Joan Baez, the popular singer and committed pacifist, had agreed to take part, but suddenly suffered second thoughts. The evening before the sit-in, it somehow fell to me to field a call from her mentor Ira Sandperl, a Gandhi scholar who had marched for civil rights with Dr. King. “Would we commit ourselves to

remain strictly nonviolent?” he asked.

“No,” I replied. “We can't.”

My bluntness surprised us both, but FSM was a democratic movement and we would make our own decisions. As diplomatically as I could, I told Ira that we were a broad coalition of groups, from Goldwater Republicans to revolutionary socialists, and I could hardly speak for them all. But, as of our last meeting, we were planning to use non-violent tactics for our occupation of Berkeley's administration building, Sproul Hall.

A great soul with a superb sense of whimsy, Ira heard what he needed to hear. Joan came to the sit-in, sang her songs, and had her say. “Muster up as much love as you possibly can, and as little hatred and as little violence, and as little ‘angries’ as you can - although I know it's been exasperating,” she told us. “The more love you can feel, the more chance there is for it to be a success.”

By contrast, our own Mario Savio had already launched us onto a less loving path. “There is a time,” he declared, “when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can't take part; you can't even passively take part, and you've got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus and you've got to make it stop.”

From soul force to political bludgeon, these differing approaches to nonviolence all appealed in varying degree to individual activists. But, as a group, we came to a post-Gandhian mix and match, never codified except in practice. We transformed Joan's call for love into a pragmatic openness toward potential antagonists, whether football cheerleaders, Christian evangelists, or sometimes even the police. And, we followed Mario's lead in rejecting for all time any Socratic call to uphold the state's authority by willingly submitting to punishment for whatever laws we might break. Goodbye bitter hemlock, catch us if you can.

Our thinking continued to evolve as we used our hard-won freedom on campus to launch nonviolent demonstrations against the rapidly escalating war in Southeast Asia. We stopped troop trains and marched on the Port of Oakland, bringing on dramatic confrontations with the Oakland Police, who once sent the Hell's Angels to attack us. Throughout, we remained democratic and transparent and tried our best to let individual participants decide for themselves how much risk they wanted to take.

But somewhere along the way, I think we fell into a trap. We began to view our nonviolent demonstrations as an almost military bludgeon to create disruption, and we failed to define ourselves politically as separate from the antiwar vandalism and violence all around us.

Our failure became clear at Stanford in the spring of 1968. We were holding a peaceful sit-in when word came that someone had set fire to the campus ROTC building. Many of the students wanted to issue a statement denying that we had done it. Along with others, I successfully argued against the denial, which I felt would only confirm the suspicion that we had set the fire and were now lying about it.

I think we were right, but only in the very short run. The problem was that none of us ever found a positive way to distinguish ourselves and our nonviolence from the ROTC fire and similar incidents at several other locations around campus.

Instead, we tried to have it both ways. As one truly pacifist comrade told a university trustee at a large public meeting, “I'm nonviolent, but I have friends who are not.” Naturally, we all laughed in support.

Years later we learned that an FBI provocateur had created the ROTC fire and the other incidents. In other words, in our silence, the FBI was defining us in ways that did not help us to build a larger and more effective antiwar movement.

Flash forward to Occupy Oakland and the Indignati in Rome. At this point, we do not know whether the vandalism came from paid provocateurs or sincere anarchists. Looking back at my own failures, I would argue that the distinction does not make much difference. Whatever the source, the police and those for whom they work will use even the slightest deviation from a very visible nonviolence and non-vandalism to discredit, attack, and eventually remove our occupiers.

That will be their game plan. Ours will evolve, but it has to include defining ourselves by our actions and using nonviolent tactics to isolate the vandals, as many in Occupy Oakland tried to do. I hope we can do it without sounding defensive and with as much creativity and good humor as we can. Letting the world know who and what we are, and who and what we are not, is a necessary step on the way to winning the support we need from the rest of the 99%.

A veteran of the Berkeley Free Speech Movement and the New Left monthly Ramparts, Steve Weissman lived for many years in London, working as a magazine writer and television producer. He now lives and works in France, where he writes on international affairs.

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The Glass

I met a boy
He liked his comic books
He drew in them sometimes
Pictures of himself
in the bottom left hand corner

And I wondered
why he didn't have his own space
on a blank page
with no previous lines
distorting his view
distorting his day
distorting his play

But he wanted to be the hero
and he threw his blank book away

Now, he knew he couldn't play with guns
That role had a burden he couldn't carry
But he could charge down a pixilated
corridor with four friends
that he had never met
in different parts of the world
ages 13 to 42
and wipe out a terrorist
with his thumb
a terrorist with no name
no face
no family
no dog
and no Sunday picnics to attend

And when the boy was done
he would open his comic books again
With colored pencils
he drew himself into each one
His bowed head echoed as a silhouette
beneath a sleeping Buddha

He read all of the books
and he threw away all of his emotions
every piece of himself
to get to where he was going

He sat with his feet just so
Beneath his bottom, just so

He breathed the way he was suppose to
breath
and he said the things he suppose to say

And the little boy
who wasn't happy with who he was
put on his Papa's clothes
They swallowed him up to his ears

The sleeves hung down to the ground
The little boy who wanted to be a Buddha
was swimming

He offered a glass of water to everyone he
met
He liked to watch the people discuss the
water
He liked how he was the only one drinking
the water sometimes
He loved the glass holding the water
That was his favorite thing of all

The glass came from somewhere else
An inferno

It use to be as simple as sand
but sand couldn't hold the water
away from its home
and our hands
they held the water perfectly
as long as they stayed close
to the water's home too

But someone took the sand
and burned it
until it could hold water
so our hands didn't have to
and we could move far away

A piece of water
in a special glass
far away from its home
would catch the light
and distort the world
like a fisheye lens

The glass blurred the colors
and the water would bend things
It bent the world
according to how the light
hit the surface
just so

The water in that pretty glass
found my lips
and I drank from someone else's cup
Throwing my own hands away
because his well was so much deeper than
mine

And oh how I loved that glass
How I loved listening to him discuss the
water
How high he was



Poet: Jodie DaLuca

Jodie moved from San Jose to Modesto nine years ago with her parents. Since then she has found a love for painting and is working towards a Bachelors of Fine Arts. She is a professional bellydancer and says, "Bellydancing has allowed [me] to experience a range of expression and communion with [my]self and others, but it was the honesty that [I] found in writing poetry that allowed [me to] move from [my] center. I do like to play music [and] am just learning how to play the guitar and piano.

Photo: Adrian Mendoza

How small we were

And I stole his comic books
I scribbled a picture of myself
just inside of his drawings
The original image
was massacred with color pencils
and black ink

I burned my own book
the one with the blank pages
Now I had someone that had come before
me
Someone that knew the things I didn't
know
But, oh
how I wanted to know what they knew
And I carried his glass
And I stuffed my emotions away
because they didn't fit
a stranger's way

One day
I asked the swimming Buddha
why we couldn't use our palms
to drink the water
and why I didn't know the water
for myself
but only through
his special glass

He went into a rage
And the clothes he was wearing
they swarmed up over his head
And he was sinking
Drowning

The person he was
The person he threw away
The little boy with all of his emotions

came flying up
and he screamed at me

He took his glass
with his special water away

My own anger
and the girl I threw away
came back

She spends most of her days now
trying to find blank pages
erasing lines
any line
that finds its way into her book
She practices cupping her hands
and trying to remember where her water is

And the little boy is still swimming
with the entire world
in a lake of crystal blue
holding a cup of water
high in the air

Special
like his comic book hero



It's finally over — and it was wrong

By JIM WALLIS

My son Jack was born just days before the war in Iraq began. So, for these last eight and a half years, it's been very easy for me to remember how long this horrible conflict has been going on.

Finally, as President Obama has announced, this American war will soon be over, with most of the 44,000 American troops still in Iraq coming home in time to be with their families for Christmas.

The initial feelings that rushed over me after hearing the White House announcement were of deep relief. But then they turned to deep sadness over the terrible cost of a war that was, from the beginning, wrong: intellectually, politically, strategically and, above all, morally.

The war in Iraq was fundamentally a war of choice, and it was the wrong choice.

From the outset, this war was fought on false pretenses, with false information, and for false purposes. And the official decisions to argue for this war and then carry it out were made at the height of political and moral irresponsibility — especially when we see the failed results and consider both the human and financial costs.

This week, U.S. Rep. Walter Jones, a nine-term Republican from eastern North Carolina and long-time member of the House Armed Services Committee, spoke to the students of my class at Georgetown University. He called his decision to give President George W. Bush the authority to go to war in Iraq “a sin.”

Even then, he didn't believe or trust “the intelligence” being used to support a war with Iraq, but confesses he feared the response of a “no vote” among his constituency in a district that includes Camp Lejeune and 60,000 retired members of the military.

Saddam Hussein and Iraq had nothing to do with the attacks on 9/11, as was falsely implied, and had no weapons of mass destruction, as was falsely claimed and endlessly repeated.

The full story of Jones' transformation by having personal encounters with families who lost their precious loved ones, and by the convictions of his own Christian faith, is detailed here: <http://www.sojournal.net/magazine/2011/09/convert-peace>

In what he calls his “penance,” the congressman has now written 10,000 letters to the families of fallen servicemen and women.

“We were lied to,” Jones told my Georgetown students, and went on to describe his journey to find the truth. Because, for people of faith, “truth matters,” he said.

Jones learned how the intelligence on Iraq was “manipulated” and “distorted” to justify going to war, and that this was a completely unnecessary war. Outside Jones' office on Capitol Hill is a wall of “the faces,” as he puts it, of those who paid the ultimate price for the manipulation of the truth. And when Jones talks about these young soldiers, you can see how deeply their loss has affected him.

We were “misled” into war by the “previous administration,” Jones said, and, so far, nobody has been held accountable for it. The names he mentioned when speaking about accountability were Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld.

“I think people should be held accountable for leading a

country to war, if it can be demonstrated that officials manipulated intelligence and the truth,” Jones said. There are wars that could be considered “just,” he said, but this war was not.

Here are some of the costs of an unjust war:

- 4,499 U.S. military killed
- 32,200 wounded
- 110,000 estimated Iraqi civilian deaths
- 2.5 million internally displaced Iraqis
- \$800 billion in federal funding for the Iraq War through FY2011
- An estimated \$3-5 trillion total economic cost to the United States of the war in Iraq.
- As many as 300,000 U.S. troops returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan with post-traumatic stress disorder.
- 320,000 troops returning from Afghanistan and Iraq with traumatic brain injuries
- The number of suicide attempts by veterans could exceed an earlier official estimate of 1,000 a month.

Such a list takes my breath away and should drive each of us to pray for lives that have been so painfully and irreparably changed.

The war literally was sold to the American public with the claim that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. Many believed it at the time, and an invasion was mounted on what turned out to be false information. A decade of sanctions and United Nations inspections had already undermined the allegations. And in the almost nine years of war, not a single WMD has been found in Iraq.

The invasion began with triumphal claims that it would be a “cakewalk,” and that U.S. forces would be welcomed as “liberators.” That proved to be initially true with the unexpectedly easy removal of Saddam Hussein from power, which led to the famous claim of a flight-jacket-clad George W. Bush on a U.S. aircraft carrier six weeks after the invasion began: “Mission Accomplished!”

But then everything fell apart. Hussein's fighters had not surrendered, but simply melted into the cities, lying in wait to fight again. Al Qaeda, which had existed largely only in Afghanistan, formed an Iraqi branch. An invasion turned into an occupation and nearly five years of vicious and deadly street warfare, sectarian violence, and constant terrorist bombings.

By the time the heaviest fighting had died down, the Iraqi people were bitterly divided, huge parts of their country had been devastated, and corruption and fraud were rampant.

As U.S. combat troops return home, they leave behind a badly damaged nation that will require years, if not decades, of assistance and humanitarian development. Our responsibility does not end simply because our military presence in Iraq has.

Clearly, religious communities must reach out now more than ever to returning veterans to make sure they have the physical, emotional, and spiritual support they need.

One of the most unjust aspects of an unjust war is that a small minority of Americans have borne the brunt of the im-

pact and cost of this war — and in our volunteer army, those were disproportionately lower-income families.

Despite this tragically mistaken war, the sacrifices made by many servicemen and women have been extraordinary. And, even in the midst of war's brutalities, there have been many acts of real heroism — soldiers risking and giving their own lives for their fellow soldiers and for the lives of Iraqis who also paid a heavy price.

No matter what our view of the war, it is our collective responsibility to be healers for those who are coming home — and for those left behind in post-war Iraq.

We must learn from this horrible and costly mistake.

We must conclude unequivocally that terrorism is not defeated by wars of mass occupation.

And we must strive to re-establish the fundamental principle that truth matters.

Jim Wallis is the author of *Rediscovering Values: On Wall Street, Main Street, and Your Street — A Moral Compass for the New Economy*, and CEO of *Sojourners*.

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All in a Month

By DANIEL NESTLERODE

My most recent musical adventures are about as disparate as they can be for a mandolin player. I suppose if I specialized in Jazz, Bluegrass, Celtic, or Pop I would go farther in any one of those genres than I have to date. But I enjoy the challenge largely unfamiliar repertory presents and more than that I enjoy the people with whom I play. If I limited myself to one genre, I would be celebrating music with a smaller circle. And it seems to me that celebrations should be as open as possible.

Sometimes music is about facilitating an activity. Sometimes it's about entertaining an audience. Sometimes it's about participation. And sometimes all of these things happen simultaneously. My recent musical endeavors have illustrated this for me in specific ways.

On a recent weekend in the foothills visiting friends who were hosting a large group of fellow musicians, folk dancers, singers, cooks, and storytellers, I got the rare opportunity to play in a contra-dance band. The dance leader organized a group of dancers (8-12 depending on the dance) and requested reels and jigs of a group of us who had fallen together near the dance pavilion.

Our bandleader called tunes or asked for suggestions and then led us through the music. Since this was Celtic music, I opened my ears, scrubbed my ear-hand coordination, and gently lubricated the neural pathways with some good scotch whiskey. But mostly I played as simply as possible in order to avoid mistakes and backed out when the music went by too fast for me to grab a hold of.

Back home in Modesto, folks have gotten together to start a regular Bluegrass jam at the Queen Bean on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month (6:30 to 8:30pm, contact the California Bluegrass Association (<http://www.fathersdayfestival.com/>) or the Queen Bean (<http://www.facebook.com/queenbeancoffeehouse?sk=info>) for info).

I attended recently and was reminded of the warm camaraderie of the Bluegrass community. Unlike playing for dancers or a distinct audience, a jam is about sharing the experience of playing music. Beyond the joy of playing music itself smiles, hugs, and handshakes are the reward at a jam.

At a jam, you won't be playing for dancers who need specific structures (reels, jigs, etc) and you won't be playing for an audience who expects to be entertained, so you can go to a jam knowing that you don't have to have your full repertoire handy or your technique sharp. You can go to a jam to learn a new tune, work on a technique, or simply enjoy the company of other players without the pressure to perform.

On a recent trip to Niles, my friend Matt and I decided to visit the Nile Café for a late afternoon coffee treat. Ever the



optimist (or opportunist—I haven't decided yet), Matt suggested we throw our instruments in the car in case we were called upon to provide some entertainment.

Sure enough, a fellow patron of the café mentioned she wished the café had "a guitarist in the corner." I heard the word "guitar" and hopped up to retrieve our instruments from my car. Matt and I played for 2 hours to an audience that never exceeded 10 and was usually closer to 4. People simply listened and clapped, glad to be in the same space as live music. We made ten dollars in tips, and a received a free meal from a grateful proprietor.

It was indeed mere happenstance, but Matt and I were presented with and grabbed the opportunity to perform. Performing forces a musician to consider presentation and all of its components: song choice, song order, preparation, recovery from mistakes without stopping the song, etc. When an audience turns their full attention to you, the performer, that attention forces you to focus and do your best. Lots of musicians avoid audiences, but those of us who perform know how intoxicating both the challenge and the reward can be.

My friend Tim has lately been developing a hybrid of eastern Indian call and response music (satsang) and western pop. He calls the band MahaShakti, and we have been rehearsing his original music. At an upcoming event, we'll be performing in a western sense while at the same time facilitating the participation of the audience in call and response lyrics.

This gig will cover all three of the other uses music can fulfill. First, we'll be playing for a purpose: to facilitate the call and response. Second, we'll be sharing: the act of supporting a satsang is about sharing our voices with each other. Third, we'll be performing: Tim has created a stage, we have a small public address system, and some of the music we'll be playing is more about showing than sharing.

So I'm getting it all in this month, supporting, sharing, and performing. If I had decided to specialize in a single genre, I doubt I could do all three so easily. I certainly wouldn't be having as much fun!

Note about the column:

I plan to take this column in a different direction in the New Year. I'll be talking with and telling you about folks whose lives revolve around music as much as mine does. These will be artisans and musicians, professionals and amateurs, practitioners and aficionados. The idea will be to introduce you to people you might want to meet, see, hear, or know about. And I'll focus mainly on the Modesto area with occasional forays into the Bay Area.

If you would like to see me write about someone special, send me an email (dnestler@mac.com) or contact me on Facebook.

Ten ways

from page 1

harm middle-class and poor people already reeling from a bad economy. Instead, the solution is to free society and government from corporate dominance. A functioning democracy is our best shot at addressing critical social, environmental, and economic crises.

5. It creates a big tent.

We, the 99%, are people of all ages, races, occupations, and political beliefs. We will resist being divided or marginalized. We are learning to work together with respect.

6. It offers everyone a chance to create change.

No one is in charge; no organization or political party calls the shots. Anyone can get involved, offer proposals, support the occupations, and build the movement. Because leadership is everywhere and new supporters keep turning up, there is a flowering of creativity and a resilience that makes the movement nearly impossible to shut down.

7. It is a movement, not a list of demands.

The call for deep change—not temporary fixes and single-issue reforms—is the movement's sustaining power. The movement is sometimes criticized for failing to issue a list of demands, but doing so could keep it tied to status quo power relationships and policy options. The occupiers and their supporters will not be boxed in.

8. It combines the local and the global.

People in cities and towns around the world are setting their own local agendas, tactics, and aims. What they share in common is a critique of corporate power and an identification with the 99%, creating an extraordinary wave of global solidarity.

9. It offers an ethic and practice of deep democracy and community.

Slow, patient decision-making in which every voice is heard translates into wisdom, common commitment, and power. Occupy sites are set up as communities in which anyone can discuss grievances, hopes, and dreams, and where all can experiment with living in a space built around mutual support.

10. We have reclaimed our power.

Instead of looking to politicians and leaders to bring about change, we can see now that the power rests with us. Instead of being victims to the forces upending our lives, we are claiming our sovereign right to remake the world.

Like all human endeavors, Occupy Wall Street and its thousands of variations and spin-offs will be imperfect. There have already been setbacks and divisions, hardships and injury. But as our world faces extraordinary challenges—from climate change to soaring inequality—our best hope is the ordinary people, gathered in imperfect democracies, who are finding ways to fix a broken world.

This article is adapted from the book, *This Changes Everything: Occupy Wall Street and the 99% Movement* edited by Sarah van Gelder and the staff of YES! Magazine and published November 2011 by Berrett-Koehler Publishers. \$6.95 (30% off the cover price when you buy from YES! All royalties from this book are donated to the Occupy Wall Street movement)

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