On Radical Grounds: A Rhetorical Take on the Emergence of #Occupy in Time, Place, and Space

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ON RADICAL GROUNDS: A RHETORICAL TAKE ON THE EMERGENCE OF #OCCUPY

IN TIME, PLACE, AND SPACE

by

MEGHAN MARIE DUNN

B.A., Texas State University, 2005

M.A., University of Texas, 2008

A thesis submitted to the

Faculty of the Graduate School of the

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On Radical Grounds: A Rhetorical Take on the Emergence of #Occupy in Time, Place, and Space
written by Meghan Marie Dunn
has been approved for the Department of Communication

______________________________
(Dr. Gerard A. Hauser)

______________________________
(Dr. Peter Simonson)

Date_____________________

The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, and we find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.

IRB protocol # 15-0064
This dissertation explores how the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) and the Occupy Movement (OM) *writ large* generated new forms of rhetorical invention through its emergence in geographical places and virtual spaces across the world. The genesis and development of Occupy on these “radical” grounds provide an empirical grounding to theory on the *chora*, rhetorical invention, and the vernacular, where the word *occupy* and the tactic *occupation* designate vital sites (*topoi*) of rhetorical activity: seats/sources of local meaning(s) that occupiers used to bring new lines of thought to life. The radical uptake of “occupy” would create what Edward Schiapp calls a definitional rupture: a disruption of the “natural attitude” around the meaning or usage of a word. To suture this gap, I acknowledge the ethical and normative ramifications that accompany the act of definition as a political act and then conduct a philological analysis on ‘occupy’ and ‘occupation’ by tracing these words to their earliest or “radical” roots. I then attend to the emergence of OWS in the place of Zuccotti Park/Liberty Plaza, followed by its first call to action and popular uptake in virtual streams and media, where both places produced new vernacular modalities and media. In gesturing to the disaster sociology literature on emergent citizen groups (ECGS) and emergent phenomena, this assembly of Occupy in time, place, and space, radically reconceives ‘what it means’ to “occupy” common places and spaces towards the creation of new socio-economic realities in response to crisis.
DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to Occupy, occupiers, and all those that continue to hold space for the emergence of new realities.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would first like to thank my advisor, Jerry, for his time and tenor in this project. His continued mentorship and humor have been instrumental to the generation and completion of this project. Secondly, I’d like to express the deepest gratitude to my living “patron saint,” Margaret, who taught me the meaning of Mutual Aid. I would not have been able to live in New York and pursue this project in the manner I did were it not for her unwavering support, her Polish pierogies, and her making me feel at home. As for those I’d like to acknowledge in Occupy, there are too many to list, but to name a few: Brandi Williams Palmer, Drew Hornbein, Katie, Jackrabbit, Ale & Nicole, Dicey, Tess, Priscilla, Pablo, Brett, Phoebe, Shane, Ethan, Cecily, Shawn, Rahee, Charles, Nick & Mariya, Lucky, Danielle, Schlomo, Thiago, Ingrid, Becky, Josh, Jenny, ALL the Puppet People, Andy Gimma, and Kelli Daley. I’d also like to acknowledge the first person I met from Occupy Wall Street in NYC, Justin Stone Diaz, who introduced me to Stan Williams—a person who deserves an entire acknowledgement page unto himself—and to the Think Tank, whose members reached out to me, took me in, and ultimately gave me a foothold in an otherwise nebulous movement and city. I am eternally grateful for the kindness and creativity I was shown by those working to make the world a better place.

On a more local (Boulder) front, I’d like to thank Patty Malesh for her encouragement to explore and participate in Occupy, for her informal advising of the dissertation, and for her creating a space conducive to “getting it done.” I’d also like to acknowledge Tiernan Doyle for her constant encouragement, for her translation of key Greek terms in this dissertation, and for keeping Boulder Flood Relief—formerly Occupy Boulder Flood Relief—alive and moving as our executive director. Thank you for keeping the goodness and integrity of this effort a viable, living, entity. To Daniel Hyunjae Kim: thank you for your friendship and camaraderie over these
past 5 years. Our conversations about rhetoric are some of my most cherished memories…many of which were diligently/candidly recorded on video for future generations, of course. To Daniel Kopyc: thank you for helping to keep the spirit of this project alive and kicking in good faith/bona fides. You saw beauty in this effort in ways that I still struggle to put into words; thank you. To my committee and department members: thank you for providing intellectual support and for allowing me to spend a year participating in Occupy at its epi-center. While not on the committee, I’d like to thank Bob Craig and Rosa Eberly, who engaged with me on @Occupy-related accounts and took seriously my efforts of bringing rhetoric and meta communication online.

On a familial front, I’d like to acknowledge the support and love of my family, both immediate and extended, who have given me something [so beautiful] to talk about “in the first place.” You’re the reason why I understood love to be the driving force of rhetoric. Finally, in the spirit of revolution—of “coming full circle”—I’d like to acknowledge a word that arrived in conjunction with the greatest epiphany of my life thus far: trincident. While this word is not colloquially used/recognized as a word, its unexpected but kairotic arrival—at the Denver Westword Music Showcase on June 18, 2011, mid-way through the last headliner/performance of the night—gave me a way to name the co-inciding of events or “emergent phenomena” in time, place, and space. I mention this here since this word would ultimately bring me into the fold of the Occupy Movement. Following through with this word would consequently find me working in the sector of crisis/disaster response and relief. For the purposes of this project, it would be negligent not to acknowledge and name the word that would help me understand what it is to “occupy” a thing for the sake of a higher good or a higher love.
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<td>American Red Cross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDC</td>
<td>New York City Dept of Design &amp; Construction</td>
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<tr>
<td>DHS</td>
<td>Department of Homeland Security</td>
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<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Disaster Research Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECGS</td>
<td>Emergent Citizen Groups</td>
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<td>EP</td>
<td>Emergent Phenomena</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEMA</td>
<td>Federal Emergency Management Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>GA</td>
<td>General Assembly</td>
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<td>HSI</td>
<td>Homeland Security Studies &amp; Analysis Institute</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information Communication Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<td>IOM</td>
<td>Institute of Medicine</td>
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<tr>
<td>MSM</td>
<td>Main Stream Media</td>
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<tr>
<td>MTA</td>
<td>Metropolitan Transportation Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>NYAM</td>
<td>the New York Academy of Medicine</td>
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<tr>
<td>NYC</td>
<td>New York City</td>
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<td>NYCGA</td>
<td>New York City General Assembly</td>
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<td>NYU</td>
<td>New York University</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>OED</td>
<td>Oxford English Dictionary</td>
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<tr>
<td>OM</td>
<td>Occupy Movement</td>
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<td>OS</td>
<td>Occupy Sandy</td>
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<td>OWS</td>
<td>Occupy Wall Street</td>
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INTRODUCTION

“The only sense in which we are communists is that we care for the commons. The commons of nature. The commons of what is privatized by intellectual property. The commons of biogenetics. For this and only for this we should fight.” - Slavoj Zizek


The topic of origins and creation, of generation (or -genesis) and beginnings is the subject and theme of this dissertation. To speak upon this concept, an inquiry into the origins of Occupy—as an emergent “Movement of movements” and a form of direct action—is broached by an in situ study of Occupy Wall Street (OWS) in three places where it ‘originally’ emerged: in virtual space, online, as the hashtag #OCCUPYWALLSTREET; in the physical place of Liberty Plaza (or Zuccotti Park) in lower Manhattan, New York City; and on an etymological front (or lexical terrain) of “occupy” as a word, over time. The latter can be traced to classical Latin and to the rhetorical figure or ‘anticipatory trope’ of occupatio or occupation: “a rhetorical figure in which the objections of an opponent are anticipated and defeated.”¹ A topological survey of Occupy in situ, in three kinds of (original) places—on Twitter, in Liberty Plaza/Zuccotti Park, and as a rhetorical trope—is undertaken as a first step towards locating new lines of argument (topoi) and new fields of economic activity (or labor²) that emerged or was generated from the grounds of OWS. More specifically, this study of Occupy in space, in place, and over time—on a virtual realm, in a physical terrain, and on an etymological front—attends to

the vernacular rhetoric of OWS, to the speech ‘native’ or ‘indigenous’ to Occupy, in order to
theoretically broaden (and radically reconfigure) the grounds upon which ‘the commons’ is
considered and conceived. Here, ‘the commons’ is taken up to mean a community or “†1. The
common body of the people of any place…”—the body politic, the polis, the corps-état—where
the “99%” has been regarded as a voice of the people, the vox populi. On the basis that
“discursive practices provide the evidentiary base for studying and interpreting the constitution
of social will,” a study of Occupy’s vernacular voices looks to the ‘regimes of truth’ (or bases of
logic) upon which a new common covenant between ‘the people’ and the polis were brought into
being.

The rationale behind this in situ survey of Occupy in three locations is twofold; first: if
revolutions, in a spatial sense, are said to come full circle when they return to the place where
they first began, then turning to the (original) sites where Occupy ‘took place’ or ‘held ground’
may reveal revolutionary ways of anticipating, inhabiting, and holding space on both terrestrial
horizons and digital fronts. Just as Robert Howard notes that “a new conception of the vernacular
can retrieve its fundamentally dialectical nature from the ancient texts where the term first
appears”—where he traces vernacular to verna (a home-born slave, a native) and to oikogenes
(“home-genetic”) and finally to the Latin hybrida (the offspring of a tame sow and a wild boar)
as a way to position the vernacular as a language between two worlds—a new conception of
occupy is equally possible when we attend to places where the term first appears. On an
etymological front, we might ask: what did occupy (or occupātiō) once mean in its mother

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3 See: OED, s.v. “common, n.1.”
tongue—in classical Latin, and as an ‘anticipatory trope’ of Rhetoric—not to mention its role in international, canon, and common law⁶? On a virtual and geographic front, we might question: what do the beginnings of Occupy—as viral hashtag (#OCCUPYWALLSTREET) and a movement in a park—tell us about what it means for ‘the commons’ to anticipate, create, and hold space for the emergence of new social, political, and economic realities? What covenants have been created as a consequence or condition of Occupy’s actions and efforts? In all cases, an attendance to the origins of Occupy and occupation may expand what it means not to ‘lay claim’ to places and spaces through seizure or force—for it is a commonplace that “as students of rhetoric our concern is obviously with those efforts which attempt to effectuate change, not through the forces of wealth or arms, but through the force of persuasion”⁷—but “what it looks like”⁸ (per the vernacular of Occupy) to “reclaim the commons” through the inhabitation and holding of common places (topoi) and spaces.

Secondly, this tripartite take on Occupy serves as graft to rhetorical studies of the chora, where the concept has been used by ancient writers (the Stoics, Plato, Aristotle) and contemporary scholars (Julia Kristeva, Jacques Derrida, Gregory Ulmer, Thomas Rickert) to theorize generative sites of rhetorical activity and the role of place/space in the emergence of new realities. As such, the arrangement (τάξις) of this study and text ‘takes after’ the dialogic character of Plato’s Timaeus and Critias, where the concept of the chora was first developed. In

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⁶ It has been noted by international law scholars that the legal origins of occupatio would ultimately give rise to the ius commune (common law), which “might still be considered ratio scripta, the expression of a timeless and universal law. See: Randall Lesaffer, “Argument from Roman Law in Current International Law: Occupation and Acquisitive Prescription,” The European Journal of International Law 16, no.1 (2005): 25.
⁸ This is a reference to the common chant/phrase “this is what democracy looks like!” While the phrase did not originate with Occupy, it was frequently invoked throughout the course of its existence and was one of the first phrases to emerge.
the beginning of his dialogue, Plato’s first three words are “One, two, three”—and his last: the three dots of an ellipsis or “...”—where Thomas Rickert notes,

...the counting to three is a recurring leitmotif as well as a structural feature. The dialogue is held to have three movements or (re)beginnings.* More important, the chōra is itself called a “third kind” (triton genos) by Timaeus (48e), meaning that it is not a thing as customarily understood, being neither matter nor ideal form. The chōra is granted a strangely displaced place, one that mirrors an ambiguity concerning ideas of beginning and creation, genesis and invention.”9

Given this, Rickert continues,

An understanding of the chōra cannot be extracted solely by examining what seem the most relevant passages, [sic], but rather must be worked through by attending to all aspects of the dialogue, including its dialogic character. As will be seen, this is entirely befitting the receptacle-like chōra, such that we might see the dialogue itself as providing a place for the concept’s emergence.”10

In a similar fashion, I have studied, participated in, and herein written on Occupy in three realms or dimensions in which the movement emerged: time, place, and space. Not only does this tripartite structuration ‘befit’ a progenitive concept like the chorē—where rhetorical invention is said to “emerge” in times of necessity as a consequence of place/space—but in order to fully appreciate what Occupy brought forth into the world, it is necessary to study how Occupy and the tactic of occupation “took place” as much in virtual space and over time as it did in the place of Zuccotti Park/Liberty Plaza. As Nathan Schneider discusses in Thank You, Anarchy: Notes

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9 In the place of the “*” is Rickert’s 7th footnote which reads: “For a well known example, Bury’s introduction to his 1929 Loeb translation of the Timaeus divides the dialogue into three parts: first, the introduction, including Solon’s legend of Atlantis (19a–27c); second, the soul of the world and the discussion of the chōra and the triangles (27c–69a); and three, the creation of soul’s and bodies (69a–end) (Bury 1929, 4). Obviously, this is not the only way to section off the dialogue, nor need we stick to a tripartite structure. It is nevertheless quite common. Additionally, the theme of threes is woven throughout the dialogue. Three different cities are discussed (Socrates’ ideal city narrated in the Republic, ancient Athens, and Atlantis), the three parts of the World Soul elaborated, and so on. The Timaeus itself was intended for a projected trilogy, of which it was the beginning, followed by the Critias, of which we have a fragment, and a Hermocrates, which was never written.” See: Thomas Rickert, “Toward the Chōra: Kristeva, Derrida, and Ulmer on Emplaced Invention,” Philosophy and Rhetoric 40, no. 3 (2007): 256.

10 Ibid.
from the *Occupy Apocalypse*, when Occupy lost its original ‘place’ in the park, its seizure of time and space became a surrogate or proxy receptacle for the movement’s aims and aspirations. He writes, “seizing space and time, and holding them, was how Occupy caused its rupture. That’s how it spread everywhere. For them, if there was no space, and no time in which to inhabit it, there was no Occupy.”

Thus, in the same way that the dialogic conventions of the *chora’s* original text (the *Timaeus*) provided a place for the concept’s emergence, so too has this dissertation been fashioned into a form that seizes and holds the dimensions of time, place, and space. It is in these dimensions that Occupy was made manifest.

As a parallel to be explored in the chapters that follow, this dissertation compares (and at times, correlates) the *chora*—as place/space and ‘maternal receptacle’—to the emergence of Occupy, where OWS would replicate itself in over 1,500 occupations worldwide and through projects that Occupy would “give birth to” in its name. As it is written about in the article “Liberty Plaza: A ‘Message’ Entangled with its Form,” Nicole Demby writes:

*Occupy Wall Street is streamed, tweeted, posted and reposted. It is a curiosity, a screen for projection, a spectator sport, everyone’s favorite and most hated child. Yet people continue to come daily who earnestly want to join or to aid the effort. OWS has become a receptacle for the lost progressive hopes of a previous generation. Despite the attempts of some media sources to caricature the occupiers, they constitute a diverse group that is attracting even more diversity. OWS has gained the support of many labor unions and community groups. Most importantly, its existence is enabling a necessary discourse to enter the mainstream.*

To the extent that Occupy is premised upon the ‘inhabitation’ or occupation of public places and virtual spaces as a movement and tactic—not to mention the precedents of occupation in bodies

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of classical scholarship and Roman law—then this study is pushing for a reconceptualization of what it means for ‘the commons’ (the body politic, the *corps-état*) to “do things,” *to act*, in physical and informational spaces. As Rickert notes, “in the *chôra* they find a theoretical resource able to generate new light on the emplaced (and displaced), distributed, and bodily character of rhetorical activity. However, the *chôra* is not only a matter of theoretical inquiry—it is of practical use.” In following Rickert’s lead in bringing the *chora* forward into our age, it is hoped that this study of Occupy may serve as a graft to rhetorical studies of the commonplace and the *chora*, where the ‘observed means of persuasion’ in the particular case of OWS may serve as ‘radical’ grounds from which to launch a broader, more general inquiry into the productive possibilities of crisis and the anticipation of its unfolding.

This ‘generic’ approach is based upon “Cicero’s idea of how rhetorical invention should be conducted,” whereby “such an inquiry, removed from particular times and persons to a discussion of a general issue, is called θέσις or ‘thesis.’” Cicero continues: “And the θέσις is, after all, the gateway through which philosophical education gets into rhetoric.” These theses or ‘abstract, general questions’ were a concern for Cicero, as they are a concern here, for reasons Tobias Reinhardt explains in the introduction to *Topica* below:

...the division of the θέσις occupies a prominent place in the famous digression on the relationship between rhetoric and philosophy in history. There Cicero argues that at an early stage both professions were one, but that they were separated because of the influence of Socrates. Since the separation, rhetoric has continuously declined—precisely because what gives life to rhetoric is its connection with philosophy—and finds itself now pressed into the narrow corner which is the (sc. forensic) υποθέσις. Cicero adumbrates the way in which rhetoric and philosophy may be brought together again: the orators need to get the θέσις back from the philosophers. It is no exaggeration to say that his idea of the

13 Rickert, 253.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid., 10.
reunification of rhetoric and philosophy comes down to winning back the θέσις for rhetoric.17

As such, the beginnings/genesis/inception of Occupy are surveyed from three original places, ‘in situ,’ in order to “reclaim the commons”18—the θέσις, the ‘general, abstract questions’—of the rhetorical discipline, whereby (as OWS proclaimed), “it is from these reclaimed grounds that we say to all Americans and to the world, Enough! How many crises does it take? We are the 99% and we have moved to reclaim our mortgaged future.”19 In turning to the reclaimed grounds of Occupy as our ‘case in point,’—in digital space, in geographical place, and over time—it is hoped that these places (topoi) and the vernacular native to these places will reveal the collective covenant we “have and hold” or come to create as citizens or occupants of the world(s) we call home. As Adbuster’s would note in its first call to action,

The beauty of this new formula, and what makes this novel tactic exciting, is its pragmatic simplicity: we talk to each other in various physical gatherings and virtual people’s assemblies … we zero in on what our one demand will be, a demand that awakens the imagination and, if achieved, would propel us toward the radical democracy of the future … and then we go out and seize a square of singular symbolic significance and put our asses on the line to make it happen.20

This study, then, is an attempt that follows suit: it is a rhetorical “take”—or, more radically, a rhetorical touch21—on a ‘square’22 whose ‘singular symbolic significance’ operates on a form of

17 Ibid., 10-11.
18 This is a picture personally taken during #S17, the one-year anniversary of OWS, in New York, NY. It captures a predominant theme (the commons) of the movement a year after it emerged in Zuccotti Park/Liberty Plaza.
19 NYCGA.net, “Principles of Solidarity.”
21 When the word “take” is traced to its earliest known origin or radical root, we discover that “take” did not mean an act of seizure, force, or conquest, but instead: ‘to touch,’ to ‘lay hands upon,’ ‘to transfer oneself by one’s own action or volition (anything material or non-material),’ to ‘receive or accept what is handed to one,’ and to ‘assume, adopt, apprehend, comprehend.’ (Emphasis mine.) I note this here because an objective of this dissertation is to draw attention to the ways that Occupy, as a movement, has disrupted the ways in which “occupy” is understood as an action. See: OED, s.v. “take, v.”
22 On radical grounds, the oldest origins of the word ‘place’ go back to the words: square, street, plaza, line, locus, and topos. What it means to “occupy” or seize a topos of argument is part and parcel of this dissertation project.
vernacular logic incommensurate with or outside dominant conceptions of law or legitimacy as (currently) recognized by statute or state. This form of logic is what Kent A. Ono and John M. Sloop refer to as “outlaw discourses” or “outlaw arguments,” which draw upon Jean-François Lyotard’s concept of the differend: “a conflict, between (at least) two parties, that cannot be equitably resolved for lack of a rule of judgment applicable to both arguments. One sides’ legitimacy does not imply the other’s lack of legitimacy.”23 Similar to the language used in the block quote above, Ono and Sloop note,

In that those arguing a case do not hold their own positions to be contingent language games (e.g., in Charland’s example, the Mohawk people “know” the land to be sacred; the courts “know” the primary function of land is to be owned and used) and in that outlaw arguments (here, those of the Mohawk people) could spark a social imaginary that, if enacted, could be an improvement on current logics (at least in the mind of the critic), we argue that the function of the critic is at times to cease ‘bearing witness to the ‘differend’ and to bear witness to a contingent logic as if it were universal, as if a particular outlaw logic were Truth with a capital T, as if all judgments should be made the way the Mohawk peoples’ judgment operates.24

Here, we may use “Occupy” in the place of “Mohawk”—especially since Charland’s example is a ‘fictional narrative example’ to illustrate the logic of those that hold certain grounds to be sacred—where in either case, Ono & Sloop note, “the critic’s question becomes: Will the logic of the outlaw discourse make for a better system of judgment than the current one, and, if so, how can I help bring it into being?”25 Towards these ends, a fellow occupier has made note through an email correspondence:

Though in the limited imagination of the vernacular ‘direct action’ rarely conjures images beyond sit-ins and banner drops, the literal definition opens up a much more radical expanse: to bring into being new structures and institutions, outside of the bounds of the ones that exist, by acting as though the necessary political

24 Ono and Sloop, 141.
25 Ibid.
and cultural conditions are already in place. In other words: To be the society you want to see.26

Thus, to the extent that the ‘outlaw logic’ of OWS was seen to make for a better system of judgment than the one that currently exists, this question—of how to bring that logic into being—has implicitly guided past and present efforts (in, with, and through Occupy) to bear witness to a particular outlaw logic as if it were Truth with a capital T. This dissertation, then, is a partial account on the vernacular of Occupy as it was witnessed to take place on “radical” grounds.

*Integrated Choric Components*

So as to not merely gesture to the “function” or “application” of the *chora* as it pertains to the generation or creation of rhetorical matter, I have integrated/incorporated choric elements into the dissertation by embedding hyperlinks in the body of the text to “outside material” in the form of articles, images, dictionary entries for key word/terms, and organizational material created in/by/during the Occupy Movement. While much of this material might be ‘just as easily’ accessed through a browser/Google search, some of these links will lead to material that was created on internal forums and drives by participants in the Occupy network. This material follows IRB protocol and exists on Google drives associated with this school email address and/or the primary email account created for this 4 year participatory study ([occupyrhetoric@gmail.com](mailto:occupyrhetoric@gmail.com)) where many fruitful conversations and internal dynamics took place. The incorporation of these materials via hyperlinks reflects “key ideas” developed in Gregory Ulmer’s book *Heuretics*: “that the contemporary age of electronic media asks us to move away from the invention techniques codified in the *topoi* toward techniques that build out

of the *chōra.*” To do this, Ulmer states (as Rickert notes) that “the writer using chorography as a rhetoric of invention will store and retrieve information from premises or places formulated not as abstract containers, as in the tradition of *topos*” (1994, 73). On this, Rickert writes:

Instead, a choric rhetorician will attend to memory, networks, technologies, intuitions, and environments (places). What might this mean? [sic] [Ulmer] uses a hybrid combination of method, pastiche, accident, and associative thinking, as well as rational discourse and logic, to construct variable-media discourses that he refers to as hypermedia. Hypermedia digitally combine image, text, and sound in various permutations; further, in terms of their composition, they are likely to borrow techniques from one media form and apply it to the other, e.g., appropriating a network organizational pattern for an argument."

Here, a networked organizational pattern (and its components) has been appropriated in order to demonstrate an argument espoused by the movement itself: “the belief that education is [a] human right; and making technologies, knowledge, and culture open to all to freely access, create, modify, and distribute.” Thus, given that many of these materials can’t be accessed or seen by those without a subscription to their respective databases/repositories or services, the incorporated links and materials allows these journals, images, and entries to be viewed by those who wouldn’t otherwise encounter or have the “privilege” to read without a subscription fee.

Another argument these choric integrations help to make manifest concerns the relationship between accessibility of information/data in the context of crisis. Thus, one form of incorporated materials include links to academic articles that are cited in the main body of text, where the referenced article can be quickly accessed in its entirety and consulted by those who might wish to review the subtler intricacies of the argument in its “original form.” Not only does this save time, generally speaking, for the reader who would wish to read the original text that

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27 Rickert, 267.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid., 267-268.
was cited, but when operating in “crisis mode” or from a crisis/disaster operational framework, barriers around the ease and accessibility of information, data, or sources inhibits and hinders response, recovery, and relief-oriented activities. As such, I have endeavored to dismantle some of these barriers by making these documents public and allowing readers to save precious time by having these resources immediately at hand. Finally, given that Occupy ran on a “gift-economy” model—whereby “people share goods and services, and all sorts of donations flow into Occupy nodes”—so too does this dissertation treat articles and words as “gifts”: tokens of gratitude, given freely, to other bodies and beings out of appreciation or celebration of their existence. Since a primary argument of this dissertation is that even a single word (i.e. “occupy”) can bring together people across time, place, and space in “revolutionary” ways, every attempt has been made to follow through on a single word in a way that exemplifies what is it to “occupy” by animating its principles.

Arrangement of the Dissertation

Following this introduction, Chapter One will serve as a theoretical primer on the vernacular and the chora as both are studied from the field of rhetoric. After providing a historical overview of the literature on the vernacular and the sites where it has been studied, I discuss the origin (or emergence) of vernacular rhetoric in social movement studies during the 1950s (Griffin 1952), which expanded on earlier conceptions of rhetoric as a social practice during the 1920s (Ogden & Richards 1923; Dewey 1927). I then briefly discuss the etymology of the word ‘vernacular,’ where it has been traced to the Latin word for ‘home-bound slave’ and native. After this, I attend to key concepts of the vernacular, which, for the purposes of this

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project, include: the reticulate public sphere (Hauser 1999), vernacular hybridity (Howard 2008; Anzaldúa 2012), and outlaw discourse (Ono & Sloop 2002). After this, I briefly review literature on emergent citizen groups (ECG) and emergence phenomenon vis-à-vis the body of hazards and disaster research, where the appearance or assembly of ad hoc groupings in the field—demonstrations of ‘helping behavior’ at the scene of disaster—became a focal point of formalized research within the branch of disaster sociology. In order to transition to the methods chapter that follows, I end by asking: what special commitments exist or arise as a consequence or condition of studies in vernacular rhetoric? Are these commitments compounded when the researcher is studying these people and practices in the middle of disaster?

Chapter Two will be a treatment of methods and the research question that gave rise to them. A growing number of scholars are drawing on qualitative methods (e.g. ethnography, participant observation, interviewing, fieldwork) in their rhetorical scholarship, creating an area of hybrid “mixed methods” that travels under several names—rhetorical field methods, ethnographic rhetoric, and critical-rhetorical ethnography. A discussion of the cause for this burgeoning of mixed-methods is first addressed, where the critical turn in rhetorical theory (McKerrow 1989; Charland 1990; Conquergood 1992; Ono & Sloop 1992) and the fragmentation of cultural terrains brought about by the postmodern condition is at the heart of this turn. After this, I address the commitments and concerns of both vernacular scholars and qualitative researchers in order to provide a rationale for the selection of methods, which include participant-observation and elements of rhetorical field methods through the case studies of OWS and OS. I give a fuller account for the data sets drawn upon for this study and the textual artifacts that I am drawing upon for an analysis of the movement. I draw upon an extensive archive of emails from public and private Occupy listservs, Google groups, and emails as well as
notes written during unfolding response/recovery effort in the relief hub of St. Jacobi Church in Sunset Park (Brooklyn), NY, as a way to provide a narrative account of the kinds of activities, tasks, and events that occurred during my study of and participation in Occupy. In order to ultimately discuss how OS leveraged the logic and technes developed during OWS, I also draw upon an extensive body of articles and reports published by both MSM, alternative media, and “formal” agencies (i.e. Homeland Security) which frame OS as one of the more successful grassroots disaster operations in the U.S.

The first analysis chapter, Chapter Three (“Occupy Over Time: The Radical Roots of Occupation and Occupatio”) conducts a rhetorical analysis on what is perhaps the most common of all commonplaces (topoi) in the Occupy Movement (OM): the name of “Occupy” and the notion of occupation. Among the occupations and occupiers who adopted these terms—or would otherwise act, speak, write, respond, or move and “do work” in its name—“occupy” (and relatedly, “occupation”) came to designate a vital site of rhetorical activity. While ‘occupy’ is “just a word,” the word itself became a seat/source/place of local meaning(s): a generative topos around which a vernacular public came into being and under which the movements of a Movement united. As we will see, the origins of this word [occupy] are intimately wedded to the discipline of rhetoric—where occupatio (occupation) and/or occultatio (or occultation) are ancient rhetorical tropes designed to anticipate, defeat, or pass over an argument—which is why this chapter pushes for what Edward Schiappa calls a “rhetorically induced”32 definition of what occupy meant at an earlier time. Just as “occupation” emerged as a vernacular tactic used by occupiers/occupations to “reclaim the commons” and open space for the emergence of new

realities, this chapter ‘occupies’ or reclaims the word of occupy on an etymological or “radical” front in order to: 1. Show how the Occupy Movement (OM) restored archaic and obsolete meanings/definitions to the words *occupy* and *occupation* through modern-day protest/process\(^\text{33}\) actions on the street, and 2. Open up space for the emergence of new “occupations” or occupational activities when we see what the ‘meaning’ of occupy looks like in a different (rhetorical) light.

Given the more abstract theses (\(\theta\varepsilon\sigma\varsigma\))\(^\text{34}\) that could be laid down on what it means for a movement to raise (en relevée) old meaning from the dead,\(^\text{35}\) this chapter traces “occupation” to its earliest recorded sources: to the ancient rhetorical figures of anticipation and occultation, to Roman private law—where *occupatio* was as a mode of acquiring property and tracing bloodlines—and to its uptake and use by Chaucer as a literary and vernacular motif. However, despite its classical origins and the modern renewal of this tactic/term by the OM, few vestiges of *occupatio* remain in contemporary and rhetorical literature on the subject. This absence of rhetorical scholarship from the very discipline wherein the term emerged indicates a theoretical gap/extension to be occupied (chora) and cultivated by those to whom the term bears relevance. While this chapter ultimately addresses what Schiappa calls “the ethical and normative ramifications of the act of defining”\(^\text{36}\) whereby the act of definition becomes a political act, we may come to discover that old meanings of occupation bear great relevance and application to

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\(^{33}\) The word “process” is used here because OWS would insist “this is a process, not a protest” and I endeavor to stay true to their words.

\(^{34}\) As Tobias Reinhardt notes in his introduction to Cicero’s *Topica*: “Cicero adumbrates the way in which rhetoric and philosophy may be brought together again: the orators need to get the \(\theta\varepsilon\sigma\varsigma\) back from the philosophers. It it no exaggeration to say that his idea of the reunification of rhetoric and philosophy comes down to winning back the \(\theta\varepsilon\sigma\varsigma\) for rhetoric.” 10-11.

\(^{35}\) To the extent that the single word (*logos*) of “occupy”—as an “idea whose time had come” (*kairos*)—was raised (en relevée) and “crossed back” (croisé derrière) like the position of the “ballerina on the bull,” then occupy/Occupy can be said to return meaning to antiquated senses of its name, a name which consequently unified a diasporic community.

\(^{36}\) Ibid.
fields beyond the political sector. In particular, occupation or “the rhetorical figure in which the objections of an opponent are anticipated and defeated” is a concept not wholly unfamiliar to those working on preparedness and resiliency initiatives in the disaster and crisis sector. This chapter will in fact close by addressing how this anticipatory figure and rhetorical mode aligns with the work of first responders in anticipating a crisis-related event, before it happens, so as to “defeat” it.

As the second analysis chapter, Chapter Four (“Occupy in the Place/Space of Zuccotti Park/Liberty Plaza”) is a rhetorical “take” on the park/plaza of Zuccotti/Liberty in NYC where this place/space served as the original site where the Occupy Movement (OM) emerged on “physical” or geographic terrain. As such, I turn to the classical concept of the *chora* in order to similarly ground my analysis in a theoretical framework and lineage of scholarship that explores the role of place/space upon the genesis of rhetorical activity. To begin my analysis on a “first place” (aphorme) where OWS held ground and took root, I provide a synopsis of the ways the *chora* has been theorized by ancient writers—namely as a spatial concept used by the Stoics and as a political, ontological, and cosmological concept in Plato’s *Timaeus* and *Critias*—where I then turn my attention to its uptake by contemporary writers (Julia Kristeva, Jacques Derrida, Gregory Ulmer, Thomas Rickert) where it is used to theorize and expand notions of invention and rhetorical space. In order to draw parallels between the park and the *chora*, the chapter is divided into the three ways the *chora* is theorized, as: 1. A place/space or “extension” which can

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37 The word ‘take’ chosen because of its “radical” fit (or original meaning) of “‘to put the hand on’, ‘to touch’” where the OED notes, “by a natural advance, such as is seen in English in the use of ‘lay hands upon’, the sense passed to ‘lay hold upon, lay hold of, grip, grasp, seize’—the essential meaning of Old Norse *taka*, of Middle Dutch *taken*, and of the material senses of *take* in English.” Since the subject and action of “occupation” is currently at hand, this word is operative in at least two senses. See the OED, s.v. “take, v.”
be occupied (‘taken’).\(^{38}\) 2. The “maternal matrix” or ontological “receptacle” of becoming and change,\(^{39}\) and 3. A ‘political’ boundary or region surrounding and sustaining a *polis* or city-state. As we will see, the place/ space of Zuccotti/Liberty has been *correspondently* called: 1. A movement predicated on the occupation or ‘taking’ of places and spaces, where movement participants and researchers/reporters have described Zuccotti/Liberty as 2. “A receptacle,” “a cocoon,” and “the womb” and 3. As “an experimental agora,” an “exemplar society,”\(^{40}\) a “base of operations” or “basecamp,” a “micro-city,” “hyper-city,” and an “alternative polity.”\(^{41}\) Thus, by attending to the original place that gave rise to emergent forms of rhetorical activity, labor, and invention during OWS, we may come to understand the tactic of occupation as both a ‘last resort’ and “first response” to the constant socio-political and bio-economic crises of the day.

As the third and last analysis chapter, *Chapter Five* (“The Digital Commons and Virtual Vernacular of #Occupy, Wall Street”) explores the origins of OWS in virtual space, beginning with the first public call to action by Adbusters magazine in July of 2011. Picking up where the last chapter leaves off—with the *chora* as a spatial concept, where the “*chôra* still has much of its original sense: it is an extension which can be occupied (‘taken’)”\(^{42}\)—I incorporate theory on the rhetorical *topos* and ‘electronic hybridity’ (Howard 2010) in order to discuss the initial ‘virality’ of the movement through the hashtags of #OCCUPYWALLSTREET and #Occupy. By taking to the virtual streams after OWS got kicked off the streets of Liberty/ Zuccotti, the

\(^{38}\) Keimpe Algra writes “in those cases where *chôra* should be translated as ‘place/ space’ the idea is always that of an extension, whether two- or three- dimensional, which is occupied or which can be occupied” and “[the] *chôra* still has much of its original sense: it is an extension which can be occupied (‘taken’).” See Keimpe Algra, *Concepts of Space in Greek Thought* (Leiden, The Netherlands: E. F. Brill, 1995), 33.

\(^{39}\) See Plato, *Timaeus and Critias*.


\(^{42}\) Algra, 33.
leveraging of social media technologies (i.e. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram) would enable occupiers to use “institutionalized” media towards non-institutionalized ends whereby those without recourse to or resources of the mainstream media (MSM) could “get the word out” in unmediated space. While the leveraging of social media became a common “tactic” of protest communities and global uprisings since 2009, I specifically discuss the hashtag as a digital *topos* that allowed occupiers to locate topics, events, individuals, and material associated with/relevant to the movement in “real time.” This, as we will see, expands the theoretical terrain of “rhetorical space” and brings the rhetorical commonplace into the modern age through its deployment in “real time” in virtual space.

In the *Conclusions Chapter*, I provide a synopsis of the major and minor premises advanced in each chapter in order to show what Occupy “gives” us when studied over time, in place, and in virtual space. These “givens” should help make it more apparent how/why Occupy Sandy (OS) was able to emerge and operate as it did, as an extension of the practices, principles, and logic that were developed in the park and online during OWS. This chapter also addresses future research to be conducted in the field of vernacular and emergent phenomena, where both fields have much to contribute the other when looking to emergent behavior within discursive domains. This is one area that is underdeveloped on both fronts, where a sustained focus to the micro-politics and hyper-local events of disaster give rise to new problems and new solutions across a variety of response and relief-oriented tasks. I plan to restate rhetoric’s relationship to *krisis* that advances some preliminary answers to a question posed in both the theory and methods chapter: what future developments might the theory and practice of the vernacular herald or hold for the viability of the rhetorical tradition and the application of its tropes, topics, and theories particular to the discipline? I will close on a note that brings together the major
takeaways from this 4-year participatory study of Occupy, which includes engagement in OWS, OS, and finally, a local emergent citizen group (ECG) that replicated/modeled itself after OS: Boulder Flood Relief (BRC), a now non-profit organization that emerged in response to the Colorado and Boulder Floods of 2013. As a “proof of concept” for the effectiveness and need of horizontal structures and transparent “everyday” practices, both OS and BFR give credence to the rhetorical activity and inventions that emerged during OWS’ “reign” in the park and in online space. It is hoped that Occupy, as a whole, can continue to teach us about the formation and response of publics in times of social, environmental, and economic crisis. It is further hoped that this dissertation demonstrates (pisteis) the role that rhetoric can play in the creation of and response to new realities.
CHAPTER I

THEORY ON PLACE (TOPOS) AND SPACE (CHORA)

In the first sentence of Thomas Rickert’s “Toward the Chōra: Kristeva, Derrida, and Ulmer on Emplaced Invention,” he writes: “Our understanding of what it means to inhabit and interact in spatial environments is changing. Fields as diverse as computing, biology, information design, cognitive science, and philosophy have in their own ways been pushing for a different sense of what it means for bodies to do things in physical and informational spaces.”¹ These physical and digital spaces—as additionally theorized by Julia Kristeva, Jacques Derrida, and Gregory Ulmer—are regarded as the architectural or ‘ambient’ environs that we inhabit as social beings navigating complex ecologies of human and informational systems: our social networks, our virtual technologies and digital devices, our ‘everyday’ traversals of the body and mind through urban topographies and affective terrains. As Rickert discusses, “the mind in particular is increasingly seen as something implicated in and dispersed throughout complex social and technological systems. It is leaky, commingling with the body and the ambient environs, and as emotional as it is rational.”² As such, our ‘everyday’ existence is forged within and transformed by the commingling of mind and body within the physical, social, and technological realms in which we interact or inhabit. However, as Rickert is quick to point out: “how these transformations affect rhetoric is less theorized, and this essay attempts to bridge that gap by looking at how these issues emerge in recent work on Plato’s concept of the chōra and rhetorical invention.”³ To the extent that Occupy contributes to changes in “what it means to inhabit and

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² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
interact in spatial environments,” this study is similarly pushing to reconceptualize what it means—or what it looks like—for ‘the commons’ (the body politic, the corps-état) to “do things,” to act, in physical and informational spaces.

Following Rickert’s lead in addressing “how the chōra as an ancient line of thinking can illuminate contemporary concerns”⁴ as it pertains to creativity, -genesis, and becoming, this chapter will draw upon the lineage of rhetorical theory on the commonplace or topos from which a discussion of the chora may begin. For as Richard McKeon notes, “that creativity takes its beginning in the commonplace may be taken as a familiar and accepted commonplace.”⁵ After touching upon the topological bases that Rickert addresses in his article —namely: what is the chora; where did it come from; how was/is it used and by whom; and why does it bear relevance to rhetorical theory—I will extend a few of these bases by grounding the chōra in actual sites of political and rhetorical activity: the places, spaces, and sites of Occupy’s corporeal origins. This effort to give place (topos) to a concept that is itself without place (atopos) follows in the footsteps of contemporary scholars who have found the chora to be “a theoretical resource able to generate new light on the emplaced (and displaced), distributed, and bodily character of rhetorical activity.”⁶ Rickert continues,

As deployed in the work of Julia Kristeva, Jacques Derrida, and Gregory Ulmer, the chōra transforms our senses of beginning, creation, and invention by placing them concretely within material environments, informational spaces, and affective (or bodily) registers, and in the case of Derrida, also by displacing them. [sic] By refocusing on what falls outside discourse proper, like emotion or the chōra itself, or redistributing rhetorical agency across a network of human and nonhuman agents, these writers suggest we can (and should) reapproach the invention question Plato wrestles with in the Timaeus, which is how to move from static ideas to vital activity, from the speculative theory of the Republic to a dynamic,
vibrant Athens. The *chōra*, brought forward into our age, stands to radically reconfigure our understanding of rhetorical space.\(^7\)

Just as the concept was used in the beginning, in Plato’s *Timaeus* and Critias, “to bring the ideal *polis* to life as an actual city, one that has a place”\(^8\)—the *chora* is used here for similar purposes: to provide a place (or the grounds) within a disciplinary environ for understanding Occupy as an emergent and inventive place/space of becoming and change. Here, analyses of Occupy—on the speech (or vernacular) that was developed through it, with it, in it—includes but extends beyond the emergence of OWS in the park (Zuccotti Park/Liberty Plaza) into other public areas, atriums, forums, streets, and squares. Here, the vernacular of #Occupy is considered within a virtual context, where occupations arose online through the leveraging of internet/communication technology (ICT) and new or “participatory” media: Twitter accounts, Facebook pages, Instagram pictures, blogs, websites, and listservs, to name but a few.

As Rickert notes, because of technological transformations in our media and social environments, “we should begin to consider media not simply the *medium* by which we interact and communicate with others, but in a quite literal sense a *place*.”\(^9\) While the idea that new media is a kind of rhetorical frontier or place is not new,\(^10\) Rickert notes that “how these transformations [in digital landscapes] affect rhetoric is less theorized”\(^11\) and ‘some basic groundwork’ is still needed to reconfigure how place and space affects or shapes the generation and organization of rhetorical discourse. For Rickert, the problem necessitating this groundwork can be attributed to theoretical tendencies of viewing the mind, body, and environment as independent from one another, despite many of our ‘everyday’ habits and routines that would

\(^7\) Ibid., 252.
\(^8\) Rickert, 258.
\(^9\) Ibid, 252.
\(^11\) Ibid., 251.
indicate our attention (or minds) are dispersed across (and influenced by) the places we frequent, inhabit, or occupy in physical, social, and technological realms. While the problem this ‘separatist paradigm’ poses is not necessarily “news” to scholars with roots in speech and performance,\(^1\) we can at least use Rickert’s understanding of this disconnect as a reminder of what the unification between mind, body, and place/space bring to rhetorical theory, where he writes:

Much rhetorical theory still works out of the separatist mind/body/environment paradigm being challenged. The demarcation between mind and body, and body and environment, along with a valuation of method, idea, and logic are typical of the older paradigm. One must have a plan, a method for achieving a plan, and a spatial arrangement or layout reflective of the plan; one then works as a rhetorical agent via ideas to achieve effects in the world “out there.” These assumptions seem *prima facie* matter of fact and perhaps indisputable, but in fact, this is not the case. In the new spatial paradigm, minds are both embodied, and hence grounded in emotion and sensation, and dispersed into the environment itself, and hence no longer autonomous.\(^3\)

Again, while there is a longer history of rhetoricians embracing the connection between bodies and environments than Rickert would allude, we can use his reinscription of the problem to address the role that our environs play as starting points or beginnings for the construction and transformation of ideational matter into rhetorical material. To make this connection between the connectedness of place/space and rhetorical generation, Rickert turns to the lineage of theory on the rhetorical *topos* where he writes, “in rhetoric, the innumerable permutations of the *topoi,* or

\(^1\) One need not go further than Walter Ong’s *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology* or Carroll C. Arnold’s “Oral Rhetoric, Romance, and Literature” for a discussion on the fusion between mind and body in relation to embodied rhetorical performance. More specifically, Arnold writes: “Whether the relationships of orality are envisioned or experienced in actuality, speaker and listener revise their views of self; experience becomes markedly other-directed; personality is recognized as an inevitable, legitimate, energizing element among affective forces; special communicative resources are seen to exist and to require use and control; special hazards are recognized, requiring to be mastered sufficiently to meet conventional standards of the oral mode.” See: Carroll C. Arnold, “*Oral Rhetoric, Romance, and Literature,*” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1, no.4 (Fall 1968): 197. See also: Walter J. Ong, *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology: Studies in the Interaction of Expression and Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971), i-348.

\(^3\) Ibid.
commonplaces, can be seen as such a nonbiological construct: the mind utilizes an external symbolic resource to generate and organize rhetorical discourse."\textsuperscript{14} He continues, “for instance, topic invention sees various ideas, either abstract (division, cause and effect) or culturally particular (taxes are bad, maximize efficiency), as providing a discursive place where thoughts begin and grow.”\textsuperscript{15} Thus, an attendance to these discursive places “where thoughts begin and grow” in the context or environ of a worldwide movement should reveal new lines of thinking (\textit{topoi}) that emerged from and radically altered the grounds upon which we know “occupation” to be possible.

\textbf{Topos and Chora: Between a Rock and an Open Place}

In order to make the case that Occupy can be understood as the \textit{chora}, I am first turning to a lineage of scholarship on the rhetorical commonplace (\textit{topos}) which has been used by ancient writers (Isocrates, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian) and contemporary scholars (Vico, William M. A. Grimaldi, Karl Wallace, Richard McKeon, William Nothstine, Ed Dyck, Sara Rubinelli, Daniel E. Mortensen, John Muckelbauer, Debra Hawhee, Peter Simonson) to designate ‘generative sites’ of rhetorical activity, invention, and argument. Thus, while the word \textit{topos} (\textit{τόπος}) and its plural form \textit{topoi} (\textit{τόποι}) are Greek terms that transliterate to “place” and “places” respectively, the formalization of the \textit{topos or topoi} as “\textit{commonplace}” or “commonplaces” are often attributed to Aristotle through his systematic treatment of the subject in the \textit{Rhetorica (On Rhetoric)} and \textit{Topica (Topics)} around 359-357 BCE.\textsuperscript{16} For Aristotle, the rhetorical commonplace—later called and used by Cicero as \textit{locus} or \textit{loci communes}—were generally held

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{16} See the timeline in Donovan J. Ochs, “\textit{Aristotle’s Concept of Formal Topics}” in Keith M. Erickson, ed., \textit{Aristotle: The Classical Heritage} (New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1974), 196.
to be synonymous with “topic” (τοπικός) and were specifically regarded as seats, sources, or ‘lines of argument’ where the rhetorician, dialectician, or rhetor might look/follow in order to furnish the ‘source material’ (or eidē/идia) necessary for an argument or theme. In addition to serving as sites of invention used to generate arguments, rhetorical topoi (or loci) have been used to designate places of memory used to recall and store information. As William Nothstine notes,

Ideas or lines of argument, the students of antiquity learned, are things that can be stored in “places.” By returning to that “place” where a bit of information was filed, the information might be later retrieved. Thus the speaker unable or unwilling to commit a speech to writing could nevertheless remember it in sequence and detail by imagining it against the background of a familiar scene.

While scholars distinguish between the loci of Cicero and the topoi of Aristotle as they operate in the rhetorical canons of invention and memory, the topos and locus are both themselves a ‘special topic’ or ‘thematic site’ (a commonplace) of disciplinary inquiry, where Daniel E. Mortensen notes, “the rhetorical concept of the locus, sometimes called a topos, topic, place, commonplace, et al., has been one of the most enduring and influential concepts in Western thought. The concept stretches from the sophists of the fifth century BCE in an unbroken...
tradition into modern rhetorical theory.”²¹ In more modern instantiations of the rhetorical topoi, scholars (McKeon) have sought to transform the commonplace “from collections of fixed and established, communicable clichés” to “neutral sources of new perceptions operative in new directions in the thought and culture and philosophy of the twentieth century.”²² As it pertains to our subsequent topic of the *chora* and the sites where rhetorical invention takes place, McKeon discusses the function of these ‘neutral sources’ or what he calls “the commonplaces of creativity” as follows:

In the interpretation of the text of a philosopher, past or present, commonplaces of invention may open up the perception of new meanings and applications even in a familiar text, which in turn uncovers previously unperceived lines of arguments to unnoticed conclusions which were not there until they were made facts by discovery. The newly perceived facts of interpreting a text may in turn lead to the discovery of new powers of perception and their use in the discovery of new existential data and new experiential facts, set in relation by new arts and methods, to discover new universes of discourse, thought, consequential occurrence, and systematic organization. The use of the commonplaces of creativity erects and fills the commonplace as a storehouse of the familiar to provide materials for commonplaces as instruments for the perception, creation, arrangement, and establishment of the new in existence, experience, discursive exploration, and inclusive organization.²³

As we will see, modern uptakes of the rhetorical topoi are similar to how the *chora* is now discussed by modern theorists: as creative or inventive ‘stores’ of perception that operate in the formation and interpretation of texts, experiences, statements, and all myriad of matters particular to beings.

*The Chora: Past and Present*

²² McKeon, 207.
Like *topos* and *locus*, *chora* (χώρα) is another spatial term of Greek origin whose basic meaning is that of ‘land/region/ground’ and which roughly translates to ‘space’ or ‘place/space.’ However, as Keimpe Algra notes in *Concepts of Space in Greek Thought*, “in those cases where *chôra* should be translated ‘place/space’ the idea is always that of an extension, whether two- or three-dimensional, which is occupied or which can be occupied.” In this sense, *chora* designates an Euclidean or ‘3D’ area or region that is open, vacant, or otherwise amenable to occupation or taking. However, before discussing what the *chora* brings to this study of Occupy—and what Occupy, as a body politic or *corps-état*, does to remedy or reconfigure “a problem that the *chôra* has no body of scholarship in rhetorical theory”—there are a few distinctions to be made here between *topos* (as place) and *chora* (place/space) in order to clarify the “inventive” nature of both. On a terminological front, Rickert notes,

> Chôra and topos were often used synonymously to refer to space and place. Chôra is the older term, however, and in the extant written record topos is not encountered until Aeschylus (Liddell, Scott, and Jones, 1940, 1,806). There are some finer shades of distinction as well. So, while *chôra* does connote place, it is also closely associated with land, city, region, or ground. Keimpre Algra goes on to suggest for *chora* the more abstract meaning “an extension that can be occupied” (1995, 33), a meaning that can include one’s place, as in social rank, or one’s proper positioning, as for example a soldier’s post (Liddell, Scott, and Jones 1940, 2,015). In cases where *topos* and *chôra* were used together—i.e. in “Plato Lg. 760 c: οι της χώρας τόποι (‘the places of the country’)”—*topos* was used to denote a (smaller) part of the *chora/χόρα* or

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25 Algra notes that “a closer look at the rules which apparently governed the choice between the two terms will allow us to criticise the ‘automatic’ translations often found in the scholarly literature, which assume a one-to-one correspondence between topos and ‘place’ and chôra and ‘space’. The Greek language did not have a terminological distinction between place and space.” Algra, 31.
26 Ibid., 33.
27 Rickert, 253.
28 Ibid., 254.
29 Ibid.
the geographical *position* within the region/country where, as Algra notes, “a relative localization could only (or at least: more naturally) be expressed by the term *topos.*” While Algra is quick to caution that “whether *topos* and *chôra* should be translated ‘space’ or ‘place’ depends on the context in which they appear rather than on anything like their ‘intrinsic meaning,’” he also notes that “we may tentatively conclude, then, that in common parlance *topos* and *chôra* were used more or less *promiscue,* the only traceable difference being that whereas *chôra* appears to have always denoted a certain extension, *topos* could also be used just to denote location in relation to the surroundings.” As it relates to Occupy, we can understand *topos/topoi* as the places or sites where Occupy emerged: the cities, the squares, the atriums and forums where occupiers encamped, assembled, and convened. Liberty Plaza, for example, can be seen as the physical grounds (*topos*) wherein OWS was geographically “located.” However, Occupy would extend beyond the place (*topos*) of Liberty Plaza upon which the grounds of Liberty became a generative space (*chora*) of activity: a ‘place-space’ of becoming and change. The “hypercity” and “experimental agora” that would arise from the grounds/place of Liberty would later be called “a receptacle” and “womb” by occupiers who inhabited the park. The place (*topos*) of the park, then, opened up choric space for the emergence and creation of new socio-political realities.

Thus, despite similarities in meaning between *topos* and *chora* in classical conceptions of place and space, the *chora* stands in marked contrast to the rhetorical *topos* (commonplace) on a couple fronts, the first in regard to the disciplinary attention received by each. That is, whereas *topos/topoi* is part of a long lineage or “unbroken tradition” of theory from the fifth century BCE

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30 Algra, 35.
31 Algra, 34.
32 Ibid.
to present day, scholars maintain “it remains a problem that “the chōra has no body of scholarship in rhetorical theory.””\(^{33}\) Rickert advances at least two reasons for the dearth of this literature, noting:

First, rhetoric has little addressed the chōra, so there is scant work to build on. Rhetoric, in whichever of its institutional incarnations, has preferred inventional systems such as the classical topoi or contemporary approaches such as Kenneth Burke’s pentad (see Young, Lauer), and thus has delimited rhetorical space as grounded in discursive, print-based notions of representation and rationality. Second, the chōra as developed in the Timaeus has ever been a murky concept given to mystery and mysticism. Nor does it appear to have been intended to have bearing on rhetoric. Indeed, the chōra is generally seen as a troublesome early effort to explain spatiality more fully developed by Aristotle when he subsumed chōra under topoi and theorized it as material space, although he did grant that Plato was the first to say anything of significance about space.\(^{34}\)

To say little about Rickert’s reading of Burke—which seems to depart from what Burke actually argues in Philosophy of Literary Form and elsewhere\(^{35}\)—there is legitimacy in the statement that the classical topoi have been used over the chora to address matters of rhetorical invention. However, despite the chora not having a “body” in rhetorical theory, poststructuralist thinkers like Jacques Derrida, Julia Kristeva, Gregory Ulmer, and Edward Casey have used the chora as a ‘theoretical resource’ for ‘generating new light’ on how extra-discursive places and spaces—“material environments, informational spaces, and affective (or bodily) registers”—give shape to the formation of rhetorical activity. Just as these writers “demonstrate that the chōra is of rhetorical interest because it transforms our sense of what is available as means for persuasion, or, more precisely, of what is available as means for rhetorical generation,” an in situ study of Occupy in sites of emergence aims to make the connections between place/space and rhetorical

\[^{33}\text{Rickert, 253.}\]
\[^{34}\text{Rickert, 253.}\]
\[^{35}\text{Peter Simonson explains: “…Burke himself did not explicitly present [the pentad] as a theory of invention, but which teachers of composition and speech would bend to those purposes (see e.g. Kneupper, “Burkean”; Young and Liu).” See Peter Simonson, “Reinventing Invention, Again,” Rhetoric Society Quarterly 44, no. 4 (2014): 304.}\]
invention more transparent. On the premise that “the chōra, brought forward into our age, stands to radically reconfigure our understanding of rhetorical space,” the emergent place(s) of OWS theoretically and empirically extend scholarship on the chora in ways that “radically ground” this concept in embryonic places/spaces that gave rise to a global movement.

Before addressing how Plato conceived of the chora and what bearing this has upon analyses of Occupy and the generation of its rhetorical activity, modern-day scholars (Derrida, 1995; Derrida and Eisenman 1997; Kristeva 1984; Ulmer 1985, 1994; Casey 1997) have used the chora in the following ways: for Kristeva, the chora designates a preverbal semiotic space that facilitates and orders the disposition of drives which are imposed on the body through social and familial structures; for Derrida, Rickert notes that “[his] writings on the chōra take two general tracks: theoretical investigations about the chōra’s place in thought and discourse and its instability as a generative, spatial principle, and practical deployments of the chōra as an inventive principle;” for Ulmer, the chora provides invention recourse for the ‘choric’ rhetorician or writer in an age of electronic media whereby the places (topoi) are expanded to include the circumambient environs of memory, networks, technologies, intuitions, and informational environments as well as the use of hypermedia. It is a combination of the latter—the use of hypermedia to ‘speak into’ choric realms—and the open-source principles of Occupy,

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36 Ibid., 252.
in “endeavoring to practice and support wide application of open source,”⁴⁰ that has motivated the use of hyperlinks/hypermedia in this text.

**Radical Conceptions of the Chora**

When Occupy is analyzed through the concept of the *chora*, or vice versa, we will find that ‘original’ conceptions of the *chora*—as “an extension which can be occupied (‘taken’)”⁴¹ and an ontological arena (or “receptacle”) of becoming and change—are remarkably consistent with empirical descriptions of Occupy’s genesis and the vernacular that arose within it. As the *chora* is first developed by Plato in the *Timaeus and Critias*—as an ‘original principle’ for a ‘new description of the universe’ in order “to explain how things come into being in the physical world”⁴²—the *chora* designates not only a vacant area⁴³ or (in classical conceptions) a place to be occupied or taken, but a maternal matrix or meonic space: “a kind of pregnant nothingness or void (as distinguished from an absolute blank nothingness) having the potential to transform into matter.”⁴⁴ In his own words, Plato says of the *chora*: “In general terms, it is the receptacle and, as it were, the nurse of all becoming and change.”⁴⁵ As such, Plato continues:

> We may indeed use the metaphor of birth and compare the receptacle to the mother, the model to the father, and what they produce between them to their offspring…Therefore we must not call the mother and receptacle of visible and sensible things either earth or air or fire or water, nor yet any of their compounds or components; but we shall not be wrong if we describe it as invisible and formless, all-embracing, possessed in a most puzzling way of intelligibility, yet very hard to grasp.⁴⁶

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⁴¹ Algra, 33.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ The phrase “vacant area” is a bit redundant here, given that area alone has been defined as “a vacant piece of ground, a level space not built over or otherwise occupied; a clear or open space within a building, such as the unseated part of a church, the arena of an amphitheatre, etc.” See OED, s.v. “area, n.”

⁴⁴ OED, “meonic, adj.”


⁴⁶ Plato, 70.
According to Plato, the *thora* is not ‘that which becomes’ (the offspring) but ‘that in which it becomes,’ the mother. It is the ontological arena where ‘the becoming’ takes place. Plato further states, “and the things which pass in and out of it are copies of the eternal realities, whose form they take in a wonderful way that is hard to describe - we will follow this up some other time. For the moment we must make a threefold distinction and think of that which becomes, that in which it becomes, and the model which it resembles.” As we will see, occupiers spoke of the space of Liberty/Zuccotti *precisely* in this way, where Occupy (like the *thora*) was called “the womb” and “the receptacle” where the development of its offspring or “children” took place.

This last point is significant given the many critiques that Occupy would receive for not producing “tangible results” beyond changing the national conversation around wealth and income disparity. As noted in “The Triumph of Occupy Wall Street,” Michael Levitin writes, “despite the public’s overwhelming support for its message—that the economic system is rigged for the very few while the majority continue to fall further behind—many faulted Occupy for its failure to produce concrete results.” However, after listing the many “unrecognized victories” that Occupy brought about, Levitin writes, “the movement that began in Zuccotti Park didn't disappear—it just splintered and regrouped around a variety of focused causes” where “ironic as it may seem, the impact of the movement that many view only in the rearview mirror is becoming stronger and clearer with time.” As we will see in subsequent chapters, the generative abilities of Occupy help us to theoretically and empirically “ground” the productive capacities of the *thora*.

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50 Ibid.
Thus, despite insights and explanations made by modern theorists on the *chora’s* ‘generational’ features, Rickert notes that “there remains something elusive about the *chōra*, something about it that resists determination (see Sallis 1999, 3–6). This problem is already noted in the *Timaeus*. Timaeus tells us that it is “most difficult to catch” and only apprehendable by means of a “bastard reasoning” (*Timaeus*, 51a–b, 52b).” In Plato’s words, the *chora* designates “a space which is eternal and indestructible, which provides a position for everything that comes to be, and which is apprehended without the senses by a sort of spurious reasoning and so is hard to believe in - we look at it indeed in a kind of dream and say that everything that exists must be somewhere and occupy some space, and that which is nowhere in heaven or earth is nothing at all.” As Rickert comments,

The *chōra* is the maternal matrix of all becoming, yet it declines to be determined, and in this sense, it is not strictly speaking an *eidos*. So, as Casey argues, while *chōra* is not a thing, “it is a locatory matrix for things” (34). It is what is necessary for the *genesis* of things, the in which (*en hulē*) and out of which (*ex hou*) they show up and pass away; but the *chōra* also recedes, declining to leave its imprint on things just as it declines to take on the qualities of the things it receives (*Timaeus*, 50c). There is a dichotomy between what occurs in the passage to actuality by which things show up, and their actual showing up. A beginning, even as something unstable or retroactively posited, is never equivalent to what has emerged.53

For this study of *Occupy*, Algra’s definition and Plato’s description of *chora* are both fitting: whereas Algra notes that “*chōra* still has much of its original sense: it is an extension which can be occupied (‘taken’);” for Plato, the *chora* is likened to an embryonic space “…for it continues to receive all things… it is a kind of neutral plastic material on which changing impressions are stamped by the things which enter it, making it appear different at different times.”55 Like the

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51 Rickert, 259.
52 Plato, 71-72.
53 Rickert, 259.
54 Ibid.
55 Ibid., 69.
chora, Occupy—appearing differently, at different times, depending on the things that ‘passed through’ the park or spoke into it on virtual streams—can be seen as both ‘extensions to be occupied or taken’ and as a ‘generative arena’ or field of potential: a receptacle or placeholder for the creation of new possibilities, ideas, technologies, and worlds.

The Place of Love

Beyond its cosmological import, the older sense of chora as a territory or region (or a city or land) is integral to Plato’s conception of the ideal polis and its creation in the Timaeus. As Rickert points out, “while chōra can mean land or city, when used in the context of polis, it more properly means the surrounding territory; a polis consists of a town (asty) and territory (chōra) (155n4; cf. Sallis 1999, 116).”56 Considered by Indra McEwen, the chōra was an outlying territory where “the notion of a polis allowed to appear as a surface woven by the activity of its inhabitants” in “ritual processions from center to urban limit to territorial limit and back again.”57 Thus, “the movements from city center to outlands and back constitute the weaving of the city, whereby what is constructed emerges directly from the situated activity of the inhabitants, much like the dance “weaves” the dancing floor.”58 As McEwen reminds us, “chōra also shares affinity with choron and choros, words first appearing in the written record in the Iliad, where they refer to both a dance and a dancing-floor.”59 It may be recalled that Daedalus was held to be the first architect, and he built the dancing floor at Knossos.”60 As Rickert notes, “McEwen looks at this and other passages in Homer and Hesiod to argue that we see here an emerging recognition that a

56 Rickert, 255.
57 Indra Kagis McEwen in Rickert, 255.
58 Rickert, 255.
60 Rickert, 254.
precondition for activity is a place for it to occur, as dancing requires a dancing floor (1993, 62–63). For McEwen, Daedalus personifies the growing realization that place and making are conjoined.61 As such, we can compare this ‘preconditional area’ to the way that the physical place of Liberty Plaza/Zuccotti Park served as “base of operations” and “staging grounds” for the nascent OM to emerge.

In the same way that Plato’s dialogue (Timaeus) provides a place for the concept of the chora to emerge, Rickert notes, “there is a parallel here with the connection McEwen sees between dancing and having a place to dance: to give something a place means to see it in action, and vice versa.”62 As another parallel, we can compare the chora—as place/space and receptacle—to the emergence of Occupy as it is written about in the article “Liberty Plaza: A ‘Message’ Entangled with its Form,” where Nicole Demby writes,

Occupy Wall Street is streamed, tweeted, posted and reposted. It is a curiosity, a screen for projection, a spectator sport, everyone’s favorite and most hated child. Yet people continue to come daily who earnestly want to join or to aid the effort. OWS has become a receptacle for the lost progressive hopes of a previous generation. Despite the attempts of some media sources to caricature the occupiers, they constitute a diverse group that is attracting even more diversity. OWS has gained the support of many labor unions and community groups. Most importantly, its existence is enabling a necessary discourse to enter the mainstream.63

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61 Ibid. Additionally, while there are certainly many ways to metaphorically conceive of “a dance”—i.e. to “dance” around the police or with the police, to dance in the streets, to perform a “dance” of wit—observers/researchers of the emergence of OWS in Zuccotti/Liberty would write: “In the southwest corner, tables at the top of the Cedar Street steps served as a hangout area, while another segment of the stairs hosted a collection of drums that turned the expanded Trinity Place sidewalk into a dance floor and performance zone.” See: Jonathan Massey and Brett Snyder, “Mapping Liberty Plaza: How Occupy Wall Street Spatially Transformed Zuccotti Park,” Places Journal, September 2012, https://placesjournal.org/article/mapping-liberty-plaza/.
62 Ibid., 258.
It is worth mentioning here that the task of Plato’s dialogue, as we will see, is to address a ‘crucial problem’ of his *Republic*, where his ideal city remains just that: an ideal. Rickert continues on this point, stating:

[The *Republic*] misses actuality, and the discussants hope this condition is rectifiable, that this city can be brought to life and seen vigorously exercising as States do (*Timaeus*, 18b). As is, the ideal city is a dead city. Sallis remarks that, strictly speaking, it is a “technical city,” a city of the head (1999, 20). Not only is it a fabrication, but it lacks *eros*, which is to say, it lacks becoming in a generative sense… For this reason, among others, Sallis tells us that what the *Timaeus* comments on, from its very beginning, are the limits of fabrication, whether as technē or poiesis, with respect to *eros* (26). We can also say that this is very much a problem of invention, in the sense of finding ways to actualize or enact what are initially only ideas, feelings, or intuitions. Stated otherwise, we can see the Platonic chōra as addressing the question of the available means of creation, and how we give life to and make a place for (static) ideas. \(^{64}\)

To carry this point further, Rickert notes that “Ann Ashbaugh makes a similar point when she claims that the *Timaeus* was the single most important Platonic dialogue in antiquity because it addressed a fundamental question—a question we have yet to answer definitively—not ‘of what an objective cosmos is, but how it comes to be known by the soul.’” \(^{65}\) It would not be out of place to consider this question within the context of Occupy, where ‘occupiers’ rallied (and *revealed*) at the coming-into-being of “an idea whose time has come,” an idea whose *kairos* had arrived. This idea, while not certain or *the same* for everyone was/still remains critical enough to take a chance on, to act on, as if the “the necessary political and cultural conditions are already in place.” \(^{66}\)

\[^{64}\] Rickert, 257.  
\[^{65}\] Ashbaugh, 1988, p. 1 in Ibid., 258.  
\[^{66}\] This quote is from an email with another occupier/correspondent on the topic of the vernacular and conversation as a form of direct action. Marcuse Ringelbach, personal communications, September 25, 2012.  
As we will see, just as Occupy provided a space or “receptacle” into which citizens could place their hopes and aspirations for other possible worlds and realities, the *chora* “provides Plato with a means to explain the movement from Idea to Becoming as a form of vital, robust actuality.” In closing this section the terminological and spatial distinctions between *topos* and *chora*, we might remember that while the *chora* is a place (or area) beyond the city ‘proper,’ it is an outlying territory upon which the city depends to thrive. This dependency introduces a political dimension to the *chora*. As Rickert explains, “being both the boundary of the city and what lies beyond the boundary” underscores “the necessity for the *polis* to go beyond its boundaries to thrive” (a reinforcement of Timaeus’s *anagke*/necessity* in 47e). Understood in this way, the *chora* provides for this study: 1.) A gateway into the vernacular, where rhetorical scholarship has used this concept to study, critique, and advocate for the ‘everyday’ practices of *marginalized* communities and those situated on (or outside of) the border; and 2.) A way to understand Occupy and occupation as an act and movement driven by the necessity to move beyond the status quo, *beyond business as usual*, in order to secure the possibility of continued life on this planet.

As stated by the New York City General Assembly (NYCGA): “It is from these reclaimed grounds that we say to all Americans and to the world, Enough! How many crises does it take? We are the 99% and we have moved to reclaim our mortgaged future.” In reclaiming this future, occupiers would have to show the world what it looked like to move beyond “business as usual.” This “showing” would be done in more ways than one, as chants like “the whole world is watching” and “this is what democracy looks like” would rise in unison.

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68 Rickert, 258.
69 Ibid., 259.
70 NYCGA.net, “Principles of Solidarity.”
from streets, plazas, and online streams across the world. Finally, as can be seen here, there is no small irony in the fact that the classical (or radical) roots of occupy (or occupātiō) once translated to “BUSINESS.” In plain language, then, occupy means business. This irony is compounded when we consider one of the more prevalent critiques Occupy confronted—exemplified by the comment made by former Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich—for occupiers to “stop whining, take a bath and get a job.” In response, common signs of Occupy would read: “lost my job, but found an occupation.” Thus, in turning to the ‘radical grounds’ of Occupy and #OWS, the chora will be used to ‘advance’ (or carry) a line of argument (topos) on how we understand occupation and Occupy as an act and Movement borne out of necessity, as a response to crisis, and as a labor of love.

Theorizing the Vernacular with the Chora

In the section above, the concept of the chora was discussed as an ontological (or cosmological) arena of becoming and change as well as region or area that lay on or outside the bounds of the polis ‘proper.’ It is in this latter sense of the chora—where “the chōra has a specifically political dimension, being both the boundary of the city and what lies beyond the boundary”—that we may segue into a discussion on vernacular rhetoric, where Rickert notes “what must be underscored here is the necessity for the polis to go beyond its boundaries to thrive.” The vernacular—considered here in its broadest sense as a kind of speech or language common or native to a people or populace which occupy or inhabit a country, district, area, region, boundary, or domain—draws upon the scholarship of rhetorical theorists who have

72 Rickert, 259.
73 Ibid.
studied the vernacular within the context of the everyday and within marginalized and border communities where both may serve as *locci* of “alternate authority” to the logics of judgment exercised in institutional realms or in dominant discourse. As a baseline for further discussions on this topic, Gerard A. Hauser, although writing specifically about the vernacular of political prisoners, has broadly defined this scholarship and its scope as follows:

Vernacular rhetoric, as a focus of inquiry, considers how rhetoric of the everyday interacts with formal rhetoric, such as that in official forums or by those vested with power, in the ongoing sculpting of the human world. These non-institutional performances cover a wide range of discursive acts from the everyday experiences of the street that tell us who the denizens think they are and what they value to the discourses of prisoners who use their bodies as a form of resistance and exhortations for change, with a variety of forms in between such as poems, letters, samizdat, diaries, memoirs, and so forth. In their own context, many are casual exchanges of the everyday, although some are products of design intended to evade social and political censorship; others are modes of interaction and interrogation of official discourse. On the surface some forms appear to be mundane, however whether they are everyday exchanges intended for a conversational partner or letters intended to reach audiences in the tenebrous regions of the underground, their constitution of and impact on the social fabric can be profound.\(^7^4\)

In studying Occupy from a vernacular framework, we are provided a theoretical basis upon which to situate and study the contestation or invocation of authority by marginalized or displaced communities through all mode and manner of practice, performance, and social exchange. By coupling the vernacular with the *chora*, we may be able to advance a new line of reasoning (*topos*) on what it is or looks like to create or develop a common (vernacular) logic through the inhabitation or holding of place/space that is just coming into being.

In the introduction to *Shifting Borders: Rhetoric, Immigration, and California’s Proposition 187*, Ono & Sloop suggest that studies of movements and migrations across

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territorial or terrestrial borders provide “the opportunity to reflect seriously on the issue of migration and its importance to human survival.” Here, the same line of reasoning used by Ono & Sloop will be used to suggest that movements across boundaries and borders provide similar opportunities for serious reflection on the issue of occupation and its importance in responding to crisis/krisis. For Ono & Sloop, the border they refer to is a geographic (and socially constructed) boundary that—depending on which side of the border one fell when they were born—would determine the rights of “illegal immigrants” or ‘resident aliens’ to access social and public services in the U.S. as drafted in the 1994 California ballot initiative on immigration. Here, the border is the circumlocutionary boundary and region that ‘surrounds and sustains a polis but exists outside of it. However, in the same way that Ono & Sloop study the discourse and cultural logics surrounding the migration of native populations from a former “homeland” to a foreign place, the vernacular is used here to study a movement (Occupy) that took place upon one’s “home turf” or homeland, but simultaneously unfolded in “uncharted territory” or “foreign waters” where the trope or tactic of occupation operated on a cultural logic outside of—or incommensurate with—dominant conceptions of “law” or “legitimacy” as currently recognized by statute or state.


76 Hauser discusses the relationship of krisis to the polis, where he notes, “Aristotle contends that the goal of rhetoric and the function of the audience are one and the same—krisis, or judgment. Krisis implies more than rational assent; it is the virtue of judgment informed by a disposition to act and feel a particular way. The rationality of krisis entails the virtue of considering the phenomena of prudential conduct in terms that exceed one’s personal interests and apply to every human. Krisis is not exercised as a calculus of consequences but as thoughtful consideration of contingent affairs in order to achieve the common good of eudaimonia, or happiness.” See: Gerard A. Hauser, Vernacular Voices (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1999), 98.

77 Rickert, 259.

78 In addition to this, both OWS and OS have been considered “unprecedented” in terms of scale and scope of its global reach where it has been noted, “nearly two years ago a group named Occupy Sandy organized an unprecedented response to the unprecedented disaster that was Hurricane Sandy.” In such conditions or state of ‘unprecedence,’ we may very well consider Occupy (and the chora) as taking place in blank space or on virgin soil, where its fluidity and open-endedness helped bring new ideas to life. See Easton Smith, “The State, Occupy, and
By virtue of what Ono & Sloop call “outlaw logic”—an extension of Lyotard’s differend—Occupy, like other native communities of present and past, ‘held ground’ in ways and on bases that were held to be incommensurate with those of dominant discourses or “those understandings, meaning, logics, and judgments that work within the most commonly accepted (and institutionally supported) understandings of what is just or unjust, good or bad.”\(^{79}\) By contrast, outlaw discourses or outlaw arguments do not simply invert, counter, or refute dominant positions—as they do not ascribe to the same logic that supports them—but operates on a ‘regime of truth’ that shares no common standard of measure with the dominant position. As Ono & Sloop note, this form of logic draws upon Jean-François Lyotard’s concept of the differend: “a conflict, between (at least) two parties, that cannot be equitably resolved for lack of a rule of judgment applicable to both arguments. One sides’ legitimacy does not imply the other’s lack of legitimacy.”\(^{80}\) The “law,” as we have learned is no guarantor of morality of truth; as Walter E. Williams points out: “Slavery was legal; apartheid is legal; Stalinist, Nazi and Maoist purges were legal. Clearly, the fact of legality does not justify these crimes. Legality, alone, cannot be the talisman of moral people.”\(^{81}\) According to Ono & Sloop, it then becomes the function of the critic to call into question the “regimes of truth” or logics of judgment operative in both dominant and outlaw conceptions of law or legality, where neither dominant discourses or “outlaw logics”\(^{82}\) are ipso facto on higher (or lower) moral ground.

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\(^{82}\) Ono and Sloop (1999) and Sloop and Ono (1997) use this term to discuss the logics of judgment that fall outside the ones exercised within dominant institutions or systems.
The Emergence of Vernacular Rhetoric Studies

The last decade of the twentieth century and the early twenty-first century saw a rise in the publication of articles and books on theories of the vernacular by rhetorical scholars and critics. Chief among these have been the work of Kent Ono and John Sloop (1995, 1997), Gerard Hauser (1999, 2011, 2012), and Robert Howard (2008, 2010) whose critical examinations of rhetoric ‘of the streets’ could be considered a graft or continuation of a lineage of studies historically concerned with the expression of power through the rhetoric of the oppressed (Foucault 1977; Wander 1984; Charland 1987; Philipsen 1975; Gregg 1971; Conquergood 1991; Bowers & Ochs 1971; Gronbeck 1973; Van Graber 1973; Ono & Sloop 1995); with the examination of civic discourse within subaltern, counterpublic, and reticulate public spheres (Dewey 1927; Habermas 1974; Fraser 1990; Asen and Brouwer 2001; Warner 2002; Hauser 1999; Goodnight 1982) and with communal invocations of authority rendered through participatory media and everyday speech (Charland 1987; Eberly 2000; de Certeau 2002; Brummet 2004; Warnick 2002, 2007; Howard 2008; Dominguez 2002; Castells 2012).

However, while the vernacular is now a commonplace of rhetorical inquiry, publications that have broached or explicitly attended to the concept could be said to predate these authors, to include a wide domain of appropriation, and to raise theoretical and methodological issues regarding the nature, function, and scope of rhetoric and how it is to be studied. While the vernacular has been studied outside the academic domains of rhetorical theory, performance theory (Garlough 2007, 2008; Scott 1990), and critical/cultural inquiry, we can trace the development of the vernacular in the field of rhetoric to movement studies that occurred in the latter part of the twentieth century. Some scholars (Hauser 1999; Hauser & McClellan 2002) trace the roots of vernacular rhetoric to Leland Griffin’s (1952) publication of “The Rhetoric of
Historical Movements,” which responded to Herbert Wichelns’s call (1925, 1946) for critics to move beyond the singular orator, speech, audience, or occasion as a focus of rhetorical critique. Griffin encouraged students of public address to “pay somewhat less attention to the single speaker and more to speakers [and] that we turn our attention from the individual “great orator” and undertake research into such selected acts and atmospheres of public address as would permit the study of a multiplicity…”83 While Griffin still shared traditional rhetorical concerns with “efforts which attempt to effectuate change, not through the forces of wealth or arms, but through the force of persuasion,”84 by looking outside biographical studies of the “single orator” or “grand speech,” the objects of rhetorical criticism were expanded from static texts to movements “originating in the sphere of actuality” through dynamic and sustained process[es] of social inference. In gesturing towards forthcoming analyses on the vernacular of the Occupy Movement, the “99%”, we might keep in mind what theoretical implications moving from a singular, a one, to a multiple or many, had on broadening the scope of objects available to the study and critique of public address.85 In closing his essay, Griffin writes,

From the identification of number of rhetorical patterns, we may discover the various configurations of public discussion, whether rhetorical patterns repeat themselves when like movements occur in the intervals of time, whether a consistent set of forms may be said to exist. We may learn something more about orators—even about the great orators—whom we may come to see from a new perspective, since they rarely speak except within the framework of a movement; and we may come to a more acute appreciation of the significance

84 Ibid.
85 Gerard Hauser (2009) notes that: “Griffin’s essay was original in its perspective toward the mobility of rhetoric as a consequential discursive mode for changing the social environment and in capturing the rhetorical environment’s dynamism by conceptualizing it within the cycle of inception, crisis, and consummation. However, once the critic allowed for these factors, Griffin’s model did not advance the tools for rhetorical analysis that were significantly different from those of the prevailing neo-Aristotelian model…. Griffin’s model, and rhetorical theory generally, had few conceptual resources to account for rhetoric in the streets.” See: Gerard Hauser and Erin Daina McClellan, “Vernacular Rhetoric and Social Movements: Performances of Resistance in the Rhetoric of the Everyday,” in Active Voices: Composing a Rhetoric of Social Movements, ed. Sharon McKenzie Stevens and Patricia Malesh (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009), 27.
of the historically insignificant speaker, the minor orator who, we may find, is often the true fountainhead of the moving flood of ideas and words.\textsuperscript{86}

Since the “significance of the historically insignificant speaker” is of consequence to studies of the vernacular and to the emancipatory aims of critical rhetoric that would follow in the wake of this paradigm shift—from criticism of “official” or formal discourse to studies of public performances and everyday speech—we can further trace the roots of vernacular to the 1920’s, where the ethnographic study of quotidian exchanges in the Trobriand Islands were undertaken by Bronislaw Malinowski and published in Charles K. Ogden and Ivor A. Richard’s (1923, 1947) text, \textit{The Meaning of Meaning}.

In his article “Attending the Vernacular: A Plea for an Ethnographical Rhetoric,” Hauser (2011) discusses the mark that Malinowski would make on the study of language and on future studies of the vernacular. Although Malinowski’s (1923, 1947) essay “The Problem of Meaning in Primitive Languages” would initially receive ‘scant attention’ from rhetoricians still preoccupied with studies of “official discourse delivered by government officials and governing bodies, the history of a momentous debate, and the social significance of a mode of discourse,”\textsuperscript{87} once rhetorical criticism came to be influenced by Kenneth Burke’s (1931, 1937, 1984) theories of symbolic action, Malinowski’s earlier postulations on the pragmatic functions of speech were revisited. Malinowski's study of the Trobriand Islanders served to demonstrate that “language, in its primitive function, [was] to be regarded as a mode of action, rather than as a countersign of thought,”\textsuperscript{88} where utterances were bound to the context or situation which served to instigate or

\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., 188.
complement action. As Malinowski notes, “a statement, spoken in real life, is never detached from the situation in which it has been uttered… without some imperative stimulus of the moment, there can be no spoken statement. In each case, therefore, utterance and situation are bound up inextricably with each other and the context of situation is indispensable for the understanding of the words.”

Thus, in Malinowski’s attendance to statements spoken in “real life” where “in its primitive uses, language functions as a link in concerted human activity, as a piece of human behavior,” understanding the meaning of speech—particularly native or ‘primitive’ speech—had to be understood in relation to the cultural, geographical, social, economic, spatial, and temporal conditions that prompted an utterance.

As Hauser notes, while “Malinowski’s attention to the details of non-oratorical discourse pointed to how everyday exchanges among members of a community could be of interest to rhetoricians,” rhetorical critics “remained focused on qualities of symbolic inducement found in the speeches of leaders and formal statements of moment while they largely ignored how these same elements established identification, moment by moment, in everyday exchanges of the street.” However, explorations into the conditions (Benson & Johnson 1968; Bosmajian 1970; Chesebro 1972; Gregg 1972; Haiman 1967; Scott 1973; Simons 1970) and situations (Bitzer 1968) that give rise to rhetorical discourse began to mark a turn from classical understandings of rhetoric as a textual product or oratorical production to be emulated or delivered. Instead, like Griffin’s call to focus on a multiplicity of acts and atmospheres of public address, a critical orientation towards a plurality of publics, the polysemic (McKerrow 1989; Campbell 1990; Gaonkar 1990; Condit 1998), and the heteroglossic (Bakhtin 1981) began to indicate an interest

89 Ibid., 307.
90 Ibid., 312.
91 Hauser, “Attending the Vernacular,” 158.
92 Ibid.
in the “social diversity of speech types”\textsuperscript{93} and “the multiplicity of unofficial [language] forms,”\textsuperscript{94} which consequently allowed for “an interrogation of meaning and across social classes.”\textsuperscript{95} As McKerrow (1989) notes, “the analysis of the discourse of power thus must begin with the assumption that any articulatory practice may emerge as relevant or consequential—nothing can be “taken-for-granted” with respect to the impact of any particular discursive practice.”\textsuperscript{96} The consequentiality of invisible articulatory practices is similar to the way that \textit{doxa}, as theorized by Bourdieu, is invisible and ‘taken for granted’ until it is rendered known or visible by its being “called out” by competing discourses.

As it relates to the general thrust and shift of critique from rhetorical product (formal speeches) to rhetorical practice (everyday instantiations of power), Gerard Hauser and Erin McClellan (2009) note that this shift was likely inspired by radical events of the period between the mid-1950’s and mid-1970’s: the civil rights movement, the antiwar movement, the women’s movement, and the student movement, to name a few. The ‘modes of influence’ available to those participating in sit-ins, strikes, pickets, protests, and marches extended beyond traditional forms of persuasion and symbolic exchange where speeches delivered in the name of a cause were replaced with using the body as a site and mode of resistance. As such, critics began looking beyond the delivery of speeches made by the dominant or elite and started to reconceptualize rhetoric as \textit{a social practice} (McGee, 1990) and as \textit{situated discourse} (Charland, 1990) which again reconfigured what counted as an appropriate object of rhetorical study. As Edwin Black would state in 1965, “whatever else the nature of rhetorical discourse, it is

\textsuperscript{94} Hauser, “Attending the Vernacular,” 162.
\textsuperscript{95} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{96} McKerrow, “Critical Rhetoric,” 96.
assuredly not the be confined exclusively to the spoken word.”97 As a result, the field would begin to see studies that looked to rhetoric of the streets and the everyday speech as site and sources of inquiry and investigation.

A more recent factor in the rise of vernacular studies stems, in large part, from moves made by rhetorical critics (Black 1965) and critical-rhetoric theorists (McKerrow 1989; McGee 1990; Charland 1991; Hariman 1991; Conquergood, 1992; Ono & Sloop, 1992) in shifting the focus of rhetorical critique from speeches of the dominant or powerful to an orientation towards the act or practice of criticism itself. This orientation to praxis, pioneered by Raymie McKerrow (1989) in “Critical Rhetoric: Theory and Praxis,” follows in the same “critical spirit” of Horkheimer, Adorno, Habermas, and Foucault by interrogating the relationship between power/knowledge as it is manifested through discourse and across a variety of social practices. A synopsis of McKerrow’s “critical rhetoric” follows below:

As theory, a critical rhetoric examines the dimensions of domination and freedom as these are exercised in a relativized world. …The critique of domination has an emancipatory purpose—a telos toward which it aims in the process of demystifying the conditions of domination. The critique of freedom, premised on Michel Foucault’s treatment of power relations, has as its telos the prospect of permanent criticism—a self-reflexive critique that turns back on itself even as it promotes a realignment in the forces of power that construct social relations. In practice, a critical rhetoric seeks to unmask or demystify the discourse of power. The aim is to understand the integration of power/knowledge in society—what possibilities for change the integration invites or inhibits and what intervention strategies might be considered appropriate to effect social change.98

Thus, as scholars began to acknowledge that “the focus on evil power is not the only way to study power,”99 an orientation towards the unveiling of power across a broader social spectrum

allowed scholars to call into question what constituted and sustained the fabric of social relations between the dominant and dominated. McKerrow, quoting Fraser (1981) notes “if power is instantiated in mundane social practices and relations, then efforts to dismantle or transform the regime must address those practices and relations.”\textsuperscript{100} As such, McKerrow continues that “the critic must attend to the “microphysics of power” in order to understand what sustains social practices. Power, thus conceived, is not repressive, but productive—it is an active potentially positive force which creates social relations and sustains them through the appropriation of a discourse that “models” the relations through its expression.”\textsuperscript{101} Thus, the changing nature of rhetorical criticism during the 1980’s can additionally be attributed to (at least) two things: to see the performance of critique as an activity directly engaged in politics and the shifting cultural terrain caused by the condition of “postmodernity.”

As Ono and Sloop (2002) note, “theorists and critics alike commonly characterize “postmodernism” as a general cultural condition marked by soundbites, a loss of history, nonrational logics, fragmented arguments, a decay of metanarratives (overarching explanations), historical and narrative nonlinearity, an ironic attitude toward social truths, and political disaffection, all of which leads to an overall decline of the modern nation-state.”\textsuperscript{102} Although cultural-critical scholars had already begun to point out that the mass media catered to the interests of corporations and institutions rather than local communities or the general public (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2002; Habermas, 1991; Marcuse, 1964; Marx, 1998; see Arato & Gebhardt, 1990), this cultural fragmentation of postmodernity created a crisis of representation where rhetorical critics were not only called upon to analyze texts from a pastiche of fragments

\textsuperscript{102} Ono & Sloop, \textit{Shifting Borders}, 8.
but to *create* them towards the performance of new political meanings, “becoming another voice in that struggle.” Ono and Sloop note,

...as rhetorical critic Michael McGee (1990) has argued, this condition, and changing media technologies from television to the Internet, have generally altered the way persuasive arguments are made, the way public business gets handled, and the way public arguments “make sense” to consumers. Hence, McGee argues that communication within mass culture (rather than changes in theory) is the primary impetus for changing the task of criticism. For McGee, the task of criticism in postmodernity is performative. Rather than assuming we simply can look at cultural texts and analyze them, part of the major function of criticism is rhetorical—not only to examine, assess, and understand texts but also to build a text out of various fragments of communication that are taking place in a variety of locales throughout mass culture and, with that text, to shape the overall discursive terrain. That is, critical analysis of culture and cultural texts can play a material role in shaping culture. In such a view, rhetorical criticism must see itself as also taking on the function of text construction as well as text analysis.”

In decentralizing the place of hermeneutics or close textual analysis, McKerrow’s recommendation that critics be “arguers and advocates” for the positions they hold shifted the focus of criticism from method to practice. What should also be emphasized here is the influence that the “ideological turn” had on modern criticism (Philip Wander 1983) where critics, following Wichelns’s (1923) “The Literary Criticism of Oratory,” recognized that “the spirit of an age” could not be captured inside the static folds of the literary text or publication; instead, human struggle must be considered and countered within the social atmosphere of public life where moments of socio-political crisis could be (and were) addressed by “real people.” Wander (1983) suggests that,

> Criticism takes an ideological turn when it recognizes the existence of powerful vested interests benefiting from and consistently urging politics and technology that threatens life on this planet, when it realizes that we search for alternatives. The situation is being constructed; it will not be averted either by ignoring it or placing beyond our provence. An ideological turn in modern

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103 Ibid., 11.
104 Ibid., 9.
criticism reflects the existence of crisis, acknowledges the influence of established interest and the reality of alternative world-views, and commends rhetorical analyses not only of the actions implied but also of the interests represented. More than “informed talk about matters of importance” criticism carries us to the point of recognizing good reasons and engaging in right action. What an ideological view does is to situate “good” and “right” in an historical context, the effort of real people to create a better world.\footnote{Philip Wander, “The Ideological Turn in Modern Criticism,” \textit{Central States Speech Journal} 34 (Spring 1983): 18.}

The function of ideological critique not only challenges the orthodoxy of the “text” as a rhetorical artifact, but—as it relates to current methodological concerns of the vernacular—seeks to move beyond poststructuralist attempts to ‘merely’ describe or deconstruct social oppression in places where it may be ‘recuperated, located, and catalogued’ (Ono & Sloop, 1995). It is not enough to say that oppression exists or that “the struggle is real;” instead, it is a task of the critical rhetorician to directly \textit{engage with} and \textit{participate in} the very processes of social transformation which serve as subject and locus of their study. Thus, before discussing methodological concerns that arise as consequence of participating in these processes of transformation, let us turn our attention to establishing a working definition of the term that unites this area of research: \textit{vernacular}. Not only will a “technical” rendering of this word provide us with a baseline or starting point from which to begin our treatment of the subject, but as Robert Howard (2008) notes in “Electronic Hybridity: The Persistent Processes of the Vernacular Web,” “a new conception of the vernacular can retrieve its fundamentally dialectical nature from the ancient texts where the term first appears.”\footnote{Robert Glenn Howard, “The Vernacular Web of Participatory Media,” \textit{Critical Studies in Media Communication} 25 (2008): 495.} This new conception, \textit{vernacular hybridity}, will be the theoretical locus around which further analyses of the Occupy Movement will revolve.

\textit{The Word and Early Concept of Vernacular}
The word ‘vernacular’ \(^{107}\) is a term that can be etymologically traced to the classical Latin words **vernāculus** (domestic, native, indigenous) and **verna** (a home-born slave, a native) where Robert Howard notes, “the Latin word ‘vernacular’ is derived from the Classical Greek word **oikogenes** that literally means ‘home-genetic.’” In extant Greek writings, an **oikotrips** is a “homeborn” slave. A distinguishing quality of the **oikotrips** was its ability to speak Greek.”\(^{108}\)

As recounted by Howard,

> This meaning is made clear in Plato’s “Meno,” when Socrates asks Meno to provide a “retainer” for an experiment in learning. Meno brings a boy forward, and Socrates asks, “He is a Greek and speaks our language?” Meno responds, “Indeed yes—born and bred in the house” [literally “yes, he is home-genetic”] (Plato, 1989, p. 365).\(^{109}\)

During the time period wherein the term vernacular (**vernāculus**) originated, Latin or “Vulgar Latin” was the spoken dialect across the Roman republic and Western Europe, which was a dialect “distinguished from the institutional languages of Classical Latin and the continued use of Classical Greek.”\(^{110}\) As Howard notes, Classical Latin and Greek “were the written languages of Roman institutions, and it is from this usage that we get the modern meanings of ‘vernacular’\(^{111}\) where the “definitive trait of the vernacular is its distinction from the institutional.”\(^{112}\) As such, it is seen as distinct from speech used in literary, commercial, and ecclesiastical arenas. The vernacular, in its broadest sense, is the language of the people. While

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\(^{108}\) Ibid.

\(^{109}\) Howard, 495. It may also be appropriate to continue Howard’s later discussion here, where he introduces the hybridity of the verna: “The verna was perceived as only partially “tamed” by her or his institutions. That “wildness” was wild precisely because it granted access to something outside of the institutions. This noninstitutional access came to be seen as a source of power that could be introduced into the discourse of Roman politics by the hybrid verna.” Ibid., 496.

\(^{110}\) Ibid.

\(^{111}\) Ibid.

there are many more passes we could make at unearthing the senses and fields in which this term operates or does work, it is enough to consider the vernacular (here) as a kind of speech community or native language that belongs to a people or populace that occupy or are indigenous to a country, district, area, region, or territorial domain.

_Vernacular Hybridity_

In more domestic terms, in the same way that the Roman home-born slave, the *verna*, is both native to the land or location in which they were born (Rome), their alterity arises from the fact that he/she is not of Roman “stock.” The lineage of the verna is “foreign” or “alien;” they come from another place. While the *verna* or *oikotrips* can speak the Roman language (which is a potential source of rhetorical invention, as noted by Cicero in his concept of the “indescribable flavor” marking vernacular persuasion) it also speaks a native tongue (typically that of its mother) that sets the “hybrid” verna outside the proper bounds or circles of a Roman citizen. As Howard (2008) notes, “subordinated though the verna were in relation to Roman institutions, their access to its languages made them more powerful than the average slave. Unlike their masters, however, they were typically also native speakers of their own cultural languages. In this sense, they were hybrid.”\(^{113}\) In being between two worlds, the home-born slave has both recourse to and baggage from its position ‘in the middle’ of customs, languages, and lineages of two “homelands”—one inside the city walls, and one outside of them. As we saw earlier in theorizations of the *chora*, when the word is used in the context of the *polis*, it is held to mean the outlying or surrounding territory outside the “walls” or limits of the city, proper. By occupying public spaces and parks inside city walls, occupiers would simultaneously step

\(^{113}\) Ibid., 204.
outside the systems of the market and state by creating “temporary autonomous zones” and “experimental agoras” that transcended the bounds of a late-capitalist democracy.

In doing so, occupiers would find themselves between two worlds and realities: one that operated on the level of the ‘everyday’ and the other that “took place” in the bastion of the park, partially-independent from the mechanisms of the cities and states in which those occupations were located. As Ek Ong Kaar Kaur Khalsa writes in a blogpost on the topic,

> It’s all about boundaries. Inside the park, a new world is being birthed, and it revels in the joy of its own existence. But a couple blocks away, New Yorkers and visitors are going about their daily life, oblivious to the social experiment taking place under the Freedom Tower. The police represent – physically and psychologically – the boundary line between those two worlds.\(^\text{114}\)

Putting aside for the moment the fact that the lexical origins of “police” goes back to polity and polis—where the chora and Occupy have both been conceived as existing outside the boundary of the polis proper—being “between” two worlds saw occupiers leveraging institutional modes of communication as well as mass-mediated communication technologies (i.e. Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, Instagram, Google docs, etc.) towards vernacular ends.\(^\text{115}\) This vernacular “reforging” of institutionally produced technologies results in what Howard calls vernacular hybridity: an amalgamation of institutional and vernacular expression.

In addition to this form of vernacular hybridity, the language that would be developed in Occupy would be ‘borne’ out of a new understanding of how words (like “occupy” itself) could be “turned against” its masters. As H. Samy Alim writes in *The New York Times*, “what if we thought of Occupy Language as more than the language of the Occupy movement, and began to


\(^{115}\) Howard writes, “based on the ancient distinction between “vernacular” and “institutional,” discourse can be properly termed vernacular when it fulfills the local or “home born” expectations of a particular human community.” As we will see, the expectations of those who considered “the park” their home would give rise to hybrid forms of communication and technologies. See: Howard, “Electronic Hybridity and the Vernacular Web,” 203.
think about it as a movement in and of itself? What kinds of issues would Occupy Language address? What would taking language back from its self-appointed “masters” look like?”116 Antonio Negri would respond to this question on his review of the book “Occupying Language,” writing: “There are words that are rocks. Rocks, like geological layers, which have accumulated over decades of struggles, and are colored with meanings irreducible to capitalist power. Rocks heavy with hope. Marina Sitrin and Dario Azzellini show how these rocks are moved—rolling them against masters, police and the ideologists of neoliberalism. Occupy language!”117 The concepts and words that would emerge in Occupy—Sitrin and Azzellini would identify Territory, Assembly, Rupture, Popular Power, Horizontalism, Autogestión (self-administration), and Protagonism in their book—is yet another form of vernacular hybridity, where “authoritative” words are reclaimed or adopted as a way for the margins to express their alterity.

Gloria Anzaldua speaks of this form of vernacular hybridity in Borderlands/La frontera: The New Mestiza: “...if you really want to hurt me, talk badly about my language. Ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity—I am my language. Until I can take pride in my language, I cannot take pride in myself.” Here, Anzaldua is referring to her experience on the borderlands between two cultures and two disparate languages, where she is unable to fully identify with either. She calls this mixed form of discourse “mestiza rhetoric” and regards her position between two worlds as a kind of “nepantilism” or “hybridity” where one is “torn between [two] ways” of being in the world. Minh-ha Trinh (1991) echoes these sentiments by noting,

Displacing is a way of surviving. It is an impossible, truthful story of living in-between regimens of truth. The responsibility involved in this mostly in-between living is a highly creative one: the displacer proceeds by unceasingly introducing difference into repetition. By questioning over and over again what it taken for

granted as self-evident, by reminding oneself and the others of the unchangeability of change itself. Disturbing thereby one’s own thinking habits, dissipating what has become familiar and cliché’d, and participating in the changing of received values—the transformation (with/out master) of other selves through one’s self.”

As Howard (2008) notes, the Roman *verna*—in being torn between two cultures, as a slave born into a Roman home—possessed, on one hand, the culture and institutional languages native to Rome, but was dispossessed of any civic rights as “the offspring of a sublimated non-Roman ethnic or culture group.” However, as Howard notes, “subordinated though the verna were in relation to Roman institutions, their access to its languages made them more powerful than the average slave. Unlike their masters, however, they were typically also native speakers of their own cultural languages. In this sense, they were hybrid.”

Howard then compares the verna to the Latin *hybrida*, the offspring of a tame sow and a wild boar, where he continues:

> The boar was emblematic of a masculine ideal in both Greece and Rome. Considered a dangerous and worthy adversary, it was the most prized and respected animal of the hunt (see Xenophon 1968:429–41). When applied to a person, however, “hibrida” suggested an individual with parents from two different nations. In particular, the term was applied to individuals who acted in Roman institutions but were not of Roman birth (see Pliny the Elder 1885:2346). While the authentically Roman was seen as civilizing its counterpart, the noninstitutional had access to an alternate authority.

As a characteristic of the vernacular, this “access to an alternate authority” will be key to understanding how marginalized or oppressed communities can be seen as possessing forms of authority or power outside of those enacted in institutional realms. In “Matrix as the Core Element,” Rira discusses how enacting those forms of alternate authority *within* institutional realms would work towards vernacular ends by serving human needs. She writes:

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119 Howard, “Electronic Hybridity,” 204.
120 Ibid.
This is the critical rupture, reformulation, and launching of alternative models that will transform existing ‘systems/technologies’ into other modes that will redistribute power to the assembly in order to serve human needs. Occupy the Department of Education has already united teachers, student, and parents to challenge the city’s institutions with its own assembly that is formulating more effective educational alternatives.\textsuperscript{121}

Theorized differently, we can also understand “alternate authority” through Ono & Sloop’s (2002) “outlaw discourse” and Lyotard’s (1988) differend, where both concepts address the incommensurability of logic between two parties when each party has different conceptions on what the ‘rule of law’ is and who has the “authority” or power to serve as arbiter. As a way to think through and extend the potential implications in studying the incommensurable logic or “outlaw discourse” of vernacular communities, we might add to this Thomas Kuhn’s (1962) notion of scientific incommensurability as it relates to the lack of a conceptual basis or “common measure” in which to compare competing paradigms of thought. As might be characteristic of movements and counter-publics in general and vernacular publics in particular, the logic upon which Occupy rests should not be expected to fall neatly into the categories or paradigms of thought upheld by those in positions of institutional authority or corporate power. As a common Occupy aphorism goes: “Corporations are not people; money isn’t speech.”

\textit{Incommensurate Logics: “Outlaw” Invocations of Authority}

Since the vernacular is linked to participation in a community outside of the one that verna is located, the vernacular was not something that could be acquired within the institution or system of Roman education, similar to how ‘streed cred’ or “street smarts” is a consequence of experience instead of formal learning. In more lyrical overtones: “That’s somethin’ that the

pastor don’t preach/That’s somethin’ that a teacher can’t teach.” As Howard (2008) notes, “the strength of the noninstitutional aspect of the hybrid verna was seen as powerful by institutional Rome precisely because it was both able to act in institutional modes of communication, Latin, and because it had access to something beyond the control of those institutional powers.” As such, “the vernacular is powerful because it can introduce something other than the institutional into an institutional realm.” To the extent that academic institutions still function to extend the bounds of knowledge rather than police its borders, this “power” of the vernacular provides us with additional warrant or “good reason” (Wallace 1963; Wander 1984) to integrate vernacular studies into the institutional realms: expanding the boundaries where learning takes place. Taken a step further, Ono & Sloop (2002) note, “we are suggesting that rhetoric shapes understandings of how the border functions; taken further, because of its increasingly powerful role, rhetoric at times even determines where, and what the border is.” A stronger connection between Academe and the streets could expand the content and modalities of learning in both directions.

Christine Garlough discusses invocations of authority outside the law through the concept of the “female bandit” (Bengali bandit Devi Chaudhurani) as she figures in and is appropriated from Indian culture and history. The female bandit evokes an ‘eclectic’ vernacular as a woman poised between the traditional female figure (the “fidelitous wife”) and the female bandit (who takes it upon herself to take “matters into her own hands”) which serves as a hermeneutical resource for rhetorical invention. Garlough notes,

During the subsequent two hundred years, the bandit Devi Chaudhurani has fired the imaginations of colonial officials, nationalist authors, feminist activists, and Bollywood filmmakers. Variously transfigured as a hardened

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123 Ibid., 204-205.
124 Ibid., 205.
criminal, an exiled queen, a sacred goddess, the quintessential Indian patriot, a courtroom judge, and a militant social rebel, these representations of Devi Chaudhurani trouble traditional appearances of “Indian womanhood” and have become the material for public argument and collective action concerning the conditions for women in colonial, nationalist, and postcolonial contexts in India. Each new appropriation of this bandit opens space to invite questions of a hermeneutical nature, calling forth new perspectives on being that provide the opportunity for a reinterpretation of prior events and texts.¹²⁶

Like “outlaw” discourse—defined by Sloop & Ono (1997) as “as loosely shared logics of justice, ideas of right and wrong that are différent than, although not necessarily opposed to, a culture’s dominant logics of judgment and procédures for litigation”¹²⁷—the female bandit is acting ‘outside’ the norms of law by restoring social justice and order through the disruption of normative expressive modes, manners, and styles of dress or presentation. Like a modern-day Robin Hood who steals from the rich to give to the poor, the outlaw and bandit are acting upon a concept of local justice that falls outside or beyond the laws as established by the state. Both notions disrupt normative judgements on who is “good” or what is “of the law,” where we must turn to the contingent nature of the event or act in which lawfulness came into being. To invoke Charland (1990), “rhetorical theory [sic] recognizes that the future is contingent upon today’s practice, but also asserts that a determination of what is right and proper, of what is ethical and not merely effective, can only be made contingently; ethical judgment arises through the rhetorical situation.”¹²⁸

As Sloop & Ono (1997) discuss, justice cannot arrive or be constituted prior to the event, it must be seen through the event itself. “In turn, we are suggesting that if judgment matters at all to rhetorical theory, and we are convinced that it does, it is material judgment, not a history of

¹²⁷ Sloop & Ono, 1997, Outlaw Discourse, 56.
the ideas about judgment. In the first place, then, out-law discourses concern judgments made in
the practice of everyday life.”
In taking judgement as that which exists outside of
philosophical speculation or reflection, justice is “restored” to the grounds upon which it actually
emerges. This is similar to Poulakos’ claim “because rhetoric came about as an activity grounded
in human experience, not in philosophical reflection, we must approach it by looking at those
who practiced it before turning to those who reflected about it.” This is a reason why attending
to the everyday—where judgment takes place through the daily transactions we have with others
and ourselves—that we may (as rhetoricians and global citizens) be more properly equipped to
arrive at a semblance of justice that reflects the actual conditions of human experience through
the social contracts we share with one another by virtue of a shared proximity and use of social
space (de Certeau). Given that the telos of rhetoric (krisis) is held to be concerned with the ways
in which we arrive at, judge, or determine the best course of action in a given case (Aristotle;
Hauser (date); Ono & Sloop (date) rhetoric is well-equipped, well-positioned, and well-prepared
to make claims upon what is possible or appropriate to the extent that is able to observe the
contingency with which justice emerges in situ and is conditioned by the “situation” (Bitzer
1968) which brings a rhetorical utterance or judgment into existence.

The Virtual Ekklesia

While the vernacular is commonly understood to be a kind of “everyday” language (de
Certeau, Lefebvre) spoken by a geographical or ‘proxemic’ populace on the basis of lived-and-
shared social practices which lie outside the commercial and educational interests of the
transactional and elite, the current interest in vernacular rhetoric is beginning to attend to the

129 Ibid., 60.
ways in which a fragmented and non-geographic populace can locate (and express) communal experience through vernacular texts and online modalities. Robert Howard’s article on the ‘virtual ekklesia’ is an example of this: it is through the vernacular mode of participatory media (the internet, the world wide web, blogs, social media, HTML coding) that followers or adherents of ‘the faith’ can act out or speak into tenets of their religion, online. Howard (2010) notes, “applying the perspective of vernacular religion to religious expression on the Internet transcends the distinction between ‘online religion’ and ‘religion online’ because it starts with the premise that all religion is emergent in individual human expressive behaviors.”

In the shift of the vernacular from physical places to virtual spaces, rhetorical critics and theorists are able to expand their accounting for (and critiques of) the ways in which discourse creates community and attends to the invention possibilities of those on the margins and those struggling to survive. The physical and virtual assemblies of Occupy Wall Street are a testament to this. However, before attending to the ways in which the vernacular of Occupy emerged through the virtual ekklesia—where ekklesia or ecclesia is “a Greek word for a regularly convoked assembly; chiefly applied to the general assembly of Athenian citizens. On the introduction of Christianity it became the regular word for church”—a more historical grounding of this virtual and vernacular turn may be warranted.

In Howard’s studies of the vernacular online, he distinguishes between “old media” like newspapers, TV, and commercial music recordings that are unidirectional in their outward dissemination to the masses for the purposes of consumption and purchase, and “new media”—or more properly, participatory media—which include online blogs, amatuer web pages, “vanity

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pages,” the general infrastructure of the World Wide Web, wikis, social networking tools, IRC channels, and folksonomy indexes, which are multi-directional in their their inclusion of the polyvocal through the “use of informal language, everyday topics, and community participation.” Unlike old media, new media texts are not closed or static, but open and ongoing in a relatively-sustained process of social inference. In the public sphere, these mass-mediated objects, old media, are limited in their ability to dynamically interact with lived experiences and interests of the public as these experiences and interests emerge and shift moment-by-moment. Participatory media, however, provide local communities with the means and modalities to express their interests as the conditions of ‘everyday life’ change. Howard conceptualizes this more fully, noting:

To fully document the vernacular online, researchers must not imagine static texts distributed by networks. Any given communication on the Internet may be static in the sense that some producer has placed it online and does not intend to change it. It is not, however, static in the same way as the physical object of a magazine, book, or DVD recording. Because it persists at a specific network location, individuals can return to it repeatedly. With each visit there is the potential that the content has been changed, because there is no single external published version, final product, or physical object. In many locations, individuals can actually contribute to the communication process by posting their own comments. Because this communication is both persistent and mutable, it generates discursive social processes at specific network locations. Thus, it is not like the finished products of mass media. Instead, it is the partial product of a communal agency.

This feature of the participatory media is what will allow for the naming of Occupy artifacts as “living texts,” a term used by the movement to describe both the open-endedness of the principles and practices being developed by a still-emerging public as well as the “life” such documents possess by virtue of being brought online into public and ‘re-traceable’ space.

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134 Howard, 2008a, 199.
135 Ibid., 200-201.
However, as Howard (2008) notes, at the same time that participatory media allow for the expression of community or vernacular interests, “the technologies that create these locations are typically produced, maintained, and funded by institutions. As a result, the discourse that emerges from these Websites is a hybrid between local and institutional interests. Imagined as hybrid, these communication processes give rise to what postcolonial culture critics Appadurai and Breckenridge (1995) have termed ‘zones of contestation’ where “national, mass, and folk culture provide both mill and grist for one another.”

Thus, while a defining feature of the vernacular lies in its contrast to institutional modes of communication or speech—where the vernacular is again held to be categorically distinct from ‘authoritative’ modes of discourse—it again cannot be seen as entirely separate from the institutional in so far as it requires the institutional to express its own alterity. This in-betweenness, as we will see, has been conceived as a source of invention, where Debra Hawhee discusses invention as “in-the-middle” not as “a beginning, as the first canon is often articulated, but a middle, an inbetween, a simultaneously interruptive and connective hooking-in to circulating discourses.”

Just as Cicero suggested that the vernacular was a source of persuasive power, the general condition of rhetoric (as a techne or “art”) is such that it occupies an interstitial position between ‘things as they are’ and ‘things as they could be,’ a concept implicit in a Sophistic definition of rhetoric which John Poulakos advances as “the art which seeks to capture in opportune moments that which is appropriate and attempts to suggest that which is possible.”

In linking “rhetoric to a movement originating in the sphere of actuality and striving to attain a

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136 Howard, 2008b, 492.
138 Cicero in Howard 2008a, 204.
139 Poulakos, 36.
place in that of potentiality,”¹⁴⁰ we come to see rhetoric as performing or fulfilling a ‘bridging function’ between the contingent and eternal, between the ‘here-and-now’ and the ‘there-and-then.’ This notion of being “between” things is that which gives rhetoric recourse to (and takes resource from) the canon and process of invention. Since it is a premise of this dissertation that the emerging techne and vernacular of OWS contributed to its role as a “first responder” during the disaster of Hurricane Sandy, we might mark this as a place to return if we are to build out larger theoretical bases on the rhetorical canon on invention and the role of techne in response to crisis. For now, one of the larger take-aways from literature on the vernacular is the relevance it bears to the formation of communities in online spaces through geographically-distributed networks.

**The Reticulate Public Sphere**

Before addressing public participation and membership in online spaces, we can look to Hauser’s (1999) conceptualization of the reticulate Public Sphere as a conversational model of society that takes *common meanings* and *shared interests* to the basis upon which publics are founded. These meanings and interests are consequently formed through our affiliations with the multiple dialogic arenas in which we come into contact or to which we belong to as member. Hauser notes,

> The contemporary Public Sphere has become a web of discursive arenas, spread across society and even in some cases across national boundaries. Each of these arenas is itself composed of those members of society who, at the very least, are attending to a discourse on issues they share and who are able to understand and respond to the vernacular exchanges that exist outside of power and yet are normative of it. Our direct daily encounters with others who share our discursive spaces may be local, but our awareness of association with others who are part of its dialogue extends to locales and participants who are strangers and yet whose participation we heed and consider.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.
Collectively these weblike structures of a particular public sphere, such as a political party or a social movement, are joined to others in the reticulate Public Sphere, where their collective rhetorical practices produce society.  

An antecedent to this conception of the public sphere—where “conversation specifically constitutes a space in which intersubjectivity may appear”—can be traced to Jurgen Habermas’ (1962, 1991) attendance to the circulation of discourse within spaces separate from the state and commercial interests of the proletariat. Though Habermas’ theory fails to account for the multiplicity of publics which exist within the bourgeois public sphere (a failure that is productively critiqued by Frazer, Goodnight, Warner, and Hauser) Habermas still provides a way to conceptualize and discuss how public opinion can arise in and be shaped through the social forums where communicative transactions occur. In these spaces of the bourgeois public sphere—the cafes, the parlors, the salons—during the 18th century Enlightenment, it was possible (at least theoretically) for all citizens to have access to the forums in which deliberation about issues that mattered occurred. However, instead of Habermas’ communicative ideal that placed a premium on critical rationality and consensus, Hauser (1999) turns to and extends the rhetorical antecedents of “good reasons” and phronesis (practical wisdom) as the markers and means by which ‘civic virtue’ could be enacted in order to make space for the emergence of new ideas and their deliberation towards the common good of eudaimonia or happiness.

In this view, good reasons provide the basis of both civic judgment and the well-ordered functioning of a healthy democratic society, where every member (again theoretically) has a say in determining the course. As it relates to past theorizations on rhetoric’s telos of krisis or crisis, these good reasons—as discovered through discursive practices—were the means through which

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141 Hauser, *Vernacular Voices*, 70-71.
142 Ibid., 66.
contingent publics, facing contingent problems or social ills, developed the justification(s) or beliefs for actions to be taken, actions that better guaranteed the healthy functioning of and fidelity to the *eudaimonia* of a well-ordered civic society. As Hauser notes, “the concept of civil society refers to a network of associations independent of the state whose members, through social interactions that balance conflict and consensus, seek to regulate themselves in ways consistent with a valuation of difference.” Of greatest import here is the notion that public opinion could be (and is) formed in spaces outside the traditional or authoritative bounds of the church, state, or kingdom, wherein “power” was concentrated and held sway over the governance of opinion and ideas that mattered. Elaborating on and expanding the notion of the public sphere, Michael Warner (2005) would advance the notion of the “counterpublic” which forms in opposition to the dominant or prevailing figurations of publics.

As a form of poetic-worldmaking where oppositional tendencies and discussions could be developed and held, counterpublics provided a way to understand how publics not only function as hegemonic forces and figurations that contain and circulate “predominant” modes of acting and thinking, but that publics formed on the basis of their opposition to accepted beliefs or normative behaviors of the masses. Similar to Hauser’s claims that the critical norms of a rhetorical model of the public sphere are derived from actual discursive practices, Warner states that “a public is a[n] [autotelic] space of discourse organized by nothing other than discourse itself”—which “comes into being only in relation to texts and their circulation”—and thus “exists by virtue of being addressed.” As it relates to an analysis of OWS, Hauser (1999) has noted,

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143 Ibid., 21.  
144 Michael Warner, 67.  
145 Ibid., 66.  
146 Ibid., 67.
Since communication is the means by which public issues acquire publicity, there is every reason to suspect that publics exist only as they manifest their publicness. A public’s essential characteristic is its shared activity of exchanging opinion. Put differently, publics do not exist as entities but as processes; their collective reasoning is not defined by abstract reflection but by practical judgement; their awareness of issues is not philosophical but eventful.  

This processural component of the public and the ways in which awareness arises as practice or event rather than philosophical speculation helps to frame even the earliest definitions of Occupy, as proclaimed by Occupy: “This is not a protest. This is a process.”

Figure 1: This is a Process, Not a Protest Meme

Our discussion of the reticulate public sphere allows us to return to Howard’s discussion of the vernacular formations through participatory media, where discourse—rather than gender, ethnicity, nationality, class, or geography—serves as the basis of perceived community. As Howard notes,

Participatory media enable interactive communication because persistent network locations offer individuals the chance to repeatedly locate and participate with each other, without full recourse to the geography necessary in real-world communities. The interacting agencies of these network locations can only be documented if they are approached as persistent communication processes. Unlike static texts, they are always generating their

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147 Hauser, *Vernacular Voices*, 64.
shared meanings across an undulating web of informal and everyday online expressive action.\textsuperscript{148}

Again, unlike geographical communities or the bourgeois public sphere—where one another must be physically proxemic to one another in order to carry out the work of identity formation—online communities can extend beyond geographical and temporal markers as the boundaries of their membership. Thus, “because they have no physical or geographic markers, online communities are radically dependent on the ongoing enactment of the shared expectations that are both witnessed and enacted by participants in the discourse (R. G. Howard 1997, 2000). In such communication, the expectations and the expression of those expectations must occur simultaneously in an ongoing process in order to sustain perceived common identity.”\textsuperscript{149}

Given that the climate and urgency of the times (\textit{kairos}) demands an alternative to “business as usual” when there is a clear and present danger in continuing down this path, an attendance to the vernacular of communities struggling to survive may point ways to such alternatives. As Occupy has decried: “You can’t stop an idea whose time has come.” Given our being upon multiple brinks of economic, environmental, biological, and social collapse—causes of which have been attributed not only to mankind in general, but to the imprudential and corrupt practices of the economic elite, the 1%—a turn to the vernacular, to the manners and imaginations of those struggling to survive, may be our last recourse and hope for revitalizing the democratic spirit that is founded upon the free expression and exchange of opinion (\textit{doxa}) where the emergence and construction of ‘good reasons’ determine the course of civil society. If rhetoric is in fact a discipline based upon and concerned with the contingencies that mark and make possible the advent or invention of new social formations, then a critical attendance to the

\textsuperscript{148} Howard, 2008a, 199.  
\textsuperscript{149} Ibid., 202.
vernacular expands the persuasive possibilities of rhetorical practice if not the grounds of rhetoric itself. In turning to situations where survival depends on whether or not a community or utterance is seen as persuasive—as well the conditions which make persuasion not only possible but necessary and prudent—allows rhetoric (as a discipline) to more fully and more intelligibly speak on and recuperate the nature of its art through the realms in which it finds greatest accord. Notable, too, is the fact that rhetoric began as a practice on the streets before it became a discipline of the arts. Beyond the role it played in the formation of public opinion in the *polis* and *agora*, rhetoric was taught to citizens in order to reclaim ‘disputed’ property that was handed over to wealthy-elites by dictators just prior to the Syracusan revolution.150 It is fitting, then, to use a rhetorical perspective to make sense of how the global movement of Occupy is collectively reclaiming public spaces for the emergence of new ideas and new forms of authority.

CHAPTER II
METHODS

As indicated in the title and preceding chapters of this dissertation, this project is first and foremost a take or “touch” on the emergence of Occupy on “radical” grounds. Given this, the purpose of this study is to identify what rhetorical inventions—what new modalities of communication and persuasion—emerged during Occupy Wall Street (OWS) over time, in geographic place, and through virtual space. As such, a primary objective of this study is to identify the rhetorical materials that were generated in the Occupy Movement (OM) as it the movement took place on the streets of New York City and on the streams of Twitter, where information/communication technology (ICT) facilitated the ‘viral’ and ‘real time’ communications of movement participants. A secondary objective involves determining whether the vernacular rhetoric—the modes of persuasion particular/native to a ‘marginal’ population or group—of OWS played an “inventive” role in responding to disaster during Occupy Sandy (OS): an “offshoot” of OWS that became between the first and fourth largest grassroots response to disaster in the U.S.

Objectives and Research Question

Both objectives of this study—determining what rhetorical materials were generated in OWS and what function the vernacular served in responding to disaster/crisis—warrant a broad examination of the movement’s communications, practices, and principles in the places where they emerged: the movement’s physical ‘point of origin’ (NYC) and its virtual origins (primarily through the ICT of Twitter) where OWS came into being and assembled. For the purposes of this study, I position OWS as an emergent response to crisis, specifically a response to the rhetorical exigency created by economic fallout from the Stock Market Crash of 2008. As such, the
rhetoric of Occupy was found to serve a recovery or relief-oriented function by virtue of the cultural, social, and political aims that the movement originally held and articulated. The research question generating these findings is as follows:

RQ: In what ways did the vernacular rhetoric of OWS emerge as an inventive response to crisis?

Within the field of disaster sociology and hazards research, a body of literature has developed around the frequent but informal sightings of emergent phenomena (EP) and emergent citizen groups (ECGS) that appear in the field or at the scene of an actual or potential disaster. This research begins to intersect with rhetorical studies on the vernacular where the emergence of publics (Hauser, 1999) and the coming-into-being of new discursive arenas (Hauser, 1999, 2005, 2008, 2011; Ono & Sloop, 1995, 2002; Sloop & Ono, 1997; Hess, 2007; Howard, 2008, 2010; Rickert, 2007) are a subject and site of theoretical and empirical investigation. Whereas rhetorical scholars have contended that “publics are emergences manifested through vernacular rhetoric,” disaster sociologists have characterized ECGs as: “the coming together in formal and informal groupings of private citizens concerned with some preparedness and/or recovery aspects of actual or potential disaster from some natural agent or technological accident.” While these bodies of literature differ in some important respects, both bodies of scholarship attend to the emergence of publics: one in response to disaster and crisis situations, the other in response to community concerns and local exigencies in the public sphere. Both bodies of scholarship have looked to social movements and places of protest as sites of emergent phenomena that bring new social developments into existence. In both cases, the researcher is often positioned in or at the original place (in situ) where these voices, experience, and disaster/crisis events are taking place or emerging.
In addition to the geographical locations where citizens and publics emerge in response to social, political, and critical exigencies, the rise and proliferation of ICT has expanded the sites or terrains where communication and rhetoric are taking place. Among these sites are the online domains where local language practices are emerging and can be studied. In studies of the vernacular online (Howard, 2005, 2008a, 2008b, 2010), “new media”—or more properly, participatory media—include online blogs, amateur web pages, “vanity pages,” the general infrastructure of the World Wide Web, wikis, social networking tools, IRC channels, and folksonomy indexes. On a disaster front, studies on ECGS has led to research on how ICT (particularly the technology of Twitter) supports public participation and collective decision-making by communities in disaster and crisis (Starbird & Palen, 2001; Palen & Liu, 2007; Palen et al., 2010; Kogen, Palen, & Anderson, 2015) where Palen and Liu note, “recent world-wide crisis events have drawn new attention to the role information communication technology (ICT) can play in warning and response activities.”

Both lines of scholarship are turning to virtual realms (and virtual technologies) in order to understand how local communities leverage new media in response to change, crisis, or disasters. These studies provide the basis or rationale for studying Occupy on virtual terrains during OWS. However, despite acknowledgements by first responders and those engaged in the disaster sector that survival is often contingent upon exercising the proper means of address—where it has been recently noted by public officials (Ruth Finkelstein, 2013) that “[in crisis,] it always, always, always come down to this: did we have the right messengers speaking to the right audience [at the right place] in the right language

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at the right time?”—disaster researchers and responders seldom turn to the rhetorical field for insight on the role that rhetoric or persuasion plays (or could) in times of crisis or disaster.

This “missed connection” signifies a theoretical and practical gap in current knowledge given that rhetoric has been historically concerned (or preoccupied) with issues concerning the timing, delivery, and placement of speech that involve particular audiences and speakers where crisis/krisis is consequently the endpoint/purpose of the rhetorical endeavor and the discipline of rhetoric writ large (Aristotle; Ono & Sloop, 1992; Hauser, 1999). In addition to this, while disaster researchers (Quarantelli, 1984) have expressed “a need to explore the occasions and conditions that generate emergent behavior,” the discursive practices of local communities ‘struggling to survive’ (the vernacular) has yet to be suggested as rejoinder to this call. This suggests another theoretical gap, given that communities on the front line or on the margins are hardest hit during a disaster (Tierney 2007; Finch, Emrich, and Cutter 2010; Tierney & Oliver-Smith 2012) and knowledge of local languages and customs (the vernacular) is needed (and used) to respond to the emergent needs of those within particular locales. As such, there is still much to be learned from studying those who are first to “get the word out” or first at the scene (first responders) where local bodies, resources, and ways of living are on the line. As noted in the disaster literature, “…disasters are linked to a breakdown or blockage in communication between scientists, politicians, emergency services, and the public…More information is available but simply does not get to those people who need to act upon it because of failures in systems of communication.” Rhetorical theorists, on the other hand, have made calls to explore

2 A notable exception to this absence is the work of Leysia Palen who has published extensively on citizen communications in crisis and the role of information communication technologies (ICTs) in their facilitation of public participation during disaster. However, most attention is placed on how publics participate through the virtual channels, not what they are actually saying on them.
the situations and occasions that give rise to the creation of discourse or what Lloyd Bitzer calls *rhetorical situations*: the “specific condition or situation which invites utterance.” Disaster researchers have likewise called for “a need to explore the occasions and conditions that generate emergent behavior.” Thus, where rhetorical theory could benefit from studying disaster and crisis as rhetorical situations that give rise to the creation or emergence of discourse, disaster research could benefit from closer examinations of the persuasive appeals (rhetoric) used by affected communities where local modes of response (the vernacular) serves as a “condition” that generates emergent behavior.

In addition to the disciplinary exigencies that call for a closer examination of the conditions that give rise to emergent phenomena, the increased frequency, scale, and scope of recent disaster events (e.g. BP/Deepwater Horizon Spill, Enbridge Oil Spill, Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Disaster, Hurricane “Superstorm” Sandy, Hurricane Haiyan/Yolanda, etc.) now suggest a trend or “new norm” in the occurrence of events that require a mass response. However, in the last couple years alone, groups like OWS, Occupy Sandy (OS), and the local ECGS of Boulder Flood Relief (BFR) suggest another trend is in place: the emergence of citizens groups that use participatory media and ICT in response to disruptive events in the economy, environment, or locale. This provides a practical warrant for understanding the persuasive appeals that local communities use and *invent* in response to real and anticipated threats to personal and collective

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4 Bitzer, “The Rhetorical Situation,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1 (1968): 4. While the scope of this study does not look at Occupy Sandy in any depth, it should be noted that Bitzer holds that natural disasters do not count as rhetorical situations, that “whatever comes about of necessity and cannot be changed — death, winter, and some natural disasters, for instance — are exigences to be sure, but they are not rhetorical.” However, Occupy has provided evidence that while rhetoric may not prevent disasters from happening, the situation of a natural disaster still invites discourse given that ‘persuasive appeals’ are found in all stages of disaster (preparedness, response, recovery, mitigation) where the crafting and communication of vital information to both ‘the general public’ and to specialized communities must be persuasive if it is to induce publics to take action.

resources, goods, and securities. As suggested above: in times of disaster and crisis, the ability to reach an audience can become a matter of life or death. This “ability” happens to be a preoccupation of the 2,500-year-old discipline of Rhetoric, where Aristotle defines rhetoric as “the ability to observe the available means of persuasion in any given case/situation.” Despite this long-standing definition and concern, rhetoric has not been a focal point or formal consideration in studies of disaster and ECGS. As such, studying the rhetoric of Occupy as an emergent response to economic crisis (OWS) and natural disaster (OS) is important to both academic communities and first responders who study or participate in the leveraging of local knowledge, languages, and practices (the vernacular) with the use of ICT/new media (i.e. Twitter) where the existence of needs and resources can be communicated and conveyed to others vested in the survival or preservation of lives and livelihoods during crisis and disaster. This not only expands the topological terrains where rhetoric takes place (and can be studied/applied) but it could change our understanding of what social movements are (or do) when people act on the belief that their home environs or ‘life-worlds’ to be in peril.

Methods on the Margins

On a methodological front, the study of the vernacular—as conducted by critical rhetoricians and rhetorical theorists—have involved ‘grounded’ or in situ methods that focus on the lived experiences of “people struggling to survive” and on the voices of those on the borders (Anzaldúa, 1987) and margins (Minh-ha, 1991) of civic, social, and geographic spheres. Since “the project of rhetorical theory and criticism is a democratic political culture”⁶ where “rhetorical

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theory’s commitment is to a culture where prescriptions emerge in speech.\textsuperscript{7} An attendance to prescriptions of democratic culture required a closer connection to the actual sites and conditions that allowed for these emergences to take place. As Ono and Sloop (2002) note, “as in other fields in the humanities and social sciences, in the field of rhetoric the push to see rhetorical criticism as a political performance grew in the early 1980s when numerous calls for a politically engaged rhetorical criticism emerged.”\textsuperscript{8} Thus, the recognition of human struggle and political strife—especially by those situated in a discipline oriented toward the telos of crisis and critical judgment—is a ‘first step’ in countering moments of socio-political crisis. As Philip Wander (1983) expounds,

Criticism takes an ideological turn when it recognizes the existence of powerful vested interests benefiting from and consistently urging politics and technology that threatens life on this planet, when it realizes that we search for alternatives. The situation is being constructed; it will not be averted either by ignoring it or placing beyond our provence. An ideological turn in modern criticism reflects the existence of crisis, acknowledges the influence of established interest and the reality of alternative world-views, and commends rhetorical analyses not only of the actions implied but also of the interests represented. More than “informed talk about matters of importance” criticism carries us to the point of recognizing good reasons and engaging in right action. What an ideological view does is to situate “good” and “right” in an historical context, the effort of real people to create a better world.\textsuperscript{9}

The function of ideological critique not only challenged the orthodoxy of the “text” as a rhetorical artifact\textsuperscript{10} but—as it relates to current methodological concerns of the vernacular—sought to move beyond postructuralist attempts to ‘merely’ describe or deconstruct social oppression in places where it may be ‘recuperated, located, and catalogued’ (Ono & Sloop, ...)
To directly participate in the arenas where human struggle was occurring required stepping outside the formal bounds of the mainstream and institutional.

*Rhetorical Field Methods*

As a countervailing force to the predominance of rhetorical analyses that are disseminated or delivered by those in power, rhetorical scholars began turning to ‘everyday discourses’ (de Certeau, Giard, Mayol, 1998; McCormick, 2003) and the vernacular (Hauser, 1999; Howard, 2008; Ono & Sloop, 1995, 2002; Sloop & Ono, 1997) in an effort to engage with the voices and perspectives of those that had otherwise evaded scholarly attention. In so doing, new methodological approaches were made necessary to examine these voices and positions from the margins. As such, a growing number of rhetorical scholars are drawing on qualitative methods (e.g. ethnography, participant observation, interviewing, fieldwork) in their rhetorical scholarship, creating an area of hybrid “mixed methods” that travels under several names: rhetorical field methods, ethnographic rhetoric, and critical-rhetorical ethnography. In particular, rhetorical field methods—which draws upon participant-observation, performance, ethnography, and “participatory epistemology”—has been used as a methodological extension of critical rhetoric’s (CR) emancipatory aims by studying and taking part in the everyday activities of the causes and communities in which the researcher is an advocate. This methodology has been defined by Middleton, Senda-Cook, & Endres as the following:

*Rhetorical field methods* refers both to the rhetorical intervention into rhetorical spaces and action in which we engage when we describe and interpret insights gained through in situ rhetorical study (like CR [critical rhetoric] this descriptive and interpretive practice aims to contribute to emancipatory practice), and to rhetorical field methods focus on the processual forms of rhetorical action that are accessible only through participatory methods (and that are flattened
Rhetorical field methods have been used to study “live” rhetorics in situ, where rhetoric is seen as taking place outside of texts or textual artifacts. As Middleton et al. discuss, this method has been used to study and analyze ephemeral discourses of protest (e.g., Endres, Sprain, & Peterson, 2009; Pezzullo, 2001, 2003, 2007), co-constructed consumer places (e.g., Dickinson, 1997, 2002; Stewart & Dickinson, 2008), contested memorial sites (e.g., Blair, 1999, 2001; Blair, Jeppeson, & Pucci, 1991; Blair & Michel, 2000; Dickinson, Ott, & Aoki, 2005, 2006), bodies engaged in mundane performance (e.g., Fenske, 2007)” (Middleton et al., p. 388) and are broadly used to seriously engage marginalized rhetorical communities that often evade critical attention (Blair, Jeppeson, & Pucci, 1991; Hauser, 1999; Ono & Sloop, 1995; Sloop & Ono, 1997; Dickinson, Ott, & Aoki, 2005, 2006; Endres, Sprain, & Peterson, 2007, 2009). Middleton et al. also identify the potential for rhetorical field methods to “analyze situations in which meanings depend on places, physical structures, spatial delineations, interactive bodies, and in-the-moment decisions.”¹² For this study, elements of rhetorical field methods—namely participatory epistemology—were used to study the “live” rhetoric of a protest/process community (OWS, OS, Occupy) through their ‘everyday’ actions (i.e. tweeting, marching, emailing, occupying places/spaces) in order to seriously engage with and study the rhetorical inventions and emergent materials/modes that would come to characterize this rhetorical community.

¹² Ibid., 358.
Here, a quick caveat is due: because I entered the “field” of NYC solely as a participant in the OM—without a research question, design, or plan—I am unable to claim the entirety of tools (particularly ethnography, interviewing, or fieldwork) that practitioners of rhetorical methods use to capture and account for rhetorical activity and invention on the margins. That said, I have approached this study and my participation in the movement with an “ethnographic sensibility” towards locating, capturing, and preserving indigenous or local meanings and modalities within the original sites where Occupy ‘took place.’ Peter Simonson discusses this ethnographic sensibility in relation to studying rhetorical generation in “Reinventing Invention, Again,” where he writes:

While the mediation of invention can be studied through multiple perspectives and methods, it invites investigations undertaken with an ethnographic sensibility attentive to ongoing forms of life and both ongoing and eventful rhetorical production within them. This roving sensibility can be deployed through “rhetorical field methods” (Middleton et al.), but it can also shape textual analysis, archival research, pedagogy, and reflective practice.13

Turning to and taking part in these emergent communiques/communications (COMMS) of Occupy in three kinds of (original) places has been undertaken as a first step towards locating new places/lines of argument (topoi) and new fields of economic activity (or labor) that emerged from the grounds of OWS. As detailed more extensively below, the creation of participatory media accounts (Twitter handles, Facebook pages, Gmail and Instagram accounts, blog/Tumblr pages, website domains, etc.) and relocating to the site where Occupy emerged (NYC) was necessary to engage with and account for the rhetorical activities and inventions made possible through Occupy. Again, while I cannot claim to have conducted fieldwork or taken fieldnotes—give the absence of a research topic, focus, or motivations—the informal recordings I took in

13 Ibid., 317-318.
personal notebooks within place-based locations (throughout the 5 boroughs of NYC) and in online spaces (predominately through Twitter) were likewise colored by this ethnographic sensibility towards the documentation of local/indigenous meaning as they emerged in “real time.”

Participatory Epistemology

Middleton, Senda-Cook, and Endres (2011) note that participatory epistemology—or “ways of interacting with and experiencing the rhetorics we study that participate in the meaning-making and the material contexts of rhetors that draw our attention”14—supplements critical knowledge by placing the body directly within the material contexts, lived experiences, and discursive constraints that shape rhetorical action and experience. Middleton et al. note, “by placing our bodies within the rhetorical situation we analyze, practioners become accountable to the affective, sensory, and aesthetic dimensions of rhetoric”15 where interlocuters are engaged as coparticipants “who offer ‘real time’ readings, explanations, reactions, translations, and other perspectives on the rhetorical action on which our research focuses.”16 Since this project “refocus[es] on what falls outside discourse proper”17 by attending to the “live rhetoric” of Occupy as it emerged from the grounds of Zuccotti/Liberty and in virtual space, the adoption of methods that “include more careful attention to the extradiscursive elements of rhetorical action”18 were necessary to expand the accounting and analysis of rhetorical experiences on the margins. Middleton et al. elaborate on how participatory epistemology supplements critical knowledge by noting:

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15 Middleton, et al., 393-394.
16 Ibid., 393.
17 Rickert, 252.
18 Middleton et al., 393.
Rhetorical field methods’ participatory epistemology expands what counts as evidence in rhetorical analysis in two ways. First, a participatory epistemology implies the importance of the rhetorician’s body for bringing into focus elements of rhetorical experience occluded by a spotlight on texts or textual fragments. By placing our bodies within the rhetorical situation we analyze, practitioners become accountable to the affective, sensory, and aesthetic dimensions of rhetoric… Second, participatory epistemology acknowledges the merit of analyzing the lived experiences of vernacular communities by seeking out opportunities ‘to witness and record discourses that are left out of traditional written records’ as instances of rhetorical invention (Pezzullo, 2003, p. 351).¹⁹

Thus, in order to understand and more fully account for how “texts and embodied, lived experiences interantimate one another”²⁰ by engaging in the literal and “symbolic” economies that shape and constrain local interpretations or “readings” of the movement, I have assessed the rhetoric of Occupy as it took place in “real-time” through grounded locales on the streets of NYC (where the movement emerged) and in online terrains through multiple ICT (i.e. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, blogs, wikis, IRC channels) in order to understand and better account for the vernacular/native nuances of what the movement brought to light and how the movement saw itself. As case in point, one of the more common chants to emerge from OWS would be: “All Day, All Week, Occupy Wall Street!” To understand what that meant and looked like, however, one would need to take part in the ‘everyday’ or mundane transactions that took place in situ on the grounds of Wall Street.

Research Design

In order to participate in these events as they were happening, I spent one year, from July 2012 to July 2013—roughly 10 months after the emergence of OWS on September 17th, 2012—as a participant in the movement in New York City. At that juncture, my intention for moving to

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¹⁹ Ibid., 394.
²⁰ Ibid., 393.
NYC was not to conduct research or collect data, but to continue my participation in a movement that was still unfolding, that I believed to be historical, and in which I was personally invested. Before moving to NYC, I had become an active participant in Occupy-related events (in Boulder and Denver, Colorado) roughly 2 months after the start of OWS. In this process, I created an @[Occupy]-related Twitter account (@OccupyRhetoric) and Facebook page on November 16th, 2011. These accounts were also linked to an email address (occupyrhetoric@gmail.com) as a way to store/organize materials associated with Occupy. My participation in Occupy (online) involved locating and following other Occupy participants (occupiers) through their Occupy-related Twitter accounts (e.g. @OccupyWallStreet, @OccupyDenver, @OccupyData, @OccupyTheory) and/or through their participation/involvement in movement events through Occupy-related hashtags (e.g. #OWS, #Occupy, #S17, etc.). After creating an online presence and locating other occupiers online, I participated in (virtual) movement events by re-tweeting, favorite-ing, and replying to tweets/users on topics related to rhetoric and/or to the movement writ large. As mentioned before, no research plan, design, or question(s) were formulated during my year of direct participation in the OWS movement and formalized research did not begin until my return to Boulder in July 2013, when I decided to write a dissertation on Occupy using the archive of emails (listed and described below) as one potential source of data.

This form of participation online (through Twitter) catalyzed my interest in the movement and eased my relocation to NY on July 19, 2012. The day after I arrived in NY, I began to attend and take part in Occupy public meetings, public marches, and public events—most leading up to the one-year anniversary (“S17” or #S17) of OWS—that were organized by movement participants and held at various sites in the five boroughs (Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, and Staten Island) of NYC. Given my involvement and attendance at these
actions and events, I collected/saved or was otherwise given access to the following materials: physical/material texts created or distributed by participants (i.e. flyers, pamphlets, brochures, buttons/pins, songbooks, magazines/‘zines,’ newspapers, and other publications); photographs of protest signs, banners, and movement-related ephemera; meeting minutes (self-recorded) taken in public forums/spaces and distributed (via email) to meeting attendees; personal journals used to take notes on present or upcoming events, actions, or meetings; emails on 13 public Occupy-affiliated list-serves to which I subscribed (via the public domain http://lists.occupy.net/lists/lists) and emails on 7 private Occupy-related list-serves to which I was added by OWS organizers (in groups which I was involved) in NYC. Finally, my participation as a volunteer and organizer with Occupy Sandy (OS) necessitated my use and access of a shared Google Drive that was created by first responders with OS on October 31, 2012. While I do not specifically use or reference the materials/data collected during OS, the emails and Google Drive of both the email account (occupyrhetoric@gmail.com) and the shared OS Google Drive serve as a repository or archive of texts and materials that contain discussion of emergent topics addressed by movement participants. The materials and data archived in these sites include: email threads, screenshots, photos, video, hashtags, tweets, links to msm and alternative media articles, planning and organizing materials. Hand-written journals and a laptop were used to take notes and communicate with others while participating in movement events, actions, and meetings. While all data collected has been done in open forums or places explicitly designated as “public,” pseudonyms or name abbreviations have been used on incorporated material to protect those who do not wish their identity to be made known.

Publically Available Information
Apart from the public tweets on Twitter timeline/accounts of Occupy participants, data collected on this online site/ICT include: screenshots of tweets with links to supplementary photos, video, hashtags, and text. These screenshots were used to capture keywords or key phrases being used by movement participants, which could be used for later reference as a reminder of the original topics/terms that were used by occupiers over the duration of my involvement with Occupy. Publicly accessible new articles, blogposts, and websites have also been drawn upon and incorporated in the following chapters in order to conduct a rhetorical analysis on the materials that emerged from the OM.

*Non-public Documents*

Emails

What I am calling an archive (the Gmail inbox) was originally designed for personal use—to communicate with others who were organizing with/participating in the movement—and not with any specific intent of being used for academic research. Retrospectively, however, I realized that this inbox was a significant and valuable source of data. Given that there are over 10,000 unread emails in this inbox alone, some emails (namely those unread) may contain information about participants (i.e. phone numbers, narratives, or other information that might be considered “personal”) but these emails were not collected for those purposes and were not used or analyzed for this study. Instead, the information I used from this archive includes: the text from discussions on public and private list serves about what Occupy “is” or “means”—which was a topic given considerable attention by movement participants—as well as other topics of interest that were 1. Given similar consideration or attention and 2. Contributed to the life of the movement or to relief and recovery objectives in OWS and OS. By looking to the number of (email) responses generated within a single thread or upon a single topic/subject, a higher
number of responses—in a shorter window or time—is usually a good indication that a topic is of interest or generating interest. Twitter uses a similar algorithmic logic in determining what tweets are “trending,” where the volume/number of hashtags are compared to the time frame/window in which these tweets were generated. For the final write-up and analysis, this email repository will be used to guide and elaborate upon the kinds of topics and rhetorical materials encountered or discussed in Occupy circles. In this way, this study will be using “original” material generated by participants, but no personal information is identified and only un-named/un-identifiable excerpts/material from these emails were used to conduct rhetorical analyses on what the word “occupy” (or other topics of interest) meant to occupiers, based on discussion generated by those that contributed to this topic/subject via email threads.

Public and Private Listservs

In Appendix A., I have listed (in chronological order) all listservs of which I am a member and from which data was drawn or used. Some of these listservs occur in the form of a GoogleGroup (which I make note of below) but they function similar to that of a listserv where the “topics/threads” of GoogleGroups are sent out like emails on listservs, where both are posted/shared with “subscribers” of listservs or the “members” of GoogleGroups. Below, I make note of: 1. Whether the group was public or private; 2. The date I became a member (start date) to the date that the list-serve was deactivated or was merged into another listserv; 3. How many emails or threads are on each listserv; 4. How many members currently remain on these listservs, and 5. Whether the listserv is currently active. I have also calculated the grand total of emails/threads on the listservs/GoogleGroups (and total number of current members) at the bottom of these figures, but only a small portion of emails and members were used in the final write-up. Lastly, according to http://lists.occupy.net/lists/lists, most (13) of the 20 list-serves that
I have access to and drew from are public, with the seven exceptions being by invitation or shared “privately.” I was invited to these 7 private listservs by OWS organizers and listserv administrators because of my involvement or interest in those groups.

Google Drive

Like the Google email inbox, the OS Google drive functions as an archive/repository of materials that can be used to locate topics that emerged within this community (of OS) in the aftermath of Sandy. I acquired and helped to construct this data/drive as a participant and organizer with OS from the first day of its efforts on October 31, 2012. While I do not explicitly draw upon/reference material from this source, its materials were used for similar purposes as the inbox archive: to account for the original topics and kinds of concerns encountered during the formative stages of this movement effort. This drive is now shared by 110 members and contains 387 files—in the form of illustrations, forms, charts/graphs, maps, and documents—that served task-related purposes in coordinating response/relief-oriented activities over the duration of the recovery and response effort(s) in NYC, New York, and New Jersey.

Personal Journals

These journals were used to record my experiences of public meetings and events, written for my personal use as an Occupy participant and not for use in research. More specifically, for both OWS and OS, hand-written journals and a laptop were used to record task-specific observations or needs/resources within Occupy groups and to communicate online while participating in movement actions, events, and meetings. These personal journals were used to write down thoughts or questions that pertained to tasks being performed, to the generation of to-do lists, and to cultivating a more substantial account of what “Occupy Rhetoric” is, does, and could do as a concept and online, participatory account.
Audio/Video and Photographs

As part of my participation in Occupy’s public actions and events, I used my cell phone to take personal videos (which contain audio components) and photographs of my experiences in Occupy and of my time in NYC. No stand-alone audio recordings were taken. These photographs and videos (~1,500 total files) were taken for personal purposes (not research purposes) and do not contain images or audio of participants engaging in illegal activities. By and large, these photographs and video contain images of: historic NYC landmarks; trips/outings made with roommates and friends; banners, signs, and art installments made by movement participants in public spaces or displayed on public marches; words/concepts written in places/spaces “outside” Occupy Movement events but associated with the movement, and experiences during my involvement with OS in responding to disaster. In most of these photographs, the emphasis is on the words or language written on these signs/banners/art and not on the participants carrying them. No personally identifiable images will be used in the dissertation and only a small fraction of photographs (approximately ten) will be used for the sole purpose of illustrating the topics, terms, and general material that was generated in the movement. No (self-recorded) video will be used.

A Heuristic for Invention

Finally, in order to evaluate the research question proposed above—“RQ: In what ways did the vernacular rhetoric of OWS emerge as an inventive response to crisis?”—we can turn to the heuristic framework developed by Peter Simonson in “Reinventing Invention, Again” where he proposes that we define invention “simply as the generation of rhetorical materials”²¹ where

²¹ Peter Simonson, “Reinventing Invention, Again,” 317-318.
he defines rhetorical materials as “the symbolic and physical elements that enter into or are gathered for the purpose of communicative address.”22 These elements include “invention’s traditional words, ideas, and arguments but also stories, styles, gestures, rituals, bodily deportments, emotions, images, objects, and the dynamic matter that gathers itself into “things” that contribute to the dynamic flow of rhetorical production (see Simonson, “Rhetoric;” Ingold, “Ecology”).”23 In this article, Simonson argues that invention can be located “through an interlocking and dynamic array of media that [he] will call inventional media.”24 To first clarify what he means by media, he writes:

I mean medium not in the sense of intermediary or conduit but instead use it in more ontological, material, and expressive senses indexed to three dimensions of the term: (a) habitat or dwelling place, as in the medium in which an organism is suspended; (b) artistic material, as in the medium through which an artist does her work; and (c) modes of communicative expression, as in the medium through which we address or interact with audiences. Inventional media then represent habitats that provide materials and modes through which rhetorical invention occurs.25

After defining this key term, Simonson constructs a heuristic by suggesting eleven conceptual categories of media where “each represents a potential site for instruction, interpretation, explanation, and theoretical elaboration.”26 The major categories of inventional media (which are abbreviated here) are as follows:

(1) bodies, the persistent medium for human invention as a practice; (2) minds, understood as the states, patterns, and faculties of cognition and consciousness through which thinking occurs—wit, ingenium, and genius among others; (3) language, from individual terms to operative tongues and Foucauldian discourses; (4) experience in the general sense of “the interaction of live creature and environing conditions,” as John Dewey put it (36), and ranging from clearly demarcated events to experience as accumulated over time and organizing itself in habits; (5) physical spaces and geographical places; (6) time, both immediate and

22 Ibid., 313.
23 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
25 Ibid., 313-314.
26 Ibid.
historical, each culturally mediated, but also presenting their own kinds of habitats and materials for invention; (7) a wide range of media captured in the broad realm of the social—interactions, relationships, roles, social identities (e.g., race, class, gender, sexuality), small groups, publics, formal organizations, movements, communities, and institutions (e.g., educational, political, legal, religious); (8) another broad range falling within the realm of the cultural—from cultures and subcultures themselves to meanings, values, ideologies, common opinion (doxa), rituals, genres, traditions, formalized practices, and conceptual schemes; (9) technologies, e.g., writing, printing, television, computers, card catalogs, archives, and other media of storage and expression through which rhetorical materials are found and expressed; (10) economies of labor and money, universal habitats for invention that have traditionally been marginalized in the textual, discursive, and logophilic canons of rhetoric; (11) regimes and relations of power that help fuel hierarchies, hegemonies, and performatively enacted patterns of domination and resistance; manifest through each of the other ten classes, which it cuts across, but conceptually separable as providing their conditions of possibility.27

To the extent that “invention organizes and materializes itself through a range of media that can be distinguished analytically but that deeply intersect in practice,”28 we can use Simonson’s heuristic as a starting point for analyzing the kinds of materials that are generated from specific media sites in the OM. By this stage in the dissertation, it should be evident that movements (in general) are emergent and fluid entities; the OM is especially effusive in terms of the meanings given to what Occupy “is”—by those inside and outside the movement—as well as the range of grounds and grievances that Occupy has covered or encountered in multiple sites, scenes, and fields across the world. As such, the porous boundaries of this movement on topological, geographical, and technological fronts have presented challenges to a systematic study of these research sites. These challenges were largely a consequence of the emergent nature of the movement where new materials and new occupations came ‘online’ everyday. In order to capture even a fraction of what materials were generated in Occupy, I have adopted a mixed methods

27 Ibid., 314-315.
28 Ibid., 314.
approach that uses qualitative ‘impulses’ of data collection—participant observation, participatory epistemology, and self-produced archives—that has involved prolonged participant observation in the field and a reflexive, ethnographic sensibility or mobility at multiple sites.
CHAPTER III

OCCUPY OVER TIME: THE RADICAL ROOTS OF OCUPATION AND OCCUPATIO

“Some people would like to believe that a word appears (or is invented) and history and the writers of dictionaries automatically throw open the gates; not so. A word has to fight for its life. To survive, a word must claim its place and convince an audience.” – Robert K. Merton and Elinor Barber, The Travels and Adventures of Serendipity

“Not everyone fights in and for the name of Occupy. Those of us who do have to claim the name, knowing that in so doing we claim the fight.” – Not An Alternative

“You cannot stop an idea whose time has come.” – Victor Hugo, Occupy Wall Street

Fig. 2: An Unoccupied Seat Outside the New York Public Library
This chapter is a rhetorical analysis on what is perhaps the most common of all commonplaces (topoi) in the Occupy Movement (OM): the name of “Occupy” and the notion of occupation. Among the occupations and occupiers who adopted the terms—or would otherwise act, speak, write, respond, or move and “do work” in its name—“occupy” (and relatedly, “occupation”) came to designate a vital site of rhetorical activity: a seat/source of local meaning(s) and common ground around which a vernacular public came into being. Just as “occupation” emerged as a vernacular tactic used by occupiers/occupations to “reclaim the commons” and open space for the emergence of new realities, this chapter “occupies” the word of occupy on etymological or “radical” grounds in order to “take back” a term native/common to the field of rhetoric. Given the more abstract theses (θέσις) that could be laid down on what it means for a movement to raise (en relevée) old meaning from the dead, this chapter traces occupation to: 1. the ancient rhetorical trope of occupatio (occupation) and/or occultatio (or occultation) as figures designed to anticipate, defeat, or passover an argument; 2. Roman private law, where occupatio was as a mode of acquiring property and tracing bloodlines, and 3. its uptake and use by Chaucer as a literary motif and vernacular mode of authority. However, despite its classical origins—and the modern renewal of occupation by the OM—few vestiges of occupatio remain in contemporary and rhetorical literature on the subject. Given the application of this trope/term to sector of disaster preparedness and response, this absence of rhetorical

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1 As Tobias Reinhardt notes in his introduction to Cicero’s Topica: “Cicero adumbrates the way in which rhetoric and philosophy may be brought together again: the orators need to get the θέσις back from the philosophers. It is no exaggeration to say that his idea of the reunification of rhetoric and philosophy comes down to winning back the θέσις for rhetoric.” Tobias Reinhardt, Introduction to Topica, ed. and trans. (NY: Oxford University Press, 2003), 10-11.

2 To the extent that the single word (logos) of “occupy”—as an “idea whose time had come” (kairos)—was raised (en relevée) and “crossed back” (croisé derrière) like, as we will see, the position of the “ballerina on the bull,” then occupy/Occupy can be said to return meaning to antiquated senses of its name, a name which consequently unified a diasporic community.
scholarship from the discipline wherein the term emerged indicates a theoretical gap/extension to be occupied (chora) and cultivated by those to whom the term bears relevance.

Definitions matter and defining is a political act. These are premises of Defining Reality: Definitions and the Politics of Meaning, where Edward Schiappa makes the case that definitions should be understood as rhetorically induced social knowledge that can have enormous consequences whenever we agree or disagree on how to name, describe, or “entitle” objects in the world. By calling definitions rhetorically induced, Schiappa is referring to “the persuasive process that definitions inevitably involve”3 when it becomes necessary (or advantageous) to keep certain definitions ‘in place’ or advocate for their revision, particularly when definitions become “instruments” of the law. He writes, “for example, if a jury agrees that person A forced person B to have intercourse and thus decides that the given instance counts as rape, person A is subject to significant penalties under the law. Of course, we do not always agree on how to describe a given phenomenon, and the degree of denotative conformity obtained in various situations can vary widely and change over time.”4 This change of meaning over time can refer to what Schiappa calls definitional ruptures: moments when words are used in ways that disrupt the “natural attitude”5 around what things ‘really mean’ or how they ought to be defined. The novel use of words like “bad” or “sick” to designate things that are ‘in fact’ enjoyable or good (i.e. ‘that song is wicked,’ ‘that show was sick’) is one such example of a definitional rupture which cannot be resolved by turning to the dictionary or another “definitional authority” for evidence of that word ‘is’ or what that word means. As such, “a fact of essence (what X is) or a

4 Ibid., 11.
5 Ibid., 90. Schiappa borrows this phrase from Alfred Schutz and Thomas Luckmann who describe “natural attitude” as “the belief that the objects of our world (including language) are simply “there” and can be taken for granted.”
fact of usage (how word X is used) may be challenged such that only through revising certain beliefs can the difference be resolved.”

While I will make the case that some definitional ruptures can, in fact, be resolved by turning to certain “definitive records” in opportune moments (kairos) and revolutionary times, the point to be emphasized here is that “definitions constitute a form of rhetorically induced social knowledge” as “both the product of past persuasion and a resource for future persuasion.” Here, definitions of occupy and occupation are rhetorically “induced” into order to bring their archaic and obsolete meanings back into a state of existence.

The exigency for this return is twofold; first, I share with Schiappa the “belief that many important problems that people face in a variety of roles—as citizens, family members, employees and employers, scholars, among others—might be faced more squarely and productively if they approached definition as constituting rhetorically induced knowledge.” This form of knowledge acknowledges that “our definitions are linguistic propositions and as such are unavoidably historically situated and dependent upon social interaction if they are to be entitled to any standing at all.”

The historical (and rhetorical) situation that gave rise to the mass “adoption” of occupy and the tactic occupation—initially as a response to the economic fallout and crisis of 2009, and later, as a response to locally-situated crises around the world—created a definitional rupture that disrupted the “natural attitude” around what it ‘is’ to occupy (fact of essence) and how “occupy” ought to be used (fact of usage). Especially for those who would participate in the occupation of places/spaces in the name of Occupy—whether these occupations were “on the ground” in geographical locales (i.e. OccupyBrussels, OccupySydney).

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6 Ibid. Schiappa also provides another example where, “significantly new approaches to art often create a definitional rupture in which facts of essence (what art “really is”) are in conflict with facts of usage (what some people call art).” Ibid., 122.
7 Ibid., 167.
8 Ibid., 3.
9 Ibid., xii.
OccupyBrazil, OWSNYC, OccupyAustin\(^1\) or took place in more conceptual arenas (i.e. OccupyCatholics, OccupyDesign, OccupyTheory, OccupyHomes)—the term that united a “Movement of movements” began to lose its denotative meaning as a militant ‘seizure’ of property or goods. As H. Samy Alim writes in “What if We Occupied Language?”:

In a very short time, this movement has dramatically changed how we think about occupation. In early September, “occupy” signaled on-going military incursions. Now it signifies progressive political protest. It’s no longer primarily about force of military power; instead it signifies standing up to injustice, inequality and abuse of power. It’s no longer about simply occupying a space; it’s about transforming that space. In this sense, Occupy Wall Street has occupied language, has made “occupy” its own.\(^1\)

Here, we might pause to consider what it means to make a word “[one’s] own” and the implications this has for what it means to “occupy” anything or everything—even the definition of a word—if occupy is understood to mean the opening and transforming of a space around it. Alim continues, “as the global Occupy movement has shown, words can move entire nations of people — even the world — to action. Occupy Language, as a movement, should speak to the power of language to transform how we think about the past, how we act in the present, and how we envision the future.”\(^1\) Thus, while the subsequent chapters will draw out descriptions of what “occupation” looked like in the place of the park and on the virtual streams of ICT and participatory media, this chapter endeavors to “occupy” the definition of occupy (in a manner the term is now used by occupiers) by opening and transforming space around the meaning of this

\(^1\) A more comprehensive list can be found at https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1s0mH3bJ84ZIcXHnoAeuWp63SlwdAPQTGZx2mzOFvsqE/edit, which is provided in “Preliminary Findings: Occupy Research Demographic and Political Participation Survey,” Occupy Research, March 23, 2012, http://occupyresearch.net/2012/03/23/preliminary-findings-occupy-research-demographic-and-political-participation-survey/.


\(^1\) Ibid.
word as it exists in the Oxford English Dictionary: the “definitive record of the English language.”

Proceeding by way of hermeneutical performance on a traditional textual source, this tracing and opening of space speaks into a second exigency motivating this chapter, where Schiappa writes, “power to define is power to influence behavior. All proposed definitions are devised for specific purposes that can be evaluated according to the interests that they advance. The success of any definition depends on how effectively its advocates persuade (or coerce) members of a given community to conform and use the term “properly.” As such, Schiappa contends, “defining what is or is not part of our shared reality is a profoundly political act (Frye 1983).” Given the first exigency above, that “many important problems that people faced in a variety of roles…might be more squarely and productively if they approached definition as rhetorically induced social knowledge,” advancing these definitions of occupy and occupation—especially to the rhetorical community in which these terms emerged and have operated, and secondarily to the sector and community of disaster preparedness and response—could solve problems associated with the anticipation of future events and the holding of space for the emergence of new realities. In the same way that defining certain areas as “protected spaces” (i.e. a wildlife ‘preserve’ or ‘refuge;’ a ‘reservation;’ a ‘sanctuary’) entitles those areas to certain protections under law, I am advocating for a “novel” definition of occupy that keeps intact both the “authoritative” or “institutional” meaning of the word as well the “brute facts” or vernacular uptake of its modern-day use. In both cases, we may come to understand past and

13 Schiappa, 88.
14 Ibid., 70.
15 Ibid., 3.
present usages of occupy and occupation as kinds of ‘protected spaces’ or spatial preserves that, like the rhetorical *topoi*, serve as stores of information from which to furnish an argument.

*Heeding the Call*

Soon after the ‘original call’ was made to [#OCCUPYWALLSTREET](http://www.occupywallstreet.net) by adbusters.org in July of 2011—“Alright you 90,000 redeemers, rebels and radicals out there…”—should ring bells for some—the word (*logos*) ‘occupy’ and the idea of occupation quickly became ‘household’ terms inside and outside the movement that bears its name. Less than four months after the movement began on September 17th in Liberty Plaza, NYC, ‘the Protestor’ had secured a place among TIME’s time-honored tradition as “[Person of the Year](http://time.com/person-of-the-year-faq/): a title, according to TIME magazine, bestowed upon someone or (in rare cases) *something* who “best represents the news of the year,” that has “archival value,” and that “will stand the test of time.”16 Days after TIME announced ‘the Protestor’ as its selection, the American Dialect Society named ‘occupy’ its “Word of the Year”: a title that pays homage to “the most sublime, lexiest creations of each year — the new words that grace our lexicon annually.”17 As Howard Richler explains,

> The choice fell to this particular word because it was felt that it became an emblem for the whole protest movement. Ben Zimmer, the language columnist of the *Boston Globe*, stated that although “occupy” is “a very old word, over the course of just a few months it took on another life and moved in new and unexpected directions, thanks to a national and global movement . . . The movement itself was powered by the word.”18

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16 As dictated by TIME in response to the question of how long Person of the Year has been around: “It has a great origin story—or maybe more of a legend. At the end of 1927, the editors of TIME looked at the year’s covers and realized they had somehow failed to put Charles Lindbergh on the cover. He’d done his historic flight in May, but no cover. They decided they could get away with putting him on the cover months later by calling him “Man of the Year.” It was a stopgap. And here we are 87 years later. The challenge is that on one hand, we’re trying to make a decision about who best represents the news of the year. But the pick also needs to have archival value. You need the sense that it will stand the test of time. So ideally, we want our Person of the Year to be both a snapshot of where the world is and a picture of where it’s going. Someone, or in rare cases, something, that feels like a force of history.” See: Keely Conniff, “Everything You Wanted to Know About TIME’s Person of the Year,” TIME.com, December 9, 2014, [http://time.com/3626016/person-of-the-year-faq/](http://time.com/3626016/person-of-the-year-faq/).


18 Ibid.
In the article “**Occupy: The Name in Common,**” written by Not An Alternative—an arts collective and non-profit organization with a mission to affect popular understandings of events, symbols and history—they would similarly note that “processes don’t define or constitute Occupy. The movement became more than its processes the moment people outside New York began organizing themselves in its name. At that point, Occupy took on a life of its own, extending far beyond the control or intentions of those who set it in motion.”

They continue to note that the offshoots or “new initiatives” of OWS—i.e. Occupy Sandy (OS) and Strike Debt/Rolling Jubilee—served to “demonstrate the continued power of Occupy to tie together issues and struggles previously pursued as if they were politically separate or even competing with one another for pride of radical place.”

As such, they continue,

> The common name of Occupy brings together debt, housing, education, finance and climate as key sites of conflict between the 99 percent and the one percent. More than any other aspect of the movement, Occupy’s name lives on. People all over the world speak, write and organize in the name of Occupy Wall Street. Exhibitions, symposia and groups assemble under the guiding idea of occupation…If Occupy is not to go the disappointing way of our mainstream politics, it has to persist as the name we use for our common struggle.

At this point, we might ask: *what’s in a name?* Would the movement called “Occupy” be what it was/what it was called by any other name? What power does a single word have or hold as a ‘mere name’ or ‘floating signifier’? As we will see, while “occupy” served as the ‘generic’ or genetic bond that united and powered what has been called “a Movement of movements” under a single banner, this word was also met with resistance—particularly by Native American occupiers and allies—given the connotative baggage that “occupation” has acquired through

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19 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
historic precedent: the forceful, violent, and ‘unlawful’ displacement of first peoples from native lands by colonial powers. As noted in “Why (un)Occupy?” by (un)Occupy Albuquerque:

(un)Occupy Albuquerque, in solidarity with the Occupy Wall Street movement, indigenous peoples, and colonized peoples worldwide, realizes that language has historically played a powerful role in social transformation. Given the “occupation” of native lands across the Americas since 1492, the colonization of Africa, Asia, and other parts of the world, and the continued “occupation” of Iraq and Afghanistan, we resist the term “occupy” or, for that matter, any language that is connected to the oppression of people.22

However, as Not An Alternative explains, “the slogan ‘Occupy Everything,’ for example, expressed the way occupation always signifies more than physical presence. On the face of it, the slogan is absurd—we already occupy everything. What matters, then, is the minimal difference, the shift in perspective that the injunction to occupy effects.”23 This “injunction to occupy”—the “authoritative or emphatic admonition or order” to “restore matters to the position in which they stood previously to [sic] action[s]” taken by those who have “invaded the legal or equitable rights of another”24—operates here on an “outlaw logic” or differend.

The injunction to occupy is not a directive or command based upon the capitalizing logic of ‘the powers that be;’ it does not ascribe to the logic of dominant ideologies where scarcity is a functional requirement to make the system work. Instead, this injunction “enjoins us to occupy in a different mode, to assert our presence in and for itself—not for the one percent, but in common and for the common.”25 While occupation emerged in response to economic crisis and issues of wealth inequality, “occupy” would begin to assert its presence in relation to the words and concepts buttressed or attached to it. “Occupy” would turn the ways the movement was being studied or seen—through its data, design, theory, or rhetoric and from a Judaic or Catholic

lens—into ‘autonomous’ movements (@OccupyTheory, @OccupyJudaism, @OccupyCatholic) that would extend itself into and for the ‘commons’ of those spheres. As Alim writes, “what if we transformed the meaning of occupy yet again? Specifically, what if we thought of Occupy Language as more than the language of the Occupy movement, and began to think about it as a movement in and of itself? What kinds of issues would Occupy Language address? What would taking language back from its self-appointed ‘masters’ look like?”26 In this same vein of thought, the literal “taking language back” to/from occupy’s earlier/earliest etymological origins, both past and present-day configurations of the word will show us that to “occupy” a place/space is not always (or even predominantly) to ‘possess’ or to ‘seize’ those grounds for the sake of ownership, profit, or the amassment of wealth. Instead, to “occupy” can be understood as answering a call (or a command, an injunction) to ‘restore matters to the position in which they previously stood’ before the grounds upon which those matters rested were desecrated or deteriorated beyond recognition or belief. As Schiappa notes, “usually, picking up a dictionary to look up a definition is not seen as equivalent to political activism, but it would be a mistake to think that inaction or trivial actions that leave the status quo unchallenged are politically irrelevant.”27 So as to challenge the interests of those who would keep occupy “at bay” or block/‘ex-communicate’ occupiers from social media observances or interactions28 as if

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26 Alim, “What if We Occupied Language?”
27 Schiappa, 70.
28 This deserves a longer explication, but I am drawing upon personal experience where @OccupyHolySee has been blocked by @PCCS_VA or the Pontifical Council for Social Communications from the Holy See. For starters, this means I’m unable to see any of their tweets, their profile, or correspond with them online from that account. This also begs the question of what it means for a “Catholic” entity to block others (with whom they’ve never had an interaction with) when the very word “catholic” is defined as: “of universal human interest or use; touching the needs, interests, or sympathies of all men.” It is wondered how the Catholic Church can touch upon the needs/interests/sympathies of ALL men if there are “conditions” for who can and cannot have access to the information, knowledge, and/or wisdom they purport to possess.
occupation was a “dirty word,” I seek to ‘restore matters to the position in which they previously stood’ given the etymological grounds upon which this word originally rested.

The Differend of Occupy and the Logic of Love

Just as Not An Alternative tells us, “what matters, then, is the minimal difference, the shift in perspective that the injunction to occupy effects,” this shift can be seen as moving from the logic of scarcity to a logic of abundance where one “holds their ground” on the vernacular premise that to occupy a place/space is to first recognize the sanctity and generative-abilities of the grounds upon which they are sitting. In fact, when we trace the word occupation to the rhetorical trope of anticipation, prolepsis, we find that a meaning for this term is “the capacity to produce branches, flowers, fruits, etc., in the future.”

A parallel example of this differend between Occupy and ‘the powers that be’ is cited by Ono & Sloop, when they drawn upon a fictional example used by Maurice Charland to illustrate the line between dominant and outlaw discourses. They note,

In “Property and Propriety,” which draws on Lyotard’s discussion of the differend, Charland provides an example in which a judge is asked to decide whether to zone a particular section of land for a golf course or for commercial use. Key to the question before the judge is that a community of Mohawk Indians says the land is an ancient burial ground and cannot be “owned” by anyone. In this traditional court case, the court requires representatives from each position to be present for a legal hearing. In Charland’s story, however, when the Mohawk people go into the courtroom they “testify” by reciting poetry, telling stories, and singing songs. Their testifying in the fashion the court prescribes or waging an official legal battle, they believe, would signify recognition of the court’s legitimacy and submission to the logic by which it operates. Thus, while appearing and communicating within the space of the courtroom, the litigants from the Mohawk nation do so in a language that is incommensurable with the language of the court, that is, in a language that does not imply the legitimacy of the court, the law, or the judge to adjudicate on the matter.

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29 OED, s.v. “prolepsis, n.”
This native or indigenous logic was similarly seen to operate in Occupy, where to “occupy” was to tend to fertile ground, to be in ‘care of’ (c/o) those grounds that are held to be sacred, hallowed, capable of bearing fruit, produce, life. It should be noted that these grounds apply not only to “physical” places—one’s house or home, the backyard, the town square, one’s neighborhood or village, the city, one’s state, a nation, the planet at large—but to the grounds or places (topoi) that provide the “raw material” for argument when, to quote Wander, “[one] recognizes the existence of powerful vested interests benefiting from and consistently urging politics and technology that threatens life on this planet, when it realizes that we search for alternatives.”

In this vein of thought, Conor Tomás Reed, who in *Tidal Magazine* sets forth his model of change as “Step 1: Occupy Universities Step 2: Transform Them,” asserts “the relationship between ideas and currency is another target for occupation,” where “we would do well to incorporate Occupy Wall Street’s methods of discussion in our classrooms and communities.” He asks,

> How often do we carefully strive to create consent about complex positions and concepts? We’ve been taught to theorize like starving hyenas—tearing the throat out of each other’s ideas. Instead, an interrelated educational community that listens to one another, repeating word for word if needed, can inscribe the social work of scholarship with a shared sense of critical construction.

In line with Ono & Sloop, I argue that at times the critic’s function is to adopt the “outlaw logic” of an outlying group as if it were the Truth, much as in their example of the Mohawk’s legal arguments. Thus, this chapter aligns with Ono & Sloop’s position as an “opportunity for a given rhetorical-cultural critic to act as a champion of a particular outlaw logic ‘as if’ it were

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33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
universally valid, even while simultaneously acknowledging its temporal and logical contingency.”

To think outside the system then, to champion the particular outlaw logic of Occupy, is to place people before profit, meaning before money, and love before all else. It is to acknowledge the “shift in perspective that the injunction to occupy effects” as a contingent command to answer to a higher authority where participation over partisanship and autonomy over authority ‘reigns’ supreme. Charles Epstein addresses how this logic compares to the dominant logic of “the system” in “Occupy Wall St - The Revolution Is Love...” where he narrates,

[1:13] The system isn’t working for the 1% either. You know, if you were a CEO you would be making the same choices they do; the institutions have their own logic. Life is pretty bleak at the top too. And all of the baubles of the rich...they’re kind of this...phony compensation for the loss of what’s really important: the loss of community, the loss of connection, the loss of intimacy, the loss of meaning. Everybody wants to live a life of meaning...and today, we live in a money economy, where we don’t really depend on the gifts of anybody, but we buy everything. Therefore, we don’t really need anybody, because whoever grew my food or made my clothes or built my house—well, if they died or if I alienate them, if they don’t like me, that’s ok: I can just pay somebody else to do it. And it’s really hard to create community if the underlying...knowledge is: we don’t need each other. So people kinda’ get together and they actionize—or maybe they consume together—but joint consumption doesn’t create intimacy, only joint creativity and gifts create intimacy and connection.

35 Ono & Sloop, 141.
36 In trying to field so many interviews during the fall of 2011, Schneider came up with a way to discuss Occupy with reporters depending on their level of familiarity with the movement. In doing so, he “devised a sequence of epiphanies by which to phrase [his] explanations of how the movement understood itself” which were named after slogans of the movement. The most advanced but last stage was “Stage Five: Occupy your heart.” See Nathan Schneider, Thank You, Anarchy: Notes from the Occupy Apocalypse (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 85-86.
37 Fierce Love Films, “Occupy Wall St - The Revolution Is Love w Charles Eisenstein,” YouTube.com, November 18, 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BRte-k6dhgs. As it relates to the logic he love, he continues: [3:29] This shift of consciousness that inspires such things is universal, in everybody—99% and 1%—and it’s awakening in different people in different ways. I think love is the felt experience of connection to another being. An economist says that essentially “more for you is less for me,” but the lover knows that “more for you is more for me too.” If you love somebody, then they’re happiness is your happiness. Their pain is your pain. Your sense of self expands to include other beings. That’s love: love is the expansion of the self to include the other. And that’s a different kind of revolution: there’s no one to fight—there’s no “evil” to fight—there’s no ‘other’ in this revolution. Everybody has a unique calling and its really time to listen to that—that’s what the future is going to be. It’s time to get ready for it and to help contribute to it and make it happen.”
As Schneider similarly notes of Occupy, “the radicals who lent this movement so much of its character offered American political life a gift, should we choose to accept it.”38 Thus, on the basis that words can be gifts or forms of exchange—that the right word at the right time (kairos) can bring and restore meaning to areas of economic activity that go ‘without name’ or without acknowledgement in the very sectors in which they do work—this next section takes a radical approach in analyzing the ways that the word “occupy” has and can be understood by looking to philological datum and research on the etymological history of occupation. While we don’t often turn to the origins of words as “evidence” of revolution—of a concept or thing “coming full circle” by returning to the position where it first emerged or began—we may find that the ways the OM has redefined the term “occupy” harkens back to origins of the term itself. While the classical roots of occupation are not often a topic of consideration within the movement that bears its name, a return to its origins will reveal how the Occupy Movement (OM) has:

1. Breathed new life into the archaic senses of the word of “occupy” and
2. Unveiled an all-but-forgotten rhetorical trope that gives new meaning to what it is to anticipate the coming of a future event: an idea not wholly unfamiliar to those working within the sector of crisis management and disaster response. As Not An Alternative states,

   We have to occupy Occupy. We have to use the name we have in common for our common struggle, which will entail grappling with its meaning and its future. Struggles over the meaning of occupation, over the name we have in common, have energized us since we began. We are alive not because we agree but because we struggle over our common name. Those who ceaselessly repeat their mantra of leaderlessness—“no one can define Occupy”—miss the point. It’s not that Occupy can’t be defined. It’s rather that Occupy is defined in the fight over its meaning. That’s what makes it powerful.39

38 Schneider, 76.
Given that “struggles over the meaning of occupation, over the name we have in common, have energized us since we began,” it is hoped that these “old meanings” of occupation may further contribute to the energy of life of the movement.

*Occupy < Occupation < Occupatio: The Radical Roots of Occupatio(n)*

During my Sabbatical in NYC, at a post-#S17 meeting with a small group of occupiers and students at a local restaurant, Dojo, I was made aware that the origin of the word “occupy” is not itself a topic of conversation (and thus, of consideration) inside or outside of most Occupy circles. That is, the place where “occupy” first began or emerged as a word is not itself a commonplace of shared meaning. Given the nostalgia of most occupiers for the original place where Occupy physically emerged as a movement [Liberty Plaza/Zuccotti Park], it was curious to find little shared knowledge of the origins of this word, despite how many consider the word of “occupy” to be what we most share in common. Adding to this curiosity—and to the potential need for recovering lost vestiges of meaning in this ancient word—were the conversations taking place in theoretical circles of the movement around the role of “radical methodologies” in OWS. In @OccupyTheory’s first issue of *Tidal Magazine, The Beginning is Near*, Alex C. elaborates, “concretely, radicals must make use of “tracing”—i.e. recognizing power and tracing it back to its origins—to build a cartography of power. With that knowledge we can actively shape the conditions for it to flow harmoniously throughout all occupiers and society.” As Alex C. suggests, the first “key step” in building a cartography of power is “recognizing and identifying “springs” or sources of power - e.g., information, connections, access to resources, history,

40 Ibid.
etc.”\(^{42}\) As Schiappa similarly contends, “definitions always serve interests and advance values, and they always require the exercise of power to be efficacious.”\(^{43}\) Thus, on the bases that words are sources of power, that definition is a rhetorical and political act, and that definitions matter, this next section ‘gives way’ to occupational proclivities—on both a rhetorical front and as occupier—where I trace the radical roots of occupy/occupation to the classical Latin word, *occupātiō*: a rhetorical trope of anticipation and later, a basis of international and municipal law where *occupātiō* functioned as a way to acquire unclaimed, vacant, or abandoned property as well as a way to trace bloodlines.

*The Rhetorical Trope of Occupatio(n)*

If we take the word “occupation” back as far as it will go,\(^{44}\) we discover that, according to the OED, the term occurs in classical Latin as *occupātiōn* - and *occupātiō*, which is stated to be “the rhetorical figure of anticipation” and a “rhetorical figure in which the objections of an opponent [or hypothetical argument\(^ {45}\)] are anticipated and defeated.”\(^ {46}\) Given the lexical technicalities around which the meanings of this word have been debated, the etymological entry for his term can be accessed through the hyperlink above and is incorporated below, so that the original source material is ready at hand:

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\(^{42}\) Ibid.

\(^{43}\) Schiappa, 177.

\(^{44}\) While the lineage of this word could technically be followed to the Sanskrit word *purā* (via occupation < occupatio < preterition, I am stopping at the place 3rd down the line, with preterition. However, according to Eystein Dahl, “the frame adverb *purā* ‘formerly’ denotes an unspecific past reference time interval which has speech time as its absolute right boundary.” See Eystein Dahl, *Time, Tense and Aspect in Early Vedic Grammar* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2010), 185.

\(^{45}\) I have taken some liberty by adding this supplemental phrase to the description of *occupatio*, given that *occupatio* served as an analytical framework from/in which I approached “occupy” as an act; as such, using *occupatio* to “defeat” a hypothetical argument, even of one’s “own making,” may serve relief- or response-oriented function, as in the case of planning or preparing for a storm (i.e. Hurricane Sandy) where anticipating arguments (or worst-case scenarios) may aid in the abetting of those events.

\(^{46}\) OED, s.v. “occupation, n.”
Etymology: < Anglo-Norman *occupacion, occupacioun, occupaciuin, ocupацийn and Anglo-Norman and Old French, Middle French *occupation activity, employment (c1175), the action of taking possession (late 13th cent.), actual possession (1372), rhetorical figure in which the objections of an opponent are anticipated and defeated (1636) < classical Latin *occupātiō-, *occupātiōn seizing, taking possession, preoccupation, employment, in post-classical Latin also the rhetorical figure of anticipation (4th cent.), land occupied by a tenant, holding (from 1086 in British sources), tenancy (from 1335 in British sources) < *occupāt-, past participial stem of *occupāre OCCUPY v. + -iō -ION suffix.

When we follow the link (in its etymology) from occupation to the entry for *occupatio*, we are taken to a word “without definition” or whose entry is defined only through accompanying quotes—and the equating of one word (*occupatio*) with another (*preterition*)—whose entry reads as follows:

*Rhetoric.*

= PRETERITION n. 1.

1550  R. SHERRY  *Treat. Schemes & Tropes* sig. Dvi,  *Occupatia*, ocupacion is, when we make as though we do not knowe, or wyl not know of ye thyng yt wee speke of most of al.

1586  A. DAY  *Eng. Secretorie* (1625) II. 95  Paralepsis or *Occupatio*, when in seeming to ouer-passe, omit, or let-slip a thing, we then chiefly speake thereof.

1928  C. S. BALDWIN  *Medieval Rhetoric & Poetic* x. 296  The whole long passage is the ‘colour’ *occupatio* (præteritio). The shorter *occupatio* in the Squire’s Tale (F63–75) suggests sarcasm less by itself than in its connection with lines 32–40 and 401–408.

1968  J. A. W. BENNETT  *Chaucer’s Bk. of Fame* ii. 94  But the didactic bird is not to be thwarted utterly, and launches..into an *occupatio* summarizing the lore in Ovid’s *Fasti*.

1993  J. HINES  *Fabliau in Eng.* (BNC) 84  So does her subsequent appropriation of a rhetorical device, the occupatio, a statement emphasized by the speaker feigning unwillingness or lack of freedom to express it.

From these illustrations of usage, we are left to deduce that *occupatio* (or preterition, as the case may be) is the ‘passing over’ of a topic (*topos*) or of a thing by a speaker who ‘feigns’ an inability or unwillingness to speak upon it. This, however, tells us little about under what conditions a speaker “passes over” a topic or how not talking about a thing—*although one could*
so speak—functions “persuasively” as a rhetorical device. However, a parallel could be quickly made between preterition and Occupy, where mainstream media (MSM) pundits often decried the inability of Occupy to arrive at a “singular message” or expressed their ‘bafflement’ of what Occupy meant. This sense of preterition, then—whereby “a statement is emphasized by the speaker feigning unwillingness or lack of freedom to express it”—gets at, in some ways, the heart of occupy. That is, if a reporter were to say (and they did) “but Occupy can’t say WHAT IT IS or what it means!” one could argue that its meaning is built into its very history as a word: by not saying what it is, it demonstrates what it is, in the same way that some sacred names are not spelled out or pronounced in certain religious traditions. From early in the movement, occupiers recognized that no ‘one’ could speak “for” the movement, only with it; as such, the indeterminacy of what Occupy “is” allowed it the room to grow. In this sense, then, the use of the word occupy repeated its historical usage: “occupatio, [sic], occupation, is when we make as though we do not know or will not know of that thing that we speak of most of all.” There may still be other reasons (not named here) for the difficulty in saying what something ‘is’ if that thing has never been seen before.

If we delve even further into the origins of occupation by following the link from occupatio to the entry for preterition, these origins become all the more mysterious—if not bordering on convolution—where the meanings of preterition extend beyond rhetoric to include usages in theology and law. The five definitions for this term are as follows:

1. Rhetoric. A figure in which attention is drawn to something by professing to omit it; an instance of this.


2. The act of passing over something without notice; omission, disregard; an instance of this.
3. *Theol.* Omission from God’s elect; non-election to salvation.
‡4. The passing of time. *Obs. rare.*
5. *Roman Law.* The omission by a testator to mention in his or her will one of his or her children or natural heirs normally leading to the invalidation of the will (see quot. 1914). Now *hist.* and *rare.*

As we see in the second and fifth instances above, omission carries consequences and apparently by design. While we began with an early understanding of occupation being a “rhetorical figure in which the objections of an opponent are anticipated and defeated,” tracing this word to even earlier instantiations (*occupatio*, preterition) have failed to account for the *anticipatory* element of this rhetorical trope. The line has seemingly gone dead, even though (as we will see) *occupatio* was once a way of *tracing* bloodlines. For now, as best can be determined by the entries above, we are left with “a figure in which attention is drawn to something by professing to omit it,” or “the act of passing over something without notice; omission, disregard.” Given this ‘fall out’ in meaning, on one hand—but the renewed usage of occupation via the OM, on the other—we might expect to find clarification on why/how occupation was once (or still is) an anticipatory trope of rhetoric in scholarship from the discipline where this term is recorded to have emerged. This, however, is not the case: scholarly work on *occupatio*—*from a rhetorical perspective*—is virtually inexistent.

*Where Have all the Natives Gone?*

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49 *OED, s.v.* “preterition, *n.*”
50 We might compare the consequences of omission with the consequences associated with another rhetorical concept, *kairos*. As Miller notes, “knowing the *kairos* means understanding an order that guides and shapes rhetorical action, whether that order is given and absolute or socially constructed. Violation of that order, failure to know the *kairos* and observe its propriety, will result in rhetorical, aesthetic, and even moral failure.” Carolyn R. Miller, “Foreword” in *Rhetoric and Kairos: Essays in History, Theory, and Praxis*, eds. Phillip Sipiora and James S. Baumlín (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002), xii-xiii.
51 *OED, s.v.* “occupation, *n.*”
Apart from its mention as a glossary term in Richard A. Lanham’s *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, James Jasinski’s *Sourcebook on Rhetoric: Key Concepts in Contemporary Rhetorical Studies*, and James J. Murphy et al.’s *A Synoptic History of Classical Rhetoric*, there is little else to consult in the rhetorical literature on this term. While *occupatio* has been studied by a modern philologist, H. A. Kelly, in “*Occupatio as Negative Narration: A Mistake for ‘Occultatio/Praeteritio,’*” and scholars of Chaucer—i.e. Kathryn L. Lynch, in *Chaucer’s Philosophical Visions* and Alan S. Ambrisco (2004) in “*It Lyth Nat In My Tonge: Occupatio and Otherness in the Squire’s Tale*”52—a keyword search of “occupatio” in rhetoric and communication journals has (to date) returned no results. This gives rise to the question: what accounts for such silence on the home front?

There are a few reasons that provide partial explanation for this theoretical gap, the first being that *occupatio*, and terms that came to be associated with it, has travelled under many names in its translation from Greek to Latin, as we discover in the work of Lanham and Kelly. Among these names are the following: *preteritio*, *occultatio*, *paralipsis*, *prolepsis*, *ante occupatio*, *anticipatio*, *praeeptio*, *praeeoccupatio*, *praesumptio*, *procatalepsis*, *apophasis*, and *concessio*. Secondly, rhetorical scholars who *do* explicitly use or discuss the word *occupatio*—namely Lanham—have deferred to an argument made by H. A. Kelly who dismisses *occupatio* as a mistranslation of *occultatio* (or *occultation*) and suggests it be dropped from present-day usage as a rhetorical term. In Lanham’s *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, under the entry for *occulatio*, he writes,

> An erroneous reading in the *Ad Herennium* has led to the currency of Occupatio as a synonym. After a thorough discussion of this error in the tradition, my colleague H. A. Kelly has urged that “the term *occupatio* should be retired from

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present-day use as a rhetorical term.” Let us by all means do so; reducing the number even by one helps clarify the muddle.53

This suggestion, however, may be premature. When Kelly explores this “muddle” in “Occupatio as Negative Narration: A Mistake for ‘Occultatio/Praeteritio,’” he dismisses occapatio on the grounds that other rhetorical figures—occultatio (occultation) and praeteritio (preterition) on one hand, and anteoccupatio (cf. ante-occupation) on the other—fulfill the two ways in which occapatio is used: respectively as “the summary mention of a thing while professing to omit it” and as “the prevention of an opponent’s argument.” For this reason, Kelly notes “there is much to be said for reducing the number of terms employed for the same figure and for making them precise and unequivocal.”54 While this argument is theoretically sound prima facie, there is also something to be said for not cutting off/erasing a line to a source, as Ann Dalzell implicitly suggests when explaining the translation error (of occupatio for occultatio) made by papal notary and rhetoric teacher Transmundus: “Transmundus’ text is wrong because he copied a text that is wrong… yet Transmundus and his readers appear to have read occupatio and to have accepted it with a simple faith in the integrity of the text. It must, therefore, be kept.”55 Kelly, however, will insist on its removal for a second reason, stating “I myself am prejudiced as a general rule against the use of Greek words, not only because such use often has an air of pretentiousness but also because for most of us the terms are foreign to our etymological instincts.”56 While this is admittedly not his primary reason for its removal, it is nonetheless a reason that argues for the displacement of a thing on the grounds that it is “foreign.”

54 Kelly, 314.
56 Kelly, 314.
Given that 1. *occupatio* is held to be a native trope of rhetoric, and 2. vernacular scholars who study “native” speech hold the function of the critic to bear witness to a contingent logic “as if a particular outlaw logic were Truth with a capital T,”\textsuperscript{57} then it is on the contingent logic of Occupy that I am striving to open up and transform space around the etymological grounds (and word) of *occupatio* in order to protect and unveil a common place or generative *topos* of local meaning from being removed or desecrated beyond recognition or belief. As Not An Alternative notes, “not everyone fights in and for the name of Occupy. Those of us who do have to claim the name, knowing that in so doing we claim the fight.”\textsuperscript{58} While Kelly would have us believe that he closes the case on this matter—by writing “*Finis libelli paralipomenon et procatabalomenon*” as the final sentence of his article—there is reason to reexamine his argument in light of recent events. Thus, in order to determine the validity or invalidity of Kelly’s claims for removing *occupatio*—and the consequent judgment of this “fight” to resurrect a word and trope that has fallen out of favor—then let us begin where Kelly begins: by noting his ‘bemusement’ and “disturbance” that “Chaucer scholars were using as a matter of course the term *occupatio* for the figure [he] had learned as “preterition” (from Latin *praeteritio*) which is also known as *paralipsis*’ (from Greek *paraleipsis*)\textsuperscript{59} where both are “figure[s] in which attention is drawn to something by professing to omit it.”\textsuperscript{60}

A classic definition of this trope—which scholars of Chaucer have referred to as the “rhetoric of impossibility,” “the liar's paradox,” and “the rhetorical version of the impossibility *topos*”\textsuperscript{61}—comes from the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (4.27.37) where *occupatio* first

\textsuperscript{57} Ono & Sloop, 141.
\textsuperscript{58} Not An Alternative, “Occupy: The Name in Common.”
\textsuperscript{59} Kelly, 311.
\textsuperscript{60} OED, s.v. “preterition, n.”
\textsuperscript{61} Kathryn L. Lynch, *Chaucer’s Philosophical Visions* (Cambridge, UK: D. S. Brewer, 200), 144.
occurs as a ‘stand-alone’ term: “Occupatio est cum dicimus nos praeterire aut non scire aut nolle dicere id quod nunc maxime dicimus,”\textsuperscript{62} which translates to “Occupatia [sic], occupation, is when we make as though we do not know or will not know of that thing that we speak of most of all”\textsuperscript{63} or similarly, “occupatio occurs when we say that we are passing by, or do not know, or refuse to say that which precisely now we are saying.”\textsuperscript{64} It is here, Kelly notes, that occupatio “has the meaning of a certain kind of preterit ion” and it is this sense of the term that rhetorical scholars (Jasinski, Lanham, and Murphy et al.) have used in their gloss of the trope. As Jasinski notes in the Sourcebook on Rhetoric, occupatio is a member of the ‘irony family’ as a form of ironic denial wherein “a person denies that he or she is going to do something, but the act of denial ironically does the very thing that the person denies he or she is doing.”\textsuperscript{65} Jasinski uses the following example to illuminate this stylistic device and trope:

A politician might say “I will not call my opponent a liar” or “I will not raise my opponent’s extramarital affair as an issue in this campaign.” But what is the result of both of these denials? The politician does, in fact, question the opponent’s honesty and does raise the issue of the opponent’s marital situation.\textsuperscript{66}

However, as detected by G. L. Spalding in the 18th century, this sense of occupatio above—as a kind of ‘passing over’ or omission—is not consonant with prior ‘anticipatory’ uses of the figure, but with the senses of occultatio (occultation) used by Quintilian (9.3.98) in Institutio Oratoria.

As a trope of concealment or “hiding,” the author of the ad Herennium invokes occultatio when he tells Herennius:

This figure is useful if employed in a matter which it is not pertinent to call specifically to the attention of others, because there is advantage in making only

\textsuperscript{62} Kelly, 311.
\textsuperscript{63} Sherry in H. A. Kelly, “Occupatio as Negative Narration,” 312.
\textsuperscript{66} Ibid.
an indirect reference to it [occulte admonuisse prodest], or because the direct reference would be tedious or undignified, or cannot be made clear, or can easily be refuted. As a result, it is of greater advantage to create suspicion by paralipsis [occulte fecisse] than to insist directly on a statement that is refutable” (trans. Harry Caplan, Loeb ed.).

This serves as Spalding’s basis to suggest occultatio as the “true reading” for the term occupatio in the anonymous Ad Herennium. As Ann Dalzell notes, “the correction occulatatio (= praeteritio) was suggested by G. L. Spalding in a note on Quintilian 9.3.98 (Leipzig, 1798-1816) and accepted by C. G. Shütz for his edition of the Ad Herennium (Lipzig, 1804). It is certainly correct. Occupatio, “seizing,” makes no sense; occulatio, “hiding” makes excellent sense.” The use of occupatio in the place of occultatio is in fact credited to a translation error in the ninth-century in the Ad Herennium, where Susan E. Phillips notes, “because all manuscripts of the Rhetorica from the ninth century forward contain the mistake, medieval rhetoricians as well as their Renaissance successors, adopt the name “occupatio.” Consequently it is the term of choice among medievalists, despite the scholarly consensus in the classics community that the medieval translation is erroneous.”

While there may be good reason to discontinue the use of occupatio in instances where preterition or paralipsis would do, a few questions remain: first, if occupatio is equivalent to preterition and definitions of preterition include “Theol. Omission from God’s elect; non-election to salvation” and “Roman Law. The omission by a testator to mention in his or her will one of his or her children or natural heirs normally leading to the invalidation of the will,” then does any relationship exist between the rhetorical “omittance” of a thing and an ethical or moral imperative to do or say a thing? That is, in what ways might not

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67 Harry Caplan (n.p) in Kelly, 312.
68 Dalzell, Transmundus Introductiones dictandi, 42.
69 Susan E. Phillips, Transforming Talk, 76.
70 Ibid., 75-76.
71 OED, s.v. “preterition, n.”
saying a thing—or passing over a thing—take on moral or deontological implications, particularly in times of crisis, where the parrhesiastic call to speak on matters of collective import becomes a matter of duty?

**Occupatio as Vernacular Authority**

Conversely, there has been “good reason” for holding an idea or utterance close—for passing over a matter—until the circumstances or kairos allow for its elaboration. In such a case, to say “if only I could speak frankly of the sights I have seen, of what the birth of that word could mean…” may or may not be a rhetorical ploy that “feigns” an unwillingness or inability to speak on such matters, but indicates that the topic at hand may not, in fact, be properly suited to the time, location, audience, or occasion in which that topic has been prompted. This underscores the sense in which occupatio is used in the Ad Herennium, where Richard Sherry in *A Treatise of Schemes and Tropes* (1550) and Angel Day (1586) translate the excerpt in which the word ‘occupatus’ occurs: “*Occupatia* [sic], occupation, is when we make as though we do not know or will not know of that thing that we speak of most of all” or “[sic] *occupatio*, when in seeming to overpass, omit, or let slip a thing, we then chiefly speak thereof.”

**Although occupatio has been regarded as a kind of “negative narration” and “a rhetorical advice for speeding up the narrative,” as well as a form of “self-conscious” and “self-defeating” abbreviation** that undermines the authority of the narrator, English professor Kathryn Lynch makes note of scholars who have ascribed a different function to *occupation*: as a

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72 A biblical precedent we have of this might be Luke 2:19; “Mary treasured up/kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.”
73 Sherry in Kelly, 312.
74 Angel Day in Kelly, 313.
75 Kelly, 315.
76 Lynch, 145.
vernacular mode of inscribing authority into an official text through an auto-exegetical and hermeneutical performance. In *Chaucer’s Philosophical Visions*, Lynch writes:

According to [Rita] Copeland, authorial appropriation of another learned tradition, that of academic literary exegesis, strengthens the claims of the Narrator in G to “auctoritas.” [*sic*] Copeland, to be sure, very intriguingly and, in my view accurately, describes the effect of *occupatio* in the legendary: ‘the net effect of the devices [*occupatio* and *abbreviatio*] is to raise and negotiate a paradox: these devices point to the immanent authority and controlling presence of sources, but also point to the way that the vernacular text can refuse and resist the authority of the sources in favor of a new *intentio auctoris*…’

This resistance to authority is accomplished through what Copeland calls a “secondary translation” which serves to “redefine the terms of academic discourse in the vernacular” and “carry out the prescriptions of the *artes poetriae* by turning the techniques of exegesis into techniques of topical invention.” In this way, Copeland continues, “they also redefine the terms of vernacular translation itself: they use the techniques of exegetical translation to produce, not a supplement to the original, but a vernacular substitute for that original.” Using Chaucer’s *Legend of Good Women* as her example, she cites that “the God of Love first exhorts Chaucer to ‘reherse’ (to ‘repeat,’ ‘recount,’ or ‘recite’) the ‘olde auctours’ or old authority of the *materia* in His books, where Chaucer thus performs the role of expositor or *compilator* who ‘gathers together the opinions of others rather than setting forth his own.’” However, through revisions made by Chaucer in a second version (‘G version’) of that same passage, which omits the academic terminology of the first version (‘F version’) and supplants it with the directive to begin with “that word” of Cleopatra, Copeland notes that “in mastering that academic discourse

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77 Ibid., 146.
79 Ibid.
80 Ibid.
81 Ibid., 196.
82 Ibid., 197.
the vernacular translator [Chaucer] has become the subject of that discourse: no longer just an exegete, a transmitter or ‘rehearer’ of lore about the auctores, he himself is an auctor.”

Thus, “whereas primary translation empowers the vernacular by inscribing it in the official discourse of exegesis, secondary translation makes the vernacular text the subject of that official discourse. It is through the disciplinary force of hermeneutics that the translator can discover—literally “invent”—the ascendancy of the vernacular.”

The use of occupatio, then, serves as “a mechanism announcing the particular narrative constraints of the text” or “to play up the comic reluctance of the narrator-persona to conform to the strictures imposed upon him.” In this text, occupatio is similarly used and theorized as a way to bring forth the ‘authoritas’ of an “idea whose time has come,” not to omit or ‘strike from the record’ as some theorists would suggest as a “function” of this trope.

The point to be emphasized is that just as the Legend of Good Women “constructs its relationship to the auctores out of the conventional postures of exegesis, service to and conservation of the authoritative text; it also finds a way of stressing or insisting upon its difference from its sources, making that very difference the explicit subject of rhetorical invention.” This simultaneous ‘conservation of’ and difference from an authoritative text or canon is what allows a project and concept like “Occupy Rhetoric” or even “Occupy Holy See” to get off the ground: it does not define itself in opposition to or in defiance of the authority of the tradition’s canonical texts, but it insists upon a difference of sources that would reinscribe the authority of the vernacular if the ‘authoritative text’ were understood from the perspective (and language) of the streets. Just as Dante’s De vulgari eloquentia and Convivio attempts to “theorize

83 Ibid.
84 Ibid.
85 Ibid., 197-198.
86 Ibid., 197.
a place for the vernacular in a hierarchy of languages” by “accept[ing] rather than challeng[ing] the given terms of that hierarchy,” locating the word of occupy in a ‘preceptive’ rhetoric and rhetorical tradition serves to locate the vernacular in a system of rhetorical values. Rather than challenge the bases or grounds upon which the discipline knows and wields its power, the rhetoric of Occupy would instead hold authorities accountable for demonstrating what it means to ‘act’ in a name or follow through with one’s word (logos). It would not diminish the position that logos occupies as a source or [artistic] “proof” of power. If, then, the OM has returned original meaning and mentions to ‘authoritative accounts’ of ‘the Word,’ then this requires a hermeneutic act or exegesis to position the vernacular as a ‘supplement’ to authority on this matter. Copeland elaborates,

The ascendancy of rhetoric, redefined as a hermeneutical act, also enables these translations to assert the priority of the vernacularity itself. They appropriate the discourse of academic exegesis and apply it to their own texts, so that their translations advance their own claims to auctoritas. They take the rhetorical motive of difference and displacement one step further than primary translation: these secondary translations insert themselves into academic discourse, not by proposing to serve the interests of continuity with the antiqui, but rather by calling attention to their own status as vernacular productions and thus underscoring the fact of cultural and historical difference that vernacularity exposes.

In other words, these secondary translations “use that official tradition to construct a vernacular critical language about vernacular textuality” where they “call attention to their own position in a historical rupture and in so doing advance their own claims to displace their sources.” In these translations, there is a “transference of academic institutional power to the vernacular”

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87 Ibid., 180-181.
88 Copeland writes, “real power lie, not in status, but in effective, persuasive communication, and here the vernacular is clearly in charge.” Ibid., 183.
89 Ibid., 180.
90 Ibid., 180.
91 Ibid.
through a “redefinition of the terms of academic discourse”\textsuperscript{92} where authors like Augustine, Dante, Chaucer, and Gower provide a “place” for the authority of the vernacular by “identifying invention with the activity of exegesis, the \textit{modus inveniendi} with the \textit{modus interpretandi}.”\textsuperscript{93} While the vernacular appropriation of academic discourse has been considered a “threat to the traditional institutional privilege of academic criticism,”\textsuperscript{94} there is also an \textit{emancipatory telos} in locating the vernacular in a system of rhetorical values.

\textit{Placing Occupatio in the Hands of Rhetoric}

Just as Dante’s \textit{De vulgari eloquentia} and \textit{Convivio} “inscribes the vernacular in this ‘official’ discipline of rhetoric by investing the vernacular with the kind of social responsibility that rhetoric can carry,” placing occupy within the bastion of the rhetorical discipline “authorizes the vernacular by giving it the moral weight of rhetoric.”\textsuperscript{95} Copeland notes “in \textit{De vulgari eloquentia} Dante authorizes the vernacular by giving it the moral weight of rhetoric. It is the moral value of rhetoric, rather than any claims to the universality of Latin, that underwrites Dante’s arguments for cultural privilege.”\textsuperscript{96} As Copeland notes, “if the job of rhetoric is public communication for the public good, rhetoric cannot accomplish its office or achieve its end except through the medium that reaches the widest possible audience.”\textsuperscript{97} Further “it is through a hermeneutical enterprise that the scope and power of rhetoric are defined and the office of rhetorical persuasion is performed.”\textsuperscript{98} In the case of the \textit{Convivio}:

\begin{quote}
...the vernacular is the medium of public enlightenment, which is constructed as the highest good. The job of realizing this highest good is given over to rhetoric,
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{92} Ibid., 180.
\textsuperscript{93} Ibid., 179.
\textsuperscript{94} Ibid., 180.
\textsuperscript{95} Ibid., 181.
\textsuperscript{96} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{97} Ibid., 182.
\textsuperscript{98} Ibid., 183.
as teaching is accomplished through the office of persuasive eloquence...but the persuasive force of rhetoric and hence the communal benefit of its vernacular embodiment cannot be recognized for what it is and thus acted upon without the agency of interpretation, the apparatus of hermeneutics.  

Copeland notes that Augustine achieves this ‘communal benefit’ by “giving rhetorical control over to readers, empowering readers to make the text meaningful” where “like Augustine, Dante extends or transfers rhetorical control to readers by locating the real power of ethical inquiry in the act of interpretation or reading and by offering his own exegetical performance as a kind of program for his readers,”[100] where “Matthew of Vendôme and Geoffrey of Vinsauf take this further by locating the topics of rhetorical invention in textual communs materia.”[101] This corresponds to ways of “reclaiming the commons” as espoused by the OM: by redefining what it is to “occupy” or inhabit common matters through the interpretation of ‘authoritative’ precedent, the vernacular is elevated to the status of an authority. Put another way: “hermeneutics restores the discursive power of rhetoric, and rhetoric in turn empowers the vernacular as a voice of cultural authority.”[102] As it relates to authoritative precedent, Copeland elaborates by taking the Convivio as example:

The major change here is the idea of what constitutes universality is modified: the vernacular has its own nobility as a universal language, not because it resists historical and geographical difference, but because, in all of its diversity, it is enjoyed by all as a natural language (I.4). Thus Dante had not questioned the system of assumptions that values universality; he has simply changed the definition of universality itself, so as to insert the vernacular into the position that Latin traditionally occupies.[103] This ‘universality’ and ‘nobility’ of the vernacular is what allowed a “Movement of movements” like Occupy to take flight, where the concept of the commons is akin to the “illustrious

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99 Ibid., 184.
100 Ibid., 183.
101 Ibid., 179.
102 Ibid., 183.
103 Ibid., 181.
vernacular” that Dante posits as “that which belongs at once to all and to none (I6.6).” As we will see, this ‘belonging to all and to none’ corresponds to adoption of *occupatio* in classical Roman law where “the right to occupy *res nullius* [no thing] was dictated by natural reason” and “the seizure of vacant places is regarded as law of nature.” In addition to the rhetorical origins of *occupatio*, its uptake and use as a mode of acquisition is of no little importance. Occupy, as it turns out, is not without legal precedent and radical warrant.

So far, this chapter has explored the historical precedents of ‘occupation’ as they emerged in ancient rhetorical and literary contexts. These philological analyses of *occupy* and *occupation* have been conducted in order to recuperate lost senses of a word that powered a global movement and created a definitional rupture around how we understand the act of occupation. As Schiappa discusses, when definitional ruptures occur, “participants in the conversation have to reconcile the difference.” Supplanting the word “occupy” where Schiappa writes the word “bad,” this statement continues, “they might do so by employing a fact of essence: ‘That is not what [occupy] is.’” Or they may do so by claiming a fact of usage: ‘That is not how we use ‘[occupy]’. In either case, the taken-for-granted status of dictionary definitions has been challenged, and the participants are required to employ a theory of definition, self-consciously or not, to close the rupture.” In this case, however, turning to the dictionary serves to recuperate lost “historical memories” of what occupy ‘is’ or was and how it is ‘used’ through the term’s

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104 Ibid.
106 Ibid.
108 Ibid.
109 In *Occupying Language*, Marina Sitrin and Dario Azzellini identify “rupture” and “recuperate” as key terms in the vocabulary of new and emergent movements, where they define ‘ruptures’ as “a break, actual or in the imaginary, with previous ways of being, seeing and relating change, in this case opening the way for more emancipatory relationships with greater solidarity. Ruptures can range from economic crisis and “natural” disasters to strikes, mass civil disobedience, rebellions, and uprisings.” They define the term “recuperate” in an emancipatory
rhetorical, literary, and legal pasts. As the next section reveals, the legal origins of occupation in Roman law provide an older, more common, and international precedent for the ‘legal’ occupation and acquisition of unoccupied places. While many occupiers would frequently invoke the language and law of the first amendment to protect the rights of the people to peaceably assemble and to petition, *occupatio* provides a more nuanced justification for “the Occupy — — formula”\(^{110}\) or the inhabitation of vacant areas beyond public parks and plazas.

**The Legal Precedents of Occupatio(n)**

In “Argument from Roman Law in Current International Law: Occupation and Acquisitive Prescription,” Randall Lesaffer opens his article by discussing the contributions made by Hersch Lauterpacht (1897-1960) to the debate on international law by showing that both in doctrine and practice, many concepts and rules of international law stemmed from the concepts and rules common to the ‘great municipal law system’ of Roman private law. Similar to the way that the rhetorical tradition interprets *topoi* as the “seats” or ‘sources’ “where the preparing orator may find formal or material help to guide the invention of arguments,”\(^{111}\) Lauterpacht also showed that it was common practice for international tribunals and arbitral bodies to turn to private law “for inspiration when existing international law did not provide a satisfactory solution to the problem at hand. As Lauterpacht recognized, many of these notions had their roots in Roman law.”\(^{112}\) *Occupatio*, as it happens, is one such legal notion, or ‘source of

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inspiration,’ of Roman law that has been drawn upon to settle claims of ownership and acquisition of vacant area (*terra nullius* or “ground zero”) where “in the practice of the Court, territorial and boundary disputes hold an important place.”\(^{113}\) As noted by Rira in “Matrix as the core Element,” a step towards materializing alternative models “is imagining the moment or situation that may or may not cross legal-hegemonic boundaries in order to liberate power.”\(^{114}\)

Here we might ask: do the legal origins of *occupatio*, in their adoption by international and municipal law systems—not to mention their “intertwining” with and uptake by canon law—help to reclaim the (common) grounds upon which we know occupation to be possible? Do legal precedents of *occupatio* help us to understand and reinscribe authority to the bases of “outlaw” logic upon which the Occupy Movement (OM) rests? If the OM is held to operate “outside” the law, then what does it mean for this “outlaw” logic to be founded upon an even older ‘inlaw’ logic that might still be considered *ratio scripta*: the expression of a timeless and universal law?\(^\)\(^{115}\)

**When Outlaw Logic Plays by Inlaw Rules**

As we will see, the legal origins of *occupatio* would ultimately give rise to the *ius commune* (common law) where Lesaffer notes, “the *ius commune* was scholastic. As such its sources had authoritative value and inspired a common ideal of law that hovered over the many hundreds of legal systems that existed and were applied all over the West. It was the lighthouse indicating the direction the many ships of law all had to steer to.”\(^{116}\) According to Lefesser and Lauterpacht, authors who directly referred to Roman law as *ratio scripta* or ‘the reason of the

\(^{113}\) Ibid.


\(^{115}\) Lesaffer, *Argument from Roman Law*, 25.

\(^{116}\) Ibid., 35.
thing’—especially to those from common law countries—“Roman law by definition seemed to embody the general principles of law. Roman law rules and concepts were considered absolute proof of what was common in the law of the different nations and could be invoked to draft new rules of international law.\footnote{Lesaffer, Argument from Roman Law, 33. Lesaffer will also note, “when Lauterpacht referred to ‘Roman law’, he in fact often meant medieval Roman law in its close connection to canon law.” Ibid., 37.} As it relates to more local matters of OWS, Nathan Schneider notes that “it became common practice for Occupiers to make reference to the First Amendment’s ‘right of the people peaceably to assemble’ as they justified their actions to the public.”\footnote{Schneider, Thank You Anarchy, 106.} Ultimately, however, “the struggle didn’t play out in court,” as Mayor Bloomberg would defend his decision to evict occupiers from the park on legal grounds, stating:

No right is absolute and with every right comes responsibilities. The First Amendment gives every New Yorker the right to speak out—but it does not give anyone the right to sleep in a park or otherwise take it over to the exclusion of others—nor does it permit anyone in our society to live outside the law. There is no ambiguity in the law here—the First Amendment protects speech—it does not protect the use of tents and sleeping bags to take over a public space.\footnote{Ibid.}

While occupiers and Bloomberg alike would use the legal precedent of the First Amendment as the grounds upon which to respectively assemble and disperse, \textit{occupatio} may provide an older, more common, and international precedent for the ‘legal’ occupation and acquisition of otherwise unoccupied places. As a rejoinder to Bloomberg’s statement that “[the First Amendment] does not permit anyone in our society to live outside the law,” \textit{occupatio} or occupation is a more far-reaching (international) law. As Lesaffer notes, Occupation of vacant land as a mode of acquisition of territory was introduced in international law during the Age of Discoveries. The concept of \textit{occupatio} was taken from classical Roman law and the notion of \textit{terra nullius} was closely related to another Roman law concept, \textit{res nullius}. Inst. 2.1.12 and Dig. 41.1.3 pr. stated that, according to natural reason, something which belonged to nobody could be
occupied. The writers of the early modern period articulated their rule on the basis of a close analogy to classical Roman law.\footnote{Lesaffer, \textit{Argument from Roman Law}, 45.}

In classical Roman law, Lesaffer notes, “according to the jurists of the classical period (50 BC – AD 250)\textit{ occupatio} was one of the natural modes of acquisition. It did not pertain to the \textit{ius civile} nor to the \textit{ius praetorium}, the application of which was restricted to Roman citizens, but to the \textit{ius gentium}, the law applied in Roman courts to cases in which foreigners were involved.”\footnote{Ibid., 40.}

While \textit{occupatio} was not originally designed as a way of acquiring title over \textit{land}, Lesaffer goes on to note that there were three juridical situations in which \textit{occupatio} could be invoked: “First, it was a way of acquiring \textit{res nullius} [no thing, nobody’s property]. In practice, this only applied to wild animals, fish and \textit{res hostilis}, enemy property taken on Roman soil during war. Gaius (c. AD 160) formulated the general rule that everything which belonged to nobody could be acquired through occupation.”\footnote{Ibid., 41.}

Second, “\textit{res derelictae} or abandoned goods could be subject to occupation. This category could include land. Occupation here only led to a title of ownership in civil law if the \textit{res derelicta} [thing left behind] was a \textit{res nec mancipi} [thing not mancipable].”\footnote{Ibid.}

Third, “one could acquire property by occupation of a lost and found treasure. The treasure had to be lost for such a period of time that it had become impossible to determine who was the rightful owner.”\footnote{Ibid.}

Even in modern times, the Law of Nations “expressly states that goods which belong to no owner pass to the occupier,”\footnote{Ibid.} possession is nine-tenths of the law. Here we might consider how the OM sought to “reclaim the commons” where—to use a common phrase of Occupy—“direct action gets the goods.” In this sense, however, what could be considered “lost”
or “abandoned” and consequently rediscovered and occupied by Occupy were the remaining vestiges of the democratic spirit and lines of thought (*topoi*) once “alive,” but since abandoned.

When Bloomberg evicted Occupy from Zuccotti Park, he addressed occupiers by saying, “protestors have had two months to occupy the park with tents and sleeping bags; now they will have to occupy the space with the power of their arguments.”

This statement would ultimately serve to open up space around what it was to “occupy” lines of argument (*topoi*) or reclaim ‘the commons’ in ways that could be collectively adopted and adapted towards emancipatory ends. In an article on *DemocracyNow!*, “Pope Francis Plea for Climate Action Revives Concept of ‘The Commons’ to Rethink Economy & Society,” Nathan Schneider expounds on the concept of the commons as it relates to the Catholic legal tradition and its recent engagement with the topic of climate change:

JUAN GONZÁLEZ: Nathan, you have written in the lead up to this, now, this encyclical that he’s announcing, of the concept of the commons in the church teaching, from the Medieval times in the Christian Church. Could you expound on that?

NATHAN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, absolutely. You know, this is a different way of thinking about economics that’s a part of Catholic tradition. You know, Pope Francis talking about the environment, about creation, is not an innovation. It’s a response to a contemporary crisis, but it goes way back. It goes back to the scriptures, to Genesis, to God’s enjoyment of stewardship over the Earth. And then, in the Middle Ages, a concept was integrally part of Catholic legal tradition that all things are common and that all things are the common inheritance of human beings, that property is kind of a subset of that, and that, ultimately, it is incumbent on all people to protect the planet and to ensure that it is protected for generations to come.

On internal Occupy-listservs, similar/same conversations had been circulating since the movement’s inception, especially around the meaning of “Occupy” and “occupation” in relation

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126 Schneider, *Thank You Anarchy*, 103.
to the how first nation/native peoples—who were allies and participants in the OM—responded
to these terms. On an [S-17 discussion] thread that would generate 53 responses and over 274
pages of printable material called “Occupy Name Change,” the first poster to this thread writes:

I have a question that has been troubling us for a while. We have many
colleagues/allies who are First Nation/Aboriginal and have serious concerns
with the name ‘Occupy’. Some of the most committed occupy people are from
aboriginal decent and have very clearly explained why this name irks them. They
feel that their shared lands and cultures have been ruthlessly occupied for
hundreds of years and the last thing they want to support is a movement called
‘Occupy.’ I have been thinking about this and the difference between “Occupy
Wall Street” and say “Occupy Vancouver”. The first is occupying the system, the
second is occupying a place. My First Nation colleagues don’t have a problem
with OWS but do with the latter.

In response to this, many from around the country wrote back with questions like “what is
Occupy Vancouver good at or what atrocities are local to Vancouver[?] … Occupy the border or
… In addition, I’ve heard the argument to reclaim words … i.e. we occupy, the 99%, the Native
peoples etc occupy space and ideas … like Occupy the Commons, etc.”128 As the thread picked
up more momentum, some would address the uptake of occupation as a tactic by first Peoples;
some discussed the need or affinity for the militant connotation of occupy/occupation; and others
chose to reframe Occupy by getting “back to its roots.” In an attempt to resolve this definitional
rupture—or perhaps keep it open—some responders sent along ‘resources’ where one noted, “I
would check out http://tidalmag.org/ & see how OWS was just ‘the Egg,’”129 another sent a link
on the power of the floating signifier,130 prefaced by the comment “this might be helpful.” From
an First Nations perspective, a video made by (un)Occupy Albuquerque was sent along; in it, an

128 E., personal communications, March 21, 2013.
129 J.D., personal communications, March 21, 2013.
130 See Jonathan Matthew Smucker, Andrew Boyd, and Dave Oswald Mitchell, “Floating Signifier (Beautiful
Trouble - Essay 6),” Beyond the Choir: A Forum for Grassroots Mobilization, April 25, 2012,
indigenous woman in Occupy/(un)Occupy says: “...to use the word occupation there, is, you know...what it means there is heartbreaking. And so I think I came back with a deeper conviction that occupation and Occupy is not a word that we should be using...”\textsuperscript{131} However, on the use of occupation by indigenous persons, two members replied in defense of the term (which I’ve conjoined in the block quoted below, who wrote:

\begin{quote}
Occupy was by no means the first People’s Occupation. Occupations have a long, established and proud history in the fight for social and economic justice[:]
\url{http://www.alternet.org/story/153072/7_occupations_that_changed_us_history}

Indigenous communities in particular have chosen to reclaim the term as well[:]
\url{http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupation_of_Alcatraz} [Another first nation peoples occupation[:]
\url{http://siouxtme.com/lodge/bia.html}

I think there’s another way to look at this question. In Dec 2010, our sisters and brothers in Tunisia and the Maghreb began what became a cycle of the latest wave of global uprisings, which stretches around the world, and takes many forms. Occupy Wall Street and then Occupy were just one manifestation and form. What will the next phase look like, and what will we call it?\textsuperscript{132}
\end{quote}

On the more militant side as it relates to the occupation or reclamation of ‘the commons,’ a couple listserv members responded: “what I like about the name Occupy is that it is militant and turns the traditional concept of ‘occupation’ on it’s head. We desperately NEED a return to more militant, radical language in our society to combat decades of pro-corporate, New-Age, ShOprahfied media brainwashing…”\textsuperscript{133} and “I’ve always liked Occupy because it is so militant, it can mean ‘take over.’ Which enables it to be used in reference to so many struggles ‘Occupy Health Care’ etc.”\textsuperscript{134} These remarks, however, were met with the reply: “Yes, but have you lived in occupied territory? I have not myself, I do not know you except by E-mail, I do not know your

\textsuperscript{131} \url{OccupyNewMexico}, “(un)Occupy Albuquerque 99-Second Soapbox ~ June 14, 2012 (1),” YouTube, July 15, 2012, \url{https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=By0eZ9HBJgc}.
\textsuperscript{132} M.P., personal communications, March 22, 2013.
\textsuperscript{133} W.S., personal communications, April 16, 2013.
\textsuperscript{134} J., personal communications, March 22, 2013.
ethnicitiy or history, but I believe that it is important that we as a movement must be sensitive to the effect of our words on our allies, and ‘allow’ them to choose to use ‘our’ language or their own.” Others chimed in: “That said, the meanings of words do evolve, and words can take on new meanings. The word ‘occupy’ has caught on with the public, and a new meaning of the word appears to have evolved: occupy - a mass movement of the disaffected.” The original poster would respond, with some spaces from the original email removed:

Really appreciate it. I don’t think Occupy was ever about wanting to dominate and control space but if anything to shift space from private control back to the commons (which it is in nature). But more so I think the idea of occupying Wall Street was first and foremost to bring attention to the vast unequal and corporate dominated world. It was the brilliant tactic of taking and holding central plazas in cities everywhere that accomplished this. Yet to many the holding of space became the Occupy Movement and thus it’s identity.

Now we in Vancouver and probably many other places are faced with this identity crisis, that occupy = taking space. Needless to say, many of our indigenous colleagues are not so thrilled with this. I do agree that shifting the use of “occupy” to specific campaigns makes sense ... like Occupy Homes / Occupy Sandy / Occupy the Banks etc. This has really clarified what the movement is about.

Finally, the “return to its roots” was exemplified by responses that took the words occupy and occupation back the movement’s origins in the park and as a word, where a couple respondents copied and pasted the entirety of the entries for these terms in their reply. To “occupy” the commons, then—be it property or concepts or ideational systems—was a topic or topos that Occupy put into motion and wrestled with as the movement continued to evolve. As some respondents noted, the mutual aid and ‘prefiguration’ projects (like

OWS and Occupy Sandy) were ‘positive’ evidence of “how commons are being created on a practical level.”

**Effective Occupation and Acquisitive Prescription**

A final and essential concept to consider in relation to the legal precept of *occupatio* is that of “effective occupation,” which was used to determine 1.) “questions of what was to be considered *terra nullius* [vacant land] and what were the conditions of an effective occupation,” and 2.) whether discovery constituted a valid title as a condition of occupation. While effective occupation was generally used to establish whether a *state* took control over a territory, these concepts may provide a starting point from which to judge whether ‘the people’ or ‘the state’ held the “authority” to occupy or possess vacant or abandoned territory not on the basis of ‘national’ law—Freedom of Speech, the right to assemble—but on the basis of what became international and common law. Lesaffer notes that to determine effective occupation, “the Court normally examines its deeds performed over a certain period. Moreover, in the weighing of facts and claims, it matters whether the exercise of sovereignty has been peaceful or not, uninterrupted or not, public or not, even if the Court has not been explicit on these points.” While Lesaffer additionally notes that while ‘the public,’ ‘the peaceful,’ and ‘the continuous character’ an “absolute” or fixed condition” of occupation or possession. Instead, “the claims of the parties are weighed, and the one providing the most convincing evidence for the most convincing behaviour as sovereign – including acquiescence – wins the case.” Since Occupy “occupied” more than physical grounds or terrestrial land, we might also compare these

139 Lesaffer, 44.
140 Ibid., 55.
141 Ibid.
conditions to those outlined for another mode of acquiring territory in international law,

*acquisitive prescription*, where “it has been defined as ‘the result of the peaceable exercise of de facto sovereignty for a very long period over territory subject to the sovereignty of another’.”\(^{142}\)

As Lesaffer notes, this doctrine distinguishes three different types of acquisition through lapse of time: “First, there is ‘immemorial possession’ which ‘involves a situation which has been in place for so long that there is no certainty about its origins.’ [sic] Second, there is a type of acquisitive prescription, which international lawyers have recognized as being close to the Roman *usucapio*,”\(^{143}\) which was a concept from the *ius civile* [civil right/Roman law] and pertained to all goods subject to ownership under the *ius civile*.\(^{144}\) Lesaffer continues,

> The conditions for acquisition under *usucapio* in Roman law were, as Johnson enumerated them: ‘(a) A thing susceptible of ownership (*res habillis*); (b) An, albeit defective, title of some kind (*justus titulus*), such as sale, gift, or legacy; (c) Good faith (*fides*); (d) Possession (*possessio*), implying physical control (*corpus*) and the intention to possess as owner (*animus*); (e) The possession must be uninterrupted for a period of time defined by law (*tempus*).’ Third, from this second kind *usucapio mala fide* can be distinguished. Johnson stated that Roman law allowed this in at least one case. Both with *usucapio bona* and *mala fide*, prescription serves to validate a title, which is – unbeknown or known to the possessor – in its origin defective.\(^{145}\)

Combined, these conditions for effective occupation and acquisitive prescription call into question, if only in practice, what it means to “occupy” or come into possession of a ‘privately-owned’ thing, in good faith, with ‘good reason,’ without interruption, on the grounds that that ‘thing’ was the “peaceable exercise of de facto sovereignty for a very long period over territory subject to the sovereignty of another.” Put another way: what does it mean to occupy [a place, an

\(^{142}\) Ibid., 46.
\(^{143}\) Ibid., 47.
\(^{144}\) Ibid.
\(^{145}\) Ibid.
idea, a disaster, a word] in good faith. Based on the precepts outlined above, we might ask if it possible to come into possession of a thing by reclaiming lost lines of thought (topoi) or vestiges of spirit for the sake of a common good. The point here is that regardless of what the laws of NY city and state may hold, the performance of occupation embodied ancient vernacular and legal meanings that aligned with the principles and direction of the OM.

The rhetorical, literary, and legal precedents of occupation discussed so far have focused on the ways that occupation operated or could operate in service to the vernacular. In this next section, the earliest origins of occupation as a rhetorical trope of anticipation are fleshed out in order to discuss how occupatio (or anteoccupatio as the case may be) bears application to sectors and fields that involve preparedness in the planning of and response to future events. In addition to the physical occupation of Liberty Park, occupy also takes on an epistemic status such that it gave with those in OM an orientation towards anticipation, perhaps unconsciously, that accompanies the act and habit of occupation. Overheard the other day was the quote “strength comes from having something to protect, not having nothing to lose.” As this relates to preparedness and resiliency initiatives and the disaster of Hurricane Sandy that was to come ashore in the same place OWS emerged a year before—

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146 As the NYCGA would collectively write in the “Statement of Autonomy,” in the formative days of the movement: “Occupy Wall Street is a people’s movement. It is party-less, leaderless, by the people and for the people. It is not a business, a political party, an advertising campaign or a brand. It is not for sale. We welcome all, who, in good faith, petition for a redress of grievances through non-violence. We provide a forum for peaceful assembly of individuals to engage in participatory democracy. We welcome dissent.” NYC General Assembly, “Statement of Autonomy,” Nycga.net, November 10, 2011, http://www.nycga.net/resources/documents/statement-of-autonomy/.

147 As a member of a private OWS-listerv would write on taking on the name and spirit of Occupy in good faith: “Take on the use of the Occupy Wall Street name but do it right and don’t make apologies for taking it on… OWS is the spirit of the movement that brought all three and at this point and there is clear advantage for it to also be a name held by an organization of stewards for the movement image, ideals and whatever else… Occupy Wall Street seems to be ready to be spoken for by a coalition of these organizations that would maintain the spirit partially while allowing the ability for motivated individuals and smaller groups to freely associate with the name in good faith circumstances.” Anonymous, personal communications/private list-serv, Dec. 7, 2012.
be it an affinity group, a community, a tent of supplies, a laptop, or an argument and *topoi*—would help to “defeat” obstacles in ways similar to how this trope was originally used.

*The Lost and/or Abandoned Trope of (ante)Occupatio*

According to Kelly, the earliest vestiges of the term *occupatio* can be traced to the phrase *ante occupatio* (sometimes written as *anteoccupatio*) which occurs “without definition” in Cicero’s *De oratore* (3.53.205) and in Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria* (9.1.31 and 9.1.44). Kelly suggests that Quintilian’s usage (“*ut ante occupet quod videat opponi*”) is the equivalent of *procatalepsis*: “a rhetorical figure by which an opponent’s objections are anticipated and answered.”

He continues that *procatalepsis* is sometimes used by English rhetoricians as “*preoccupation*” (or *praecoccupatio*) which the OED defines as: “†1. The meeting of objections beforehand; *spec. (Rhetoric) a figure of speech in which objections are anticipated and prevented; anticipation, prolepsis. Obs.*” As the term was used by Quintilian in 9.1.44, *occupatio* is by and large a mode of defense whereby he states,

> Our ideal orator then will speak in such a manner that he will...defend himself by anticipation; will transfer the blame of some charge brought against him to his opponent, will...anticipate objections, introduce comparisons, cite precedents, assign and distribute different sentiments to different persons, silence interrupters, assert that there are certain things of which he prefers not to speak, warn his audience to be on their guard against certain things, or venture on a certain licence of speech.

While this rhetorical figure originated in an oratorical context wherein “the objections of an opponent are anticipated and defeated,” there is again little to no contemporary literature to

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148 OED, s.v. “procatalepsis, n."
149 Ibid., “preoccupation, n.”
151 OED, s.v. “occupation, n.”
reference or consult as to how this trope operates in modern times.\(^{152}\) However, when we bring this trope into the context of movement or crisis, it gives a name to what is an unnamed but ‘everyday’ practice: the anticipation, whether conscious or not, of and preparation for future events. While there are many occupational arenas where ‘anticipating objections’ or “expecting the unexpected” come into play, the ability to anticipate possible or probable events that have yet to transpire or be realized is particularly relevant to first-responders in movement arenas and sectors of crisis/disaster management.

In both cases, participants and responders must draw upon both past examples and precedents as well as present episodes and events in order to make critical decisions on what to say, how to say it, and whom to say it to. As such, this trope bears great relevance to rhetorical situations (Bitzer, 1968) and crisis events (Quarantelli, 1984), where critical information must be anticipated, carried, and conveyed, i.e. a warning to evacuate, a tweet from the streets of a march, to the appropriate audience, at the opportune time (kairos) with the appropriate language (or vernacular) of those populations and publics to whom that information bears relevance. The hermeneutic capacity to discover/invent or anticipate the ways in which an utterance or text may be interpreted or received by different publics and audiences, where each public/audience likely holds different ideas of what an ‘authoritative’ or persuasive message looks like/sounds like, is arguably the most “traditional” of rhetorical concerns, if not the very definition of rhetoric itself: “the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion.”\(^{153}\) In times of disaster and crisis, the ability to reach an audience, to get a message through, to have a signal

\(^{152}\) One exception may be how “presumption” (praesumptio) and preoccupation are discussed in the texts on argumentation. For a discussion on the relationship between presumption and preoccupation in relation to burdens of proof, see: Richard Whately, Elements of Rhetoric Comprising the Substance of the Article in the Encyclopaedia Metropolitana: With Additions, &c., 5th Edition (London: B. Fellowes, 1836): 104-118.

heard, can become a matter of life or death. As Ruth Finkelstein, Sc.D., Senior Vice President for Policy and Planning, New York Academy of Medicine, would say during a debrief held six months after the landfall of Hurricane Sandy: “[In crisis,] it always, always, always comes down to this: did we have the right messengers speaking to the right audience [at the right place] in the right language at the right time? We need to look back.” However, despite the acknowledgement by first responders and those engaged in the field of crisis/disaster management that survival is often contingent upon exercising and preparing for/anticipating the proper means of public address, emergency managers and researchers seldom turn to the rhetorical field for insight or expertise on a particular hallmark and trope of the rhetorical tradition, (ante)occupatio: the anticipation of an opponent’s [or hypothetical] argument before it is made, so as to defeat it. This is not so surprising, however, given how little attention it has received by the very discipline from which it emerged.

Fig. 3: In Anticipation of the Arrival of Hurricane Sandy

Restoring Power to (ante) Occupatio
By unveiling an unnamed but everyday and habitual practice—of *anticipating* needs or objections before response or relief is needed—we can move (ante) *occupatio* this trope from the domain of unconscious behavior to one which enables this trope to be wielded consciously and used as a tool, especially by those responding to social ‘ills’ and injustice or those working to relieve local, state, national, or international crises. This enjoins one to preliminarily and *consciously* “occupy” matters before hand, where preparedness and anticipation is key to effective response, where fires (to use a metaphor) can be *prevented* instead of needing to be ‘put out.’ While this anticipatory mode is seemingly commonplace to those generally involved in movements—where the possible ‘reaction’ or reception of the audience or public is considered; where the timing or *kairos* of a future march/event/direct action is planned for; where preventative measures or precautions are taken against potential informants or disruptors—this mode was arguably all the more common to Occupy given that the issues that the OM brought to light were often local or hyperlocal and *emergent*. As such, in order to document and/or demonstrate local and emergent concerns to a more general public, who may not be familiar with or receptive to issues that don’t affect their immediate (geographic or ideological) domain/sphere of interest or concern, occupiers had to have certain tools/technologies at hand (i.e. smartphones, web applications, social media, online presence) *beforehand* in order to bring these events before the eyes of a broader public. Given the “newness” of some of these messages, not to mention tendencies of the MSM not to report incidents or events that would call into question the legitimacy of the very corporations or ‘hands’ that fed them, arguments against this bias were often prepared beforehand. One such example is taken from Nathan Schneider in *Thank You, Anarchy: Notes from the Occupy Apocalypse*, where he notes:

The Press Relations Working Group began preparing language to use in case things got ugly—including specific tweets:
Perspective: broken windows vs. broken financial system, broken politics, broken promises, broken priorities. #OccupyWallStreet still inspires!

It would be nice if the media paid so much attention to the violence happening on Wall Street everyday. #OccupyWallStreet #OWS

Don’t get distracted by a few angry people breaking things. There are millions of angry people working to change things! #OccupyWallStreet

Most people probably hoped those tweets wouldn’t be needed, though some looked forward to when they would be.\textsuperscript{154}

On a crisis and disaster front, Kate Starbird and Leysia Palen in “\textit{Working & Sustaining the Virtual ‘Disaster Desk’}” discuss the concept of “tweetables”—“pre-fabricated messages that offer information about how to prepare or respond to specific kinds of disasters”\textsuperscript{155}—that were used by the once-emergent (now formal) group of digital volunteers, \texttt{@HumanityRoad} (HR), as a way to “standardize preparedness and educational messaging”\textsuperscript{156} during the ‘between-disaster’ or ‘before’ period of a crisis or disaster. Starbird and Palen elaborate that “for HR, between periods are times to change focus from the high-action, real-time, information processing activities of event responses, to education messaging concentrating on prevention and preparation advice, an illustration of their structuring of their work vis-à-vis the external temporalities of disaster events and hazards seasons.”\textsuperscript{157} They note that HR’s most frequently broadcast tweetable is:

\texttt{@HumanityRoad: Verify twice. Tweet once. Rumors put lives at risk. #hmrd}

These tweetables function like rhetorical (and digital) \textit{topoi} to the extent that they capture what is commonplace in disaster or to disaster/crisis response activities, where in the case above,

\textsuperscript{154} Schneider, 70.
\textsuperscript{156} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{157} Ibid.
“early crisis tweeters saw verifying as an important aspect of their work.”\(^{158}\) While verifying sources may be a common practice in other sectors of business, there are more immediate and potentially dire consequences to spreading misinformation (whether or not intentionally) in crisis and disaster where the uptake and dissemination of wrong information can create a “secondary trauma” for individuals and regions trying to assess and secure needs and resources. Other examples of commonplace tweets or tweetables can be seen through Twitter accounts of formal responding agencies like @FEMA, @Readygov, and @ReadyColorado—and hashtags like #disasterprep and #preparAthon—which include tweets like:

@femaregion7: It's America's #PreparAthon! Day! Join the nation in taking some specific action to ready your family for disasters. [http://Ready.gov](http://Ready.gov).

@EnvisiageNow: Digital activities are an effective way to engage a community for #DisasterPrep. [http://bit.ly/1AnPTlq](http://bit.ly/1AnPTlq)

@RedCrossDenver: Timely video for winter safety from #preparathon. Watch at [http://ow.ly/Ebtvc](http://ow.ly/Ebtvc). Be smart, Take Part, Be prepared. #Coready #winter

@GetReady: Knowing evacuation routes is key, some roads will close/become one way. Routes also designed to take you to safety. #NatlPrep #Preparathon

What is an unspoken “given” here is that, as Starbird and Palen note, “members turn to Twitter to send information about unfolding events, routing information to both specific people and organizations who are involved in the response as well as broadcasting information to a broad audience.”\(^{159}\) Another unspoken commonplace evident in the examples above is the use of link-shortening and link/brand management tools through web services ([bit.ly](http://bit.ly) and [ow.ly](http://ow.ly)) which take full URL or web address ([http://www.envisagenow.com/online-game-encourages-disaster-preparedness-through-social-sharing/#sthash.XJnLeDco.dpbs](http://www.envisagenow.com/online-game-encourages-disaster-preparedness-through-social-sharing/#sthash.XJnLeDco.dpbs) and

\(^{158}\) Ibid.

\(^{159}\) Ibid.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XVpGJ_XI_w&list=UUVrYey5SZMid_VZkJ9D8tYmA&index=4) and abbreviate/shorten those links to http://bit.ly/1AnPITq and http://ow.ly/Ebtvc, respectively, which aid in the reduction of noise (or superfluous characters) when locating information online. While using these services does not affect the character account on Twitter (Twitter automatically shortens links), it does create more space when used on other ICT media where links/materials that are ‘short and succinct’ are not only aesthetically pleasing, but are often necessary in the “high-action, real-time, information processing activities of event responses”\(^\text{160}\) when word is traveling quickly.

In addition to this, in the context of movement, the not-so-secret “secret monitoring” of Occupy, both online and off, could/has fundamentally influenced the content of messages and tweets created by occupiers: for those that could not risk or afford arrest—or for those who sought to undo slander/bias against what might already be a misunderstood name or concept; i.e. “occupy” or “rhetoric,” or both (#occupyrhetoric) at the same time—anticipating the arguments that could be brought against one’s occupation or message gives way to rhetorical invention, where messages or tweets had to bypass the ‘radar’ of certain “authorities” while simultaneously getting a point across to present and future audiences without repercussion. Anticipating how a message/tweet can be interpreted by audiences in the present and future is partly a hermeneutic mode and partly a consequence (and affordance) of the public ICT platforms which were commonly used in the movement (i.e. Twitter, Facebook, Google docs, Instagram, etc.) where tweets/posts can be searched and relocated. As such, the potential permanence and ‘traceability’ of one’s speech online can pose, on one hand, a threat to one’s civil liberties—where past tweets can be used as evidence of “punishable” or improper behavior—just as they can serve as

\(^\text{160}\) Ibid.
record/evidence/proof of the things that were communicated or conveyed in historical moments. In both cases, online speech—especially tweets, which are now available in Google search results\(^{161}\)—can be relocated by individuals or publics both in the present and in the foreseeable future. Thus, to have a message/tweet “fly” under-the-radar-but-straight-to-the-target admittedly involves a certain sophistry and hermeneutical mindset, where one takes additional or anticipatory measures to illustrate or preserve/protect a line of thinking (topos) in public forums where that line can be accessed or reached.

In conclusion, while anticipatory measures were common in the OM and during disaster response/relief activities, locating discussions of these anticipatory measures (of ante occupatio) was less common. To search for such evidence, terms like “in case of” or “just in case” and “in preparation for” was sought out in its place. However, if ante occupatio (or simply occupatio, for the sake of brevity and ease of use) were more commonplace or known by name, we would likely discover new ways of preparing and protecting a case or community—especially those cases and communities close at hand or heart—where the argument or obstacle of an opponent (be it a human interlocutor or a disastrous force) is anticipated in such a way that defeats it. As such, the anticipation of future events or arguments beforehand could radically aid in movement building and response efforts when the trope of (ante) occupatio or preoccupation/procatalepsis is brought together with the rhetorical telos of krisis. In such an alignment, the inventional space of the chora is made manifest by virtue of an amplified necessity: the rhetor or rhetorician must arrive at a contingent judgement or decision (krisis) not in ‘normal time’ but in crisis, where Starbird and Palen note, “a dominant feature of disaster events is their temporal ordering, or perhaps their

temporal disordering.”\textsuperscript{162} While the rhetor or rhetorician is still customarily positioned in ‘interstitial’ or ‘in between’ space\textsuperscript{163}—in bridging the realm of possibility to the realm of actuality through techne and invention—this ‘in between’ space is at the mercy of another dimension that affects the emergence of speech: time. Starbird and Palen elaborate that “disasters might be one of the few natural events that override the socio-temporal order; indeed, damage to the routines of social life is a defining characteristic that separates disasters from local emergencies and other disruptions.\textsuperscript{164} Given that crises and disasters are becoming a ‘new norm’ of our planetary condition, thinking in an anticipatory (occupatio) mindset where krisis must be made in crises could become an ‘everyday’ way of thinking. Given too that a meaning of the an equivalent anticipatory trope, prolepsis, is “the capacity to produce branches, flowers, fruits, etc., in the future,”\textsuperscript{165} such a mindset is likely to produce ‘new growth’ for lines of thinking and domains of activity that have yet to see the light of day.

Finally, given the popular uptake/adoption the tactic/trope of occupation by the OM, there may be reason yet to consider occupatio in light of what occupatio can provide as a rhetorical trope independent from (or codependent with) its ante- or ‘before-hand’ element. That is, if we take ante occupatio to be an preoccupation—and relatedly take prolepsis to be a preconception or prefiguration—then to consider occupation and conception/figuration apart from its beginnings (ante- and pro-) is to consider the development of rhetorical arguments not beforehand or in anticipation, but as they arrive on the spot. What would it look like to consider the occupation of arguments independent from its preoccupation; figuration apart from prefiguration; and conception independent from its preconception? As the OED notes, “nearly all

\begin{footnotes}
\item[163] See: Poulakos, Atwill, Muckelbauer, Hawhee.
\item[165] OED, s.v. “prolepsis, n.”
\end{footnotes}
the senses [of ‘conceive’] found in French and English were already developed in Latin, where the primary notion was apparently ‘to take effectively, take to oneself, take in and hold.’”

What is the relationship between conception and occupation? Is it possible to consider the relationship between *ante occupatio* and *occupatio* as one where occupation *requires* preoccupation? Put differently, does one’s preoccupation—defined as “an occupation that takes precedence over all others; a subject or matter that engrosses a person and dominates his or her thoughts”167—allow one to ‘seize’ or ‘take’ a rhetorical argument (or *topos*) for “oneself” but for ‘one’s own’? While more questions could be formulated along these lines, it should be noted that Kelly would end his article on removing *occupatio* with a partially untranslatable Latin phrase “*Finis libelli paralipomenon et procatalabomenon*” that would more or less claim he has “closed the book” on this discussion. However, the statement that “we live in an Occupy moment”168 suggest the kairos is right for us to reopen this case, where the lack of literature and attention on this topic suggests both a theoretical gap and fertile ground that can (and perhaps *should*) be occupied by rhetorical scholars. As Not An Alternative reminds us: *Not everyone fights in and for the name of Occupy. Those of us who do have to claim the name, knowing that in so doing we claim the fight.*

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166 Ibid., “conceive, v.”
167 Ibid., “preoccupation, n.”
CHAPTER IV

THE PLACE/SPACE OF ZUCCOTTI PARK/LIBERTY PLAZA: BODIES ON THE LINE

“Place is the first of all beings, since everything that exists is in a place and cannot exist without a place.” – Archytas, Commentary on Aristotle’s Categories

“A family. Born from the womb of Zuccotti...Occupy Novad...Occupy Strikedebt...Occupy Sandy. A lineage. A family tree. Biopolitical constellations. Looks like a family tree, ~ a Genealogy Tree! ... the sacred tree of Zuccotti, did you ever wonder about its symbolism? Birth to something greater than ourselves, an encounter that WAS a supernova. An egg. A cocoon. To nest. The future. Bonds of friendship beyond the brand, a fellowship of the key;; € beyond the name lies what makes us human - the connective tissue. To the encounter that gave birth to _______!”

– Atchu

Fig. 4: The Assembly of OWS in Zuccotti/Liberty Park/Plaza (Photo by Henny Ray Abrams)
While the occupation of Liberty/Zuccotti can be understood through the movement ‘tradition’ of sit-ins, urban demonstrations, and political occupations—i.e. the 1930’s sit-down strikes in Flint, Michigan; the 1960’s lunch-counter sit-ins of the Civil Rights Movement; the occupation of Alcatraz in 1969 by Native American activists; the contemporary (2011) encampments of the Arab Spring and acampanadas of the 15M Movement—the occupation of Liberty/Zuccotti can also be recast in terms and theory that fall outside/move beyond the limited language of current political discourse.¹ This ‘movement to the margins’ is in fact the theoretical focus and subject of two strains of rhetorical scholarship—vernacular rhetoric and the chora—where both provide a lens into how the ‘bases of logic’ of marginalized communities and the ‘original principles’ of ‘external forces’ give rise to the emergence of speech or the materialization of forms. To the extent that OWS is understood as an emergent response to economic crisis(where this dissertation, writ large, uses disaster research on emergent citizen groups (ECGS) and emergent phenomena (EP) as the overarching backdrop to this study)—then the chora and the vernacular operate as rhetorical auxiliaries in assessing the role of place/space upon the generation or emergence of relief-oriented activities.

Just as scholars contend “the chōra is of rhetorical interest because it transforms our sense of what is available as means for persuasion, or, more precisely, of what is available as means for rhetorical generation,”² disaster researchers have found emergent activity or EP to be “highly relevant to emergency managers, and can be or are frequently beneficial to quicker or

¹ As Charles Eisenstein notes, “Anything that people can articulate…can only be articulated within the language of the current political discourse. And that entire political discourse is already too small.” See Fierce Love Films, “Occupy Wall St - The Revolution Is Love w Charles Eisenstein,” YouTube, November 18, 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BRtc-k6dhgs.

more effective disaster responses.”\(^3\) As such, understanding ‘rhetorical generation’ as a kind of EP responds to calls made by disaster researchers for more nuanced studies of emergence, especially around developing additional categories of EP\(^4\) and exploring the nature of emergence in phases of disaster (mitigation, preparedness, and recovery) beyond the phase of response.\(^5\)

While alternative categories of EP have been recently proposed by disaster researchers in the literature on this subject—i.e. type V (or supraorganization); quasi-emergence; structural emergence; task emergence; group emergence; emergence based on latent knowledge; and interstitial groups\(^6\)—these categories typically only capture alterations or emergences made in or to organizational structures, functions, behaviors, tasks, and relations. As Drabek and McEntire (2003) note, “while these recent conceptualizations [of emergent categories] help to clarify our comprehension of emergent phenomena[,] they remain somewhat primitive, lacking theoretical refinement and empirical substantiation.”\(^7\) One such category absent from this discussion is the kinds of emergent rhetorical phenomena that are developed in anticipation of or in response to crisis. For example, what rhetorical innovations or advancements might be made before, during, or after a disaster? What means of persuasion become available (or emerge) in particular cases.\(^8\)

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\(^4\) Drabek and McEntire note, “a second area of focus in the recent literature is on developing additional categories of emergent phenomena.” A first area of focus are the following topics which have expanded the debate about EP: “the further clarification of emergent groups; the development of additional categories of emergent phenomena; the exploration of the nature of emergence in different phases and types of disaster; an assessment of the impact that culture, religion, gender, and ethnicity/racial groups may have on emergence; a comparison of emergence in other countries; and the introduction of structural theory.” Ibid., 97-112.

\(^5\) Drabek and McEntire note that the evaluation of emergence in different phases or types of disasters also remains sparse, as “the focus is still predominantly on the response phase of disaster.” Ibid., 101.

\(^6\) Ibid., 100.

\(^7\) Ibid., 101.

where saying a thing or acting upon it must be done in a manner conducive to having that message heard or? As spoken by Ruth Finkelstein, Senior Vice President for Policy and Planning for the New York Academy of Medicine: “[In crisis,] it always, always, always, comes down to this: did we have the right messengers speaking to the right audience [at the right place] in the right language at the right time? We need to look back.” Given that crisis (or krisis) is held to be the telos (or endpoint/aim/purpose/objective) of rhetoric, the rhetorical discipline (and the OM) is well-equipped to advance observations made by disaster researchers that “further research is required to explore alternative definitions of ‘disaster types’ and even the basic concept of ‘disaster.’” As Drabek and McEntire note, “while studies on emergence have traditionally focused on natural and technological disasters, some researchers are now exploring emergence in conflict situations such as riots, civil disturbances and war.” The coupling of rhetorical theory and the OM contribute to this exploration of emergence by placing Occupy inside a framework that analyzes the movement through the generation of its rhetorical activity.

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This chapter, then, is a rhetorical “take” on the park/plaza of Zuccotti/Liberty where this place/space will be analyzed as the “radical grounds” or original site where the Occupy Movement (OM) emerged. By attending to the place that gave rise to emergent forms of rhetorical activity, labor, and invention, we may come to understand the tactic of occupation as a both a ‘last resort’ and “first response” to socio-political and bio-economic crisis. Keeping in mind the discussion in Chapter 3 regarding the rhetorical trope of occupatio/occupation as a

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10 The word ‘take’ chosen because of its “radical” fit (or original meaning) of “to put the hand on”, “to touch” where the OED notes, “by a natural advance, such as is seen in English in the use of ‘lay hands upon’, the sense passed to ‘lay hold upon, lay hold of, grip, grasp, seize’—the essential meaning of Old Norse taka, of Middle Dutch taken, and of the material senses of take in English.” Since the subject and action of “occupation” is currently at hand, this word is operative in at least two senses. See the OED, s.v. “take, v.”
trope designed “to anticipate an opponent [or hypothetical] argument before it is made so as to defeat it,”—there is much to be gleaned from studying EP in the place/space (chora) where a global movement first emerged, where the actions and speech of its occupants and occupiers were directed towards the location and protection of resources, the planning of future events, and reaching a geographically- and culturally-fragmented public distributed across time and space. As Rickert writes about the study of these places/spaces:

By refocusing on what falls outside discourse proper, like emotion or the chōra itself, or redistributing rhetorical agency across a network of human and nonhuman agents, these writers suggest we can (and should) reapproach the invention question Plato wrestles with in the Timaeus, which is how to move from static ideas to vital activity, from the speculative theory of the Republic to a dynamic, vibrant Athens.11

Given, too, that the development of the chōra in the Timaeus “has ever been a murky concept given to mystery and mysticism”12 and “nor does it appear to have been intended to have bearing on rhetoric,”13 this study of Occupy’s emergence in the place/space of Zuccotti/Liberty moves to empirically ground the abstract or “murky” conceptions of the chora in the same way that scholars note that the original literary/philosophical source of the chora—Plato’s dialogue, the Timaeus and Critias—provided a place for the concept’s emergence.14

By turning to the geographical site where #OCCUPYWALLSTREET (OWS) first emerged, this chapter answers a call made by rhetorical theorists to conduct “some basic groundwork in developing a sense of what the chōra has been, and why a concept that has largely been associated with material space, and only secondarily with beginnings and creation,

11 Rickert, “Toward the Chōra,” 252.
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
14 Rickert writes: “An understanding of the chōra cannot be extracted solely by examining what seem the most relevant passages, usually considered approximately 48e–53d, but rather must be worked through by attending to all aspects of the dialogue, including its dialogic character. As will be seen, this is entirely befitting the receptacle-like chōra, such that we might see the dialogue itself as providing a place for the concept’s emergence.” Ibid., 256.
should be of interest for rhetoric.” If, “the chōra, brought forward into our age, stands to radically reconfigure our understanding of rhetorical space,” then the ‘radical grounds’ of OWS stand to reconfigure (or reconceive) what we understand the chora to be and why such a productive but ‘nebulous’ concept is of rhetorical matter and import. While Rickert writes that “it yet remains a problem that the chōra has no body of scholarship in rhetorical theory,” the place of Occupy’s origins may give shape and substance to a line of argument (topos) that perhaps can only be “secured” through the tactic or trope of occupation. This is to say: some arguments (or lines of thought) may not appear ‘as such’ until they are held or “occupied” in a manner that would risk life and limb to reclaim certain sacred grounds—or evidentiary bases—from destruction or misuse. Again, as the last chapter mentioned, occupatio/occupation once functioned as a way to trace bloodlines or “a line of descent.” Thus, just as Julia Kristeva, Jacques Derrida, and Gregory Ulmer “are interested in how the chōra as an ancient line of thinking can illuminate contemporary concerns,” my interests are equally vested in how current events (i.e. Occupy) advance both ancient and contemporary descriptions of the chora.

Before addressing how the chora was originally conceived and what bearing this has upon analyses of Occupy and the generation of its rhetorical activity, a brief review of literature may be due. While I will be drawing almost exclusively on Plato and Thomas Rickert to draw

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15 Ibid., 253.
16 The word “nebulous” has a dual meaning here: on one hand, it suggests a “hazy” or indistinct object—personified, perhaps, by the figure (and optical illusion) above, where the grey haze around the singular point disappears when one focuses upon the point—and secondly, it alludes to a nebula: a ‘star-forming’ region of ‘the heavens.’
17 OED, s.v. “bloodline, n.” in “blood, n. (and int.)
18 Rickert, 252. Rickert later elaborates, “Kristeva, Derrida, and Ulmer are among those interested in what the chōra can offer us distinct from what Aristotle accomplished. In the chōra they find a theoretical resource able to generate new light on the emplaced (and displaced), distributed, and bodily character of rhetorical activity. However, the chōra is not only a matter of theoretical inquiry—it is of practical use. Derrida and Ulmer in particular utilize invention methods that could be called choric, as opposed, for instance, to topic invention, because of the way they attribute invention agency to non-human actors such as language, networks, environments, and databases.” Ibid., 253.
parallels between Occupy and rhetorical adoptions of the *chora*, modern-day scholars (Derrida, 1995; Derrida and Eisenman 1997; Kristeva 1984; Ulmer 1985, 1994) have also used the *chora* as a theoretical resource for discussing invention as a maternal and embryonic ontological space. For Kristeva, the *chora* designates a preverbal semiotic space precedes and transcends language by facilitating and ordering the *disposition* of drives which are imposed on the body through social and familial structures.¹⁹ She writes, “the mother’s body is therefore what mediates the symbolic law organizing social relations and becomes the ordering principle of the semiotic chora”²⁰ where “the semiotic *chora* is no more than the place where the subject is both generated and negated, the place where his unity succumbs before the process of charges and stases that produce him.” For Derrida, Rickert notes that “[his] writings on the *chōra* take two general tracks: theoretical investigations about the *chōra*’s place in thought and discourse and its instability as a generative, spatial principle, and practical deployments of the *chōra* as an inventive principle.”²¹ For Ulmer, the *chora* provides invention as recourse for the ‘choric’ rhetorician or writer in an age of electronic media whereby the places (*topoi*) are expanded to include the circumambient environs of memory, networks, technologies, intuitions, and informational environments as well as the use of hypermedia.²² As Ulmer writes, “in order for

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¹⁹ More specifically, Kristeva notes, “in this way the drives, which are “energy” charges as well as “psychical” marks, articulate what we call a chora: a nonexpressive totality formed by the drives and their stases in a motility that is as full of movement as it is regulated.” See: Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, trans. Margaret Waller and introduction by Leon S. Roudiez (NY: Columbia University Press, 1984), 25. We might compare this to the observation made by John Poulakos, where “the rhetorician is not confined to a single movement. [sic] The starting point for the articulation of the possible is the ontological assumption that the main driving forces in man’s life are his desires, especially the desire to be other and to be elsewhere.” See: John Poulakos, “*Toward a Sophistic Definition of Rhetoric*,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 16 (1983): 42-43.
²¹ Rickert, 263.
²² As Rickert notes, “One of the key ideas developed in Ulmer’s book *Heuretics* is that the contemporary age of electronic media asks us to move away from the invention techniques codified in the *topoi* toward techniques that build out of the *chōra*. Ulmer states that “the writer using chorography as a rhetoric of invention will store and retrieve information from premises or places formulated not as abstract containers, as in the tradition of *topos*” (1994, 73). Instead, a choric rhetorician will attend to memory, networks, technologies, intuitions, and environments (places).” Ibid., 267.
rhetoric to become electronic, the term and concept of *topic* or *topos* must be replaced by *chora* (the notion of “place” found in Plato’s *Timaeus.*) While the next chapter will argue that rhetoric need not *replace* the term and concept of *topos* in order to become electronic, this chapter (as dissertation writ large) incorporates “choric” components based on Ulmer’s justification for “exploiting” the digital convergence of media and hypermedia.

Since an objective of this chapter is to show the parallels between the ancient descriptions of the *chora* (namely through Plato) and modern manifestation of these descriptions through the OM, I have relied heavily on Rickert’s article as it captures a broad synthesis of modern uses of the term and bring them back to the discipline in a way that provides a starting point for future research. Since there is “scant little” rhetorical scholarship on the *chora*, I have turned to Rickert to make these connections between the *chora* and the inventional activity of the OM more readily manifest. In “Reinventing Invention, Again,” Peter Simonson discusses his own reasons for citing Rickert, writing:

I have quoted from Rickert in some detail because his theory captures a number of important and promising elements of invention’s re-invention since the late 1960s. Working within the matrix I have called postmodern revisionism, it weighs in on the essentially contested concept of invention by drawing on traditional vocabulary and contemporary redeployments of it. In so doing, it grounds rhetorical theory in the inherited tradition of terms while opening up space from its logophilic and masculinist history.”

So as to embrace the maternal elements that the OM embodied, even the abbreviation of the Occupy Movement as ‘OM’ (instead of ‘Occupy’) is a purposeful take on/gesture to the word

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24 To describe this process, Rickert writes: “[Ulmer] uses a hybrid combination of method, pastiche, accident, and associative thinking, as well as rational discourse and logic, to construct variable-media discourses that he refers to as hypermedia. Hypermedia digitally combine image, text, and sound in various permutations; further, in terms of their composition, they are likely to borrow techniques from one media form and apply it to the other, e.g., appropriating a network organizational pattern for an argument.” Rickert, 267-268.
25 Simonson, “Reinventing Invention, Again,” 311.
‘om’ (from Sanskrit oṃkāra, literally om-making) which is a syllable “containing all origination and dissolution” that formed ‘the basis or seed’ of the sacred mantra or evocation of the infinite and the Tibetan bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, Om mani padme hum: “considered the most important bodhisattva of Tibetan Buddhism” who embodied the compassion of all the Buddhas. While a fuller history of this figure can be traced by following the incorporated link, the OED notes:

The oldest version of the Sanskrit text associates the formula with padmā mudrā, or padmāṅkā mudrā, which appears to mean ‘a sign, marked with a lotus or jewel-lotus’, but it is not clear exactly what was envisaged by this. [sic] However, the text itself became incomprehensible and the image was replaced by the concept of a female figure, Maṇipadmā, the physical manifestation of the male Avalokiteśvara, and by the invocation of ‘her’ name.

As this relates to theorization of the chora, Rickert writes, “In On the Name, Derrida in turn looks to khōra as a third term that lies outside the “regularity of the logos” yet does not belong to mythos, and asks, is there a place for what lies outside this opposition (1995, 90). This question of place is tied to the issue of naming, which is one of the reasons he refers not to “the chōra” but to “khōra,” as if he were speaking to a woman by that name.27 So too does the abbreviation ‘OM’ serve to address the movement as if speaking to a woman by that name, where this chapter builds upon the correspondence between the OM and chora.

As discussed in Chapter One, the term chora was first used to designate: 1. a place/space or “extension” which can be occupied (‘taken’),28 which was later theorized by ancient and contemporary scholars in the following senses: as 2. the “maternal matrix” or ontological

26 OED, s.v. “Om mani padme hum, n. (and int.)”
27 Rickert, 264.
28 Keimpe Algra writes “in those cases where chōra should be translated as 'place/space' the idea is always that of an extension, whether two- or three-dimensional, which is occupied or which can be occupied” and “[the] chōra still has much of its original sense: it is an extension which can be occupied (‘taken’).” See Keimpe Algra, Concepts of Space in Greek Thought (Leiden, The Netherlands: E. F. Brill, 1995), 33.
“receptacle” of becoming and change and as 3. a ‘political’ boundary or region surrounding and sustaining a polis or city-state. As we will see, the place-space of Zuccotti/Liberty has been correspondently called: 1. a movement predicated on the occupation or ‘taking’ of places and spaces, where movement participants and researchers/reporters have described Zuccotti/Liberty as 2. “a receptacle,” “a cocoon,” and “the womb;” and 3. as “an experimental agora,” an “exemplar society,” a “base of operations” or “basecamp,” a “micro-city,” “hyper-city,” and an “alternative polity.” Thus, while all movements might be said to possess a choric dimension by virtue of their indeterminacy, the OM is particularly analogous to descriptions of the chora to the point where Occupy is herein advanced as a modern manifestation of the chora. Following Rickert’s lead in bringing the chora forward into our age—where he notes “these writers [Kristeva, Derrida, and Ulmer] suggest we can (and should) reapproach the-inventional question Plato wrestles with in the Timaeus, which is how to move from static ideas to vital activity, from the speculative theory of the Republic to a dynamic, vibrant Athens”—the place-space of Occupy’s origins reanimates a request made by Socrates in that same dialogue:

Let me now go on to tell you how I feel about the society we have described. My feelings are rather like those of a man who has seen some splendid animals, either in a picture or really alive but motionless, and wants to see them moving and engaging in some of the activities for which they appear to be formed.

Towards these ends of animation or movement, the following analysis of Zuccotti/Liberty is grouped into the three categories to reflect the predominant ways that the chora is theorized.

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29 See Plato, Timaeus and Critias; Rickert, Edward Casey, Gregory Ulmer, Jacques Derrida, Julia Kristeva.
32 Rickert, 252.
33 Plato, 31.
These categories have been outlined above and are discussed below as: 1. a place/space or “extension” which can be occupied (‘taken’); 34 2. the “maternal matrix” or ontological “receptacle” of becoming and change; 35 and 3. a ‘political’ boundary or alternative polity surrounding and sustaining the polis or city-state. In making parallels between the place/space of Zuccotti/Liberty and the chora, I draw upon public and private materials (i.e. blog posts, tweets, archived emails, websites, news articles, journal reflections) to access and assess a broad range of descriptions and accounts of Occupy’s emergence in the place of Liberty/Zuccotti. As a final caveat: I was not in the park when OWS arrived on the scene, so I cannot provide a self-reflective description of what it was like to be in the place/space of Zuccotti/Liberty when it first emerged or at the height of the encampment. That said, each case/category discussed relies upon descriptions of the park by those who experienced or witnessed the emergence of OWS “first-hand.” These descriptions will provide an empirical basis or “grounding” to predominant ways the chora has been theorized in order to show why this concept has “bearing” upon rhetoric and rhetorical invention.

The Emergent City-State of OWS: The Occupation of Liberty/Zuccotti Park

In the first sentence of “Toward the Chôra: Kristeva, Derrida, and Ulmer on Emplaced Invention,” Rickert writes, “our understanding of what it means to inhabit and interact in spatial environments is changing.” 36 This statement could be similarly extended to the OM, where the

34 Keimpe Algra writes “in those cases where chôra should be translated as ‘place/space’ the idea is always that of an extension, whether two- or three- dimensional, which is occupied or which can be occupied” and “[the] chôra still has much of its original sense: it is an extension which can be occupied (‘taken’).” See Keimpe Algra, Concepts of Space in Greek Thought (Leiden, The Netherlands: E. F. Brill, 1995), 33.
35 See Plato, Timaeus and Critias; Rickert, Edward Casey, Gregory Ulmer, Jacques Derrida, Julia Kristeva.
36 Rickert, 251.
emergence of Occupy encampments in over 1,500 locations\textsuperscript{37} world-wide arguably changed what it meant to ‘inhabit and interact in spatial environments’ through the tactic of occupation. As Jonathan Massey and Brett Snyder illustrate in “Mapping Liberty Plaza: How Occupy Wall Street Spatially Transformed Zuccotti Park,” the two-month occupation of a park in the heart of NYC’s financial district transformed “a staid corporate plaza into a testing ground for radical ideas about the reorganization of state and society.”\textsuperscript{38} By modeling “new ways of practicing politics and public life”\textsuperscript{39} in the experimental agora of Zuccotti Park, “protesters rewrote the social and spatial codes that had determined use of the block for decades.”\textsuperscript{40} On the website for placeMATTERS: A Joint Project of City Lore and the Municipal Art Society, the entry for “Zuccotti Park (formerly Liberty Plaza Park)” reads:

Since Saturday, September 17, 2011, the Occupy Wall Street movement has claimed Zuccotti Park as its base of operations. Because the park is privately owned, neither the mayor nor the police can force the protesters to decamp. Still open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, Zuccotti Park now features a sprawling campsite, a people’s library, a media station, a kitchen, information booths, posters, drum circles and between hundreds and thousands of people. Full-time and part-time protesters, supporters, news media, police officers and tourists have occupied or visited the actual site, while the eyes of the rest of the world focus, with increasing intensity, on websites reporting the demonstration’s growing momentum. While the movement has not officially codified its demands, it calls for an equitable allocation of resources.\textsuperscript{41}

Located between Broadway, Trinity Place, Liberty Street, and Cedar Street in lower Manhattan, the geographic location and features of Zuccotti Park were in many ways “unspectacular.” As a

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{41} placeMatters, “Zuccotti Park (formerly Liberty Plaza Park),” placeMATTERS.net, n.d., http://www.placematters.net/node/1611.
popular clip by The Daily Show with Jon Stewart revealed: “Zuccotti Park in lower Manhattan—aka the park no one, even those who live across the street from it, had heard of until the Occupy Wall Street Movement. Apparently it’s a park in lower Manhattan where people from Wall Street would go to smoke around noon.”42 In other ways, however, the park that OWS took and held for the 99% was originally the site of a different kind of “spectacle” and trauma, where Zuccotti—formerly known as Liberty Plaza Park—was used as an emergency staging area by the Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) and the New York City Dept of Design & Construction (DDC) in the immediate aftermath of 9/11.43

* A Rising from “Hallowed” Grounds

Facing Ground Zero at its NW corner, Zuccotti looks diagonally and directly into a void left by what is considered the “the worst terrorist attack in world history and the deadliest foreign act of destruction to life and property on American soil since the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.”44 On this same NW corner of the park stands a singular London plane tree encircled by a series of disconnected benches or seats, where K. Seward Johnson’s “Double Check” sculpture once sat. Some may remember this haunting figure from post-9/11 images, as many mistook the sculpture for a live person covered in dust and debris. As the New York Times noted,

> On Sept. 11, 2001, with everything in ruins, one figure remained in Liberty Park across the street from the World Trade Center. He was sitting hunched over, staring in his briefcase, a businessman who seemed to be in shock and despair.

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Rescue workers, it was reported, approached him in the chaos to offer assistance, only to discover that he was not a man at all, but a sculpture.45

During the World Trade Center recovery effort, the park’s already-compromised foundation cracked beneath the weight of emergency vehicles and equipment, which required extensive renovation to the park. As noted in the entry for “Zuccotti Park (formerly Liberty Plaza Park)” by placeMATTERS, “the park reopened on June 1, 2006, with a new name: Zuccotti Park, named after John Zuccotti, the U.S. Chairman of Brookfield Properties and also the chairman of the Real Estate Board of New York, former first deputy mayor of the City of New York, and former chairman of the New York City Planning Commission.”46 Now lined with an orchard of 54 honey locust trees and 500 twinkling lights, the renovations and ‘reimaginings’ of old Liberty/new Zuccotti Park would be described by Governor Pataki as “an urban oasis” and “another symbol of the rebirth of downtown.”47 Despite these renovations, few would know the park by either name until OWS emerged in this spot.

Given that OWS has been framed as a response to economic crisis, it is notable that the OM originated in what was once a place of triage and recovery, an “emergency staging grounds” situated just outside the immediate bounds where a national trauma took place. The chora, it might be remembered, is characterized as both “the nurse of all becoming and change” and an ‘outlying territory’ necessary for the polis to thrive. It is fitting, then, that the same grounds that served as the closest periphery to national trauma—the place/space nearest to, but just outside the range of disaster—would likewise give birth to a movement that operated partially outside or autonomous from the systems and structures of market and state. As discussed by Massey and

46 placeMATTERS, “Zuccotti Park (formerly Liberty Plaza Park).”
Snyder in “Occupying Wall Street: Places and Spaces of Political Action,” the occupation of Liberty/Zuccotti “prefigured in microcosm the alternative polity desired by many participants, modeling and testing modes of self-organization partly autonomous from those provided by the state and the market.”

Massey and Snyder continue, (hyperlinks theirs):

Stepping partially outside state and market systems, occupiers created their own structures for discussion and governance; for provision of daily services; for medical care and sacred space; for music, dance and art. Some aspects of this counterpublic resembled the exhilarating, liberatory “Temporary Autonomous Zones” described by anarchist writer Hakim Bey. Others were pragmatic, even bureaucratic. Within days, working groups resembling urban agencies — dedicated to issues like Comfort, Medical, Kitchen, Library, Sanitation and Security — created a series of nodes or workstations that cut diagonally across the park. They appropriated design elements such as retaining walls, benches and tables to define functional zones.

As further detailed on maps of the park here, here, here, and here, the “temporary autonomous zone” of Liberty Plaza would host a range of operational areas including: three information tables/tents—one positioned on the NW corner next to “Double Check” and another on the SE corner under Mark Di Suvero’s “Joie de Vivre”—an assembly area; a library; a legal, media, and outreach zone; two art sections; zones for sanitation, kitchen, sleeping, and medical; a comfort station; an art/flex section; a social area; and lastly, sacred space.

Unbeknownst to some of those who would designate or use the sacred space ‘as such,’ this area would be located on the same NW corner of the park where granite benches (upon which “Double Check” sat) encircled the lone London plane tree, the only tree to survive the aftermath of 9/11. Whereas “Double Check” would be dually known as ‘The Survivor,’ the tree

48 Massey and Snyder, “Occupying Wall Street.”
49 Ibid.
51 Massey and Snyder, “Mapping Liberty Plaza.”
around which the ‘sacred space’ was formed would later be referred to by occupiers as “the sacred tree of Zuccotti” or “the tree of life” (see figure 5) and by NY natives as ‘The Survivor Tree.’ As one occupier describes it: after the space was called upon at the GA, “a group [of us] walked the perimeter of the park and settled on the largest tree on the block, which from that day forward become the People’s Shrine at the Tree of Life, a natural altar of all faiths and all absence of faith, of all spiration and the hope for a better world, born organically at the Heart of the Leaderless Revolution.” Eventually, the park as a whole would be considered ‘sacred space,’ even called by some “a holy place.” While this NW corner was not my own first geographical point of entry to the movement, the concept of ‘sacred space’ prefigured my involvement with Occupy; it seems appropriate, then, to begin with this corner as an entry point to the park given that the park was an entry point to the movement.

54 Eco Lake, Personal Communication, 2015.
55 When looking into the origin of Zuccotti’s “sacred space,” a Facebook post was sent out to Occupy participants where many respondents began answering how Liberty Plaza “came to be” instead of the sacred space within it, confusing “sacred space” for the park as a whole. See also: admin, “Zuccotti Park: A Holy Place,” Teachings of Night, November 3, 2011, http://briandonohue.org/2011/11/03/ows-a-holy-place/.
In fact, were it not for the intersections between Liberty/Zuccotti and the ‘sacred’ or ‘holy,’ there may not have been an “encampment” of the park to speak of, given that protestors were able to get around the city law not to erect temporary structures and tents only because members from Occupy Judaism erected a sukkah—“temporary dwellings in which Jews are commanded to live during the holiday of Sukkot”—in Liberty Plaza to honor/commemorate the

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Israelites’ exodus from Egypt. As Occupy Judaism member Daniel Sieradski explains in “Sukkahs are the New Front in the Battle to Occupy NYC and Seattle” (hyperlinks his):

On Wednesday, members of Occupy Judaism NYC erected a Popup Sukkah, a portable nylon tent-like sukkah, while surrounded by supporters, press and legal observers. Police inquired as to the commotion surrounding the structure and upon learning that it was a Jewish ritual object, one officer threw up his hands and said, “We’re not messing with that,” and backed away. This precedent gave Occupy Judaism impetus to advise other demonstrators who identified as Jewish to erect temporary dwellings for themselves and their guests in order to join in the celebration of Sukkot.\(^{58}\)

This account is further corroborated and extended in “A New Type of Tent City has Grown at Occupy Wall Street” by Lincoln Anderson of The Villager, where he wrote in early November of 2011:

As for the turning point in the encampment’s becoming a tent city, he said it happened about two weeks ago. First, police allowed a small sukkah tent to be erected for the Jewish holiday of Sukkot. Next, the protesters put up a medical tent, and police promptly moved to take that down. But Jesse Jackson happened to be at Zuccotti Park and he and other protesters locked arms around the medical tent, standing their ground, and the police backed off, according to Matney. ‘Ever since then, tents have been popping up like crazy,’ he noted.\(^{59}\)

Thus, by observing a “higher law” outside the law of the city or state, occupiers began to rewrite the social and spatial codes that had traditionally marked the use of public or privately-owned public space (POPS). This is but one way that necessity—of the kind invoked by the “commandments” of moral obligation or duty—‘gave way’ to invention in the place of the park.

_Dwelling in the Place of Occupy_

As the occupation of Liberty/Zuccotti would begin to show, the notion of “occupying” became a native tactic and trope of reimagining the use of public space. Again, just as Rickert

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writes, “our understanding of what it means to inhabit and interact in spatial environments is changing,” so too would the global emergence of “tent cities” and encampments—from Liberty/Zuccotti to St. Paul’s/London and Santa Cruz to Hong Kong—change what it meant to inhabit or occupy an area “under construction” or in the process of becoming, where Massey and Snyder note “the camp claimed a prominent and symbolically charged city space in order to call attention to a political cause.” While Matt Mulberry notes in “Physical Space and ‘Occupy’ Tactics: A New Trend in Civil Resistance?” that the tactic of occupation did not begin with Occupy, he writes: “[occupation] stands out as a relatively new phenomenon when considered within the longer history of civil resistance movements, when the tactic or place of occupation seldom came to define the entire movement.” Mulberry continues:

The most recent protests in Hong Kong are indicative of a trend among people’s movements that use civil resistance – the increased emphasis placed on the taking and holding of physical space, which is to say, the tactic of occupation. Usually focused on a central square, as in the case of Egypt and Ukraine, or concentrated on a particular site emblematic of injustice, as in Occupy Wall Street, occupations as a tactic have been a media coverage-igniting feature of many of the most important protest campaigns occurring over the past few years.

However, as an American “take” or “fusion” on the Spanish acampada and the tactic of Tahrir, the occupation of Liberty/Zuccotti would differ from its forerunners by seemingly serving as an end (a telos) in itself. That is, while the occupational precedents of OWS would use occupation as a means (tropos) towards a political end or as a ‘matter of course’—i.e. the ousting of

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60 Rickert, 251.
61 Massey and Snyder, “Occupying Wall Street.”
63 Ibid.
Mubarak in Egypt; the adoption of direct democracy in Spain—the original poster and first “directive” of OWS would proclaim: “Bring Tent.” While this initiative was not realized until the raising of sukkahs by Occupy Judaism, it would seem that a goal from the beginning was to “occupy” an area in a sense of that word which is considered to be obsolete: “†c. intr. To hold possession or office; to dwell, reside; to stay, abide. Obs.” While we may not turn to the origins of words as evidence that a revolution is taking or has taken place, the time might be right (kairos) to consider what implications there might be for the ability of a movement to renew or restore old meaning of a word through current events.

This relationship between occupy and “dwelling” was in fact a point raised during the first #OccupyChristmas in Liberty/Zuccotti by a minister with Ecclesia Ministries of New York, Dr. Clyde Kuemmerle, who addressed this topic (topos) during a Eucharist Service he delivered to holiday revelers in the park. As transcribed from the YouTube video “Christmas with #Occupy Wall Street,” Kuemmerle says: “...and the word became flesh and dwelt among us. The Greek origin of that word dwelt, oskiaono means...OCCUPY. [cheers, applause] They both have their...their true root goes back to an even older word: tent.” Putting aside, for the moment, what it could mean for Occupy to “fulfill” promises of a return—especially a return or

66 OED, s.v. “occupy, v.”
67 This is merely how this word might be written/spelled phonetically. I consulted a friend and classics scholar who, after viewing the clip, wrote to me: “ἐσκήνωσεν is the word that you are looking for. Transliterated: eskhnwsen. It is the 3rd person aorist (past tense with the aspect of one time rather than recurring action or effect, which is interesting given the context here). The quotation is from, as I’m sure you know, 1:14 of the gospel of John: And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we wondered at his judgment (very interesting use of the word doxa, which was a sophistic or philosophical argument, not the ‘glory’ which is in most translations). But, back to occupy. This form is the past tense of the verb σκηνόω which doesn’t mean occupy so much, but literally to pitch a tent or make camp, live in a tent. Verbs ending in -όω mean that they are instrumental, or making something happen, and the root ‘σκην-’ means tent.” Tiernan Doyle, personal communication, April 7, 2015.
“coming” predicated on the large-scale adoption of a word\textsuperscript{69} or logos—the tent and encampment/camping became a symbol of the Movement \textit{writ large}.\textsuperscript{70} Both literally and symbolically, the tent provided a shelter and refuge for those that would seek assembly or asylum in the “almost utopia” of Zuccotti. As Schneider notes, in addition to those who had come to Zuccotti to participate in OWS, “people who’d been living on the streets already, not by choice, took refuge in the park from the city’s punitive and inadequate provision for them.”\textsuperscript{71} As it will later bear relevance to discussion of the chora as a “nurse” or “mother” of becoming and change, this photo taken of the People’s Puppets of OWS during a labor march in NYC would capture the spirit of the occupation through the figures of Lady Liberty and Lady Justice, the banner in front of them reading: “Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand a mighty woman with a torch whose flame is the imprisoned lighting and her name Mother of exiles.”

\textsuperscript{69} As Not An Alternative notes: “Many of us long dreamed of creating a political form (a common) that could be adopted and adapted, that would circulate and inspire, in a protean, expressive, horizontal fashion. We imagined a politics capable of exceeding the confines of issues and identities. With Occupy, we have that. So we need to put it to use, not put it away, as some have suggested.” See: Not An Alternative, “Occupy: The Name in Common.”


\textsuperscript{71} Schneider, “Thank You Anarchy,” 84.
Additionally, while some popular media would dismiss the congregation of occupiers in the park as “riotous”—one popular performer going so far as to release a video, “No Church in the Wild,” (seemingly) modeled after Occupy protests—it might be remembered that the “church” was another word *ekklesia* or *ecclesia*: “a Greek word for a regularly convoked assembly; chiefly applied to the general assembly of Athenian citizens. On the introduction of

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Christianity it became the regular word for church *n.1 and adj.*” Thus, to the extent that we understand the vernacular modalities of Occupy as taking place on the margins—in the “wild,” outside the structures of market and state—then to say there is “no church in the wild” is akin to saying there is “no assembly on the margins,” which would be an unfortunate mis-take on what Occupy brought into being. See figure 6 below. As Schneider discusses of those who would gravitate towards and assemble in the park:

> They came for a protest and arrived at a school, a school of the sort that they didn’t know was a school until they started learning its lessons—the school of happenstance arrests, the school of endless meetings, the school of many voices, the school of changing faces, the school the whole world is watching, the school that could close at any minute, the school that could save the world, the school that is mocked and slandered, the school without a name, the school with no degrees, the school that is outside and under trees, the school that may betray you, the school that’s your only hope.

Thus, just as choric scholars contend that “what must be underscored here is the necessity for the *polis* to go beyond its boundaries to thrive (a reinforcement of Timaeus’s *anagke* [[necessity] in 47e],” occupiers would similarly contend that “creating new autonomous community zones is necessary for the survival of the movement.” Again, an older sense of *chora* is understood as both a spatial region and ‘political’ territory outside (or autonomous from) the political organization of the city ‘proper.’ This sense is integral to Plato’s conception of the ideal *polis* and its creation as developed in *Timaeus*, where the task of this dialogue is to address and “give place” to a ‘crucial problem’ of his *Republic*: “how to move from static ideas to vital activity,

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74 Adbuster.org, the “founders” of OWS, would frequently sign their blogposts with “for the wild.”
75 Schneider, 59-60.
76 Rickert, 259.
78 As Rickert points out, “while *chōra* can mean land or city, when used in the context of *polis*, it more properly means the surrounding territory; a *polis* consists of a town (*asty*) and territory (*chōra*) (155n4; cf. Sallis 1999, 116).” Rickert, 255.
from the speculative theory of the Republic to a dynamic, vibrant Athens.”79 Just as the *chora* is described as having “a specifically political dimension, being both the boundary of the city and what lies beyond the boundary,”80 occupiers answered the call to #OCCUPYWALLSTREET by erecting an “experimental agora” or an “alternative polity” inside the city, but outside ‘the state.’

![Occupying the BEATI QUI AMBULANT IN LEGE DOMINI](image)

**Fig. 7: Occupy under BEATI QUI AMBULANT IN LEGE DOMINI or “Blessed are those who walk in God’s law”**

*Occupy as The Little City in the Big Apple*

As a “little city” or “exemplar society” in ‘the big city’ of NYC, the occupation of Liberty/Zuccotti could be said to have existed in (at least) two places at once. Referred to as the

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79 Rickert, 252.
80 Ibid., 259.
‘epicenter’ of the movement and a “hypercitv built of granite and asphalt, algorithms and information,” the park was as much on the streets, in the park, as it was an emergent bastion or “ideal city” that existed outside the city proper. In the first place, the park would provide a place for the New York City General Assembly (NYCGA) to emerge and convene, where dozens of Occupy groups came together to “organize and set the vision for the #occupywallstreet movement”81 through consensus-oriented discussion. Functioning as the democratic and organizational nexus of OWS, the NYCGA defines themselves (italics mine) as “an open, participatory and horizontally organized process through which we are building the capacity to constitute ourselves in public as autonomous collective forces within and against the constant crises of our times.”82 Their orientation to process would be seen/heard in a common Occupy appeal: “this is a process, not a protest.”

As Not An Alternative explains, “some in the movement, particularly in New York, argued that the heart of Occupy is its process: the General Assembly, consensus-oriented discussion, and the autonomy of each individual who speaks only for herself and never for another.”83 While this process was certainly not without its flaws—the GA was often critiqued for its “process-fetishism”84 and for excluding the very participants it was designed to include—this “everyday activity of talking through issues and coming to an agreement about what to do” was nonetheless considered a better alternative and a necessary response to existent political practices. As Not An Alternative writes, “in the context of a corrupt, exclusive political system, people needed to find ways to rebuild their trust in one another and in themselves. Processes that

82 Ibid.
84 Ibid.
facilitated participation and collective decision-making were attractive insofar as they helped people build new capacities and connections."  

Some products of this process would include the GA-consensed documents including the “Principles of Solidarity,” the “Statement of Autonomy,” and the “Declaration of the Occupation of New York City,” each outlining the foundational values and grievances associated with the movement.

Every night for nine weeks straight, the NYCGA met at the eastern end of Zuccotti Park, “where a shallow crescent of stairs creates a modest amphitheater” beneath Suvero’s sculpture named after the “joy of living.” In this assembly area, participants would spend hours “work[ing] through issues of common concern — every word repeated by the assembly, which formed a human microphone amplifying the speaker’s voice — until they reached consensus.”

The “mic check” was another example of necessity giving rise to invention—and that invention being ‘outside the law’ as a vernacular mode of resistance—where NPR reported, “the protesters have come up with a creative way around the no-amplification rule at the park. One person talks and the rest of the crowd repeats what they’ve said so everyone can hear.” These ‘everyday’ processes that emerged in the park quickly spread and replicated in other sites and spaces of occupation, where Massey and Snyder note (hyperlinks theirs):

Such was the daily practice of *Occupy Wall Street*, paralleled in more than a thousand cities around the world. Participants borrowed tactics from Quaker meetings, Latin American popular assemblies, Spanish *acampadas*, and other traditions of protest and political organization. They also enacted something

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85 Ibid.
86 Massey and Snyder, “Occupying Wall Street.”
87 Ibid.
88 While getting around this law was unlikely a primary motive, it was a product of necessity to the extent that one needed to project their voices in this (or a similar) manner in order to hear what others were saying. See: Eyder Peralta, “Siding With Mayor, Judge Rules Against Occupy Wall Street Protesters,” *NPR.org*, November 15, 2011, [http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2011/11/15/142365231/siding-with-mayor-judge-rules-against-occupy-wall-street-encampment](http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2011/11/15/142365231/siding-with-mayor-judge-rules-against-occupy-wall-street-encampment).
foundational to the western democratic tradition: constituting a polity as a group of speaking bodies gathered in a central public place.89

In fact, due to the number of “speaking bodies” participating in the deliberative process of the NYCGA, the meetings would necessitate or otherwise bring into being: a facilitator selecting volunteers to “take stack” and record meeting minutes as well as reviewing the rules for prioritizing speakers; this often involved demonstrating the non-verbal hand gestures “by which participants could signal agreement or dissent.”90 These gestures would become one of the more recognizable ‘traits’ of Occupy’s vernacular.

As illustrated in the NYCGA Assembly Guide, these gestures—part of an emergent vernacular through which occupiers communicated by signal and sign—were designed to both “ensure everyone’s voice is heard and every opinion is respected”91 and to quickly conduct a #tempcheck of the assembly: a way of determining the general “climate” or ‘leanings’ of the participants on a matter of discussion. Using a range of “twinkles,” responses ranged from full-fledged support (#uptwinkles) to ambivalence or uncertainty (#midtwinkles) to disapproval or dissent (#downtwinkles or #stinkles). Eventually, these gestures—or “hippie finger wiggles” as an outside observer humorously called it92—would inspire the creation of an online application, Loomio,93 which was designed to help groups make decisions collaboratively online. As indicated in the Assembly Guide linked above, the NYCGA began to produce smaller gatherings or groups known as “Working/Thematic Groups” (now listed under “Network Groups”) that

89 Massey and Snyder, “Occupying Wall Street.”
90 Ibid.
“focus on supporting specific initiatives or topics relevant to the movement [which] range from Food, Medical, and Legal Committees to Arts & Culture, Direct Action, Principles of Solidarity and many more.”

From the working groups of the General Assembly (GA) would arise another proliferation of groups: ad hoc project groups, autonomous affinity groups, identity groups, and “a profusion of others whose members neither knew nor cared how to categorize themselves.”

Eventually, the overflow of these groups in the park would bleed over into a satellite space, the Deutsche Bank building at 60 Wall Street, where “various committee and working groups [met] to discuss the things they’re working on and to develop proposals for the general assembly.”

As Massey and Snyder note of this space, “from morning to night [occupiers] used the tables, benches, chairs and wifi of the climate-controlled space as a purposeful, orderly extension of the eastern end of Liberty Plaza, establishing commuting patterns that figured 60 Wall as the Occupy office.”

Eventually, empathetic owners supporting the movement would offer up vacant spaces and properties within the general vicinity of the park to OWS for temporary use, including a storage space that held the shipments of goods that were sent to OWS from across the country.

The use of these places/spaces “from morning to night” not only calls to mind an emergent chant of the movement—“All day, all week, Occupy Wall Street!”—but the description of these satellite sites as a “purposeful, orderly extension of the eastern end” is in

94 NYCGA, “General Assembly Guide.”
95 As Nathan Schneider notes, “identity groups formed, with names like Safer Spaces and the People of Color Caucus and the Feminist General Assembly and OWS in Espanol.” See Schneider, Thank You Anarchy, 65.
96 Ibid., 64.
98 Massey and Snyder, “Occupying Wall Street.”
99 Judson Church in Washington Square Park would eventually be used as a general “presentation” and meeting space, an in-solidarity space, so too would the Brecht Forum, 2 Beaver Street, and an office along Broadway that served as the “Occupy Office” (separate from 60 Wall Street) that was temporarily given to OWS by a company who gave OWS members the key code to their office.
many ways a meta-demonstration of the way that the *chora* was first used to terminologically designate “an extension which can be occupied (‘taken’).” However, before discussing how OWS served as exemplar par excellence of this sense of the *chora*, the site of Zuccotti/Liberty was first and foremost a choric “entry point” into the movement; a ‘first place’ or starting point where ideas (and ideals) would take root and grow. As Michael Premo writes, “Occupy Wall Street has captured the global imagination. It began with the literal occupation of the heart of global capital, and, just as the arteries and veins of the system stretch to every part of our lives, so must our occupation.” As we will see, what began in the park would in fact bleed over into other domains of activity, just like the saying in Occupy goes: “fireflies setting wildfires.”

*The Park: A Topos of Beginning*

Beyond a park in the city and a “hypercity” outside of it, a third place Zuccotti/Liberty “existed” was in the minds of the public imagination: a “place” that makes more lucid the murkier dimensions/descriptions of the *chora* as an “eternal and indestructible space” that can only be approached “as through a dream (*oneiropoloumen*)” or apprehended “by means of a ‘bastard reasoning’ (*Timaeus*, 51a–b, 52b).” To return to this excerpt in the original text, Plato writes of this “third space” that it “is apprehended without the senses by a sort of spurious reasoning and so is hard to believe in - we look at it indeed in a kind of dream and say that everything that exists must be somewhere and occupy some space, and that what is nowhere in heaven or earth is nothing at all.” As occupiers would similarly write in a first communiqué,

100 Algra, *Concepts of Space in Greek Thought*, 33.
102 Rickert, 270.
103 Ibid., 259.
104 Plato, 71-72.
“we have come to Wall Street as refugees from this native dreamland, seeking asylum in the actual. That is what we seek to occupy. We seek to rediscover and reclaim the world.” This “dream world” and “bastard discourse” functions predominately in the *Timaeus*, where Rickert elaborates on its significance noting:

Indeed, that is the problem of the *Timaeus*: that the ideal city is *atopos*, that it has no place. And, as a “third kind” (triton genos) approachable as in a dream through a bastard discourse, neither does the *chôra*. Indeed, *chôra*’s nonplace frames the gap sundering the Forms from the physical world as well as providing passage between them. The *Timaeus* thereby stages for us a new kind of beginning, one that moves from the realm of the idea to the world of generation, or from being to becoming. This is what Socrates wishes to hear from his fellow discussants, and it is the purpose of the *Timaeus* to bring the ideal *polis* to life as an actual city, one that has a place. Eventually, this place will come to correspond with Athens.  

Here, this ideal city ‘without place’ could just as easily correspond to the encampment of Liberty/Zuccotti, where researchers have written that the park “gave visitors a point of entry into the movement and its ideas.” As noted by Sarah Jaffe (2014) in “Post-Occupied: Where are we Now?”:

That original moment where Occupy felt huge and magical is gone and no one disputes that; its organizers have settled into longer-haul projects that often do, in fact, have measurable goals. “I remember, I wish[ed] I had more of an imagination, because it seemed like whatever idea we had in that space [in Zuccotti Park] we could make happen, and we did,” says Mary Clinton, a labor organizer who helped plan Occupy Wall Street. 

The terminology from Mary’s passage above (i.e. ‘original moment,’ ‘idea,’ ‘in that space,’) is echoed in Rickert’s description of the *chora* below, where he summarizes the relevancy of beginnings to rhetorical theory:

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106 Rickert, 258.
107 Massey and Snyder, “Occupying Wall Street.”
The *chora*, then, raises anew questions about beginnings, about what lies at an origin, and about the relationship of that originary moment to what follows. As we have seen, not only did these questions interest Plato, but they have bearing on rhetoric. For instance, in the rhetorical tradition, the *topoi*, general or special, are seen as a means to initiate a discourse. The general topics (commonplaces) would be cultural familiarities ready at hand for a rhetor; the special topics would be cognitive abstractions showing particular ways for thought to follow. In both cases, ideas are assumed as starting points.\(^{109}\)

As this relates to the topic of origins, creation, and generation (*genesis*) that serves as subject and theme of this dissertation and chapter, we can turn to Liberty/Zuccotti to understand how this nebulous “third space” both existed ‘in place’ and in the minds of the public imagination, where “anything could happen” and “another world is possible.” In such a space, the park—like the *chora*—provides a place of passage between the Forms and the physical world, where Plato wrote of ever-shifting chora: “And the things which pass in and out of it are copies of the eternal realities, whose form they take in a wonderful way that is hard to describe - we will follow this up some other time.”\(^{110}\) Picking up, then, in the place where Plato left off—where it is perhaps no “mistake”\(^{111}\) that the Timaeus ends in mid-sentence with the phrase “and when they had assembled addressed them as follows: …”—so too would the park be characterized and colored by the people who ‘passed through’ and populated its open atriums and parks.

As Rickert explains, “it is important to note that while the chôra thereby designates a kind of beginning, it has no real qualities itself; its odd passivity marks it as fundamentally indeterminate (Timaeus, 51a–b). The implication is that while a beginning requires a place, the

\(^{109}\) Rickert, 262.
\(^{110}\) Plato, 69.
\(^{111}\) Some scholars have suggested that the “…” indicates that Plato purposefully abandoned completing what was supposed to be a trilogy since Plato forecast a third speaker, Hermocrates, but did not have a chapter in his name. Desmond Lee notes, “Plato, finding that the material for the third dialogue of the trilogy was outgrowing its formal limits, abandoned the task of completing it (the Critias as we have it stops in mid-sentence) and turned to his last major work, the Laws.” Given, however, that this dialogue largely concerns the cyclical revolution of time, he may have believed the ‘eternal forms’ to reappear at a time in the future; a time into which only future events could speak. See: Desmond Lee, *Timaeus and Critias*, 23.
generative or choric aspects of that place remain indeterminate, or, as we shall see, give nothing to what emerges.\textsuperscript{112} Though the choric arena of Occupy did give something to what emerged, if only in name or a name, the name itself did not necessarily determine what shape that occupation would take. As we saw with each occupation that emerged—whether geographically (in NYC or Denver or Paris or London) or conceptually (a la @occupytheory, @occupydata, @occupyhomes)—each movement within the Movement was imbued with its particular physiognomy\textsuperscript{113} by the characteristics of the place in which it arose. Thus, while each occupation would operate under the banner of Occupy, no two occupations would be alike because no two places or cities were alike. Each occupation would come to reflect the local crises and issues that affected that area or region, be it water cut-offs in Detroit, fighting for direct democracy in Hong Kong, or even natural disasters like Hurricane Sandy in NY. In an article by \textit{The Atlantic}, “The Americans Who Inspired Hong Kong’s Protesters,” Peter Beinart discusses the uptake of the occupy moniker by . #OccupyCentral/@OCLPHK or Occupy Central with Peace and Love:

...in taking the name “Occupy,” Hong Kong’s protesters are paying homage to a movement that challenged the lack of democracy in Washington itself... But it’s worth remembering that Occupy Wall Street never formulated specific demands. Its message was broader: that unaccountable elites—“the 1 percent”—had created a political and economic system that denied ordinary people a voice in their government and a chance at a better life. It was the breadth of this message that helped Occupy spread rapidly across the globe, as local activists adapted it to their particular circumstances.\textsuperscript{114}

\textsuperscript{112} Rickert, 251.

\textsuperscript{113} Leland Griffin writes: “The student’s task is to isolate the rhetorical movement within the matrix of the historical movement: the rhetorical movement is the focus of his study. It is to be isolated, analyzed, evaluated, and described, so that he can say, for the particular historical movement which he investigates: this was the pattern of public discussion, the configuration of discourse, the physiognomy of persuasion, peculiar to the movement.” This is a literal take on the term \textit{physiognomy}, or “the study of the features of the face, or of the form of the body generally, as being supposedly indicative of character; the art of judging character from such study.” See OED, s.v. “physiognomy, n.” and Leland Griffin, “The Rhetoric of Historical Movements,” \textit{The Quarterly Journal of Speech} 2 (April, 1952): 185.

Similarly, in “Occupy: The Name in Common,” Not An Alternative writes, “many of us long dreamed of creating a political form (a common) that could be adopted and adapted, that would circulate and inspire, in a protean, expressive, horizontal fashion. We imagined a politics capable of exceeding the confines of issues and identities. With Occupy, we have that.”\footnote{115} As this relates to the appearance of the ideal polis as a choric emergence, Hannah Arendt notes in The Human Condition:

> The polis, properly speaking, is not the city-state in its physical location; it is the organization of the people as it arises out of acting and speaking together, and its true space lies between people living together for this purpose, no matter where they happen to be. . . . It is the space of appearance in the widest sense of the word, namely, the space where I appear to others as others appear to me. . . . Wherever people gather together, [this space of appearance] is potentially there, but only potentially. Not necessarily and not forever.\footnote{116}

The parallel here is that Liberty Plaza is a choric place as an indeterminate space of appearance whose dimensions are not defined until it makes its appearance. As a place of invention, it is capable of accommodating anything as a possibility, where (to quote Plato) “it continues to receive all things” as “a kind of neutral plastic material on which changing impressions are stamped by the things which enter it, making it appear different at different times.”\footnote{117} However, once something appears in this place/space, the chora/Occupy is no longer “indeterminate” to the extent that whatever appears has dimensions that give it definition.

Thus, as we have established so far, the place of Liberty/Zuccotti speaks into descriptions of the chora as a place/space of assembly and invention, outside the boundaries of the city ‘proper,’ where the ideal polis could come into being. Coinciding with descriptions of the chora

\footnote{115} Not An Alternative, “Occupy: The Name in Common.”
\footnote{117} Plato, 69.
in Plato’s *Timaeus*, the park makes empirical a concept otherwise abstract or ‘without place’ in nature; as Plato writes, “we shall not be wrong if we describe it as invisible and formless, all-embracing, possessed in a most puzzling way of intelligibility, yet very hard to grasp.”118 Just as Plato’s dialogue provided a place for the concept’s emergence, Liberty/Zuccotti “grounds” the *chora* in ways that potentially serve as a rejoinder to Derrida’s question about “the possibility of giving place to something that seems to have no place.”119 As Rickert explains, “Derrida implicitly argues that the question of how to give place to something is an issue of invention.”120 Thus, we can understand the park, as a whole, as a collective “invention” to the extent that it provided the grounds—both literally and figuratively—for subsequent development and invention to take place.

*First Comes Love, Then Comes Babies: Chora as the Maternal Matrix*

As mentioned in the *Timaeus* and in subsequent literature on the chora, the ideal polis or “choric city” is “one that not only has a place, but one where *eros* is present.”121 As Rickert elaborates,

[The *Republic*] misses actuality, and the discussants hope this condition is rectifiable, that this city can be brought to life and seen vigorously exercising as States do (*Timaeus*, 18b). As is, the ideal city is a dead city. Sallis remarks that, strictly speaking, it is a “technical city,” a city of the head (1999, 20). Not only is it a fabrication, but it lacks *eros*, which is to say, it lacks becoming in a generative sense… For this reason, among others, Sallis tells us that what the *Timaeus* comments on, from its very beginning, are the limits of fabrication, whether as *technē* or *poiesis*, with respect to *eros* (26).122

While a flat or premature reading of OWS might result in thinking that Occupy was ‘all about’ the economic disparity between the 99% and the 1%, those participating in the movement would

118 Plato, 70.
119 Rickert, 264.
120 Ibid., 265.
121 Ibid., 258.
122 Rickert, 255.
come to see the movement as one rooted in love. As transcribed from the short film “Occupy Wall St - The Revolution Is Love…” produced by members of @OccupyLoveFilm, Charles Eisenstein narrates:

This movement isn’t about the 99% ‘defeating’ or toppling the 1%—you know the next chapter of that story: which is that the 99% create a new 1%—that’s not what it’s about. What we want to create is a more beautiful world our hearts tell us is possible—a sacred world, a world that works for everybody, a world that is healing, a world of peace…And that’s why making explicit demands kind of reduces the movement and takes the heart out of it—and so it’s a real paradox; and so I think the movement actually understands that…

This idea was perhaps one of the movement’s more “radical” grounds, which may explain why concepts like “love” or “heart” didn’t enter the mainstream understanding of the movement until OccupySandy. As Nathan Schneider discusses in Thank You Anarchy: Notes from Occupy Apocalypse, the number of radio interviews he had to field during the emergence of OWS led to him devising “a sequence of grand epiphanies by which to phrase my explanations of how the movement understood itself.” These epiphanies—or stages, as he later called them—would be used to anchor the conversation depending on how familiar the caller or interviewer was with Occupy. He writes,

None of these stages, as it turned out, was “wealth inequality,” the complaint most commonly associated with the Occupy movement in the media. I suppose that association wasn’t incorrect, but strangely it wasn’t talked about very much among the organizers I spent most of my time with. On this scale, maybe, the fact that there is gross wealth inequality would rank around Stage One-Half, or possibly lower, somewhere between complete ignorance and Stage One.

123 Fierce Love Films, “Occupy Wall St - The Revolution Is Love w Charles Eisenstein,” YouTube, November 18, 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BRtc-k6dhgs. This quote continues: “An economist says that essentially “more for you is less for me,” but the lover knows that “more for you is more for me too.” If you love somebody, then they’re happiness is your happiness. Their pain is your pain. Your sense of self expands to include other beings. That’s love: love is the expansion of the self to include the other. And that’s a different kind of revolution: there’s no one to fight—there’s no “evil” to fight—there’s no ‘other’ in this revolution. Everybody has a unique calling and its really time to listen to that—that’s what the future is going to be. It’s time to get ready for it and to help contribute to it and make it happen.”

124 Schneider, 85.
125 Ibid., 85.
Naming these stages after common slogans, Schnider writes of the last stage: “a fifth [stage], oppositely, and also difficult to place: Occupy your heart. This had to do with some kind of inner work and how people could relate to one another.” While this stage would only be deployed for those ‘most familiar’ with the movement, the notion of “occupying your heart” was there from the very beginning. In the first publication of @OccupyTheory’s Tidal Magazine, one of the first images to appear on its pages are four silhouetted figures holding three billowing signs, one which reads: “Occupy Your Heart, Another World Is Possible, Make Ready Your Dreams.” For those participating in or observing the Movement online during the emergence of OWS, it was likely noticed that accounts like @OccupyLove and @OccupyLoveFilm were some of the first to come online. While the first account has been inactive since December of 2011, the fact that it exists (‘in the first place’) nonetheless indicates the presence or viability of the concept, where occupy—as will be explored in the next chapter—would come to be “adopted” in ways that extended beyond physical locations.

To again underscore the “generative” ability of the *chora* and its purpose in the *Timaeus* for “producing” or bringing invention to life, Rickert explains that “the limits to fabrication can be exceeded through productive *eros*, an idea that adds to the implicit importance of place a bodily dimension (as well as a reinscription of a maternal feminine, a point underscored by Kristeva).” The initial inscription of a maternal feminine was discussed in the *Timaeus* where, according to Plato, the *chora* is not ‘that which becomes’ but ‘that in which it becomes’ as the ontological arena or “receptacle” where ‘becoming’ takes place. As Plato wrote: “For the moment we must make a threefold distinction and think of that which becomes, that in which it

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126 Ibid., 86.
127 Rickert, 258.
becomes, and the model which it resembles. We may indeed use the metaphor of birth and compare the receptacle to the mother, the model to the father, and what they produce between them to their offspring.” As such, the *chora* can be understood as the womb (or receptacle) where the development of the child (or progeny) takes place. In the article “Liberty Plaza, A ‘Message’ Entangled with its Form,” Nicole Demby echoes this language of Plato’s receptacle and child, where she writes:

> Occupy Wall Street is streamed, tweeted, posted and reposted. It is a curiosity, a screen for projection, a spectator sport, everyone’s favorite and most hated child. Yet people continue to come daily who earnestly want to join or to aid the effort. OWS has become a receptacle for the lost progressive hopes of a previous generation. Despite the attempts of some media sources to caricature the occupiers, they constitute a diverse group that is attracting even more diversity. OWS has gained the support of many labor unions and community groups. Most importantly, its existence is enabling a necessary discourse to enter the mainstream.

This framing of Occupy as a maternal force, as a “Mother of movements,” is also explicitly discussed by Jerry Ashton in the Huffington Post, “Occupy, It Is February, 2015. Where Are Your Children?” In it, Ashton follows up his title/question by stating, “I have been looking all over for you. The mainstream media long ago declared you dead or missing, and yet you seem to pop up in so many ways and places.” He goes onto name these places: in Paris, at the “Je Suis Charlie?” march; in Hong Kong, at #OccupyCentral; in Australia; in London; in Ferguson, Missouri; in the marches across the U.S. for Michael Brown (#HandsUpDontShoot) and in New York for Eric Garner (#ICantBreathe); in Detroit, Michigan to protest residents’ water being turned off; in San Diego, California, to fight the legislation against the homeless; in Canada, as

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128 Plato, 69.
allies to the American Indian, Alaskan Native and Indigenous First Nations people fighting against the XL pipeline; in the projects of Rolling Jubilee and Strike Debt working to abolish medical and student debt. And of course, though not mentioned: Occupy Sandy, one of the largest grassroots responses to disaster in the U.S. and offshoot of OWS. Ashton then notes, “in the early weeks of Occupy Wall Street someone, perhaps not half-joking, printed up a crude sign on a piece of battered cardboard: ‘Screw Us, and We Multiply.’ Well, you were screwed — and you did appear to multiply.”131 After asking again “Where are your children?,” he goes onto conclude: “There is a very good reason as to why I can’t seem to find you anywhere...you are everywhere!”132

The progenitive quality of the movement—as a “receptacle” and “womb” giving life to occupations and activities that emerged in the place and space of a park—is perhaps the most compelling and correspondent parallel to descriptions of the *chora*. It also calls to mind the etymological roots of occupy or *occupatio* as a trope of anticipation, “the capacity to produce branches, flowers, fruits, etc., in the future,”133 not to mention biblical stories around the parthenogenesis or “virgin birth” of Christ (Logos) in the sense that the receptacle of the park gave rise (or life) to a movement that self-replicated itself through the word (logos) or name of “occupy.” While this line of thinking (*topos*) might be admittedly a “stretch,” Algra notes “when applied to a smaller piece of ground *chôra* gets the meaning ‘stretch/field/ground/place,’”134 and the *Timaeus* tells us that the *chora* is only apprehendable by means of a “bastard reasoning” (*logismô nothô*) or a kind of “spurious logic.” A bastard—or etymologically and literally: “a

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131 Ibid.
132 Ibid.
133 OED, s.v. “prolepsis, n.”
134 Algra, 33.
pack-saddle child” or “having an irregular origin.” Just as Plato wrote “we may indeed use the metaphor of birth and compare the receptacle to the mother, the model to the father, and what they produce between them to their offspring,” we can similarly understand the receptacle/mother as Liberty Plaza, the model/father as the conceptual or geographical attaché (i.e. –Oakland or –Paris; –theory, -design, or –rhetoric) and the product/offspring as the inventions or applications that were developed as a consequence of this coupling: permaculture farms; sharing economies; alternative currencies; alternative energy systems; FLO open/source platforms; inventory systems for disaster relief. As captured in the quote beneath the title of this chapter and copied below, an occupier would write of the park in the following choric terms:

A family. Born from the womb of Zuccotti...Occupy Novad...Occupy Strikede...Occupy Sandy. A lineage. A family tree. Biopolitical constellations. Looks like a family tree, ~ a Genealogy Tree! ... The sacred tree of Zuccotti, did you ever wonder about its symbolism? Birth to something greater than ourselves, an encounter that WAS a supernova. An egg. A cocoon. To nest. The future. Bonds of friendship beyond the brand, a fellowship of the key;; € beyond the name lies what makes us human - the connective tissue. To the encounter that gave birth to ________!  

The second-to-last character in the quote above, “______” or “the blank,” is in many ways the most comprehensible way to describe a final (but “original”) sense of the chora and Occupy-as-chora, where Algra notes that the “chôra still has much of its original sense: it is an extension which can be occupied (‘taken’).”

Back to the Beginning: The Oldest Sense of the Chora

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135 OED, s.v. “bastard, n.”
136 Ibid.
137 Ibid., s.v. “spurious, adj.”
138 Plato, 69.
139 Atchu, Personal Communications, 2015.
140 Algra, 33.
As a microcosm of the movement writ large, the park literally and symbolically represented a kind of “blank space” or “open forum” that could be used to facilitate movement between actualities of ‘what is’ and the possibilities of what ‘could be.’\textsuperscript{141} Just as the chora provided recourse for Plato and subsequent theorists “to explain how things come into being in the physical world”\textsuperscript{142} as a product of necessity, Thomas Hintze and Laura Gottesdiener discuss this concept in “An Outdoor Space,” writing, “for us, space is not a mere necessity—a place to lay our head, to eat our meals, to congregate and assemble—it is also a symbol and a direct action. Literally, vacant lots are voids that we fill with physical representations of our concerns, hopes, fears, and dreams.”\textsuperscript{143} Beginning in the place of the park—but soon extending into virtual, conceptual, and abstract space—the visions and voices of ‘the 99%’ would be literally and figuratively “projected” onto blank places and spaces. In a literal sense, Occupy projects like The Illuminator—also known as “the 99% van” and the “Occupy-mobile”—used a roving cargo van with a modified roof and a 12,000-lumen projector to strategically beam “guerilla protest messages” onto blank spaces and buildings in the city.\textsuperscript{144} On its maiden voyage into the East Village, the messages “It is the beginning of the beginning” and “Another World is Possible” and finally “99%” flashed on the steel façade of Cooper Union, as accounted for by Jared Malsin in “A Van, a Vamp, and Two Spectacles in the Name of Occupy Wall Street.” To this day, riding in this vehicle and helping set up a few of its “celebratory spectacles” in NYC is one of my fondest

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\textsuperscript{141} This might be compared to the general thrust of John Poulakos’ argument in “Toward a Sophistic Definition of Rhetoric,” where he provides a definition of rhetoric and follows that with the statement: “Further, this definition links rhetoric to a movement originating in the sphere of actuality and striving to attain a place in that of potentiality.” See John Poulakos, “Toward a Sophistic Definition of Rhetoric,” Philosophy and Rhetoric 16, no. 1 (1983): 36.
\textsuperscript{142} Rickert, 252.
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memories of Occupy. Other projects like the Overpass Light Brigade (OLB) use a variation of this “tactic” by spelling out messages in light, letter-by-letter, on corrugated plastic signs back-lit with strings of battery-operated LED lights.

In a more figurative sense, Occupy would use the concept of “blank space” to bring into being new social, political, and economic realities, where Suzahn E. writes in “An Occupier’s Note” that “we must project our vision of a just world onto the blank paving stones of public parks and into the silent hallways of abandoned schools. Now it is time to shift our communities—to turn our collective imaginary into a collective reality.” She continues to note, “interviews or articles about Occupy Wall Street eventually lead to one question: ‘What does a just world look like?’ We need only to look at Liberty Square, or at any people’s occupation from around the world, for an answer. Although these sites are microcosms, they are nevertheless worlds where we aspire to achieve mutual aid and solidarity, autonomy and horizontality.” In this same publication Judith Butler writes,

The reason it is said that sometimes there are “no demands” when bodies assemble under the rubric of ‘Occupy Wall Street’ is that any list of demands would not exhaust the ideal of justice that is being demanded… For when bodies gather as they do to express their indignation and to enact their plural existence in public space, they are also making broader demands. They are demanding to be recognized and to be valued; they are exercising a right to appear and to exercise freedom; they are calling for a livable life.

The virality of these occupational “appearances” worldwide—and the soon-to-be non-geographic extensions of Occupy into conceptual arenas and virtual terrains, as covered in chapter five—was perhaps predicted in Adbuster’s 96th blog post to #OCCUPYWALLSTREET, where they noted, “the beauty of this new formula, [of occupation,] and what makes this novel tactic exciting, is its

145 Suzahn E., “An Occupier’s Note.”
146 Ibid.
pragmatic simplicity: [sic] ... we go out and seize a square of singular symbolic significance and put our asses on the line to make it happen. This “square” of “singular symbolic significance” could be any space, any place, any topic, anything; the open-endedness and indeterminacy of this ‘seizure of significance’—like descriptions of the chora—is, in part, what took the Occupy Movement (OM) from an encampment in the streets to a ‘mass emergence’ on global fronts.

Conclusions

By using a “prominent and symbolically charged city space in order to call attention to a political cause,” not only did the camp “constitut[e] a polity as a group of speaking bodies gathered in a central public place,” but the emergence of those bodies and speeches would provide a place/pace where occupiers, observers, and reporters alike could ‘turn to’ for the material necessary to furnish their respective arguments or observations. As a source of emergent rhetorical activity, the park was both a topos and chora where the Liberty/Zuccotti can be understood as falling into the camp of topic invention, where Rickert notes:

In rhetoric, the innumerable permutations of the topos, or commonplaces, can be seen as such a nonbiological construct: the mind utilizes an external symbolic resource to generate and organize rhetorical discourse. For instance, topic invention sees various ideas, either abstract (division, cause and effect) or culturally particular (taxes are bad, maximize efficiency), as providing a discursive place where thoughts begin and grow.

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149 Massey and Snyder, “Occupying Wall Street.”

150 As Keimpe Algra notes in Concepts of Space in Greek Thought, in those cases where topos and chôra were used together, the Stoics used topos (place) to denote a (smaller) part of the chôra. Here, the place/space of Zuccotti/Liberty can be understood in parallel: Zuccotti Park, as a place (topos) can be used to denote a smaller part of the space (chora) of Liberty Plaza, where the physical grounds of Zuccotti were occupied and transformed into the transcendent, choric space of Liberty. See Algra, 37.

151 Rickert, 251.
As discussed in this chapter, the rhetorical activity that emerged ‘in the place of the park’ is arguably both a product of the place of Zuccotti—as a local or “situated” site within the urban matrix of the city—and the non-determinate or generic features that are characteristic of the non-characteristic chora, which Occupy as a “blank space” brought into being. As Plato wrote, “[the chora] can always be called the same because it never alters its characteristics. For it continues to receive all things, and never itself takes a permanent impress from any of the things that enter it; it is a kind of neutral plastic material on which changing impressions are stamped by the things which enter it.” In this case, the place of Zuccotti—in conjunction with a movement’s “taking” of it—gave rise to the transcendent space and ‘choric’ polis of Liberty Plaza. That is to say, it is a topos. Here, the space of Liberty functioned as an arena of invention and a base of operations by those who “showed up” to #OCCUPYWALLSTREET by ‘passing through’ the place of the park. As such, the park gave a face, a physiognomy, to the movement—as can be seen in “99 Faces of Occupy Wall Street” and (for better or worse) the “Hot Chicks of Occupy Wall Street” Tumblr—which gave a glimpse into the more ‘humane’ and ‘germane’ facets of the movement often absent in MSM depictions.

On its physical grounds, OWS gave place for the “making” and emergence of occupations worldwide, where Occupy changed “what it means to inhabit and interact in spatial

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152 Plato, 69.
153 This can be compared to Plato’s description of the chora in the Timaeus and Critias: “And the things which pass in and out of [the chora] are copies of the eternal realities, whose form they take in a wonderful way that is hard to describe - we will follow this up some other time.” Ibid., 69.
154 Leland Griffin writes: “The student’s task is to isolate the rhetorical movement within the matrix of the historical movement: the rhetorical movement is the focus of his study. It is to be isolated, analyzed, evaluated, and described, so that he can say, for the particular historical movement which he investigates: this was the pattern of public discussion, the configuration of discourse, the physiognomy of persuasion, peculiar to the movement.” This is a literal take on the term physiognomy, or “the study of the features of the face, or of the form of the body generally, as being supposedly indicative of character; the art of judging character from such study.” See OED, s.v. “physiognomy, n.” and Leland M. Griffin, “The Rhetoric of Historical Movements,” The Quarterly Journal of Speech 2 (April, 1952): 185.
environments” by becoming a receptacle or placeholder for the creation of new possibilities, ideas, technologies, and worlds. Following its eviction from the park on November 15, 2011, the lessons learned in OWS would extend into virtual terrains where a new series of occupations would emerge online. As Schneider notes of the eviction, “Mayor Bloomberg tried to present his surprise police raid as an opportunity to turn a new page. ‘Protestors have had two months to occupy the park with tents and sleeping bags,’ he judged. ‘Now they will have to occupy the space with the power of their arguments.’” In what is perhaps a bizarre coincidence, @OccupyRhetoric would come online the day after the eviction, a technical take on occupying the space by argument. In the same moment orders were being handed down to evict OWS from Zuccotti Park, the Press Relations team for OWS would send out a “forward-looking” message, writing: “Some politicians may physically remove us from public spaces — our spaces — and, physically, they may succeed. But we are engaged in a battle over ideas. Our idea is that our political structures should serve us, the people — all of us, not just those who have amassed great wealth and power.” This would give rise to one of the most prominent messages to emerge from OWS: “You can’t evict an idea whose time has come.” As Schneider recalls,

Some Occupiers were already talking about ‘Occupy 2.0’ or ‘Phase II’ like they’d planned for it all along. But another contingent continued to insist that this movement was fundamentally about reclaiming space — space for assembly, space for autonomy, space for providing for one another, space for staging the struggle against those who claim to own that space. Seizing space and time, and holding them, was how Occupy caused its rupture. That’s how it spread everywhere. For them, if there was no space and no time in which to inhabit it, there was no Occupy.”

155 Rickert, 251.
156 Schneider, 103.
157 Ibid., 103-104.
So as to preserve or account for the life of Occupy in such a manner, I have sought to explore the emergence of this movement in the dimensions mentioned above. Having covered time and place in this and previous chapters, the next chapter will explore how Occupy spread into virtual domains or online space.

As this chapter has hopefully made more clear, looking at the emergence of OWS through a choric lens, in the place of the park, establishes the foundations of Occupy as both ‘extensions to be occupied or taken’ and as a ‘generative arena’ or field of potential: a place that gives space to—not takes away from—the possibilities of engaging with others to create better “alternative” worlds. As Rickert writes, “we can also say that this is very much a problem of invention, in the sense of finding ways to actualize or enact what are initially only ideas, feelings, or intuitions. Stated otherwise, we can see the Platonic chōra as addressing the question of the available means of creation, and how we give life to and make a place for (static) ideas.”  

From a choric perspective, then, we can understand the emergence of OWS as being less about conquering space and more about creating it. A “blank space,” after all, does not determine what comes to be in that location, but it does provide a place for the emergence of a concept or thing otherwise atopos, without place. Just as occupiers wrote that Occupy was “an encounter that gave birth to _______ !,” choric scholars contend, “while a beginning requires a place, the generative or choric aspects of that place remain indeterminate, or, as we shall see, give nothing to what emerges.”

Extending once again into the open “frontiers” of virtual space, Occupy would leverage social media and communication technologies to give the movement viability and life outside the parks and plazas that would shut it out.

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158 Rickert, 257.
159 Ibid., 256.
CHAPTER V

THE DIGITAL COMMONS & VIRTUAL VERNACULAR OF #OCCUPY WALL STREET

#OCCUPYWALLSTREET

A shift in revolutionary tactics.

Are you ready for a Tahrir moment?
On Sept 17, flood into lower Manhattan, set up tents, kitchens, peaceful barricades and occupy Wall Street.
“Now, the beginning is unbegotten, for that which is begotten has a beginning; but the beginning is begotten of nothing, for if it were begotten of something, then the begotten would not come from a beginning. But if unbegotten, it must also be indestructible; for if beginning were destroyed, there could be no beginning out of anything, nor anything out of a beginning; and all things must have a beginning. And therefore the self-moving is the beginning of motion; and this can neither be destroyed nor begotten, else the whole heavens and all creation would collapse and stand still, and never again have motion or birth.” – Plato, Phaedrus

Rhetorical studies of movements generally hold that it is difficult, if not impossible, to pin-point the precise moment when a movement first begins. And for good reason: *not all movements begin with a bang*. Some of the first movement theorists, however, understood movements as being episodic in nature: each having “a period of inception”\(^1\) or “a stage of genesis” which refer to “a time when the roots of a pre-existing sentiment, nourished by interested rhetors, begin to flower into public notice or when some striking event occurs which immediately creates a host of aggressor rhetoricians and is itself sufficient to initiate the movement.”\(^2\) While Charles J. Stewart, Craig Allen Smith, and Robert E. Denton Jr. would concede that “social movements never follow a neat, linear pattern from birth to death,”\(^3\) there is still a tendency by scholars, the media, participants, and observers alike to identify what Griffin called a ‘striking event’—what Simons referred to as a “triggering incident”—to account for the origins or catalyst that bring a movement into being. As noted in the article “From a single hashtag, a protest circled the world,” Ben Berkowitz writes, “as with any movement, a spark is needed to start word spreading.”\(^4\) As recently tweeted by @ChrisLynnHedge, “the trajectory of all movements is not a linear movement upwards. [The Occupy protest] is like what happened in

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2 Ibid., 185.
1765 when they rose up against the Stamp Act. That became a kind of dress rehearsal for the rebellion of 1775 and 1776. It triggered something. It triggered an understanding of the systems of power and a sense of personal power.” However, as Malcolm Sillars notes, the delineation of a movement’s beginnings and ends is typically a retrospective or revisionary process:

> For example, when did the Populist movement begin and end? Women’s suffrage? Fundamentalism? Peace? Did the civil rights movement begin with the Montgomery bus boycott, the Emancipation Proclamation, or when the first slave said “no” or slowed down in the work assigned? And did it end with the death of Martin Luther King, Jr.? It is clear that beginnings and endings are determined by the critics perceptions and ability to get others to agree to those perceptions.

Today, the same questions might be asked of the protests that followed the Grand Jury decision in Ferguson, Missouri or of the marches against police brutality that accompanied the non-indictment of a police officer in New York City: did the now ongoing #BlackLivesMatter movement begin with the singular shooting of an unarmed black adult by a white officer after an altercation in the street? Was the public outcry of #ICantBreathe inspired by the singular use (or abuse) of police force? As it pertains to our present study: did the occupations that ‘sprang up’ across the world in 2011 begin with a hashtag on a blogpost (à la #OccupyWallStreet on Adbusters.org) or when enough people showed up in a privately-owned public space (a POPS) and held their ground? What precedents were in place—historically, culturally, rhetorically, technologically—both at home and abroad, that made this movement possible? That sustained it?

As noted on the OWS-related blog LibrarianShipwreck, an anonymous author writes,

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5 Chris Lynn Hedges, “#OWS @OccupyWallStNYC @OccupyWallSt,” April 3, 2015, https://twitter.com/ChrisLynnHedges/status/584150031437037568.


7 The term “park” could be used here, but more technically, this park (Zuccotti Park or Liberty Plaza) is a privately-owned public space or a “POPS.” According to the Department of City Planning of the City of New York, “Privately Owned Public Spaces, abbreviated as “POPS”, are an amenity provided and maintained by a developer for public use, in exchange for additional floor area.” See The City of New York, “Projects & Proposals > Citywide > Privately Owned Public Space,” NYC.gov, http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/pops/pops.shtml.
It is hard to pinpoint an exact moment at which OWS exploded into something large enough for the news media to declare it was of no significance while simultaneously covering it. Perhaps it was when a video of a police officer pepper spraying young women cordoned off in orange netting went viral, maybe it was when hundreds shut down the Brooklyn Bridge, but trying to discern the exact moment is pointless. The very nature of social movements, and of protests, is their fluidity.  

Thus, although a linear model alone is inadequate to account for the theoretical range and ways of studying movement, it is not the prerogative of this study to throw the baby out with the bathwater, so to speak—quite the opposite in fact—given that this chapter seeks to ‘radically reconceive’ how the occupation of the [digital] commons gave life to a movement and voice to a distributed collectivity. Given this, a virtual exploration of Occupy’s public beginnings could take as its starting point (aphorme) the “original call” to #OCCUPYWALLSTREET on July 13, 2011, by Adbusters in their 96th blog post online. As Jonathan Massey and Brett Snyder discuss, “in the months leading up to the first occupation, and in the year afterward, Occupy established an online presence unmatched in the history of social action, leveraging multiple online spaces to stage protests and to generate a distinctive counter-public and alternative polity.” Initially, this presence was made possible through the #OCCUPYWALLSTREET and #Occupy hashtags that emerged from the movement, which appear as the first few elements of script/text and image(s) on the landing page for Adbuster’s original post/call.

Adbusters: The First Call to Action

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9 Non-public planning for #OccupyWallStreet preceded its public emergence, where discussions were taking place in private online forums and meetings.
As evident in all three images which have copied and pasted on the first page of this chapter, the hashtag #OCCUPYWALLSTREET is common to all. While not all movements “begin with a bang,” it would not be incorrect to say that what became a movement (OWS) started with a singular sign or symbol: the hashtag or hash sign (or simply a ‘hash’) which are regarded as words or phrases preceded by the “#” symbol that now functions online—primarily (and originally) on Twitter—to categorize or classify content and material associated with the accompanying tweet or text. In 2014, the term “hashtag” was entered into the OED, where the entry now reads: “(on social media sites and applications) a word or phrase preceded by a hash and used to identify messages relating to a specific topic; (also) the hash symbol itself, when used in this way.” As discussed in the article “How to Start a Movement with a Twitter #Hashtag: #OccupyWallStreet is the Tweet Heard ‘Round the World,” Hajj Flemings notes “a hashtag is defined as a pound symbol followed by a word or phrase (i.e. #OccupyWallStreet). In essence, it’s a community of people that engage by creating and sharing content around a specific topic, conference, event, crisis or news story. A hashtag enables people to easily search and track related tweets and spread ideas digitally to amplify your message.” In the research article “The Digital Evolution of Occupy Wall Street,” hashtags are described as a “topic-specific token” and “short tokens prepended with a pound sign (e.g., #taxes or #obama)” that “allow the content produced by many individuals to be aggregated into a public, topic-specific stream including all the tweets containing a given token.” Advanced here, the hashtag then

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12 OED, s.v. “hashtag, n.” in “hash, n.3.”
functions as a rhetorical commonplace (topos) around which or through which content/material relevant to that topic can be aggregated or composed.

While hashtags were well in place before OWS would emerge on the scene—and while Twitter has been widely recognized as transformative digital technology (or ICT) for protest and activism since roughly 2009—15—the levering of this hashtag and technology was instrumental to Occupy’s adoption for reasons that extend beyond the coordinating role of the medium itself. Chief among these reasons is the ability of occupiers and participants to capture the granularity and immediacy of “hyper-local” events, where in “From a Single Hashtag, a Protest Circled the World” Ben Berkowitz notes, “social media experts trace the expansion [of OWS] to hyper-local tweeters, people who cover the pulse of communities at a level of detail not even local papers can match.”16 This hyper-locality is a topic applicable to rhetorical studies of the commonplace and the *chora*, where, on one hand, Cicero defines ‘place’ or *locus* as “the location of an argument, and an argument as a reasoning that lends belief to a doubtful issue;”17 on the other hand, Edward Casey describes the *chora* as a “locatory matrix” for the genesis of thing, something “at once locatory and yet not itself located, permanent and yet invisible, underlying

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and yet insubstantial.” In both cases, the hashtag has rhetorical implications for the creation, sharing and locating of a ‘commons’ in digital space.

While the hashtag #OCCUPYWALLSTREET was an initial commonplace around which participants assembled, the idea of “occupy”—in awakening the imagination of a collectivity called to action—would give birth to occupations beyond the physical confines of Liberty Plaza/Park. What originally began as a call to occupy a specific terrestrial ground—“occupy Wall Street”—would soon extend beyond this local site and street into cities and countries across the globe (i.e. @OccupyDenver, @OccupyBoston, @OccupyLondon, @OccupySydney, @OccupyParis) where the current number of geographic occupations, according to the Occupy Directory, stands at 1,518 worldwide. In addition to the appearance of locale-specific hashtags and Twitter accounts—whose ‘going viral’ has been attributed to a demonstration on the Brooklyn Bridge where hundreds were arrested “and the spark was ignited”—a kind of “appearance” less covered by mainstream media, alternative media, and research reports are the number and kinds of “occupations” that began to extend into realms beyond “physical” or geographical terrains: @OccupyData, @OccupyDesign, @OccupyWriters, @OccupyTheory, @OccupyTheology, @OccupyBuddhism, @OccupyJudaism, @OccupyCatholic, and @OccupyFarm, to name but a few of these non-geographic or ‘conceptual’ grounds where Occupy took place.


20 Ben Berkowitz, “From a Single Hashtag.”

21 OS made it all the more apparent that many occupations under the radar of either MSM or alternative media were hyper-local sources and resources of expertise and labor: places whose focus or subject being “occupied” had much to contribute to crisis or disaster related objectives and tasks. As such, using the OS mentality of recovery and relief, I started a directory to track the needs and resources of these “hold-outs” and communities. A link to an incomplete but representative sample of these non-geographic occupations can be accessed here.
the body of text that followed the first graphic elements above—was “a fusion of Tahrir with the
campadas of Spain, where “the spirit of this fresh tactic” is recalled below:

The beauty of this new formula, and what makes this novel tactic exciting, is its
pragmatic simplicity: we talk to each other in various physical gatherings and
virtual people’s assemblies … we zero in on what our one demand will be, a
demand that awakens the imagination and, if achieved, would propel us toward
the radical democracy of the future … and then we go out and seize a square of
singular symbolic significance and put our asses on the line to make it happen.
The time has come to deploy this emerging stratagem against the greatest
corrupter of our democracy: Wall Street, the financial Gomorrah of America.22

Here, in connecting the financial market/district/enterprise of Wall Street to a biblical city upon
which divine judgment was passed, we might take pause in contemplating what these two cities
or districts share—Wall Street and Gomorrah—as it relates to their conjoined appearance on the
first call of action to a general public. If we were to seek insight into the origins of this biblical
story, the term is found in the entry of † Gomorr(h)ean which is defined in its first sense as: “of
or pertaining to Gomorrah (see Gen. xviii, xix).23 To pursue this line even further to its source—
to actually follow the directive to see “Gen. xviii, xix” as the entry recommends—the text reads:

Then the LORD said: “The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great, and
their sin so grave,* that I must go down and see whether or not their actions fully
correspond to the cry against them that comes to me. I mean to find out.”24

Like the biblical God, inhabitants around the world came to find out; in so doing, a kind
of vernacular collectivity (or mass) was created through the occupation and cultivation of
common ground in spatial fields (parks, atriums, assemblies, forums) and on digital terrains

22 Adbusters, “#OCCUPYWALLSTREET: A Shift in Revolutionary Tactics,” Adbusters.org, July 13, 2011,
24 *Genesis xviii (20q) [18, 20] states: “Israelite tradition was unanimous in ascribing the destruction of Sodom and
Gomorrah to the wickedness of these cities, but tradition varied in regard to the nature of this wickedness.
According to the present account of the Yahwist, the sin of Sodom was homosexuality (Gn 19, 4f), which is
therefore also known as sodomy, but according to Isaiah (1, 9f; 3, 9), it was a lack of social justice; Ezekiel (16, 46-
51) described it as a disregard for the poor, whereas Jeremiah (23, 14) saw it as general immorality” (emphasis
mine).
(Twitter/micro-blogging sites, wikis, blogs, pirate pads, IRC channels, dark web) where occupiers “dar[ed] to imagine a new socio-political and economic alternative that offers greater possibility of equality.”25 As Kristeva notes in *Revolution in Poetic Language*, “…the kinds of activity encouraged and privileged by (capitalist) society represses the process pervading the body and the subject, and that we must therefore break out of our interpersonal and intersocial experience if we are to gain access to what is repressed in the social mechanism: the generating of significance.”26 By bringing ‘the commons’ together again—as the body politic, the *corps-état*—Occupy “gave place” for such ‘significance’ to reemerge. In the same way that early uses of the *chora* (in Homer and Hesiod) have been used to argue that what “we see here [is] an emerging recognition that a precondition for activity is a place for it to occur, as dancing requires a dancing floor (1993, 62–63),” we can understand Occupy as a kind of floor (or grounds) that “personifies the growing realization that place and making are conjoined.”27 As discussed in previous chapters, not only did the physical *place* of Liberty Plaza/Zuccotti Park serve as “base of operations” or “staging grounds” for the nascent Occupy movement to emerge and take shape, but the concept of occupation would itself give rise to a myriad of projects in the name of Occupy.

*The Digital Commons of Twitter*

As diligently recorded28 in a first conversation in Liberty Park on October 25, 2011 by The Occupy People’s Think Tank—an entity described as “a sort of intellectual nucleus around

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25 NYCGA.net, “Principles of Solidarity.”
27 Rickert, 254.
28 Every meeting of this group was recorded and transcribed, which are now housed in New York University’s (NYU) Tamiment Library.
which people have gathered since the beginning of the movement to discuss topics like health care, food, energy, banking and the influence of corporate money in politics”\(^\text{29}\) — a #clarifying question was raised by the assembly: “does the idea of “community” change with new technologies that facilitate communication? General frustration with the mainstream media is expressed.”\(^\text{30}\) While this question may not be entirely novel to rhetorical studies or communication writ large, it does indicate a commonplace concern of an emergent public that recognizes the power of some technologies to redefine what constitutes a community. Twitter, as one such technology, can be briefly described as an online social network and a “microblogging” service that publishes user-generated “tweets” or ‘bursts of information’ less than or equal to 140-characters. Designed to address the prompt “what’s happening?” (see Figure 1 below) by those who use their service, tweets are “a new and easy way to discover the latest news related to subjects you care about” by the “find[ing] of what matters most” through the “discovery of sources,” “building a voice,” and “get[ting] fancy.”\(^\text{31}\)

Fig. 8: What’s Happening Twitter Prompt

What falls under the topos or topic of “news” is a subject that deserves far greater attention than can be given here, but it is a concern that speaks into the phenomenon of what Marco Jacuemet (2005) calls transidiomatic practices: an “instance of sociolinguistic effects of globalization processes, [where] language practices [detach] language resources from their “original”

\(^{30}\) The Occupy People’s Think Tank, “What Defines Who and What We Are as a Movement?,” October 25, 2011.
community and space of use, to be deployed (often in a mediated form) elsewhere.” Thus, what a community understands the role of the news to be, how it should be reported—or what “the news” is believed to be in the first place (see Figure 9 below)—are likely to transfer to those media which become extensions of the original period, place, or group where such “news” is seen to take place.

![Image](image.jpg)

**Fig. 9: The Writing on the Wall at an Occupy March**

On a public listserv of Occupy (NYC) the use of democratic technologies was discussed as “instrument(s) of free speech, where it was voiced, “we have stopped turning to the higher-ups in an act of petitioning (the government) or pleading (with the corporate media) otherwise known
as begging (the 1%) - we instead turn to each other to discuss our needs and strategies, on level ground. As such, Twitter was one way to get on “level ground”—and at times, higher ground—by maneuvering around the perceived bias of the main stream media (MSM) to focus on the violent and fringe elements of OWS and compounded neglect to cover actions and events that drew crowds and the masses. As advanced here, the role of Twitter (in Occupy) not only “coconstitute[d] and coconfigure[d] the protest space” where the medium served as “both networking agent in and window on the protest space,” but was itself a site where “occupations” took place or were held: Twitter became a ‘battleground’ (or perhaps more fittingly, a dance floor) upon which one could stake “claim” to a location, concept, or idea by being the first to “take” a user name or handle in the name (or with the name) of Occupy. So too would occupiers invent hashtags (#SandyAid) and co-opt others (i.e. #MyNYPD) where both served to ‘take on’ (or take over) critical conversations in this informational space. Much like the chôra, which “still has much of its original sense: it is an extension which can be occupied (‘taken’),” the movement of Occupy “took place” by occupying open extensions in virtual

32 Personal Communications, September 2012.
33 As recounted by Nathan Schneider, “with remarkable timing if nothing else, Adbusters promulgated ‘Tactical Briefing #18: Occupy the High Ground’ just hours before the eviction [of Zuccotti Park]. Perhaps the time had passed for the movement to be so focused on encampments, the communiqué suggested, and it might be better to move on to bigger and better things instead.” See: Nathan Schneider, Thank You, Anarchy: Notes from Occupy Apocalypse (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 102.
36 As perhaps exemplar par excellence, occupiers and local residents of NYC responded to the NYPD’s tweet on April 22, 2014: “Do you have a photo w/ a member of the NYPD? Tweet us & tag it #myNYPD. It may be featured on our Facebook.” Then, “One by one, hundreds of tweets with photos of what the tweeters suggest is police brutality or misbehavior are being sent out with the hashtag #MyNYPD.” See Abby Phillip, “Well, the #MyNYPD Hashtag Sure Backfired Quickly,” The Washington Post, April 22, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2014/04/22/well-the-mynypd-hashtag-sure-backfired-quickly/.
37 Keimpe Algra, Concepts of Space in Greek Thought, 33.
38 As defined by the OED, one entry for the term extension is as follows: “esp. in Logic. Of a term or concept: Its range as measured by the number of objects which it denotes or contains under it. Opposed to intension or
realms under the broad banner of Occupy. However, unlike most common or more traditional understandings of “occupation” as the seizure or taking of a territory by force, Occupy (by and large) took over places/spaces in order to facilitate conversations on the possibility for more sustainable worlds or ways of inhabiting common places of affinity, energy, labor, activity, and attention. Through these autonomous but interrelated occupations, occupiers ‘virtually’ assembled not only to participate in movement events and direct actions, but to extend the reach of occupy into other conceptual realms and topics. As Massey and Snyder note, “from its inception, Occupy tested the capacities of the internet’s virtual spaces to sustain organizational activity, deliberative discourse and other kinds of public-making.” As discussed in the following section, part of this sustaining and making of publics can be directly attributed to the hashtag as a ‘digitized’ form of the rhetorical topos.

The Hashtag as a Digital Topos

As we might deduce from headlines like “From a Single Hashtag, a Protest Circled the World,” “#OccupyWallStreet Is More Than a Hashtag - It's Revolution in Formation,” “#OccupyWallStreet: Origin and Spread Visualized,” and “Occupy Twitter – #OccupyWallStreet and its True Base of Operations,” the hashtag #OccupyWallStreet is commonly hailed as the origin of the movement. We might further deduce that a hashtag, ipso facto—by the fact of its existence—is what accounts for its coordinating or locutionary role. However, the history of the

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comprehension.” This has relevance to the listing of species under the categorical headings or departments of the rhetorical topos where Nothstine notes: “Of course, the canon of memory is logically related to the canon of invention, just as “inventory” (the cataloging of what is already “on hand”) is etymologically related to “invention” (the combination of materials and principles to produce something novel. My point is that, as before, the “place” metaphor has a cluster of commonplaces that is central to our traditional understanding of topical systems.” See William L. Nothstine, “Topics’ as Ontological Metaphor in Contemporary Rhetorical Theory Criticism,” Quarterly Journal of Speech 74 (1988): 152-153.

39 Massey and Snyder, “Occupying Wall Street.”
hashtag (and relatedly, the commonplace) may shed some light on how, more technically, this operator (#) now “works” in the digital spaces it does. Thus, before the digital instantiation of the hashtag on Twitter in 2007\textsuperscript{40}—and their eventual uptake on other ‘new media’ platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Google+, and Vine—the symbol of the hash sign (#) was originally the number sign or pound sign, where (in North America) it appears on the buttons of touch-tone telephones, conventional typewriters, and other keypads. As noted by the OED, the hash was also called an octothorp in technical contexts, where according to a quote from \textit{U.S. Patent 3,920,926}, “the octothorp (#) key generates a command to send the contents of the memory into the telephone line.”\textsuperscript{41} As a rhetorical corollary, whereas the octothorp key (#) originally “generated a command to send the contents the memory into the telephone line,” the hashtag symbol(#) could be said to similarly generate (or activate) a word\textsuperscript{42} or grouping of words whose associated contents (in that tweet) are preserved in memory as a line, a \textit{locus}, a topic, a \textit{topos} that can be retraced and discovered in the present or future.

As discussed in “#OriginStory,” by Carnegie Mellon University, “when [sic] alumnus Chris Messina (A’03) first suggested using a hashtag (#) sign on Twitter on Aug. 23, 2007, he was just trying to help people group together topics.”\textsuperscript{43} The hashtag, then, can be understood as a digital analog to the rhetorical \textit{topos} and \textit{locus} (generally: commonplaces) that still function octothorpically as ‘places’ of memory and invention. As William Nothstine discusses in “Topics’ as Ontological Metaphor in Contemporary Rhetorical Theory Criticism,” the commonplace as a

\textsuperscript{40} Carnegie Mellon University alumnus Chris Messina (class of 2003) is credited with founding the hashtag, as a way to group and classify texts/tweets, which was a method already commonplace in IRC (Internet Relay Channels) which used the # sign/symbol to designate channels or name rooms/forums. See Carnegie Mellon University, “#OriginStory,” in \textit{Homepage Stories > Next-Generation Computing}. Accessed March 21, 2015, http://www.cmu.edu/homepage/computing/2014/summer/originstory.shtml.
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., s.v. “octothorp, n.”
\textsuperscript{42} To come full circle, the origin of [the word] “\textit{word}” goes back to the Sanskrit word for command: \textit{behest}, vrata.
\textsuperscript{43} Carnegie Mellon University, “#OriginStory.”
mnemonic device was central to research on the metaphor of place where “ideas can be ‘stored,’ ‘retrieved,’ ‘discovered,’ and so on, as when Jebb characterizes a topos as a “place in which a thing is to be looked for in the memory.””\(^4^4\) We can compare this to the way that Twitter describes the function of its services and tweets as “a new and easy way to discover the latest news related to subjects you care about” by the “find[ing] of what matters most” through the “discovery of sources,” “building a voice,” and “get[ting] fancy”\(^4^5\) (emphasis mine). Just as a hashtag allows Twitter users to locate or discover information, material, and other users/sources associated with the hashtagged term or phrase, Nothstine writes, “ideas or lines of argument, the students of antiquity learned, are things that can be stored in ‘places.’ By returning to the “place” where a bit of information was filed, the information might later be retrieved.”\(^4^6\) By marking the data/information contained in a tweet with a popular, personal, or community-driven hashtag (i.e. #BlackLivesMatter for the movement, #RhetOfInqui for a “Rhetoric of Inquiry” class, or #cowx for “Colorado weather”) other users can search and relocate updates or material associated with that movement, topic/subject, or event. The hashtag, when understood as a digital topos or locus upon which information and ideas convene, stands to radically reconfigure our understanding of rhetorical space and place.

To the extent that we understand ‘radical’ in a few of its senses—as “going to the root or origin; touching upon or affecting what is essential and fundamental;” a “person who advocates

\(^4^4\) William L. Nothstine, “‘Topics’ as Ontological Metaphor in Contemporary Rhetorical Theory Criticism,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 74 (1988): 152. Additionally, as Mortensen elaborates of the Ciceronian loci, “when composing a speech the orator would first create specific arguments through a combination of the taxonomic loci, the ideal loci, and the specifics of a given case. He would then memorize these arguments using the mnemonic loci. Cicero describes this relationship as that of letters and words (i.e. the loci of invention and arguments they produce) and a wax tablet (i.e. the loci of memory). Although the mnemonic sense of locus is substantively different from the other senses, the metaphor of writing and the wax tablet illustrates that this sense is functionally related to the other senses.” See Cicero, *De orat.* 2.354–5; *Part. 26*, in Mortensen, 52.

\(^4^5\) Twitter Help Center, “Twitter 101: How should I get started using Twitter?.”

\(^4^6\) Nothstine, 152.
radical or far-reaching political or social reform;” and “a word or part of a word which cannot be analysed into simpler elements”—then the hashtag, as a grouping of alphanumerical characters that cannot be separated into smaller components, “radically” animates the ancient rhetorical topos/locus in a digital arena by bringing old and new topics online. In this space, hashtags emerge in ways that give both old and new arguments and ideas life in a public forum that encourages engagement, collaboration, and remembrance. As Massey and Snyder note, “while online forums, as the Latin term implies, evoke the experience of face-to-face discussion, other online technologies create public spaces without analogue in the physical world. The Twitter hashtag, for example, enables radically new modes of creating, discovering and organizing affinity clusters, which proved useful in movements like the January 25 Egyptian Revolution and the Green Revolution in Iran.” It is fitting that the place of the topos and locus are to be found in the rhetorical canon of memory and invention, where Cicero attributes the function of topos in memory to Simonides of Ceos and its function in invention to Aristotle where Cicero writes in Topica, “‘Places’ is the name Aristotle gave those locations, so to speak, from which we can draw arguments. Therefore we may define a Place as the location of an argument, and an argument as a reasoning that lends belief to a doubtful issue.” As witnessed in the operation of primary Occupy accounts (i.e. @OccupyWallStNYC, @OccupyWallSt) the digital topos, as it relates to both memory and invention, was used to demarcate important days of action (i.e. #S15, #S16, #S17, #N17, #MayDay) or identify/name emergent topics or novel things, where movement participants could speak into events happening “on the ground,” as they were

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47 OED, s.v. “radical, adj. and n.”
48 Massey and Snyder, “Occupying Wall Street.”
49 Cicero, Topica, 119.
happening, and contribute to the posting/tweeting of material that were topically related to the event, date, or subject at hand.

Thus, not only could material be *recalled* through the inventory of hashtag/tweets made available through the digitized “memory” or timelines of Twitter, but participants could contribute new (inventional) ideas, concepts, and perspectives and to the conversation through the use of a common hashtag and their location in particular positions and places. As Nothstine reminds us, “of course, the canon of memory is logically related to the canon of invention, just as “inventory” (the cataloguing of what is already “on hand”) is etymologically related to “invention” (the combination of materials and principles to produce something novel).”

The reexamined ‘place’ metaphor implies that a *topos* is a stance that one takes that allows certain things to be seen while necessarily causing others to disappear from sight. Our understanding of this situatedness, within a horizon, makes available to each of us possibilities already contained within our world, and with experience we can appropriate different points of view and ways of conceptualizing from among these possibilities…

Thus, by linking or speaking one’s “take” on a common place, date, or event in the movement (i.e. #S17, #notarsands, #ThingsYouDontSayAsAPolitician, #ZuccottiPark) one can contribute or locate new material or lines of thought associated with these topics. As reported by Sherilynn Macale on *The Next Web* only two months into OWS, over 100,000 different hashtags had been used to discuss the Occupy Wall Street movement and similar “occupy” tactics, as reported by Twitter. Among these findings were the following:

- Top occupy-related hashtags: #occupywallstreet #ows #occupywallst #occupy #occupyboston #takewallstreet #p2 #nypd
- Up to 330K total hashtags about occupy-topics tweeted each day, with up to 17K different hashtags daily.

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50 Nothstine, 152-153.
51 Ibid., 157.
Top 10 cities tweeting occupy hashtags, in order: NYC, LA, DC, SF, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Philadelphia, Atlanta and Portland.

Top cities outside US tweeting occupy hashtags are: London, Cairo, Toronto, Madrid, Sydney, Vancouver, Berlin, Mexico City & Dublin.\(^{52}\)

The emergence of these occupy hashtags on the participatory media of Twitter suggests the blurring of both institutional and vernacular interests, resulting as a form of “hybrid” media that leverages the commercial technology for vernacular ends. In “Electronic Hybridity: The Persistent Processes of the Vernacular Web,” Howard writes, “in online participatory media, the distinction [between folk and mass] is further blurred because the content that emerges intermingles vernacular, commercial, and institutional interests.”\(^{53}\) As Massey and Snyder note, this hybridity was manifesting in more ways than one, where “in the summer of 2011, before the first protesters had set foot in Liberty Plaza, the Occupy movement was evolving toward a model of General Assembly that hybridized online and offline discourse.”\(^{54}\) By existing ‘in-between’ online and offline communities, occupations and occupiers could extend the reach of their message (being developed and shaped on the ground) into spaces of the global ‘village’ (in the virtual streams of online media.)

#Occupy as Vernacular Village

As it relates to the theorizations of the vernacular as a “common resource” of both general and historically disempowered groups, it may be notable that the origins of the term “octothorp” is a subject of ongoing speculation, where some cite an employee of Bell Laboratories (Don Macphereson) as coining this term, while other former employees of the

\(^{52}\) Sherilynn Macale, “Over 100K Different Hashtags Used to Discuss Occupy Wall Street on Twitter,” The Next Web, October 11, 2011, http://thenextweb.com/twitter/2011/10/21/over-100k-different-hashtags-have-been-used-to-discuss-occupy-wall-street/.


\(^{54}\) Massey and Snyder, “Occupy Wall Street.”
company (namely Douglas A. Kerr) have published alternative explanations\(^{55}\) arguing that ‘octothorpe’ was an arbitrary formation of octa- and -therp, and lastly, another variant of explanation is provided by New Science (in the OED) where “the word [octothorp] is explained as arising from the use of the symbol in cartography to represent a village.”\(^{56}\) The idea that a single hashtag—i.e. #OCCUPYWALLSTREET—could represent a public, a community, or a village is not so far-fetched; as we saw from the emergence of occupations on Twitter, the hashtag was a vernacular modality used by movement participants to: 1.) locate/find other occupiers/movement participants (both in general and during events) across time and space; 2. to document or record eye-witnessed accounts or observations of movement activities and events; 3.) to challenge and expand conceptions of authority (initially corporate authority) through epideictic demonstration;\(^{57}\) and 4.) to (re)imagine/enact and speak into new socio-economic or political realities reminiscent of the commonly-used phrase “another world is possible.” This enactment of the vernacular on virtual realms aligns with Hauser’s framing of the vernacular where Howard has summarized Hauser’s view as follows:

In his 1999 *Vernacular Voices*, Gerard Hauser articulated a different conception of the vernacular. Hauser argued that “publics are emergences manifested through vernacular rhetoric.” Hauser’s “vernacular” is the dialogic force of the community. This force emerges in what he calls the “mundane transactions of words and gestures that allow us to negotiate our way through our quotidian encounters.” Used as a source of invention, the vernacular is here an agency that adheres in the commonplace. Differentiating vernacular agency from that of formal public speaking associated with institutional discourse, Hauser argues that publics, “are not formal exchanges of the podium; they are vernacular expressions of who we are, what we need and hope for, what we are willing to accept, and our


\(^{56}\) Ibid.

\(^{57}\) Very briefly: the rhetorical genre of epideictic is known as “praise and blame” or “ceremonial” rhetoric where an orator “extols the bad and praises the good” through a speech made upon present events (in comparison to speeches made of events past or events yet to pass, known as judicial/forensic rhetoric and deliberative rhetoric, respectively) which were usually conducted in front of crowds to reinstill or reaffirm sentiments for or against virtues and vice.
commitment to reciprocity.” From this perspective, the vernacular is associated with the doxa, sensus communis, or “common sense” that is accessed through informal discourse.58

Given that the first Principle of Solidarity created by OWS was “engaging in direct and transparent participatory democracy,” it is only fitting the hashtag—as a primary tool for social assembly and public dissemination in Occupy and beyond—allows for open-ended contribution and collaboration. As noted by Jeff Jarvis, professor and director of the Tow-Knight Center for Entrepreneurial Journalism at the City University of New York’s Graduate School of Journalism, “a hashtag is open and profoundly democratic. People gather around a hashtag. They salute it and spread it or ignore it and let it wither. They imbue it with their own meaning. The creator quickly and inevitably loses control of it.”59 While the hashtag can be repurposed for reasons beyond public consumption or uptake—i.e. the categorization of data or information for research purposes, personal to-do lists/list-making, or for tagging/marking “private” moments on locked/non-public Twitter accounts—what is often at the heart of the hashtag is its ability to connect with (or locate) audiences (or individuals) inside or outside one’s immediate sphere of influence or activity. In an article in the MIT Technology Review, “How Occupy Wall Street Occupied Twitter, Too” Mike Orcutt has this observation on the thought of Gilad Lotan:

To optimize the way that your message spreads, “you really have to understand who is following you, and who tends to give you attention,” said Lotan last week during a panel discussion at MIT. Time of day, the specific terms and language used in the tweet, and the topics raised are important too. Online, as in real life, the bridges between disparate social networks are humans. For a message to spread beyond its author’s network such bridges must first notice it, and then be compelled to re-share it. For Lotan, single tweets or hashtags that spread virally

are welcome deluges of data that can shed light on how and why messages spread beyond their original author’s network.  

The Immaterial Labor of the Virtual Vernacular

Additionally, the work that was performed by occupiers on Twitter and other virtual platforms during Occupy would open up new fields of economic activity that new media researchers (Bolder et al.) have referred to as “connective labor,” a concept that augments Bennett and Segerberg’s logic of “connective action”—based on personalized content sharing across media networks—in order to “reveal the often hidden labor of women in sustaining the networked and affective dimension of social movements.” Bolder et al. would give voice to sets of this hidden labor by categorizing common organizing practices in Occupy into three roles: the Admin (strategizing, metrics, and curating), the Documentarian (informing, witnessing, and archiving), and the Connector (alerting, rereporting, and reaching out). This connective labor would then be theorized as an “extension of affective, immaterial, and digital labor;” as “an outcome of the participatory culture of hybrid social movements;” and as “embodied, gendered ‘revisioning’ of the logic of connective action.” As the logic of connective action pertains to invention, beginnings, and the genesis of rhetorical activity, Bennett and Segerberg write:

In place of the initial collective action problem of getting the individual to contribute, the starting point of connective action is the self-motivated (though not necessarily self-centered) sharing of already internalized or personalized ideas,

63 Bolder et al., 438.
64 Ibid., 445.
65 Ibid., 446.
66 Ibid., 448.
67 Ibid., 450.
68 Ibid., 452.
69 Ibid., 453.
plans, images, and resources with networks of others. This ‘sharing’ may take place in networking sites such as Facebook, or via more public media such as Twitter and YouTube through, for example, comments and re-tweets.70

Beyond the affinity that “the starting point of connective action is the self-motivated” shares to a remark made by Plato in the *Phaedrus* that “and therefore the self-moving is the beginning of motion; and this can neither be destroyed nor begotten, else the whole heavens and all creation would collapse and stand still, and never again have motion or birth,” these concepts of connective action and connective labor highlight “the gendered, hybrid, embodied, and material nature of women’s connective labor that has supported, and in many ways sustained, the contemporary Occupy movement.”71 This emergence of labor fits into multiple categories of inventional media that Simonson identifies in his heuristic on invention in “Inventing Invention, Again,” namely the following categories:

(8) another broad range falling within the realm of the cultural—from cultures and subcultures themselves to meanings, values, ideologies, common opinion (*doxa*), rituals, genres, traditions, formalized practices, and conceptual schemes; (9) technologies, e.g., writing, printing, television, computers, card catalogs, archives, and other media of storage and expression through which rhetorical materials are found and expressed; (10) economies of labor and money, universal habitats for invention that have traditionally been marginalized in the textual, discursive, and logophilic canons of rhetoric.72

Thus, the tasks associated with the ‘admin,’ ‘documentarian,’ and ‘connecting’ roles of Occupy would allow and require new forms of communicative and connective labor as OWS spread into multiple locations on domestic and international fronts. To observe/record, catalogue/collect, or facilitate/connect the people, events, and material that would emerge from Occupy, skills,

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71 Bolder et al., 438.
72 Ibid., 314-315.
technologies, and social networks would be both leveraged and developed in response to the viral spread of the movement.

Conclusions

In so far as theories and tropes of classical rhetoric can be seen as intersecting with the formation of publics through digital technologies and participatory media, the practice or performance of ‘online’ or “live” rhetorics (Middleton, Senda-Cook, Endres 2011) has broadened the range of discursive domains through which ‘persuasive appeals’ can be coordinated and constructed. Concomitant with the expansion of discursive sites where rhetoric takes place, developments made in computing and operating systems (i.e, smartphones, PDAs, laptops) have led to a ‘democratization of technology’ where users outside of the technical industry (or technical sphere) now have greater access to the use and shaping of “sophisticated” products, networks, and applications once unavailable to the masses. Not only have these ‘everyday’ technologies increased the mobility of its users and reconfigured senses of place—one can ‘be’ online and be physically elsewhere—but the advent of “real time,” “streaming,” and “ephemeral” social media sites (i.e. Twitter, Facebook, LiveStream, Instagram, Vine, Snapchat) has altered our relationship to time and space: we can measure, witness, and take part in communicative exchanges as they unfold by the second in public space.

As discussed in one of their findings on the place/spaces of OWS, Massey and Snyder note, “media are accelerating the pace of discourse and action. Flash mobs and viral tweets may be excessively hyped, but the compressed temporality of the new media landscape is reflected in the rapid emergence, metastasis, and dormancy of Occupy Wall Street.”73 While not discussed at length here, the acceleration of the pace of discourse by the media has consequences (and

73 Massey and Snyder, “Occupying Wall Street.”
potential opportunities) for rhetors and rhetoricians who might practice their craft in spaces that involve quicker response times coupled with the expected degree of accuracy or eloquence. On this topic Quintilian writes in *Institutio Oratoria*:

> But the crown of all our study and the highest reward of our long labours is the power of improvisation. The man who fails to acquire this had better, in my opinion, abandon the task of advocacy and devote his powers of writing to other branches of literature. For it is scarcely decent for an honourable man to promise assistance to the public at large which he may be unable to provide in the most serious emergencies, or to attempt to enter a harbour which his ship cannot hope to make save when sailing before a gentle breeze.\(^74\)

For occupiers that would provide assistance in the emergency of OccupySandy, the skills developed online (i.e. following multiple streams of information, locating others by keyword or place-name, leveraging social networks and connections, performing admin, documentarian, and connective roles) and in the park (i.e. setting up temporary structures, receiving and disturbing goods, articulating internal dynamics to outside reports) would transfer to the efficient “improvisation” demanded during disaster.

Thus, in addition to studies of the vernacular which have theorized the role of new media in the construction of rhetorical space,\(^75\) the immediacy and publicity of information exchanged through social media and information communication technologies (ICTs) like Twitter have made virtual technologies not only powerful tools for civic engagement\(^76\) and public deliberation, but are increasingly being used by members of the public to facilitate ‘real time’ responses to political unrest (i.e. #iranelection); social movements (#ArabSpring, #OccupyWallStreet, #BlackLivesMatter); and disaster and crisis (#SandyAid, #SMEM,

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By understanding the hashtag as a way to locate resources, materials, or goods, this opens up new possibilities around what it means to “give place” to concepts and ideas ‘without name’ or footing. As such, the act of naming (via the hashtag) carries new consequences and opportunities for the ability of a single word to bring people together in “real time,” especially in times of crisis. #Occupy did just that. Finally, in shifting of the locus of vernacular studies from physical places to virtual spaces, rhetorical critics and theorists are able to expand their accounting for (and critiques of) the ways in which discourse creates community and attends to the invention possibilities of the mundane, of those on the margins, and those struggling to survive. While this change of location from place to space does not shift the focus of vernacular studies from the ‘marginal,’ the point here is that new forms of rhetorical invention and activity emerge when we “begin to consider media not simply the medium by which we interact and communicate with others, but in a quite literal sense a place.” In Occupy, the leveraging of participatory media allowed for direct and “real time” communication to take place on a public or ‘transparent’ forum amongst participants—or between occupiers and others ‘outside’ the movement—on a range of emergent topics and events unfolding within it. As such, Twitter became a powerful democratic tool and site where the vernacular took place (and “gave place”) to those engaged in the participatory, public, and transparent processes of the movement online.

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78 Rickert, 252.
CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSIONS: The Arc of Occupy

The years between 2007 and 2009 generally mark the starting point of the worst financial recession that the United States has seen since the Great Depression in the 1930’s. Publications and working papers with titles like “The Perfect Storm” and “THE CRISIS: BASIC MECHANISMS, AND APPROPRIATE POLICIES” began to appear after crisis was declared, theorizing the conditions and mechanisms responsible for this fallout. Whatever causes, companies, or systemic flaws we can or will attribute to this financial collapse, we can say with certainty that the Stock Market Crash of 2008 resulted in the widespread loss of public securities, currencies, investments, and homes. As noted in an Alternet article published in December of 2011—“It’s True: The Banks Got Bailed Out, and We Got Sold Out”¹—the author writes, “when the house of cards fell, the government had no choice but to save the banks because our economy can’t function without a banking system. Then the bankers took the money and paid themselves in big bonuses while millions lost their jobs, their homes, and their retirement securities.”² When the government interceded, it was not on behalf of the American people—those that had put their capital and trust into its nation’s statutory institutions—but to the bidding of those bankers whose reckless practices and incomprehensible greed³ had paved the road to no uncertain perdition.

“Follow the money…and ALL ROADS LEAD TO WALL ST” would soon be a resounding

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² Ibid.
³ Ibid. As noted in the article referenced above, the author makes note of a “particularly troubling memory” of an ex-financier and regional vice president of one such banking institution who was “honest” about what happened: “He says that some account executives earned a commission seven times higher from subprime loans, rather than prime mortgages. So they looked for less savvy borrowers—those with less education, without previous mortgage experience, or without fluent English—and nudged them toward subprime loans.”
proclamation of the movement that arose in the wake of this financial crisis and the systemic practices that precipitated it: Occupy Wall Street.

As a response to real and anticipated ripples from this economic collapse, a call to action made by Adbusters to “#OCCUPYWALLSTREET”⁴ by showing up, with a tent, at an undesignated place in lower Manhattan on September 17th. Eventually, this place would come to correspond with Zuccotti Park: a 33,000 square-foot expanse of privately-owned public space (POPS) between Broadway, Trinity Place, Liberty Street, and Cedar Street, whose geographic location was chosen as “Location 2” by the members of OWS’ Tactical Committee for its proximity to Wall Street, its “high-visibility,” and the affordances of POPS in not being subject to city park curfews.⁵ Within weeks, the American people began to rise up by the masses; within months over 600 occupations had sprung up around the world. Dovetailing with events, movements, and revolutions abroad—“first in Tunisia and then in Bahrain, Libya, Syria, Yemen, and most notably in Egypt”⁶—word of Occupy Wall Street (OWS) travelled quickly by mouth and by media, namely through social and participatory media sites like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LiveStream. #Occupy, as hashtag, went viral. Through a “diversity of tactics”⁷ and through information communication technologies (ICTs) that were developed prior to and during the unfolding of this movement, those who found themselves called to Occupy began to locate and connect with one another in the streets.

Running parallel to (and consubstantial with) the movement’s unfolding in the streets, connections were taking place around emergent topics and events through hashtags and tweets in virtual domains. As Occupy encampments sprung up around the country and world—as parks and public spaces began to be populated by occupiers and those that came to witness, observe, and surveil⁸ them—occupiers would write: “Occupy changed the question [from] Who will save us? [to] How will we save us?”⁹ Towards those ends, the place/space of Liberty/Zuccotti became a refuge where conversations on a range of local, national, and international grievances could be aired, where free classes and teach-ins were taught, where food was being made and served, where working and affinity groups were being formed, and where experimental structures—both physical and conceptual—were being developed in response to the mass emergence and reclamation of the commons. Perhaps most importantly, principles and skills (technes) were being developed and shared in the park (i.e. how to leverage social and participatory media for vernacular ends, how to create horizontal platforms for dialogue and discussion, how to “intake” and “distribute” resources and goods that passed through the park, how to meet needs on the ground) as occupiers came to recognize the power they held as autonomous individuals working towards a collective and common good.

Despite these democratic advancements, OWS was evicted from Zuccotti Park just shy of two months into the occupation, where Mayor Bloomberg addressed occupiers noting, “protestors have had two months to occupy the park with tents and sleeping bags; now they will

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have to occupy the space with the power of their arguments.” As addressed in Chapter Three and Five, this statement would ultimately prompt occupiers to open up space around what it was to “occupy” lines of argument (topoi) and reclaim ‘the commons’ in ways that could be collectively adopted and adapted in virtual spaces towards emancipatory ends. “You cannot stop an idea whose time has come!” would become the rally-cry of those who would extend the work and ‘place’ of movement into realms beyond the “physical” or geographical. However, despite the emergence of “conceptual” occupations (i.e. @OccupyData, @OccupyDesign, @OccupyTheory, @OccupyWriters, the #OccupyResearch Collective) that came online and took place outside the purview of the park, the MSM would decidedly proclaim Occupy as “dead” and “a failure” when the movement: 1. Ceased to exist as a polity in a geographic place, and 2. Did not produce results within the framework of dominant political structures. To this point we will shortly return. Then, on October 29th, 2012—just over a month after OWS celebrated its first anniversary on ‘#S17’—disaster struck again as “Superstorm Sandy” made landfall along the Eastern Coast of the U.S. and passed over New York. On the first night that the hurricane battered upwards along the coast and made landfall in New York, a cadre of veteran-occupiers from OWS in NYC set up a donation page, promulgated what would become another viral

hashtag, #SandyAid, and began reaching out to church contacts to secure physical space for the anticipated influx of volunteers and donations.

Leveraging the vernacular logic and technēs occupiers came to “possess” in the park, this form of ‘direct action’ and response effort took the name “Occupy Sandy” (OS) and opened its doors to upwards of 60,000 volunteers—more than four times the number deployed by the American Red Cross\(^\text{14}\)—who would assist in the recovery and relief efforts over the following months. As noted by Sarah Jaffe in “Post-Occupied: Where are we now?,” the “skills first honed in the park – feeding hundreds and distributing supplies and divvying up donations – translated easily to filling the gaps left by the failures of state and federal agencies and the major NGOs.”\(^\text{15}\) In an article by Truthout, OS organizer Tamara Shapiro is quoted as saying, “we proved through Occupy Sandy that the skills we were learning and the tools we were using and the infrastructure we were building could be used incredibly effectively to do something concrete.”\(^\text{16}\) Not unlike the initial emergence of Occupy as a grassroots response to an economic crisis, an effort ‘by the people for the people’ emerged in response to the impending crisis of this sizable storm. Occupy, long proclaimed to be “dead” by the MSM, came back into public view with renewed force, flooding headlines as the “relief organization for [the] 21\(^\text{st}\) century”\(^\text{17}\) by the same media outlets


that had only months before called it a “failure.” Even the Homeland Security Studies & Analysis Institute (HSI)—whose parent agency (DHS) was reported to have worked alongside the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), local police (NYPD), regional fusion centers, and private-sector intelligence agencies in the monitoring and suppression of OWS activities\(^\text{18}\)—
would praise OS as “the resilient social network”\(^{19}\) and recommend to other formal response agencies that “we can learn lessons from Occupy Sandy’s successes to ensure a ready and resilient nation.”\(^{20}\) Finally, a NY bishop, Lawrence Provenzano, who witnessed the operations of OS would write: “From a religious standpoint, this was the church at its best, an example of the Gospel in action” and “this is what incarnate love looks like!”\(^{21}\) In many ways, however, the efforts of OS were simply an extension of OWS’ vernacular logic: a recognition of “critical gaps” or ‘unattended areas’ needed to be held, “occupied,” or filled in anticipation of the loss of life, livelihood, and damage to property in the wake of crisis or catastrophe.

**Answering the Question**

While OWS and OS can be differentiated by some important political and teleological differences, what makes these two occupations categorically commiserate lies in their emergence as responses to crises and in their application/replication of an “occupational” logic that had been developed prior to and during the social movement that had engendered it. The claim here is that the “mass emergence” of the OM can be partially attributed to the *logic* implicit in what it meant (to occupiers) to “occupy” a place, position, or anticipated projection of crisis or consequence. From a critical-rhetorical perspective, what makes OS and other spin-offs of the movement so novel or “inventive” does not lie solely in their development and leveraging of media, tools, and *technes*, but in the underlying logic that allowed these spin-offs to come into being in the first place. This, to great degree, is why I have first written upon OWS rather than OS: to make

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\(^{20}\) Ibid., 72.

explicit the bases of logic motivating, but already implicit, in the operations and emergence of OS. If OS, a network of first responders with no prior disaster relief experience, is a proof of concept—“evidence [sic] demonstrating that a design concept, business idea, etc., is feasible”—for the viability of what OWS brought to light and to life, then examining the “regimes of truth” operative in the movement that gave birth to 1,500+ occupations world wide was considered a ‘first step’ to understanding the premises that would allow OS to be labelled by HSI as having “set a precedent.” For these reasons, this study has attended to the OM along three dimensions (in time, place, and space) in order to answer the research question advanced earlier: in what ways did the vernacular rhetoric of OWS emerge as an inventive response to crisis? Advanced here, the vernacular rhetoric of OWS can be located in the “occupational” and outlaw logic of the OM, through which future spin-offs, “products,” or ‘generations’ were made possible. In the sections below, I address how the ‘everyday logic’ (i.e. “All day, all week, Occupy Wall Street!”) of an emergent vernacular community (OWS) took place across multiple dimensions (time, place, space) and what conclusions this allows us to draw about our object of study. In the same breath, I draw out what these conclusions do for rhetorical studies on the vernacular, the *chora*, and classical *topoi*.

*The Vernacular Logic of OWS*

Returning a point passed over above, the MSM would proclaim Occupy as “dead” and “a failure” when the movement: 1. Ceased to exist as an organized polity in a geographic place, and 2. Did not produce “results” within the framework of dominant political structures, despite the ongoing movement activity in places beyond the purview of the park. In response to the first

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22 OED, s.v. “proof of concept, n.” in “proof, n.”
point, chapters three, four, and five demonstrated how the mass uptake of the word “occupy” created a definitional rupture that shifted the “natural attitude” around the meaning of this word. As Not An Alternative noted, “many of us long dreamed of creating a political form (a common) that could be adopted and adapted, that would circulate and inspire, in a protean, expressive, horizontal fashion. We imagined a politics capable of exceeding the confines of issues and identities. With Occupy, we have that.”

Thus, while OWS ceased to exist as a polity in the park upon its eviction from Zuccotti/Liberty, the logic of occupation—engendered by new meanings of what the words (logoi) of “occupy” and “occupation” meant to occupiers—would see the extension of the movement’s operations and activities in virtual space. While writers for Oxford Dictionaries would write, “the Occupy —— formula was recognizable enough to be reappropriated for rhetorical or humorous effect in phrases like Occupy My Street and Occupy Main Street,” other reappropriations of the ‘Occupy formula’ involved hidden forms of connective labor and rhetorical work in order to bring hyper local crises to light. This is a point missed by those who have studied the “lexical legacy” of Occupy.

As would become even more apparent during OS—when the labor performed in the park would be applied or replicated towards the ends of recovery, response, and relief—the occupational logic of locating and transforming “extensions which can be occupied (taken)” or

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26 Connor continues: “Occupy, of course, is a common, standard English word, but it was used so frequently in reference to the Occupy movement that it contributed to a visible spike in the Corpus of Contemporary American English for the period 2010–2012, and a more than threefold increase in frequency in the Proquest US National Newspapers database in 2011, compared to the previous year. That spike in the frequency was dramatic, but short-lived. After peaking in November 2011, mentions of “occupy” in major newspapers began to decline, although they have not yet returned to pre-OWS levels. Most of this increase in usage, though, refers to the Occupy movement itself, so it reflects only the prominence of the protests in our national conversation, not an actual shift in our vocabulary.” (Hyperlinks hers.) Ibid.
reclaiming vacant areas/blank spaces for the commons would easily translate to the “function” of emergent citizen groups (ECGS): to “fill critical gaps” and “attempt to fill important societal functions made evident by an extreme event.”

As the literature on ECGS indicates, “a significant turning point in the early stages of the emergence of ECGS is the collective consciousness that there is a perceived problem which is not recognized or acknowledged by others, especially those in positions of governmental responsibility.”

By extension here, the emergence of OWS (and the OM more generally) can be understood as a response to the collective perception that urgent grievances, problems, and needs were being neglected by those who traditionally (or institutionally) occupy a role, seat, or position of authority related to the task or topic at hand. The bailout of the banks and bankers by the government—“those who are ultimately responsible for the welfare of the nation’s citizens”—and the consequent loss of securities by the American people may be an exemplar of this condition. As the HSI report on OWS discuss in their section “Filling the Gaps”:

> At times, especially in the first few days and weeks following the storm, urgency dictated the actions of Occupy Sandy members. Many were actions that traditional relief organizations would not take because of liability risks. This includes entering residential buildings without permission to check on the elderly, stopping traffic to request use of vehicles, or prescribing medication to individuals trapped in their homes.

From experiences had in the OWS/OM, occupiers had learned not to ‘hold their breath’ waiting for a solution from the “powers that be.” Instead, occupiers took matters into their own hands by identifying and taking action upon “mission critical gaps” as autonomous citizens who—to the

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30 Ibid., 41-42.
best of their abilities—acted upon GA-consented principles such as: “exercising personal and collective responsibility; empowering one another against all forms of oppression; redefining how labor is valued; the sanctity of individual privacy; the belief that education is human right; and making technologies, knowledge, and culture open to all to freely access, create, modify, and distribute.”31 In both cases, protestor and responder (not mutually-exclusive) identified places, topics, grievances, and groups that could “fall through the cracks” and put their bodies on the line to gives those places, topics, and groups a voice.

As for the second point to return to from above (i.e. the common critique that Occupy failed to produce “results” within the framework of dominant political structures), a writer for the Huffington Post would explain the failure of Occupy as follows:

The liberal Occupy Wall Street, by contrast, focused on... well, what exactly? Its message, beyond disdain for the rich, was never entirely clear to many Americans, and indeed its various protests fizzled without much to show -- no new leaders, no legislative victories or political change of any kind. If anything, the national mood favored liberal ideas, yet the Occupy protestors never showed any kind of solidarity. The movement is now dead, and will be no more than a footnote to history.32

However, a predominant take-away of this movement and dissertation should be that Occupy operated on the logic of a différere or an “outlaw logic” incommensurate with the logic used by dominant political discourse and structures. As Ono & Sloop note: outlaw logics, by definition, “challenge dominant ways of thinking and acting [that] create the potential for substantive social

change.” In revoking the legitimacy of the institutional logic that “broke our sacred covenant” in the first place, Occupy did not share the political prerogative to create new political leaders or legislative victories for the reason/on the logic that doing so would recreate the very system that had failed them. Instead, as Schneider notes, “the Occupiers set themselves on a path substantially more ambitious: a wholesale rethinking of political life…” As one occupier explained:

Though in the limited imagination of the vernacular ‘direct action’ rarely conjures images beyond sit-ins and banner drops, the literal definition opens up a much more radical expanse: to bring into being new structures and institutions, outside of the bounds of the ones that exist, by acting as though the necessary political and cultural conditions are already in place. In other words: ‘To be the society you want to see.’

This prefigurative logic that would emerge in OWS would later serve as the ‘radical grounds’ or logical bases upon which the spin-offs or “children” of Occupy would be formed. As Ono & Sloop discuss, outlaw discourses—which operate by a different logic than dominant logics, that of the différend—“are not simple inversions of dominant discourses; they do not refute or counter dominant positions; rather, they are discourses outside the logics of dominant ones.” Iain Chambers similarly writes, “logics in which opposition and resistance simply mirror and invert the language of oppression do little to challenge the systems that are producing the

34 This is a lyric from a video produced by “SolidarityMusic” of Occupy Boston: “Mic Check! Mic Check! This is what democracy looks like! This is what democracy looks like! 1%, Your money’s spent to circumvent the People’s intent….You jacked the rent, caused this descent, “cuz you broke our sacred covenant. The people point to the streets; they have have joined together to preserve democracy….The beginning is near and only the 1% have something to street. Because whose street is this? Our street!” See: SolidarityMusic, “Mic Check! This is what democracy looks like! - Occupy Song for Occupy Wall St. & Occupy Boston,” YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FOzjkzwsU2M.
37 Ono & Sloop, 15.
problems.” To judge the success of Occupy, then, on the logic of those institutions that had failed the very people and perogatives they are sworn to represent—and in many cases, protect—is to similarly “judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree.” Neither Occupy nor fish can/should be measured against a logic or nature that they were not born to possess.

**People Over Profit: A Critical Lens**

In *Shifting Borders: Rhetoric, Immigration, and California’s Proposition 187*, Ono and Sloop discuss the role of rhetorical critics in relation to their studies of the vernacular, where they write: “Critics can help bring particular outlaw discourses to various spaces in which dominant logics operate so that outlaw logics provoke the social imaginary and encourage the formation of other ways of thinking about judgment and justice.” As such, the value of this study is twofold: first, along with traditional rhetorical studies of the vernacular, it shares a critical concern for bringing marginalized voices to the fore, where these voices have provided new (or alternative) evidentiary bases for interpreting and constructing new socio-economic realities in the context of crisis. As Schneider recalls of these Occupy-induced realities:

> There was this moment, while I was standing on the steps of the New York County Supreme Court Building overlooking Foley Square, when things came together in front of me. It was October 5, the day of the first big march when organized labor turned out in support of Occupy Wall Street…Leading the way was a big banner that I’d seen arrive at Liberty fresh from the printer the night before: “OCCUPY EVERYTHING” it said. There’s a memory I have of being a little kid—sitting on one of those orange seats on the Metro in DC, I think—and wondering, What will my generation do? It seemed to me then, there, before that crowd, that I might be looking at the answer. The trouble was knowing what it really was, or what it meant.

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39 The full quote, commonly attributed to Albert Einstein, reads: “Everybody is a Genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.”
41 Schneider, *Thank You Anarchy*, 55.
Part of this project has involved conducting a rhetorical “take”—or rhetorical touch—on the literal meaning of this “answer” in so far as ancient meanings of occupy and occupation correspond to present-day realities. As addressed in Chapter Three (Occupy over Time) “insiders” or ‘natives’ to the movement have struggled over the meaning of Occupy nearly since its inception. For those continuing to engage with that struggle, the vernacular has been used as a tool to reflect on and engage with the things said, done, and seen in/with the OM that have often escaped the notice of “dominant” channels of observation and authority, particularly for those who would otherwise share an affinity for the kinds of labor and logic produced in the name of Occupy. Easton Smith writes as much in his write-up of OS, noting “the activist community in the United States as a whole, however, does not know that much about what happened in the weeks and months following the storm, and those who participated in the efforts [of OS] have few resources for reflecting on and understanding the value of their work.”

In bringing the vernacular to bear on this study of Occupy, unpacking the “outlaw logic” operative in the act of “occupation” exposes the incommensurability between those who occupy a position of power by virtue of “institutional authority” and those who have sought to return that power to places of need by virtue of occupation. Rather than uniformly “challenging,” “protesting,” or “resisting” institutional authority, occupiers took direct and autonomous action upon matters and topics (topoi) of collective concern in ways that, at times, implicitly shifted the burden of proof (without demand) of who has the “power” or prerogative to occupy a position

43 Judith Butler writes, “to demand justice is, of course, a strong thing to do. It also involves every activist in a philosophical question: What is justice, and what are the means through which the demand for justice can be made? The reason it is said that sometimes there are “no demands” when bodies assemble under the rubric of “Occupy Wall Street” is that any list of demands would not exhaust the ideal of justice that is being demanded.” See: Judith
or seat of authority. Secondly, Ono & Sloop discuss of the task of the critical rhetorician as follows:

Hence, the role of the critical rhetorician is to bring selected voices and logics to the fore, if indeed the critic views as necessary the implementation of such logics in dominant civic culture. Taking the perspective just elaborated, the critic’s question becomes: Will the logic of the outlaw discourse make for a better system of judgment than the current one, and, if so, how can I help bring it into being?44

As discussed by the HSI report on OS: “trained and experienced disaster responders, such as FEMA’s disaster assistance employees, have years of working disasters. Consequently, we assume their judgment as reported in assessments is ‘wiser.’”45 However, this report goes on to propose a system modeled after the initiatives of OS that “allows government, traditional established NGOs and FBOs, and non-affiliated volunteers to coordinate their activities in virtual space.”46 They continue, “such a system would not represent a subtle evolution in the management of disaster response and recovery in the United States; it would be rather revolutionary.”47 Thus, to the extent that ‘the logic of outlaw discourse make for a better system of judgment than the current one,’ I have sought to ‘bring into being’ the occupational logic of OWS as it played itself out in practice through place, space, and over time.

The point here is not to denigrate formal responders or response mechanisms, but to show how the uptake and application of occupational logic could further advance response, recovery, and resiliency initiatives and missions already “in place.” Finally, while discourse is but one “display” or instantiation of the vernacular—one site where the vernacular can be located—this project has endeavored to broaden the sites of vernacular studies by attending to the ways

46 Ibid., A-5.
47 Ibid.
vernacular or “outlaw” *logic* can instantiate itself through ‘demonstrative acts’ in times, places, and spaces of protest, movement, and crisis. To speak the “vernacular” of Occupy was more than “hippy finger wiggles” in the park or engaging in the process of consensus during general assemblies—more than carrying cardboard signs or canvas banners proclaiming to be the 99%—it involved, instead, a “radical” rethinking of the possibilities of democratic life. To speak the “indigenous” or “native” (vernacular) rhetoric of Occupy—to persuade or otherwise “move” another (or oneself) from one place or position of understanding or belief to another, especially as such speech or persuasion occurred “outside” the bounds of institutional authority—can be understood as practicing what one preached: to *occupy* or “own up to” one’s words or speech in such a way that proved (*apodeixis*) what one said was feasible, if not true.48 Particularly in times of crisis, to “occupy” a place—where place, *by extension here*, is a rhetorical *topos* or line of argument—draws upon a kind of logic that goes “above and beyond” the *status quo* (or existing state of affairs) to bring into being new possible worlds, realities, and mechanisms of response.

*Contemporary Configurations of the Chora*

In turning to the geographical site where #OCCUPYWALLSTREET (OWS) first emerged, this study answers a call made by rhetorical theorists to conduct “some basic groundwork in developing a sense of what the *chōra* has been, and why a concept that has largely been associated with material space, and only secondarily with beginnings and creation,

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48 As Aristotle wrote: “It is clear, then, that rhetorical study, in its strict sense, is concerned with the modes of persuasion. Persuasion is clearly a sort of demonstration, since we are most fully persuaded when we consider a thing to have been demonstrated.” See: Aristotle, Rhetoric, trans. W. Rhys Roberts, *The Internet Classics Archive*, n.d., [http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/rhetoric.1.i.html](http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/rhetoric.1.i.html). In George Kennedy’s translation, this excerpt reads: “Since it is evident that artistic method is concerned with *pistis* and since *pistis* is a sort of demonstration [*apodeixis*] (for we most believe when we suppose something to have been demonstrated) …” [where Kennedy writes that *apodeixis* is “Aristotle’s technical term for logically valid, scientific demonstration.”] See: *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*, (2nd edition) trans. George A. Kennedy (NY: Oxford University Press, 2007), 34.
should be of interest for rhetoric."⁴⁹ Towards these ends, I examined the correspondences between OWS and the *chora* as 1. a place/space or “extension” which can be occupied; 2. the “maternal matrix” or ontological “receptacle” of becoming and change; and 3. a ‘political’ boundary or region surrounding and sustaining a polis or city-state. In doing so, Occupy gives the *chora* empirical grounding that makes clear/transparent what “has ever been a murky concept given to mystery and mysticism.”⁵⁰ As occupier Imani Jacqueline Brown (Quezergue) describes of OWS in *Krytyka Polityczna*:

…As we lay together in the center of Manhattan on our patch of prime real estate, gazing up at the electric glow of corporate logos, we caught wind of the sublime: freedom. We marveled at our creation: an autonomous micro-society guided by a collectively-determined system of values, built on a resource-based economy of mutual aid, sustained by a swarming mass of bodies united in a single, thunderous voice that radiated outward from spontaneously rotating loci within a churning nebulosity. The power of this experience was numinous; its beauty transcended the realm of the aesthetic delineated by Western theoreticians.⁵¹

The holding and transformation of a privately-owned public space by OWS (in Liberty Plaza/Zuccotti Park) not only advances our understandings of how rhetorical invention “takes place” in choric arenas of movement and emergent activity, but it draws out the finer distinctions of what Plato meant to “give place” for the ideal polis to come to life and how to move from static ideas to vital activity. As such, this study goes beyond Rickert by grounding abstract characterizations of the *chora* in the ‘flesh and blood’ of an emergent and ongoing movement.

What we discover through the *chora*, then, is a divergence away from the critiquing of social institutions—where capitalism or patriarchy often serve as the master trope—and a gravitation towards another way of conceptualizing, mobilizing, and imagining political potential

⁵⁰ Ibid., 252.
in the world. Given the status of planetary crisis and upheaval, there is a pragmatic need to comprehend both large system failure and ways of occupying extensions or gaps that are “mission-critical.” Additionally, while choric scholars like Gregory Ulmer have argued “in order for rhetoric to become electronic, the term and concept of topic or topos must be replaced by chora (the notion of “place” found in Plato’s Timaeus.),”\(^\text{52}\) I have given a different take on topos and chora vis-a-vis invention by addressing how the topos/locus (as commonplace of invention and memory) operated in Occupy through the technology of Twitter. As theorized in that chapter, the logic of occupation in the place of the park would extend into virtual space, where the hashtag (\#) and handle (@) served as a rhetorical topos: a way of locating, categorizing, and grouping material associated with local/specific and general topics. The ability to track the movements of the Movement across geographic locales and time necessitated a way of ‘bringing before the eyes’ observations made during actions, events, and in ‘everyday’ living. The hashtag was one way of locating and coordinating movement activities across time and place in space.

**Limitations to the Study**

As Middleton, Senda-Cook, and Endres (2011) note in “Articulating Rhetorical Field Method: Challenges and Tensions,” the “scattered approach” to the “ad hoc development of central methodological and analytic commitments that inform in situ rhetorical analysis…limits theoretical development and slows critical self-reflection.”\(^\text{53}\) While I was embedded in the activities of the movement as a participant, I did not go into the field with a research design or question; as such, capturing data could have been more systematic and robust had I conceived of these research elements beforehand. As HSI notes of OS—which is equally applicable to the

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study of OWS here—is that emergence “is a difficult research subject for many of the same reasons it succeeded in helping so many communities in New York and New Jersey: its membership and infrastructure are fluid, it has no elected leaders, and it conducted autonomous relief activities across a large geographic area.”\footnote{Homeland Security Studies & Analysis Institute, “The Resilient Social Network,” 6.} OWS was equally diffuse in its membership, actions, and sites of emergence; no two occupations were the same.

In addition to this, while rhetorical methods have greatly advanced the study of live rhetoric in situ, few methodological resources exist for the study of these rhetorics in disaster or crisis situations. As such, the ad hoc use of methodological and analytic commitments are considerably “scattered.” In addition to this, institutional limitations still exist in the writing upon and presenting of rhetorical invention, despite the bearing or application these inventions could have upon communities inside and outside academic domains. Finally, while over 12,000 emails have been collected in the Gmail archive used during my participation in the OM, only a fraction of these have been used in the final write up. While I have sought out the conversations relevant to the topics at hand, this study in no way encapsulates the range of topics and events that took place in Occupy.

\textit{Future Research}

In the spirit of critical rhetoric and vernacular studies, I have sought to bring into being “a contingent logic as if it were universal, as if a particular outlaw logic were Truth with a capital T.”\footnote{Ono & Sloop, \textit{Shifting Borders}, 141.} As such, I have studied, identified, and applied the logic\footnote{Another way to say “carried out its logic” is “followed through with its word,” where word and logic are etymologically related if not interchangeable.} of Occupy in ways that extend beyond the dissertation (or the production of text) where lessons learned in OWS and OS were applied in anticipation of and in response to the Boulder/Colorado Floods of 2013. Replicating
the work performed and logic developed during OS (i.e. taking action before action was “officially” called upon; building out root directories and databases of emergent contacts, needs, and leads; creating Twitter accounts and a social media presence; circulating horizontally-inspired Google docs that allowed for collaboration; locating space where relief/response-activities could be performed; anticipating future or potential obstacles to continued operations), these actions ‘brought into being’ Boulder Flood Relief (originally Occupy Boulder Flood Relief) which served the needs of the local community as an emergent grassroots response to disaster. As for the implications that this occupational logic has for future study, understanding how the rhetorical trope of (ante)occupatio or anticipation plays out in practice during crisis situations could expand the telos of the discipline itself, krisis, and (à la Bitzer) the occasions which give rise to the creation of discourse. Secondly, future research is necessary to assess more granular ways that rhetorical invention is brought online through the digital topos, especially as those inventions operate in service of response and relief activities.

As HSI notes, “most studies on the use of social media in disasters have focused on surveillance (e.g., monitoring Twitter feeds to identify trends) or persuasion (e.g., advertising what to do during an emergency). Studies should be conducted to determine how communities can collect data responsibly (evidence-based data) to identify mission critical gaps.”

To the extent that Occupy emerged in response to national and hyper-local crises—where Occupy “occupied” both public places and “open [conceptual] spaces” to bring critical issues to light/life—then there is further need to explore the ideas, products, and materials generated by movement participants in particular domains, subjects, or sites of occupation. OccupyResearch, for example, has specifically attended to best research practices in the conditions of “mass

emergence.” There is still data to be collected and interpreted from the multiple movements within the OM. Finally, more work remains to be done on the ways that vernacular logics play out in the microscopic practice of occupation online. For example, we might ask: what facilitates the recognition of kairos as it pertains to the decision to tweet at particular moments? What are those moments and how might they serve as a criterion for judgment—i.e. when might it be too soon or too late (or the opportune moment) to tweet or speak into an unfolding event? Under what conditions are some hashtags used at the expense of others? In what instances do vernacular publics leverage “trending topics” to their own ends or advantage? The micro-politics of occupation in “real time”—what it means to take on or take over or “occupy” a topic in virtual and public space—is likely to be an additional and rich source of rhetorical invention.


Originally published 1941.


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are-as-a-movement.


APPENDIX A: Pre-#S17 OWS Listservs, Google Groups

1. [OWS ThinkTank Logistics]/ows-thinktank-logistics@googlegroups.com
   Type: Google Group, Private
   Date joined: 04/01/12
   Earliest Date of Access: 11/22/11
   Number of topics/threads: 750
   Current number of members: 59
   Status: Active

2. [Occupy Research Collective]/reading-occupy@googlegroups.com
   Type: Google Group, Public
   Date joined: 06/05/12
   Number of topics/threads: 169
   Current number of members: 162
   Status: Active

3. [All in the Red]/allinthered@lists.occupy.net
   Type: Listserv, Public
   Date joined: 07/23/12 - present
   Number of emails: 129
   Current number of members: 128
   Status: Active

4. [Occupy Wall Street Puppetry Guild]/occupy-wall-street-puppetry-guild@googlegroups.com
   Type: Google Group, Private
   Date joined: 07/24/12 - present
   Number of topics/threads: 3,157
   Current number of members: 105
   Status: Active

5. [s17-convergence]/s17-convergence@lists.occupy.net (merged with [S17-discussion] on 10/14/12)
   Type: Listserv, Public
   Date joined: 08/06/12 - 10/14/12
   Number of Emails: 97
   Current number of members: N/A
   Status: Inactive/Merged

6. [s17-outreach]/s17-outreach@lists.occupy.net (merged with [S17-discussion] on 10/14/12)
   Type: Listserv, Public
   Date joined: 08/07/12 - 10/14/12
   Number of Emails: 151
   Current number of members: N/A
   Status: Inactive/Merged
7. [S17-discussion]/s17-discussion@lists.occupy.net
   Type: Listserv, Public
   Date joined: 08/07/12 - present
   Number of Emails: 2,502
   Current number of members: 165
   Status: Active

8. [revgames]/revgames@lists.occupy.net (merged/changed to [novad] on 02/16/13)
   Type: Public
   Date joined: 8/30/12- 02-16/13
   Number of emails: 313
   Current number of members: N/A
   Status: Inactive/merged

9. [Occupied Stories]/occupiedstories@wiggomail.com
   Type: Listserv, Private
   Date joined: 09/06/12 - present
   Number of emails: 115
   Current number of members: Unknown
   Status: Active

Post-#S17 OWS Listservs, Google Groups

10. [actions]/actions@lists.occupy.net
    Type: Public
    Date joined: 09/30/12
    Number of emails: 14
    Current number of members: 1,463
    Status: Active

11. [wws-discuss]/wws-discuss@lists.occupy.net
    Type: Listserv, Private
    Date joined: 10/10/12 - present
    Number of emails: 44
    Current number of members: 10
    Status: Active

12. [blackfriday]/blackfriday@lists.occupy.net
    Type: Listserv, Public
    Date joined: 10/23/12 - 11/05/12
    Number of Emails: 13
    Current number of members: N/A
    Status: Inactive

13. [MovementMonday]/movementmonday@lists.occupy.net
Type: Listserv, Public  
Date joined: 11/15/12 - present  
Number of emails: 52  
Current number of members: 74  
Status: Active

14. [novad]/novad@lists.occupy.net  
Type: Listserv, Public  
Date joined: 02/15/13 - present  
Number of emails: 834  
Current number of members: 69  
Status: Active

15. [Occupy Design]/occupy-design@googlegroups.com  
Type: GoogleGroup, Private  
Date joined: 02/26/13 - present  
Number of topics/threads: 193  
Current number of members: 20  
Status: Active

Occupy Sandy Listservs, Google Groups

16. [OSCREW]/sandyrecoverycrew@googlegroups.com  
Type: Google Group, Private  
Date: 11/07/12 - 09/04/13  
Number of topics/threads: 915  
Current number of members: 132  
Status: merged to public [OS]

17. [Red Hook]/occupysandy-redhook@lists.occupy.net  
Type: Listserv, Public  
Date: 11/09/12 - 02/14/13  
Number of emails: 163  
Current number of members: N/A  
Status: Inactive

18. [OccupySandyComms]/occupysandycomms@googlegroups.com  
Type: Google Group, Private  
Date: 11/12/12 - present  
Number of topics/threads: 37  
Current Number of members: 54  
Status: Active

19. [OS]/occupysandy@lists.occupy.net  
Type: Listserv, Public  
Date: 11/26/12 - present
Number of emails: 1,473  
Current number of members: 167  
Status: Active

20. [ossspokescouncil]/ossspokescouncil@lists.occupy.net  
   Type: Listserv, Public  
   Date joined: 7/16/13 - 4/24/14  
   Number of emails: 181  
   Current number of members: 45  
   Status: Active

Total number of emails/topics/threads: 11,302  
Total number of current members: 2,653
act, v.
ante occupatio, n. (cf. occupatio, n.)
anticipatio, n.
apophasis, n.
area, n.
behest, n.
bloodline, n. in blood, n. (and int.)
chora, n.
church, n. (cf. ecclesia, n.)
conceive, v.
correspondence, n.
crisis, n.
commons, n.
commonplace, n. and adj.
concessio, n. (cf. concession, n.)
ecclesia|ekklesia, n. (cf. church, n.)
economy, n.
epideictic, adj.
eg-ogenesis, comb. form
graft, n.1
grounds, n. and v.
hashtag, n. in hash, n.3
injunction, n.
kairos, n.
krisis, n. and v. (cf. crisis, n.)
locus, n.
logos/Logos, n.
meonic, adj.
occultatio (cf. occultation, n.)
occupatio, n.
occupation, n.
occupy, v.
octothorp, n.
Om mani padme hum, n. (and int.)
on, prep.
paralipsis, n.
physiognomy, n.
police, n. (cf. policy n.1, polity, n.1 and polis, n.1)
praecptio, n.
praeeoccupatio, n.
praemunio,
preceptive, adj.
preteritio, n. (cf. preterition, n.)
preterition, n.
procatalepsis, n.
prolepsis, n.
proof of concept, n. in proof, n.
radical, adj. and n.
revolution, n.
rhetorical, adj.
take, v.
technē, n.
topic, adj. and n.
topos, n.
triggering event, n. (cf. triggering incident)
vernacular, adj. and n.
virtual, adj. and n.
vital, adj. and n.
word, n.