

## TIDAL

Direct Communication 1 We occupied Zuccotti Park as a provocation, but that became beside the point. Living together and building a community quickly captured our attention. We created a self-organized space where we took care of each other.

The juxtaposition became surreal.

At the epicenter of the greed culture, this small bubble of people interacted as humans instead of commodities.

Just the fact of that interaction made us a threat

People from all over the world gravitated to our little spot, small physically, but enormous to the imagination.



The movement became a massive effort to live freely. That is the concept we have worked to develop going forward.

Then we faced retaliation.

We assumed opposition to the occupation would be civilized, but the full police apparatus was brought to bear. The police made the press turn off their cameras so they could launch a midnight goon raid and attack people who had renounced violence.

IN TIME, THE VIRULENCE OF THE ATTACK  
MADE US REALIZE

THEY  
FEARED  
US

The central problem of a police state involves how to enforce the will of the minority it serves over the majority. A police state fears everything that doesn't follow its script.

Ultimately, our greatest threat was the fact that we established a self-contained functional community that did not rely on government, that operated on communitarian principles rather than greed, and that openly spoke about inequity.

In a free society, none of this would be threatening. In our society, it presents an enormous problem.

Washington Sq Park  
this Sunday @ Noon - Join us!

Direct Communication E Side...

Many view this time as an OWS Diaspora.

We're not trying to return to Zuccotti Park though; we seek instead to spread the lessons learned there everywhere. Our critique of society flows from those lessons.

We have an elite that increasingly sucks more of the national wealth from the environment and people. The elite argue that they improve the world for everyone,

while the lives of most people deteriorate. The measure of success in our economy - stock indexes, GNP - do not capture our true social health. Most growth based on our current economic footprint

is ultimately self-destructive. Under our current economic system, everyone but the elite loses. Modernity might not be so bad if its benefits were widely shared among the population, but they're not.

Most don't even view that as unfair. Winner-take-all competition has become one of our dominant cultural themes, with all the mythologies of superiority and deservedness that accompany it.

So many of our popular shows revolve around this premise - sports playoffs, cooking competitions, designer competitions, singing competitions, all these talent shows.

{ OUR WORK NOW FOCUSES ON HOW TO UNDO THIS MESS }

Much of the problem is internalized. We create the conditions for our own servitude by over-reliance on unnecessary things.

Certainly, the police, jail, and debt all hold people down, but the most effective tools for repression are the restraints that people carry in their minds and incorporate into their identities.

Our basic national and commercial imagery echoes this constantly. Dystopian entertainments make a fetish of this conceit.

People surrender to, even embrace, the idea of themselves as pieces of a machine or edgy competitors in a hard world.

We need to make internal transformations, and we do that by reaching out to one another.

Externally, we have turned our attention to debt. Early on, most focused on Wall Street's role in generating economic disparity, and on the fact of the bailouts. We have come to view the pervasive debt in our economies - mortgage debt, medical debt, student debt, credit card debt as an even greater danger. Necessities have been priced in the United States to ensure that people must go deeply into debt to survive. The central tenet of the debt relationship has become that borrowers bear all risk, including the risk of their lenders' stupidity and malfeasance. It is better for a person to lose their home, or to be denied medical care, than it is for a bank to suffer a loss. We have targeted that perverse relationship, and the dispassionate societal institutions that sustain it.

Internal discipline, external reach-out, external action.

Having glimpsed a better world, we will not rest until we have fully actualized it.

#STRIKEDEBT #SEPTEMBER17 #OCCUPYWALLST

Downloaded from http://direct.mit.edu/octo/article-pdf/doi/10.1162/OCTO\_a\_00120/1753643/octo\_a\_00120.pdf by guest on 07 September 2023