

OWS in Crisis

Occupy Wall Street is wandering in the desert. This much was made clear on New Year's Day. Sitting at the airport in London waiting for my flight back to America, I watched a stream of hysterical tweets from OWS's Twitter account. They described the attempted "reoccupation" of New York City in terms usually reserved for genuine crises. It was 4 a.m. on the East Coast, and the occupiers were in the midst of an attempt to grab the first headlines of 2012 – ostensibly by encouraging their members to get themselves arrested, which is apparently the new metric of revolutionary success.

When I landed at JFK, I expected to find all sorts of stories filling the Web and to head straight down to Zuccotti Park to see what had happened. After all, the disproportionate media coverage that OWS received – which was more in line with the protesters' deluded sense of self-importance than commensurate with the public's interest or the coherence of their aims – was its greatest achievement of 2011. But there was nothing, and nor was there much sign of OWS in New York. In the seven hours I had been out of touch with those on the ground, America's media had gone wild with apathy and OWS had gone home. Evidently, occupying is so last year.

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