



# OCCUPY OVERDOSE

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*A writer's take on a less-than-proactive protest*

If I never hear the word “occupy” again, I’ll be utterly overjoyed. I’m tired of it. It’s a cliché—think hipsters drinking PBR or Rick Santorum wearing a sweater-vest. And yet 99 percent of the media are still obsessed with the Occupy movement. So naturally, it’s all we hear about, save for the latest intrusive TSA security measure or the newest carcinogen.

It’s not like I’m writing off the entire movement. I’m not sure what they want (is anyone?), but I’m glad to see they’re out expressing their myriad unclear grievances. To me, the protests come down to this: Occupiers blame everyone but themselves for their problems while they camp out in tents and play Frisbee. So you want to lessen the hold corporations maintain over American politics? That’s fair—the enormous sums of money that cloud our political process frustrate me, too. But I’m not quitting my day job to go whine about it.

So you want to protest injustices in our country? Step right up—we’ve got plenty. You have a right to protest, and we need a little citizen participation in our government. But do it legally. Don’t complain, don’t trash our public parks and plazas, and don’t spew confusing, unclear doctrine. In the light of almost no unbiased information about the Occupy movement (because 1 percent of the media has 99 percent of the information, of course), here are a few things I’d like to clarify for everyone.

## OCCUPY OCCUPIERS’ JOBS

While you’re sitting in plazas expressing your overarching discontent with the government, some smart kid is out there getting your job. I understand you’re doing something you believe in. And I know it’s hard when you feel you’ve been treated unfairly. But protesting won’t get you a new house or support your family. If those are things you need, consider getting a job (or two)—though you might have to fight with that smart kid to get yours back. The government isn’t Ty Pennington: It can’t afford to give you a new house, let alone get us out of our trillion-dollar debt.

I apologize for my harsh tone—I don’t mean to be unkind. I really value your vendetta against... Wait, what is it you’re protesting again? Anyway, I just think someone needs to tell you what’s going on in the rest of the country. I imagine it’s a little difficult to glance over your Twitter feeds while you’re camped in a tent—although I’m sure you

wouldn’t patronize a corporation like Twitter. That would be a slight conflict of interest.

## IT’S PEACEABLE ASSEMBLY

I don’t blame you if you’ve never read the entire Constitution. It’s not exactly a thrilling read. But I want to remind Occupiers everywhere that while you have the right to assemble and protest, you can’t do anything you want. Yes, the First Amendment says you can assemble—peaceably. And that means exactly what it sounds like: You can protest as long as you play by the rules. You can’t set up camp anywhere you want and then complain when the police ask you to leave. Check out the local rules, and register your protest. These are requirements that make sure we—100 percent of us—can peaceably assemble.

I don’t feel bad for you when you face repercussions after refusing to obey the rules. The occasional police officer might not be fair or ethical, but most are just doing their job. If the police ask you to leave a park after hours, you can’t complain when they forcibly remove you. You have to be willing to accept the consequences—whether that’s jail time or pepper spray. And if you think police officers have crossed the line, report them. Don’t lump all officers under one umbrella of evil. After all, 99 percent of them are just middle-class Americans trying to make a living by protecting you.

## #OCCUPYHOLLYWOOD

Why isn’t anyone protesting against Miley Cyrus? Or Stephenie Meyer? If there was ever an example of corporate injustice, it’s the *Twilight* franchise: One percent of the vampires have 99 percent of the fame. Meanwhile, werewolves are doomed to a life of misunderstanding and awkward imprint situations. And I can’t be the only one who’s enraged that Kristen Stewart has exactly two emotions and more money than I’ll make in my lifetime. Occupiers, I think we’ve uncovered a new target: Hollywood. I’ll join in. Let’s get out there, camp out on the sets of blockbuster hits, and let them know who’s really in charge here. Leonardo DiCaprio and Dakota Fanning don’t stand a chance.

Maybe they’ll even play Frisbee with us.