

# The Ontario Occupy Movement

## Purpose

The purpose of this project was to study the strategies of Civil Disobedience by protestors in Toronto and Peterborough during the Occupy movement. This project discusses the motivations, organization, and the municipalities' reaction to the protest. The project also looks into how the nature of public protest in Canada has evolved since the movement began in the fall of 2011.



## Methodology

1. Researched scholarly literature on the nature of public protest in Canada.
2. Studied various forms of media including social media, corporate media, newspapers and grey literature.
3. Interviewed five members of the Occupy movement from the Peterborough and Toronto area.

"Watching some of the other cities [the Occupy Movement] was clearly effective there, not so much here in Peterborough. I think one of the big reasons for that was that we didn't occupy any of the physical space as people did in some of the other big cities... I think it was still successful, given the broader aims of the movement to challenge inequality and challenge structures of oppression... That's not something you can physically do by taking over one specific plot of land. Just taking over a park isn't going to change the world. What will would be bringing people into a broader conversation and [have them] articulate the problems of capitalism... I think we helped inspire conversation which would hopefully go towards building the broader movement."

-Matthew Davidson, Occupy Peterborough Participant

"A lot of people did see Occupy as a failure because Occupy never did become some sort of giant political mass movement that could challenge powers and change political economics, but those types of movements happen over decades. The occupy movement just started two years ago and becoming a mass movement and challenging power is really something that is not easy to do, and it comes with great disappointment. I think it's not very glamorous but the most important thing that could happen is a slow building movement among people with common ideas." - Steven Martin, Occupy Toronto Participant

Project completed in April 2013 for HIST/POST/CAST 4770  
Student: Krista Liebscher  
Supervising Professor: Jim Struthers  
Host facilitator: Roy Brady