

# THE AMERICAN TAHRIR SQUARE

By Dennis "DJ" Mikolay

For decades, underdog politicians and self-styled patriots have called for a "Second American Revolution." This mythical coup d'état would restore the principles and greatness of the ailing Republic, sending the country on an upward trajectory towards economic and social prosperity.

While the logistics of this great uprising varied between each ideology (Communists perceived it as a Proletariat Revolution, conservatives craved a return to Federalism), it seems that the growing frustrations over the bail-outs, corporate politics, and economic inequality may make the age-old dream of a new revolution come true.

It remains unclear, however, what path this uprising will take. Americans have once again taken to the streets,



"Brookdale graduate Lindsay Durino examines literature at the Occupy Wall Street protest."

with economics as the topic du jour, but two distinct schools of thought have emerged, each advancing different solutions to the economic crisis.

Until recently, protests against domestic economic policy seemed to be the conservative modus operandi. The "Tea Party Movement" rode this issue to power, becoming a vehicle to channel conservative frustrations. And yet, while the Tea Partiers continued to grow in numbers, attempts by liberals to launch any form of counter movement quickly fizzled.

Now it seems the left may finally have its time to shine. A series of grassroots protests, known collectively as **Occupy Wall Street**, have taken the country by storm. Thousands of activists, many of whom are students, have gathered to condemn the corporate domination of the American political system and the rampant social inequality.

While the movement is not explicitly liberal, the progressives who hope to see capitalism go the way of the Woolly Mammoth (replaced by what they believe will be a more "humane" economic system) are by the far the largest segment of the protests.

These activists, whose vocal calls for wealth redistribution and fair trade have shaken the cages of Democrats and Republicans alike, have become the most visible — and arguably influential — figures within the burgeoning movement. The rapid expansion of their ideals have attracted young activists at an astonishing pace, instilling them with a sense of purpose.

Just ask eighteen-year-old Patrick Noble, a student activist from Brookdale Community College, who has spent the last several weeks dividing his time between Occupy Wall Street's protests on the East Coast and in Los Angeles.

A ballot-qualified candidate for Monmouth County Freeholder, Noble views these protests as reminiscent of the early stages of last year's Egyptian Revolution.

"The message of the occupy movement is broad and diverse," said Noble. "It essentially boils down to issues like socio-economic inequality and corporate greed. The motivation, in my opinion, is based on people en-masse realizing that electoral action isn't enough to bring genuine change for the better, so more direct action is needed."

While the number of protesters congregated at Wall Street has yet to match the numbers who gathered in Tahrir Square, many of those involved believe that Occupy Wall Street will continue to gain traction. But as the wave of leftist zeal gains momentum, the conservative niche within the movement may be threatened with expulsion.

The ideas espoused by conservatives (free markets, low taxes, and individualism) are fast becoming incompatible with the mantra of the movement. Many on the right are beginning to feel unwelcome. Brian Arthur Nole, host of a conservative radio program at Monmouth University's WMCX 88.9FM, sees the anti-conservative writing on the wall.

"Their ideas unfortunately are not compatible with conservatism and libertarianism," said Nole. "The protesters have been tricked into begging for more enslavement, such as higher taxes, socialism, and four more years of the Obama Administration."

The involvement of prominent conservative figures like Governors Buddy Roemer (R-LA), Jesse Ventura (I-MN) and Gary Johnson (R-NM), has done little to strengthen the influence of the conservative minority.

Their lack of influence demonstrates that it will be very difficult for one movement to wear two hats, serving simultaneously as both an outlet for liberal economic frustration and conservative fiscal angst.

The tenacity for leftism may be a result of the demographics that comprise Occupy Wall Street. These protesters are far younger than the Tea Party. If these activists transition their protests into direct electoral activism, it could put parent against child. The clash between these two grassroots groups could get ugly, further clouding already opaque elections.

But that isn't slowing either side down. The "Second America Revolution" might be just around the corner, but if the rift between liberals and conservatives isn't mended, so could a New Civil War