

Occupy Wall Street and the Democrats

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New York magazine published an article called “2012=1968?” Author John Heilemann implies that Occupy Wall Street should forge the “working alliance between Democrats and the movement” that Todd Gitlin hopes for. But in my view this alliance would be a suicidal disaster; it would rob the movement of its potential to spark real change. OWS needs to fight for remedies to foreclosures, bank ripoffs, grotesque student debt, devastating attacks on Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, etc., while challenging America’s fundamentally unequal and undemocratic economic and political structure. The Democrats, with their deep Wall Street ties, can’t be genuine allies in either dimension. The Dems may be pressured to make some immediate reforms — and we should welcome those reforms- but sustained pressure will come only from a movement independent of them. And of course the Democratic Party can’t and won’t work for a new democratic society free from corporate rule. How could it?