

Letters on the World Socialist Web Site redesign

23 October 2008

The World Socialist Web Site has received a flood of emails in response to its new design, launched on October 22. Many readers have offered suggestions, which we will carefully consider. Others have pointed out lingering bugs, most of which are already fixed. We thank all those who have sent comments, and we encourage our readers to continue to write in and tell us what you think.

Below we post a selection of the letters we have received.

Congratulations!!!!

I predict at least a 1000 percent increase in the readership of the site as word gets around the Internet. Not only is it more aesthetically pleasing, but you'll be able to carry so much more material at this extremely important but dangerous point in world developments. I always made it a point to read WSWS first thing in the morning to get a lead from a Marxist perspective on daily events, but now it's going to be a much more dynamic experience.

Again, congratulations and keep up the good work!

JT

Congratulations to this extraordinary development of the web page! This is the result of the timely anticipation of the developing crisis of world capitalism by the "think tank" of the working class. It is a fantastic tool to organize the independent organization of the working class worldwide. Thanks to the ICFI comrades who have secured the continuity of the heritage of the great Marxists, the science of working class perspective and the science for the world.

The WSWS will be welcomed by many conscious workers worldwide, who will realize—like the reader who responded from Kenya on October 16, 2008—the power of its content.

Now, let's build the SEP worldwide as the mass party of the international working class.

PH

I can only see one drawback to the new design. For years, I have been printing articles from the home page, and placing them in those ugly, plastic real-estate magazine stands. The words "WORLD SOCIALIST WEB SITE" were prominent, and they promoted the site to passersby. The effect is diminished with the new design. I wonder if anyone else feels this way, or if anyone can recommend a "work around."

C

Metuchen, New Jersey, USA

Love your new design. Keep up the good fight.

RS

Moline, Illinois, USA

Excellent site design!

K

I shall always have fond memories of the old WSWS web format—my

introduction to the ICFI and socialist history was conveyed to me on those pages. Thus they served well.

I like the look of the new format, and I'll like it more as soon as I explore it a bit and learn to navigate it (I could work the old format like a tool). So thank you.

And one final thing about your new digital image and graphics setup—it reveals that White and Van Auken are among the best looking candidates on the presidential/VP ticket for 2008.

RR

Medford, Oregon, USA

Excellent work on the new version of the WSWS—content may need to be king, but it doesn't hurt if it looks good, too. I think the site is now considerably more accessible to new readers.

Keep up the good work!

JK

You guys have moved into the 21st century. Also, dead on the money with the review of "W."

TS

I don't like to wet-blanket anyone, but actually, while it's pretty, I preferred the old one since it was easier to archive stories and know which ones I hadn't seen before, since they were shown in a different color after I clicked on them. I find this more confusing and more difficult to read (like the "corporate" web sites).

BP

The print is too small, and if I enlarge it the page doesn't fit the screen! Back to the drawing board.

CL

The redesign is excellent. A far better layout and more pleasing to the eye.

DG

The main problem with the redesign (for me) is that the page format is too wide for my browser window, and I have to side-scroll back and forth to read the page. Not everyone has these widescreen monitors, you know. Why don't the text margins realign as they used to, in order to fit all the text into the browser window, even if you resize it smaller? The original design was simpler, cleaner and much easier to focus on. But if only it fit on my screen, I guess I'd be happy.

BKS

The new web site has the advantage of opening up new articles for quick perusal, however, the typewritten text is too small for easy reading. Many of your readers, I'm sure, have visual difficulties—me for one—and I find it a great deal harder to use it therefore.

FB

Congratulations on the new design. Your site is invaluable. A typographic comment, however, from a former printer. Having the text bump up against the left margin in articles is disorienting because the reader's eye continues to travel left looking for the start of a line. A margin (white space) is needed. Text up against the left side of the frame makes for a cramped, too busy look. Keep up the good work.

BJ

WOW! This web site is HOT! I have only explored a few of the new features, but I am impressed. I particularly like the archive feature and the perspectives feature. This puts articles and historical information right at the reader's fingertips (literally). Congratulations on a beautiful and user-friendly new web site!!!

CZ

I was very excited to see the new web site today. I think it was particularly appropriate that comrade North's most recent criticism of Steiner/Brenner came up with the new site. Thank you for putting such important theoretical and political material in an attractive and user-friendly format. Best of luck in expanding the readership in this period of profound capitalist crisis.

EH
Norfolk, Virginia, USA

I couldn't believe my eyes! Was I at WSWS.org or did I mistype the URL? You have made a wonderful and dynamic graphical advance! Congratulations.

MB

I read you every day, and I say very nice WSWS! Nicely laid out, very user friendly, and the most informative site on the web. Good job, and thanks!

PB
Reynoldsville, Pennsylvania

While the new site is an improvement, it is still much too "dry" and academic looking. Most young people, as a result of their visual/aesthetic conditioning, will still be turned off.

It is a serious error to underestimate the importance of this factor if you wish to do more than preach to the choir.

JF

I prefer the old web site. It was easy to navigate and not so distracting. There is a reason why people like to read simple, 'Drudge' style web pages. This is too much and too slick, it doesn't match your message. Sorry, that is how I feel—this web site is professional, but it doesn't seem appropriate somehow.

DL
Deerfield, Illinois, USA

Hi. I really like the new site! Great job! Just two things: When is the automatic news mailing going to die, or will it start working again? Do I have to sign in for it again?

And as much as I love the new site, I loved the text in Roman instead. It's not just a theoretical thing, they did research, ha. I loved how you were one of the few who used those fonts. But no biggie. I guess this is like the trend in the Internet (which I hate, yup).

Thanks, and keep it up.
EM
Costa Rica

Hi! I am a student from the Philippines and an occasional reader of WSWS. I think the new format is a big improvement for the web site, but about the main menu: the Book Review section seems to be missing from the Arts Review menu. I understand that this may have been overlooked in the transition to the new web design. I hope to see it back soon. Thanks!

KM
Cebu City, Philippines

Unfortunately I do not like the new web site design. I liked the stark simplicity of the old design. I could quickly browse the headlines, click right to the articles of interest, and after reading them go about my business. I am much more interested in in-depth analysis than a flashy visual display. Unfortunately this puts me at odds with most web sites, the Internet, and my society in general. But isn't that opposition what the WSWS should be about in the first place?

KP

Congratulations on the new design! The WSWS finally doesn't look like a web site from the mid-90s anymore. To get a feel for the new site, I clicked on every section on the top of the page. What I often did on the old site was to browse through the archive of film reviews, which was neatly sorted in an alphabetical order. Either I can't find this alphabetical list or you've forgot to add it. Anyway, good luck and I hope the new design draws more readers to your excellent articles.

A

Congratulations on the new web site design. It's impressive and far better than the previous layout. I trust the politics is not going to be, er, "modernized" in the same way... Keep up the excellent work. Your analysis is invaluable in these desperate times.

SB
France

Great step forwards. Good luck.

PH
The Netherlands

My first impression of the new layout is very positive. It is admirably clean and legible. Lots of useful information on the home page. I like the links to related articles on the article pages, although at the moment these links (the 2nd column) are password-protected when accessed from that column.

Thanks also for preserving the directory structure; my pages bookmarked in delicious still work.

A big round of applause for everyone involved.

CB
The Netherlands

Congratulations on your new site! Without wanting to sound unkind, however, I had really grown accustomed to the "old" one. I especially liked the typeface, which conveyed an aura of intellectual rigour, dependability and austerity, very pleasing to the eye and reassuring to the mind. In a way, I had come to look upon the WSWS site the way I used to see *Le Monde* in its good old days, or *Die Zeit*.

The new look makes the WSWS more like so many other sites, which I think is rather unfortunate. Still I understand your reasons.

HV
Belgium





To contact the WSWs and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact