

Letters from our readers

24 October 2009

On “The ‘Balloon Boy’ hoax, celebrity culture, and the American media”

This is an excellent article. I wondered if the WSWWS was going to ignore the phenomenon or engage it. I am glad that you have opted for the latter. In doing so, you have written a power piece on the grotesque, all consuming celebrity culture in America, which seems to affect Gen Y even more than Gen X. You also say something really insightful about the overall criminalization of emotional distress. Clearly, a socialist society wouldn't tolerate a hoax of this kind. But how it would deal with it would not be, I imagine, punishing a man who clearly has deep emotional problems. Rather, the fact that capitalism has no place to provide this man and his family with much needed help is a minor, albeit sharply damning critique of capitalism.

Thank you much for providing this important insight.

Nick P

22 October 2009

The reality show “Wife Swap” does possess one notable feature—its arrival was presaged by a joke. The Comedy Central series “Chappelle’s Show” had broadcast a skit entitled “Trading Spouses,” a parody of the reality series “Trading Spaces.” Within a year, there were two actual reality series on American TV (one already broadcast in a UK version) with the same premise as the parody. One was titled “Wife Swap” and the other “Trading Spouses.” Satire is having a hard time keeping up with the absurdity of reality.

Thomas H

22 October 2009

Thank you for once again being the voice of reason with your comment on the “balloon boy” incident. No doubt along with millions of others when the story broke, I was

utterly horrified by the thought of a little boy facing certain death. Of course the full arsenal of the media outlets was turned out, training exclusively on the story.

And as always, the media was seamlessly integrated into the police response: helicopters, “experts,” live feeds. This was a big budget affair. Talk of a body hunt particularly titillated them. How eager they seemed for a twist, of any kind!

And...how moralizing and angry (and disappointed) they were when it appeared they would have no tragedy, no broken body after all. Oh, but they will make sure the Heene family will be paying for this one, one way or another.

EG

22 October 2009

On “Obama turns to the financial elite for campaign cash”

Comments: I have to wonder if, like the infamous balloon boy incident, the financial crisis was staged since the perpetrators have received enormous benefits, while the average worker has suffered enormously. Sacrificing the odd CEO to the pasture wouldn't be a surprise; the psychopathy of capitalism allows for no moral codes to interfere with profiteering, and as any therapist will tell you, no one is more manipulative than a psychopath. And, with capitalism, risk involves some loss, and while it appears that even billionaires lost money for a time, as in the stock market (which we know is manipulated), a loss can eventually mean a big gain especially if you are in the “in crowd.” Not for one minute do I believe the ruling elite was blind to the bubble; perhaps I seem like a foolish conspiracy theorist, but we are speaking about greedy, very savvy individuals here, families who have been involved in financial incest for decades. All of sudden they turn stupid? No, they knew they'd get the bailouts just as the family of the balloon boy knew the authorities

would find no one in the balloon. They just had to orchestrate it so that what would benefit them would benefit us all...in the long run. As Hitler said, if you're going to lie, make it a big lie. And they did. Playing Chicken Little's "the sky is falling! the sky is falling!" worked wonders.

Stephanie N
Canada
21 October 2009

On "The world economic crisis, the failure of capitalism and the case for socialism"

I couldn't agree more on prosecuting the criminals that are taking the money away from the majority of the people. I would love to start a socialist movement in the United States. I really don't have time for that though, because I am too busy trying to find work and survive in this messed up country. Brother, can you spare me a dollar?

Scott Q
20 October 2009

On "The British National Party and 'Question Time'"

Hi Julie,

Very good summary of the real issues involved! One recent example of the Labour Party's and unions' symbiotic relationship with the BNP was the use of Gordon Brown's explicitly nationalist "British jobs for British workers" slogan as the basis for the strikes to stop workers from Italy working in the UK. When this led to an increase in support for the BNP's more open advocacy of the same type of nationalism, the likes of the UAF used it to justify an even closer embrace of the same forces that are responsible! Such is the putrid state of bourgeois politics today.

Thanks for giving us a breath of fresh air by openly stating what is.

TJ
22 October 2009

On "New Anti-capitalist Party tries to channel worker discontent with the unions"

Marxist theories do not constitute an axiomatic system of thought. They are historically rooted and reflexive. To be able to use these ideas in terms of social analysis requires engagement on many levels and a constant

critique of your own productions. However for those who cannot or will not make the effort (opportunists, reformers, etc.) Marx's works are an invaluable source of ideas that can be put to the banal service of self-advancement. The degeneration of all of the reformist parties on the left in Europe is clear. For a while we will all be knee deep in revolutionary posers.

Chris
Ireland
21 October 2009

On "Germany: Armed Forces memorial unveiled in Berlin"

Reminds me of my student days in Holland when looking over the border to see what was going on in Hitler's Germany, where religious leaders were strongly in support of Hitler and his Nazis. Pius XII was Hitler's Pope.

Sure people in Germany in 2009 are against it, but like seventy odd years ago the ones in the driver's seat drive everything right through. Not one iota of a difference between then and today. The fascists are back in control.

As always,
Frans
Thailand
22 October 2009

On "Red Star Over Russia"

I was surprised by being gifted this beautiful and outstanding book at this year's Frankfurt Book Fair and want to recommend this compendium of Russian art, history and culture to everyone who really wants to get into the Russian legacy!

5 stars!

Katja
20 October 2009



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact