

Reader contributions: Why I read the WSWS

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In its fifteen years of continuous publication, the *World Socialist Web Site* has had an enormous impact on the political education of a generation of workers and young people all over the world.

As part of campaign marking the fifteenth anniversary, we are asking readers to submit essays explaining why you read the WSWS and what impact the site has had on your political and intellectual development.

Some questions to consider are: What initially drew you to the WSWS? What article did you first read? What articles did you find most interesting? Why did you continue to read? What about the *World Socialist Web Site* is unique? What impact has the site had on your own politics and ideas?

Several essays have already been published on the WSWS and the 15th anniversary webpage, and we post several more below. To submit one, [click here](#).

Knut, Norway

“Quality in journalism is no simple matter, and you deliver”

Congratulations on the anniversary. Accept my admiration and appreciation for your achievements, with kudos to each and every one of the editors, and to the editorial board for its enabling leadership. My greetings are extended to all WSWS readers. As one of the many, I proclaim that I am honoured to be endowed with the fruits of your labour. I am a grateful reader, and I am proud to be part of your global readership.

You deserve accolades for your standards. Quality in journalism is no simple matter, and you deliver. Your persistent quest for dispelling the veils of deception and unmasking the manipulators of power and politics makes encouraging reading. You highlight facts and contexts that inform and educate, with analysis that enlightens. Subjective criticism and personal opinion make for credibility when based on knowledge, and on principled statements that are flagged high.

Mainstream journalism’s proclaimed “objectivity” is indeed “the Emperor’s new clothes”—the fairy tale of the naked ruler. *De omnibus dubitandum*, doubt everything, Marx’s credo and a cornerstone in the philosophy of science, is surely the right point of departure. WSWS shines a beacon in our bleak times.

I am a regular reader for some eight years. I crave to be

informed on the important topics of the day, with the facts that matter, and with qualified assessments and commentary. You deliver on all scores. I commend your expansions into the spheres of science and art, and I am confident in representing my fellow readers’ appreciation. Your articles on astronomy, summarizing factual complexities and linking to thoughts on materialistic philosophy and the history of enlightenment provide perspective insights and food for thought. Your reviews, interviews and eulogies from the realms of art, music and cinema are laudable. Your thoughtful assessments contribute greatly to cognition of the intricacies of modern life and times.

WSWS presents the events that shape our world, with grounded perceptions of how it can be reconfigured. It is indeed an essential means to that end. Already the readership expands the globe. By your good work, with the translations and the principled international perspectives, it will necessarily multiply.

Nick Barrickman, Washington D.C.

“The truth never hurt anyone, provided he was on the level”

I first came in contact with the *World Socialist Webs Site* in 2007, while searching for reviews of the Michael Moore film *Sicko*. Like many others, I supported this film on the assumption that it was speaking for the underdogs in society, that it was taking a stand against entrenched power. David Walsh’s analysis of this film struck me, as did several correspondences between him and other readers, in his assertion that art, and consequently all forms of social interaction, should not aim to merely placate an audience with sentimental imagery, but to tell it the truth. This struck a chord with me.

“The truth never hurt anyone, provided he was on the level,” said James P. Cannon, one of the founders of the American Trotskyist movement. This is the philosophy that one must apply to oneself on a constant basis if one truly intend to endow one’s actions with meaning. Consequently, one cannot lie when the fate of humankind is at stake. This explains the SEP and its web site’s critical attitude towards social developments,

the seriousness of the situation facing mankind, and the party's willingness to acknowledge it and conduct its struggle on those terms. This is the definition of the word "principled."

Throughout the course of the year 2008 particularly, that period bearing so much political significance, I found myself drawn to the WSWs's analysis at an increasing rate. The stance it took on the election of the first African American president of the United States, and the financial crash of Wall Street with its many aspects of criminality, kept me grounded during this time of alarm. To this day, I am pleasantly surprised upon seeing the release of the WSWs' latest commentary on events, always keeping in step with social developments and applying a refocusing lens to the proceedings.

In a world where mottos such as "good guys always finish last" had gained traction and the truth seemed to be unfashionable, this was a breath of fresh air. There is something empowering about being able to stand on a platform which wholly defends historical truth and the working class, the underprivileged and oppressed of society in such an adept manner. This is something the youth of today will cling to as they strive to find their bearings in the gauntlet that capitalism has laid before them.

Harold, Missouri

"It helps to keep me sane in an insane world"

I would like to thank everyone at WSWs for the existence of this invaluable web resource. I am able to find more truth in each daily post than I can find in years of mainstream press. It has been a source of real information and analysis, and I recommend it to anyone who is interested in what is really happening in the world.

I discovered the WSWs shortly after it began. I was searching a political topic and got a link to the WSWs. It was one of the luckiest finds of my life. I read it everyday and I feel that it helps to keep me sane in an insane world. Your optimism in the possible future of humanity contrasts with the conventional beliefs, held by both the right and left in this country, that we are all capable of evil and that our society will fall into ruin soon.

I read many other "liberal" and "progressive" publications and foreign newspapers and listen to newscasts from other countries over the Internet. I have always been disappointed by these outlets, chiefly because they all seem to be either trying to save capitalism or have just given in to it. I used to read *The Nation*, but gave it up decades ago. They seemed too dedicated to theory with no praxis. The writers were, in the main, no different from other American "intellectuals." I was glad I wasn't reading *The Nation* when it started to make excuses for

the Iraq/Afghanistan wars and became an apologist for the Democratic Party. I may not agree with everything WSWs publishes (just 99.9 percent of it), but I feel that the articles are always carefully thought out and researched.

To contrast WSWs with the "progressive" press, in the latest issue of *In These Times* (March 2013) there are 1) an editorial praising the French government for their interference in Mali, ending with a hope that the French would recognize that the Tuaregs had legitimate grievances, but no mention of French imperialism; 2) "Ode on a Grecian Radical," praising Alexis Tsipras and Syriza; 3) a typically obfuscating article by buffoon/intellectual Slavoj Žižek (he appears in ITT often); and, 4) a "feminist" take on Kathryn Bigelow, that she has broken into the "boys club," including the opinion that she is being criticized for being a strong woman, and praising the CIA agent, Maya, in *Zero Dark Thirty* for being a strong woman! There is no mention of the real controversies around this terrible film or Bigelow's collaboration with the CIA. There are also articles on the latest middle class concerns. It's not that there aren't some well thought out articles and some useful information; it's that they do not seem to have enough belief in their own philosophy to stand up for it. They seem afraid that they will offend the middle class, that they are too grounded in identity politics, especially a kind of faux-feminism and "green" (whatever that means) and are very willing to compromise (i.e. give up). Broadcast progressive programs on TV are no better. I am constantly seeing fake progressives like Juan Cole, Dana Milbank, Jonathan Alter, and any number of Democratic Party operatives.

Please keep up the good work. You are keeping the flames of independence, equality, and rational thought alive in this dying society.



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact