

Wendy Thatcher

Why I read the WSWS

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The WSWS was the reason I bought my first computer in 1998. Having read the *Bulletin*, which was the forerunner in newspaper form to the web site, I didn't want to be cut off from the in-depth socialist internationalist analysis that only the International Committee of the Fourth International offers.

It took me many years to become politically astute, as a Marxist analysis wasn't something I was familiar with at all. I have been working in Canada as a professional actress for some 47 years and unfortunately such spot-on class analysis is not something that is immediately available in the theatre and film milieu.

But after reading Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, I began to understand history for the first time. My favourite book is Trotsky's *In Defense of Marxism*. Economics is something I'm still struggling with, but Nick Beams is there to help out. I love those articles and share them with others. I also read everything from Barry Grey, David North, Bill Van Auken and Carl Bronski from Canada.

When the website started the "Arts" section I was thrilled. Whenever I go to the movies I always read David Walsh and Joanne Laurier's reviews. It makes such a difference to watch a film armed with their insights on the role of art, the historical and social backdrop and the current nature of the film industry. Their depth of understanding always amazes me, and now I try to watch a film with a much more demanding and social critical eye.

Since reading the WSWS and becoming politicized, it has changed me completely. When I am cast in a play now I attempt to see what the writer is trying to say in the world he is living in and what is happening in that world. I am always looking for the truth, and once you know it, there is no turning back.

Last year at the Shaw Festival in Ontario where I

often work, I was cast in a Bertoldt Brecht play, "Senora Carrar's Rifles," which was written in 1937 during the Spanish Civil War. The play itself is somewhat bereft of sharp political and historical analysis, so I was able to help the young director with the history—particularly of the role of Stalinism in undermining the revolution in Spain—and eventually gave him Ken Loach's film *Land and Freedom* to view.

The influence of the WSWS leaks into people's awareness in many ways. In his director's notes at the theatre festival, he used a quote that I gave him from Trotsky which is terrific. "No devil yet voluntarily cut off his own claws." That is pretty much how I see the financial elite of today, and I thank the WSWS for educating me in so many varied ways.



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