COVID-19 Social and Political Analyses

New Politics lists on this page a number of what we consider to be important social and political analyses as well as political statements concerning COVID-19, the coronavirus pandemic. Those who seek guidance for dealing with the health issues should see the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website and get in contact with their local government’s public health department or office of emergency management.

We update this list on a regular basis, but all articles are posted in chronological order.

- Rebecca Gordon, “The Future May Be Female But the Pandemic Is Patriarchal,” Tomgram, March 31, 2020. Looks back at earlier plans for May Day without women, turns to impact of corona virus on women suggesting they face many risks, and asks what will come after.
- Sonia Shah, “How Trump Is Going to Get Away With a Pandemic,” The Nation, Marh 31, 2020. “There are lots of ways for the Trump administration to cook the data to hide the extent of the coronavirus outbreak—in fact, it already is doing so.”
- Dan La Botz, “The Coronavirus Strikes and their Significance, So Far”, New Politics, March 31, 2020. “If wildcat strikes continue and grow they could propel new rank-and-file movements that rise to seize the leadership of the union and to turn them into fighting organizations of the working class.”
- Brazilian left parties, “Bolsonaro’s coronavirus denialism will cost lives” (text and video), No Borders, March 30, 2020. The left parties criticize the Brazilian president and threaten legal action.
▪ Vijay Prashad, Paola Estrada, Ana Maldonado and Zoe PC, “IMF Refuses Aid to Venezuela in the Midst of the Coronavirus Crisis,” The Bullet, March 30, 2020. The IMF “policy to provide special assistance to countries should have been sufficient for the IMF to provide the assistance that the Venezuelan government had requested. But, very quickly, the Fund declined the request from Venezuela.”
▪ Edgar Franks, “Fighting for justice while feeding the nation during a pandemic,” No Borders, March 29, 2020. “Puntorojo interviews Edgar Franks, Political Director of Familias Unidas por la Justicia...in Washington State. The majority of the members are Mixteco and Triqui people from Guerrero and Oaxaca, Mexico.”
▪ Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores, “Declaración del PRT frente a la emergencia que representa la

• Laura Spinney, “Is factory farming to blame for coronavirus?” The Guardian, March 28, 2020. “Scientists are tracing the path of Sars-CoV-2 from a wild animal host – but we need to look at the part played in the outbreak by industrial food production.”

• Robert Galbraith, “Cuomo Puts Private Equity Vulture in Charge of Coronavirus Economic Recovery,” Truthout, March 28, 2020. Cuomo’s former aides and appointees have deep ties to Wall Street: William Mulrow is a senior advisory director at the private equity giant Blackstone Group and Steven M. Cohen is chief administrative officer of MacAndrews & Forbes, the conglomerate owned by billionaire Cuomo donor Ronald Perelman.

• Joan Benach, “The Official Story of the Coronavirus Hides a Systemic Crisis,” The Bullet, March 28, 2020. “...Covid-19 is not only a global health problem, but is also a problem with interconnected facets of an economic, ecological and social nature, making it a systemic and political problem on which it is necessary to reflect.”

• Katie, Halper, “Media Silent as Poll Workers Contract Covid-19 at Primaries That DNC, Biden Campaign Claimed Were Safe,” FAIR, March 28, 2020. “...one of our most urgent tasks is accurately informing the public about Covid-19 to counter his lies. Instead, the chair of the DNC and the Biden campaign decided to amplify Trump’s message that Covid-19 was no real impediment to public gatherings, and endangered millions of their own voters. And instead of reporting on this urgent story, the media have enabled this dangerous behavior.”

• Michael D. Shear, Abby Goodnough, Sheila Kaplan, Sheri


- Gregg Gonsalves and Amy Kapczynski, “Claims that the cure is worse than the disease rely on a false tradeoff between human needs and the economy,” Boston Review, March 27, 2020. “Claims that the cure is worse than the disease rely on a false tradeoff between human needs and the economy.”


- Marc Steiner interviews, Dr. Sonia Shah, “Covid-19, Ebola, And SARS Outbreaks Were All Unleashed By Humans,” The Real News,” March 27, 2020. “Some of the most devastating outbreaks of the modern era can be traced to rapacious development and habitat destruction that brings wild creatures into our domestic spaces.”

- No author, Health care workers across Mexico protest shortages of supplies,” Mexico News Daily, March 27, 2020. “Staff from Mexico City to Yucatán, doctors and nurses are demanding face masks, gowns and gloves.”
Eamonn McCann, “Ireland nationalizes hospitals—‘It Can be Done’,” No Borders, March 27, 2020. “Written just before this announcement, here Eamonn McCann looks at how production can be reorganized to solve the coronavirus crisis and more.”

Rachel M. Cohen, “To Develop a Covid-19 vaccine, pharma and the Federal Government Will Have to Break Old Patterns,” The Intercept, March 27, 2020. Asks, if and when a vaccine for Covid-19 is approved, then what? “Will distributing a vaccine resemble the embarrassing efforts to distribute coronavirus tests? Does the government even have the capacity to manufacture a vaccine as quickly and widely as needed?”


Justin Akers Chacón, “Bailouts are class warfare” Puntorojo, March 26,2020. A new phase in the crisis of neoliberalism is now unfolding in the form of a battle between capital labor and labor.

Ontario Health Coalition, “Austerity and the Crisis in Healthcare,” The Bullet, March 26, 2020. Calls for increased funding and shifts in funding to deal with all health care issues as well as coronavirus.

Kathleen McLaughlin, “When Butte wouldn’t shut down: The devastation of the 1918 flu and our collective trauma,” Mountain Time, March 26, 2020. “So many people buried in these grounds died 102 years ago in a flu pandemic, in part because powerful people in the city refused to shut everything down to stop the spread of the virus.”

- South African Federation of Trade Unions, “The state isn’t pulling its weight!” March 26, 2020. The federation argues that the anti-viral lockdown is a social-distancing start – but fiscal stinginess and tight monetary policy risk a rebellion born of extreme desperation.
- Roberto Luzzi, “Facing the coronavirus-capitalist epidemic in Italy,” No Borders, March 26, 2020. Union leader Roberto Luzzi “explains how the compulsion for profit has transformed Italy into the most intense Covid-19 killing zone in the world.”
- *Martin Thomas, “Lessons from past pandemics,” Workers Liberty, March 25 2020. Earlier experiences in “…1891-2 and 1918 suggest that if socialists organise well in the crisis, then after it our message of democratic social solidarity can gain ground to change things for good.”
- Daniel Boguslaw, “Dock Workers Threaten to Shut Down Ports After Risking Coronavirus Exposure,” Vice, March 25, 2020. “Members of a historically-militant union are demanding sanitary conditions while working ports that serve as major shipping arteries.”
- Mike Davis, “Lessons from Wuhan,” The Nation, March 25, 2020. Discusses the question of why China was successful in containing the virus.
- Science for the People, Statement on the COVID-19 Pandemic, March 25, 2020. Makes demands on government and private institutions. This is a short version of the statement with link to complete statement.
- Javier Pineda, Popular revolt, feminist mass strikes, and Covid-19 in Chile, No Borders, March 25, 2020. Provides an account of the growth of the pandemic in Chile, the government response, the reaction of the left, social movements, and the trade unions.
- Christine Berry, “The Covid-19 pandemic will change everything – for better or worse,” Verso, March 24, 2020. Author “…argues, crises aren’t only opportunities for the left, and the conditions that are emerging could well play into the hands of a renewed far-right.”
- Tyler Zimmer, “Capitalism Has Failed—We Need a Planned Economy,” Rampant, March 24, 2020. March 24, 2020. The “free market” offers no solutions to the problems we face. “To overcome the present crisis, we have to take the reins into our own hands and democratically plan a future for all.”
- Alan MacLeod, “In Pursuit of Chinese Scapegoats, Media Reject Life-Saving Lessons,” FAIR, March 24, 2020. “For weeks, conservative media echoed the explicit Trump line that the reaction to COVID-19 was a liberal “hoax”
weaponized against the White House.” Also discusses Trump’s racism and the question of China.


- International Crisis Group, COVID-19 and Conflict: Seven Trends to Watch, Crisis Group, March 24, 2020. ‘The COVID-19 pandemic unquestionably presents an era-defining challenge to public health and the global economy. Its political consequences, both short- and long-term, are less well understood.”


- Jeet Heer, “Trump Toys With a Let-Them-Die Response to the Pandemic,” The Nation, March 23, 2020. Explains that goaded by the right-wing media, the president is arguing for a dangerous nihilistic strategy of letting the virus run wild in order to save the economy.

- Emma David, “The cradle will rock,” RS-21, March 23,
2020. The social crisis produced by the coronavirus has had a major impact on children and their care. A nursery worker reflects on a fortnight of uncertainty and change.

- Walden Bello, “Coronavirus and the Death of ‘Connectivity’,” Foreign Policy in Focus, March 22, 2020. Bello argues that China rescued globalization after the financial crash in 2008, but the coronavirus crisis has put deglobalization back on the agenda. Whether this will move in reactionary or progressive direction remains to be seen.
- Doug Henwood, “Now Is the Time to Fundamentally Transform America,” Jacobin, March 21, 2020. State that with this crisis, “The market will never do it on its own. It may not be socialism, but if we do it well, it will legitimate a public sector badly in need of legitimation.” And proposes a social democratic program.
- Orion, Rummler, “America’s hospitals, doctors and nurses urge Trump to ramp up medical supplies,” Axios, March


Daniel Denvir interviews Mike Davis on Coronavirus Politics, The Dig, (Audio), March 20, 2020. Davis discusses coronavirus in terms of history, politics, and the left.

“Chinese Virus,” World Market.” N+1, March 20, 2020. Despite the title, argues that “Chinese virus” is a racist and xenophobic term, discusses Chinese origins, the role of the market in spreading the disease, and the search for a vaccine.

Amy Goodman Interviews Mariame Kaba, “Solidarity Not Charity: Mutual Aid & How to Organize in the Age of Coronavirus,” Democracy Now, March 20, 2020. “We look at the incredible community networks across the country that are coming together to protect their neighbors
during the coronavirus pandemic — and how you can get involved.”


- Emmanuel Saez and Gabriel Zucman, “Social Insurance in a Time of Pandemic: A Proposal for the Government to Act as Buyer of Last Resort,” Dollars and Sense, March/April 2020. Argues that “a buyer-of-last-resort program would alleviate the hardship of workers and businesses and maintain the cash flow for families and businesses, so that the coronavirus shock has no secondary impacts on demand—such as laid-off workers cutting down on consumption—and a quick rebound can take place once demand comes back.”

- Ellen Engelstad, “Norway’s Workers Insisted They Shouldn’t Pay for Coronavirus — And They Won,” Jacobin, March 19, 2020. Explains that a split in the government allowed the trade unions to pressure the government “to pass a new and much more social set of measures” giving workers full pay for 20 days and then 80 percent of pay and 62 percent of all else.


- Valerio Arcary, “Nothing will be the same. Notes on the Covid-19 emergency in Brazil,” No Borders, March 19,
2020. Arcary writes, “We cannot predict to what extent today’s determining political factors will remain in place. Nothing will be the same.”


- Huron Valley Labor, “Community Response to COVID-19,” undated but March 2020. We post this as an example of many local initiatives being taken.


- Charles Davis, “Sanders proposes $2,000 monthly cash payments until the end of the coronavirus crisis,” Business Insider, March 18, 2020. Sanders calls on the U.S. government to give each household $2,000 per month until the crisis ends.

- Cbris Brooks, “Auto Companies Announce Closure Following

- Danny, Katch, “NYC Public Hospital Worker Warns ‘We Should Expect the Worst’ From Coronavirus,” Indypendent, March 18, 2020. An interview with Sean Petty, a pediatric emergency room nurse, who argues that, because of government policies, the hospital are ill prepared for pandemic.


- Fourth International Bureau, “Covid-19 pandemic: let’s protect our lives not their profits!” March 18, 2020. Describes the current situation as a crisis of the capitalist system and puts the emphasis on self-organization.


Federation of Teachers of Puerto Rico and the National Union of Educators and Education Workers make demands on the government.

- Dr Sabine L. van Elsland and Ryan O’Hare COVID-19, “Imperial researchers model likely impact of public health measures,” March 17, 2020. British scientists argue that various mitigation methods could reduce deaths by half.
- Rampant editorial collective, “A Light at the End of the World,” Rampant, March 17, 2020. States that COVID-19 inaugurates a new era and that the future will be shuttered by repression or it will be built upon solidarity.
- John Westmoreland, “Lessons from the Spanish flu of 1919: internationalism and people before profit,” Counterfire, March 17, 2020. Looks at the origins and impact of the 1919 flu and argues it had no particular national origin but was cause by capitalism and war.
term needs.


- National Nurses United, “Nurses: Time to sharply ramp up health care capacity for COVID-19,” March 16, 2020. Argues that there is inadequate equipment for nurses and criticizes the CDC and the American Hospital Association; makes demands for personal protective equipment for nurses.


- Naomi Klein, “Coronavirus Capitalism and How to Beat It,” The Intercept, March 16, 2020. A video and short text claims that the coronavirus provides opportunities both to capital and to people; argues for a green future.

- Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN): “We call for not a loss of human contact but only a temporary change in its forms,” March 16, 2020. Call for closing off the Zapatista communities, for extraordinary hygiene measures, and for continuing with other struggles.


and democracy.

- Working Class Perspective, “Class and the Challenge of COVID-19,” March 16, 2020. Notes that workers will be most impacted, that class will affect the response, calls for solidarity and internationalism.
- Daniel Tanuro, “Eight Theses,” International Viewpoint, March 15, 2020. Calls upon the left to analyze the dynamic interaction of capitalism, the environment, and health to understand the crisis.
- Michael Roberts, “It was the virus that did it,” March 15, 2020. The effect of the pandemic on an already fragile world economy.
- Ryan Grim, “Dispatch from a Nurse on the Frontlines of the effort to Contain Coronavirus,” The Intercept, March 14, 2020. A nurse from a rural state in the United States states that there has been inadequate preparation, leadership, and resources.
2020. Critique of bill passed by the House of Representatives.


• Mike Davis, “COVID-19: The monster is finally at the door,” Links, March 12, 2020. On the roots of the pandemic and why we need peoples’ movements to break the power of Big Pharma and for-profit healthcare.
• Chris Hill, “The Cripples Will Save You’: A Critical Coronavirus Message from a Disability Activist,” March 6, 2020. Makes the case for the inclusion and importance of the disabled and argues that their perspective can contribute to dealing with coronavirus.
• Eric Toussaint, “No, the coronavirus is not responsible for the fall of stock prices,” Committee for the Abolition of Illegitimate Debt, March 5, 2020. Argues that coronavirus only detonated an economic crisis that was to be expected.
