

Our Most-Viewed Articles of 2020

December 31, 2020



The last 12 months have been tumultuous ones, particularly in the United States—a failed impeachment trial of Donald Trump, the global coronavirus pandemic and the worst economic downturn since the 1930s, the police murder of George Floyd followed by the biggest protest movement in U.S. history, the most polarized U.S. presidential election in living memory, with Trump still refusing to admit that he lost.

Here are some of our most-viewed articles from the past year. Unsurprisingly, many of them were about the election and electoral strategy for the left—they don't represent the full-range of issues covered by *New Politics* and they don't represent the full-range of perspectives that you will find on our website and in our pages, but they do give an idea of what was on the minds of our readers. Many thanks to our contributors.

If you would like to support our work, please consider making a (tax-deductible) donation to the magazine. And please also consider subscribing to the print edition of *New Politics*. Our Winter 2021 issue will be out in January (see below).

Best wishes to all our readers and supporters for a new year in which the socialist movement continues to grow.

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Problems with an Electoral Road to Socialism in the United States (Winter 2020) by Kit Wainer & Mel Bienenfeld

“When radical socialists win office within the existing state, they will always be subject to an opposition with plenty of power to block or reverse socialist measures. Pro-capitalist politicians will continue to control some parts of the federal government, which they can use to obstruct. A workers’ government that insists on operating within the U.S. constitutional framework will never be able to transcend this impasse.”

The Socialist Position on the Latest U.S. Attack on Iran: The Assassination of Suleimani (Jan 4) by Dan La Botz

“President Donald Trump has virtually declared war on Iran with the assassination of Maj. Gen. Qassim Suleimani, leader of Iran’s elite Quds Force, in an airstrike near Baghdad International Airport. The assassination of Suleimani will very likely lead to war, though it is unclear how such a war will develop and what form it will take. How do American socialists decide our position on this new situation?”

The “PMC” Does Not Exist and Why it Matters for Socialists (Jan 9) by David Camfield

“Most of the people labelled “PMC” by users of the term should instead be understood as part of the working class (a minority are not, chiefly middle managers). This means that the working class is both *broader* and more *internally-divided* by workplace hierarchies, educational credentials, and other cleavages than many socialists realize, as well as divided by gender, racial and other forms of oppression.”

Bern After Reading: Sanders and Socialist Strategy (Jan 28) by Andrew Sernatinger

“If our goal is to develop class consciousness, this will be through mass movements and confrontation with employers. Our message should explicitly create a path from Sanders to on the ground organizing; as it stands, the formulation is inverted where organizing flows *to* Sanders.”

Why is Biden Winning? (Mar 5) by Dan La Botz

“Sanders proved to be weaker than many of his supporters understood. His fundamental strategy failed: Young voters and other new voters did not turn out in numbers large enough to change the balance of forces and bring him victory. In fact, many young people, as he has himself admitted, didn’t turn out to vote. And where voter turnout did increase, for example in Virginia (spectacularly) and Texas, the majority were moderate voters who cast their ballots for Biden.”

Facing Reality: The Socialist Left, the Sanders Campaign and Our Future (Apr 14) by Charles Post & Ashley Smith

“DSA needs to put most of its energy into rebuilding mass resistance amidst the pandemic and engaging in electoral work when it advances organizing our power from below—something that is impossible within the Democratic Party.”

Building Class Power, Not Electoralism, Is the Future of the Left (Apr 16) by Natalia Tylim

“While Bernie’s program remains very popular, the Sanders campaign hit the limit of what the Left can expect to win through an electoral vehicle alone, built primarily around ideological appeals for reforms. However popular these demands are, without class organization, and mass movements behind them giving credibility and successfully struggling and winning things, such demands will seem out of reach and can easily be brushed aside by more conservative narratives about being “realistic” and the threat of Trump being too great to risk a polarizing candidate.”

An “All Hands on Deck” Moment: Sixty-Six Old New Leftists Urge Support for Joe Biden (Apr 18) by Paul Le Blanc

“The letter of the sixty-six appeals to the lessons of history, which I think is always a good idea. What they do with history, however, strikes me as selective and superficial. The actualities of history undermine the case they make. After following my old friends down the pathways of the past, I will want to return to what seems to me to make sense in the present moment.”

The Movement for Black Lives Is Different This Time (Summer 2020) by Haley Pessin

“While mainstream media have fixated on incidents of “looting” and property destruction, the wealthiest Americans became \$400 billion richer during the pandemic. At a time when 40 million people are unemployed, this only serves to highlight the fact that this capitalist society puts a greater value on profit than on human life. The rebellion against racist police brutality has exposed these deadly priorities like no other force.”

Why Leftists in Most States Should Vote Green (Aug 2) by Michael Hirsch

“A vote for Hawkins in any of the non-battleground states, if only *de minimus* to secure ongoing ballot access and federal funding for the party’s effort to soldier on, is the least we leftists can do.”

Don’t Support Biden, Even Against Trump (Oct 10) by Six Members of the New Politics Board

“There is no lack of outrage at the rank injustices of the system under which we live. What is in short supply is the vision and hope that something can be done about them. One of the biggest obstacles

to radical change is the misplaced loyalty that millions feel for the Democratic Party, despite the lack of enthusiasm that most have for its current leader.”

Racism and Capitalism (Dec 8) by Phil Gasper

“Because capitalism and racism are intertwined, and because of the role that racism plays in dividing the working class, if we want to fight against capitalism and class inequality, anti-racism has to be at the center of our activity.”

Biden’s pick for Secretary of Education: What to expect from Cardona? (Dec 22) by Lois Weiner

“Parents, teachers, students who use the schools have the right to shape their future, to reimagine and make it. We want equality of educational outcomes as well as economic security for working people, health care, housing, food security – a program for social justice and school quality. We should let Miguel Cardona know we want to have his back if he defends what schools, teachers, students really need – while we simultaneously prepare for his not doing so.”



Our Winter 2021 issue is at the printer and will be mailed to subscribers soon. Contributions by Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, Kim Moody, Mike Gonzalez, Lois Weiner, Au Loong-Yu, Stephen Steinberg, and many others. If you don’t yet have a subscription, please consider getting one. Here are a couple of articles assessing the 2020 election that will be in the new issue:

Biden Replaces Trump: A Malignant “Normalcy” Is Restored by Thomas Harrison

“Biden’s win is the triumph not of democracy but of an oligarchic status quo, itself an increasingly authoritarian system. And I suggest that the conclusions to be drawn from the election point toward a different perspective going forward for the left.”

The 2020 Elections in the United States: A Socialist View from Afar by Rohini Hensman

“Many of us watching with envy from afar have nothing but admiration for the way in which a would-be dictator has been peacefully overthrown.”