

# GUIDE TO PROGRESSIVE PUBLICATIONS FOR DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS

Being a democratic socialist, or any other kind of progressive activist for that matter, involves understanding the problems that plague our world, figuring out how to fight against them and also projecting a vision of what we're working toward. To that end, there are a number of excellent publications--magazines, journals, newspapers, websites and others--that can help us stay informed about the political developments occurring around us while also creating space for democratic debate, dialogue and reflection. Below we've listed some of the better sources of news, commentary and analysis available in print and on the internet. There are democratic socialists who write for each of these publications, though they are all unique in the range of political perspectives they offer, the issues they cover, and the audiences they reach. This is by no means a complete list of alternative media--it does not include indispensable left-wing programs like Pacifica Radio's *Democracy Now!* ([www.democracynow.org](http://www.democracynow.org)) nor have we listed quality local or non-U.S. based publications. There are countless other progressive magazines, blogs, newsletters, radio programs, books, films, and other media outlets that one can turn to. With that said, we recommend the following publications to our members and to the progressive community at large.

*(Note: This list is in alphabetical order. Following the name and homepages of each publication is a description of them taken from their own websites. The underlined text below each section is a quick note that explains where each publication fits into the diverse world of left-wing media.)*

## THE AMERICAN PROSPECT [www.prospect.org](http://www.prospect.org)

*The American Prospect* was founded in 1990 as an authoritative magazine of liberal ideas, committed to a just society, an enriched democracy, and effective liberal politics. Robert Kuttner, Robert Reich, and Paul Starr launched the magazine initially as a quarterly.

Since then, the Prospect has grown into a monthly magazine with a paid circulation of 55,000, a special in-depth report in most issues, and a daily Web magazine with more than 300,000 monthly visitors.

The Prospect's articles generate debate, further ideas, and set agendas. We explore and challenge the conservative views of policy and politics that have been so seductive in this era. Political leaders and journalists look to the Prospect to see what smart, resolute liberals have to say. *The American Prospect* does not back political candidates, nor does it attempt to achieve unanimity or even consistency among its writers.

While not the best place if you're looking for radical viewpoints, *The American Prospect* does well at chronicling developments in liberal thought and inside-the-beltway politics, and has good labor reporting by Harold Meyerson. An excellent source for progressive policy wonks.

## COMMON DREAMS [www.commondreams.org](http://www.commondreams.org)

An eclectic mix of politics, issues and breaking news with an emphasis on progressive perspectives that are increasingly hard to find with our corporate-dominated media. Updated several times a day, Common Dreams is a valuable on-line source of commentary and articles from a wide range of prominent liberals and radicals. The side bar column on the Common Dreams site lists and links to a wide variety of other lefty publications and media organizations.

## DISSENT [www.dissentmagazine.org](http://www.dissentmagazine.org)

Dissent is a quarterly magazine of politics and culture edited by Mitchell Cohen and Michael Walzer. In the words of the New York Times, Dissent "ranks among the handful of political journals read most regularly by U.S. intellectuals."

A magazine of the left, Dissent is also a magazine of independent minds. A magazine of strong opinions, Dissent is also a magazine that welcomes the clash of strong opinions.

Each issue features reflective articles about politics in the U.S., incisive social and cultural commentary, plus the most sophisticated coverage of European politics you'll find anywhere outside of Europe. As the Utne Reader says, "Politics, economics, and culture come together in every article, giving the entire publication a balance most political journals lack."

Founded in 1954 at the height of McCarthyism, *Dissent* remains a very well-written journal of left-liberal and social-democratic opinion, one that is often critical of what it views as the excesses of the radical left. With a rather diverse editorial range, a number of *Dissent* writers support controversial U.S. military interventions on what they regard as humanitarian grounds. While few among their regular contributors would list "socialism" as among their main concerns anymore, *Dissent* continues to be a thoughtful publication for progressive activists. An excellent source for anyone who wants to read up on the arguments of the day, either to beef up ones own position or to skewer the other side.

## IN THESE TIMES [www.inthesetimes.com](http://www.inthesetimes.com)

*In These Times* is dedicated to informing and analyzing popular movements for social, environmental and economic justice; to providing a forum for discussing the politics that shape our lives; and to producing a magazine that is read by the broadest and most diverse audience possible.

In 1976, author and historian James Weinstein founded *In These Times* with the mission to “identify and clarify the struggles against corporate power now multiplying in American society.” Weinstein was joined in establishing this independent magazine of news, culture and opinion by noted intellectuals Daniel Ellsberg, E.P. Thompson, Noam Chomsky, Barbara Ehrenreich, Julian Bond and Herbert Marcuse, all of whom were among the original sponsors of the magazine.

A dedication to independent journalism based on progressive values is one of the primary characteristics separating *In These Times* from the conventional, corporate and increasingly embedded media.

*In These Times* started out as an independent leftist newspaper and now runs as a biweekly newsmagazine. While no longer officially socialist, it remains a useful resource, particularly for labor reporting by David Moberg, African American politics by Salim Muwakkil, and increasingly improved cultural coverage.

### **MONTHLY REVIEW** [www.monthlyreview.org](http://www.monthlyreview.org)

In May 1949 *Monthly Review* began publication in New York City, as cold war hysteria gathered force in the United States. The first issue featured the lead article [Why Socialism?](#) by Albert Einstein. From the first *Monthly Review* spoke for socialism and against U.S. imperialism, and is still doing so today. From the first *Monthly Review* was independent of any political organization, and is still so today. The McCarthy era inquisition targeted *Monthly Review's* original editors Paul Sweezy and Leo Huberman, who fought back successfully. In the subsequent global upsurge against capitalism, imperialism and the commodification of life (in shorthand “1968”) *Monthly Review* played a global role. A generation of activists received no small part of their education as subscribers to the magazine and readers of *Monthly Review* Press books. In the intervening years of counter-revolution, *Monthly Review* has kept a steady viewpoint. That point of view is the heartfelt attempt to frame the issues of the day with one set of interests foremost in mind: those of the great majority of humankind, the propertyless.

For a number of years *Monthly Review* was virtually the only place one could read radical political economy, and even with the death of Paul Sweezy (the "dean" of American Marxist economists), political economy remains its greatest strength. Originally a critical supporter of the Soviet Union, later of China, and today some of its articles remain colored by a "soft Maoism." *MR* tends to be uncritically supportive of Fidel Castro. Political problems aside, *MR* is often worth reading.

### **MOTHER JONES** [www.motherjones.com](http://www.motherjones.com)

Mother Jones is an independent nonprofit whose roots lie in a commitment to social justice implemented through first rate investigative reporting.

With a large circulation topping 100,000, *Mother Jones* is a progressive publication named after the great socialist agitator Mary Harris “Mother” Jones. Coming out of the California left of the late 60’s and 70’s, *Mother Jones* is especially strong in its anti-corporate environmentalist coverage.

### **THE NATION**

[www.thenation.com](http://www.thenation.com)

*The Nation will not be the organ of any party, sect, or body. It will, on the contrary, make an earnest effort to bring to the discussion of political and social questions a really critical spirit, and to wage war upon the vices of violence, exaggeration, and misrepresentation by which so much of the political writing of the day is marred.* -- from *The Nation's* founding prospectus, 1865

As a well-established institution and the oldest continuously published magazine in the U.S., *The Nation* remains identified with left-liberalism. The magazine comes out frequently enough (on a weekly basis) to be topical. Politically, *The Nation* is a bit all-over-the-place--from the more conventional liberalism of Eric Alterman to the far-left views of Alexander Cockburn.

### **NEW POLITICS**

[www.newpol.org](http://www.newpol.org)

New Politics, a 200-page semi-annual, follows in the tradition established in its first series (1961-1978) as an independent socialist forum for dialogue and debate on the left. It stands in opposition to all forms of imperialism, and is uncompromising in its defense of feminism and affirmative action. In our pages there is broad coverage of labor and social movements, the international scene, as well as emphasis on cultural and intellectual history. Above all, New Politics insists on the centrality of democracy to socialism and on the need to rely on mass movements from below for progressive social transformation.

*New Politics* is known for its "hard" anti-capitalism and "hard" anti-Stalinism. While some of its articles may be too ultra-left for some, and many of its writers have more confidence in building a mass third party than most DSA members, it is one of the few avowedly socialist (though small in circulation) publications in the U.S. and an superb one at that.

### **THE PROGRESSIVE**

[www.progressive.org](http://www.progressive.org)

The mission of *The Progressive* is to be a journalistic voice for peace and social justice at home and abroad. The magazine, its affiliates, and its staff steadfastly oppose militarism, the concentration of power in corporate hands, the disenfranchisement of the citizenry, poverty, and prejudice in all its guises. We champion peace, social and economic justice, civil rights, civil liberties, human rights, a preserved environment, and a reinvigorated democracy.

*The Progressive* originally comes out of the midwestern Progressive populist movement of the early 1900’s. Though not very ideological, this lefty monthly publication is known for its muckraking journalism and quality featured interviews.

### **ZNET**

[www.zmag.org](http://www.zmag.org)

If a radical article has been published recently, you can probably find it posted on the ZNet website, particularly if it's been written by a "big" name. Connected to *Z Magazine*, ZNet and the articles it features tend to focus on international political developments and debates within activist movements.