

THE CHOO CHOO SOCIALIST REVIEW

The latest news and updates from Chattanooga DSA

DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!

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Sweater Weather & Socialism

by Sierra White, Chattanooga DSA Co-Chair

Hello and Happy Fall, Comrades! I'm incredibly excited for Chattanooga DSA's 2nd edition of the *Choo Choo Socialist Review*. I want to give a special shoutout to Jane, Martha, Sarah, and Sarah Anne for all the time, energy, and love they've invested in this over the past few months. If you are interested in helping out with this project, you can join the #newsletter channel on Slack. Our awesome team will get you looped in.

Over the past few months, we've been involved in a variety of national, statewide, and local projects. We participated in the DSA National Convention and the Chattanooga Trans Liberation Rally. We've also been hard at work planning a local TN statewide convention with comrades from chapters all around the state. The convention will take place virtually on Zoom October 15-17th. You can sign up at bit.ly/TNComrades for the free virtual convention, and you can find the full schedule of events at bit.ly/TNComradesEvents. All DSA members are welcome!

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In addition, we've made time to learn and grow together as socialists at our monthly Socialist Night Schools. We've read about the inherent problems of capitalism, why the working class and solidarity are so important, and much more. Socialist Night Schools have proven to be a great way to not only learn, but they have helped us hone our communication skills and deepen our relationships with each other during this time of social distancing. It can be tricky and intimidating to talk to friends, family, and co-workers about socialism, or organizing your workplace, and participating in socialist night school is a great way to help us feel more comfortable talking about these issues and concerns in our day to day lives.

As we head into another rainy pandemic fall, here's a quiz to help you find some good quality content to encourage some socialist thought and conversation with friends and family. Let's get started:

What are you in the mood for?

- a. Something fun and light that I can watch with friends
- b. Something that will require me to use a dictionary to look up at least every other word
- c. Something that is overtly educational, but casual enough to get through quickly
- d. Something that has more of classroom vibes that I can do for free from home

I enjoy....

- a. Teen dramas
- b. Theoretical discussions
- c. Switching it up, depending on what I am in the mood for
- d. Watching rather than reading

If I could have any treat right now, it would be:

- a. A macaron (or a croissant)
- b. A hot black coffee (no explanation needed)
- c. Nachos (so I can curate every bite perfectly)
- d. Bubble tea (so I can keep my hands free for notes)

If you got ...

Mostly A's: Two words - Gossip Girl (the original, of course, Gossip Girl is nothing without Blair). You may be wondering, "Sierra, isn't Gossip Girl about rich Manhattan teenagers?" and you would most certainly be correct. But it is very entertaining to watch the .01% teens and their parents sell each other out and ruin their own lives because of boredom, envy, and jealousy. It really highlights the lengths the wealthy will go to to protect their wealth, power, and privilege. Plus the fashion and dry wit are unparalleled in the world of 00's teen dramas. You can watch it on HBO Max. Send me a DM with all your GG hot takes while you watch, please!

Mostly B's: Peter has had this deep read on his list to check out (go to bit.ly/StealingFireFromGods). If you got this, send him a DM on Slack to discuss the reading and compare notes.

Mostly C's: I recommend looking through the Socialist Night School Curriculums that national working groups and DSA chapters have put together. They include a lot of great content with links to the readings. You can check out the Socialist Feminist Curriculum at bit.ly/SocialistFeminist and Philly DSA's curriculum at phillydsa.org/night_school. And be sure to join our #socialist-night-school Slack channel so you can join us for an upcoming Zoom session! We host them monthly.

Mostly D's: Late last spring as we were transitioning into lockdown, I found this Marxian Economics Course online that is taught by a very engaging UMass professor, which reminded me just a little bit of Bernie. I loved 'taking' the class on Youtube. It was a great intro to the mathematical/econ side of Marx. You can watch the class at bit.ly/MarxEcon.

Post your quiz results in the #chat channel in Slack so you can find other Chatt DSA members who got the same results. I'd love to hear your own recommendations, too!

Where Your Dues Went

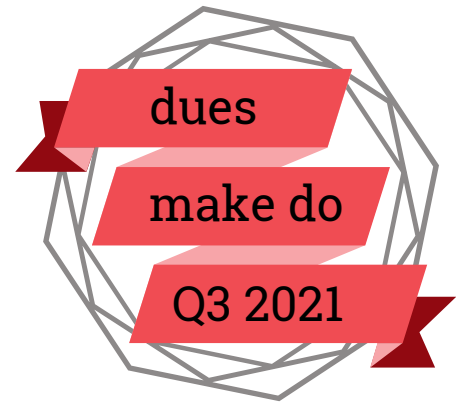
by Jaime Booth, Chattanooga DSA Treasurer

2021 incoming dues as of September 4 - \$1,065

2021 incoming donations as of September 4 - \$846.52

While keeping up with our accessible meetings and awesome website, we also were able to pay for a great voting tool that helped us decide on our national convention delegates!

Don't forget that you can always ask for funds for purposes related to our work!



CALEB Implements Restorative Justice Program at Orchard Knob Elementary

by Sarah Millard

The school-to-prison pipeline - it's something that affects us too close to home. Chattanoogaans in Action for Love, Equality, and Benevolence (CALEB) is working to end the school-to-prison pipeline in Hamilton County, starting with Orchard Knob Elementary School.

WHAT'S THE SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE?

According to 2019 data from the Hamilton County Department of Education (HCDE), schools in Hamilton County rely heavily on suspensions and expulsions as management for "bad" behavior. Black students are 3-4x more likely to be suspended or expelled than white students, and this rate is higher for boys than girls as well. Being suspended or expelled means children are out of school more often. According to the US Departments of Education and Justice, "Studies have suggested a correlation between exclusionary discipline policies and practices and an array of serious educational, economic, and social problems,"* including increased school dropouts and higher incarceration rates. That's exactly what CALEB is aiming to change in Hamilton County with their new program at Orchard Knob Elementary (OKE).

WHAT'S THE NEW PROGRAM LIKE?

Starting this school year, CALEB has implemented a 3-year restorative practice training program for the teachers and staff of OKE. Restorative practices disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline by removing exclusionary discipline like suspensions. Instead, teachers will learn how to address the underlying cause of negative behavior, helping children communicate and take responsibility for their actions within the school setting. This kind of social and emotional learning leads to behavioral change, especially when taught early, and better equips children to form healthy relationships. Additionally, restorative practices instill a sense of community and shared responsibility in children, helping them become caring and empathetic adults and leading to a more equitable society.

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The new program is a partnership between OKE, CALEB, UnifiEd, and professors at Southern Adventist University. In fact, the trainer for the program is Megan Wimpleburg, a teacher at OKE. She was inspired by the results of restorative justice when she implemented them in her own classroom in 2019, and recently went back to school to earn her master's degree in the method. The principal of the school is also on board, and the community has gotten excited as word of the program spreads. According to CALEB, restorative justice programs like this can reduce suspensions and expulsions anywhere from 15-50% - what a difference that will make!

Of course, the impact of the program will depend partly on how much support it gets as a community. Tennesseans like to say we support teachers, but statewide, only 2.9% of available state resources are spent on education. Only 19% of Tennessee school districts meet the state goal of 1 certified social worker for every 1500 students, and that's not even close to the best practice standard of 1 social worker to 250 students instead. Teachers have relied on suspensions and expulsions so heavily because they don't have the resources and tools to do otherwise. The new program at OKE will begin to bridge that gap. But we need to make sure OKE continues to get the resources it needs to implement and continue the program successfully.

HOW CAN WE HELP?

The more people on board with the program, the more successful it will be. The CALEB Education Taskforce, which has been working with OKE, is always in need of people to help get the word out. Canvassing events were held the last week of September, and there are more volunteer opportunities planned. To learn more about CALEB, the restorative justice program, and sign up to help out, visit www.calebcha.org.

CALEB is a coalition made up of member organizations in Chattanooga. The Chattanooga DSA is a member of CALEB.

**U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice, Dear Colleague Letter on the Nondiscriminatory Administration of School Discipline (Jan. 8, 2014)*

DSA National Convention Report

by Katie Keel, Chattanooga DSA Co-Chair

The DSA National Convention is held every other year. This year, we were awarded three delegates, and the chapter chose Sierra White (co-chair), Cindy Parker (secretary), me (Katie Keel, co-chair) to attend, with Peter Sooley as a delegate.

Over the seven-day convention, we each had the opportunity to observe DSA internal democracy at length, the good and the bad. As far as actual business went, there were things passed that we agreed and disagreed with, but nothing that passed or failed was a complete dealbreaker for any of us in terms of ideology or views.

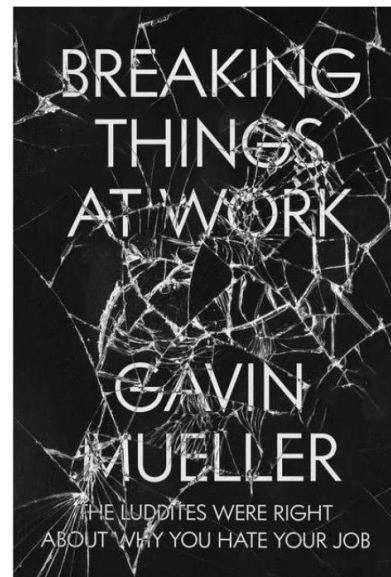
Resolutions at the convention are "priced" in terms of monetary cost and staff time, but the convention body doesn't vote on which approved resolutions will be prioritized, so anything passed at the convention may or may not make it to national organizing priority and become campaigns we can work on, depending on what the NPC decides to do.

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Join the Book Club!

by Martha Hunter, book club organizer

Mark your calendars for Sunday, Oct. 10 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. We'll be discussing *Breaking Things at Work: The Luddites Are Right About Why You Hate Your Job* by Gavin Mueller (40% off as a paper or e-book at Verso right now!) Even if you can't get through the full text, we'd love for you to join. I'll post the Zoom link in the #readings channel (where group details are always shared) closer to Oct. 10. Closed captioning will be provided. Be sure to DM me if you'd like to be added to that channel or have any questions, and happy reading!



We select the next book at each meeting. Here are some of the books we've discussed so far.

- *The End of Policing* by Alex S. Vitale
- *The Fire Next Time* by James Baldwin
- *How We Get Free: Black Feminism & the Combahee River Collective* by Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor
- *The Huey P. Newton Reader*
- *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists During the Great Depression* by Robin D.G. Kelley
- *Work Won't Love You Back* by Sarah Jaffe

Looking forward to seeing you on the 10th!

... Convention Report (continued from page 4)

Regardless, here are some notable resolutions that passed:

An official DSA platform, for the first time

Chapter matching funds to hire staff and open offices, which is exciting

Building a Mass Party (a resolution to make DSA into a political party at some point, also previously affirmed at 2019 convention)

Building a Mass Socialist Organization

Universal childcare campaign

A recommitment to labor work as central to DSA's existence

We look forward to finding out what kind of issue campaign infrastructure and chapter work we'll be able to participate in in the next two years as a result of this convention. Solidarity!

Attend an Upcoming Event

- General meeting: To be announced
- CALEB Coalition Meetings: Second Thursday each month
- Socialist Night School: Oct. 7 (sex work module)
- Socialist Book Club: Oct. 10 (*Breaking Things at Work*)
- Tennessee DSA Convention: Oct. 15-17
- Join our Slack and follow us on Facebook and Instagram for more info on upcoming events!