

GUIDELINES FOR DEMOCRATIC LEFT BLOG POSTS

If you have written for us in the past, you may send us a pitch rather than a full blog post, and we will let you know if we would like you to submit a full piece. Otherwise, please submit a full post.

1. Length should be 500-1000 words. Exceptions can be made for complex issues, but try to be succinct.
2. Posts should be analytic, not descriptive. If a DSA local's action is being reported, it should be linked to an analysis. Think about what a democratic socialist position should be on whatever you're writing about.
3. Write in a way that is accessible but smart.
4. Whenever possible, provide an image. Send an image with appropriate credit, or a link to a public domain image. 100 dpi is fine, since this is for a website. Provide a caption or some form of identification of content.
5. Sign the piece as you wish to be identified, and provide a one-line identifier at the end of the post. (The local chapter you're a member of, for example, or a position you hold that makes you knowledgeable about the topic.)
6. Style: DL blog follows AP style, except that we capitalize Right and Left as political groups or positions. The author need not be concerned about style--the editorial committee will edit for style.
7. Citations: Provide links to online sources if possible. Provide a citation for direct quotes. Consider providing, at the end, links to places for more information.
8. Our goal for Democratic Left blog tone: many blog sites thrive on put-downs and mean-spirited conflict. That's not what we're interested in. We want to interest DSA members and new people to shake things up and question the status quo without promoting cynicism with one more snarky and cynical blog site.
9. Disclaimer: All posts other than official statements of national DSA will end with this disclaimer: "Individually signed posts do not necessarily reflect the views of DSA as an organization or its leadership."

10. Fair Use Guidelines for Quoting Other Articles and Posts

If you are ever unsure about whether you are on weak ground regarding fair use guidelines and quoting others' writing, you should check out the Electronic Frontier Foundation's discussion of copyright laws:

<http://www.eff.org/issues/bloggers/legal/liability/IP>
<<http://www.eff.org/issues/bloggers/legal/liability/IP>> .

The EFF writes: "Short quotations will usually be fair use, not copyright infringement ...

if you are commenting on or criticizing an item someone else has posted, you have a fair use right to quote. The law favors ‘transformative’ uses — commentary, either praise or criticism, is better than straight copying — but courts have said that even putting a piece of an existing work into a new context (such as a thumbnail in an image search engine) counts as ‘transformative.’”

The Electronic Frontier Foundation also has a broader legal guide for bloggers posted on its site: <http://www.eff.org/issues/bloggers/legal>
<<http://www.eff.org/issues/bloggers/legal>> .

11. Your piece will be edited by DL blog committee members, so expect to be asked to rewrite. Maria Svart National Director, Duane Campbell, and Barbara Joye are the editors at this time. Email info@dsausa.org with “DL BLOG SUBMISSION” in the subject line if you do not have emails for the individuals listed above.

12. You will be given final sign-off on significant changes (not copyediting for style).

13. The DL blog works on a schedule several weeks ahead, so please follow deadlines as they are agreed upon between you and your contact on the DL Blog Committee.