

Political Education Does Not Come From Reddit: What You “Learn” Will Be Wrong

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STRUGGLESSESSIONS



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What You "Learn" Will Be Wrong

Struggle Sessions Editorial Board

Some time back, a group of social media users asked our Editorial Board to help them moderate an online forum. We declined and stated extensively our reasoning behind our decision, going so far as to recommend that their internet projects be abandoned for something useful.

Instead of having the principles and common sense to keep private correspondence or disagreements private, some of these social media-dependent comrades have, true to form, spewed out their thoughts onto their preferred social media platforms, in this case accusing us of being “dismissive”. This indicates and confirms in the sharpest way all of our concerns and criticism regarding the irresponsible and ignorant idea that one can learn anything at all about Communism by interacting on such websites, sites riddled with the police and all sorts of pretenders, without a doubt, a place which lacks any verifiable or trustworthy sources. Due to this persisting trend of self-proclaimed but totally inactive and disconnected “Maoists” and “principally Maoists”, we are compelled to issue this open statement, after all we would not want to be “dismissive”. Since this is not the most important topic, we will keep this short.

For starters, what is political education from the Communist point of view? First, it is what is learned in class combat, in the trenches of the people and in

taking up these struggles earnestly and learning from one's mistakes; second, it is through collective and individual study of the important theory and history, of the experience of the ICM. Our internet-based siblings, those who insist that they can "study Communism" online have gone so far as to suggest that platforms like Reddit are "indispensable" to "political education". We disagree, and insist on maintaining connection to the living movement of the people and revolutionaries, having dispensed with this faulty form of "political education."

This demands a brief examination of education generally and Communist education specifically. Education happens anywhere in the most loose sense of the word; human beings are always learning, but they are not always learning well or always learning the correct things.

For Maoists the method of education is very practical and is based on the "learn then teach" formula, making all students teachers in one aspect and all teachers students in one aspect. The principal aspect of this forms the identity of teacher-student and student-teacher. This means something quite important—the bourgeois teacher student relationship is broken down and the educators, who are also constantly learning, take on the role of a fellow militant, *a trusted facilitator*. The idea that such trusting and symbiotic relationships can be fostered between total strangers online, in an open forum in view of both the exploiter and the exploited, the police and the policed, the oppressor and the oppressed, already closes the door to any legitimacy. This is the first main fallacy these types subscribe to, the idea that education is a spectator pastime—rather than a living struggle in which all parts are active participants and in which trusted facilitators are developed—is both bourgeois and ignorant.

Education enriches the struggle and cannot be confused for a mere accumulation of data and facts. It must be done justice with correct methods.

What is Communist political education? It is the study of the scientific means to make revolution; that is to say, it is the study of how to violently overthrow

the existing order and replace it with a new one. The idea that open, public, unregulated mediums controlled by the ruling class is an acceptable place to conduct such an exchange is vulgar, voyeuristic, and appealing to the agent provocateur. Your online study group is a honey pot for the police, know this and abandon such nonsense, such pretend revolution which does bear real world consequences.

Of course, the mentality that Communist political education can be conducted online sprouts like weeds from the default opportunism found in imperialist countries, where people are prone to trust their oppressors with their “democratic rights” no matter how many times these rights are systemically and consistently violated. Their faith in the internet rivals only that of the electoral cretins who poses such faith in the state to legitimize their elections. They are legalists, through and through. To conduct oneself online in such a manner screams one thing: what we are studying is not serious, it will not be applied to overthrow the existing order, therefore we can safely talk about these things in front of the enemy—we trust the enemy to understand our intellectual pursuits and not confuse us for actual revolutionaries. There are no Bolsheviks in these forums, only Mensheviks. There is no way of sidestepping this.

We must understand the great difficulty those who have constituted and reconstituted Communist Parties around the world have endured to develop clandestine war machines capable of taking state power. The bourgeois illusions of democracy have eroded the rational thinking of these comrades. Communist political education is a security concern; it has been proven such throughout the history of all serious political movements. Underground study circles, though fewer and smaller, are certainly more valuable than the open and disturbed study groups conducted on social media platforms. The first is serious and takes its job—imparting revolutionary science to those who will actually use it—seriously. The other lacks all seriousness; it is a fantasy football league, a liability, a mockery of revolutionary thought.

Those who are serious about making revolution do not discuss revolution with random people on the internet. Throw out your computers, go outside. Make revolution. Understand that public statements should be curated, examined, weighed and measured. They should not be real time exchanges with unverified and thus dubious accounts. Political disagreements, and debates etc should be held in the appropriate settings, not in front of the police. This is why editing, newspapers, journals and other tried-and-true platforms will always be superior to social media in terms of conveying a line or a body of thought.

There is no such thing as an “internet Maoist” because to be a Maoist is to practice Maoism, a practice which is irreconcilable with the methods used in these internet circles. We wholeheartedly implore our readers and supporters to drop out of such activity, to disregard all such groups on Discord and Reddit, Facebook or Twitter etc. Cut the plug completely, learn and study in the correct way, become a Maoist by using Maoism, taste the pear to use Mao’s term. It is not enough to study the correct things; these must be studied correctly, and what you learn must be verified and reliable, otherwise what you learn will not be correct, and, worse, you will teach these incorrect ideas to others. Let us inoculate ourselves against such a common and easily treatable sickness.

We have the responsibility to confirm without a doubt that those connected to the actual movement are discussing their politics with the people they organize with, and not random online “friends”. We do not lend any legitimacy to these confused and misguided comrades, sadly they have no connection, they have no credentials, and they have no business speaking on these matters, let alone speaking on them publicly. It is one thing to think you know Marxism and another thing entirely to prove you can use it.

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