

## [Labor History UPDATE: “While There Is A Soul In Prison, I Am Not Free”: The History of Solidarity in Social and Economic Justice](#)

Announcement published by Wesley Bishop on Friday, December 18, 2020

Type:

Conference

Date:

April 10, 2021

Location:

Indiana, United States

Subject Fields:

American History / Studies, Labor History / Studies

*UPDATE: Due to the ongoing issues of the COVID19 pandemic the organizers have decided to move this conference to a virtual format. We will no longer be meeting in person in Terre Haute, Indiana. The conference will be held on April 10, 2021. The organizers are still accepting paper and panel presentations until January 31, 2021.*

April 10, 2021

Online Conference

Sponsored by the Eugene V. Debs Foundation, the Cunningham Memorial Library, and the Department of History at Indiana State University

**Keynote Address:** Peter Cole, PhD., Professor of History at Western Illinois University

In 1918, the American labor organizer and socialist leader Eugene Victor Debs was sentenced to ten years in prison for his anti-war activities opposing America's involvement in World War One. In his closing defense, Debs said, "Your honor... I said then, and I say now, that while there is a lower class, I am in it, and while there is a criminal element I am of it, and while there is a soul in prison, I am not free." After being remanded to prison, Debs then went on to run in the 1920 presidential campaign, garnering nearly a million votes.

To honor the hundredth anniversary of the court decision, the 1920 election, and Debs' commitment to economic and social justice, the Eugene V. Debs Foundation, the Cunningham Memorial Library, and Indiana State University's History department are calling for papers as part of a daylong conference in Terre Haute, Indiana on April 10, 2021.

The conference's theme is broadly the history of "solidarity in social and economic justice," and the organizers are specifically interested in the fields of labor and social movement history. However, to give specific focus to prison abolitionism and mass incarceration, special attention will be given to scholars and activists working in the prison abolitionist movement. Themes in terms of geographic location and time are being left purposefully open to encourage a wide range of topics in world

Citation: Wesley Bishop. *Labor History UPDATE: “While There Is A Soul In Prison, I Am Not Free”: The History of Solidarity in Social and Economic Justice*. H-Announce. 05-27-2022.

<https://networks.h-net.org/node/73374/announcements/6979209/labor-history-update-%E2%80%9Cwhile-there-soul-prison-i-am-not-free%E2%80%9D>

Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 United States License.

history throughout the long struggle of working class social movements.

**To submit a paper or panel proposal**, email a 200-300 word abstract with a CV by January 31, 2021 to all of the organizers:

Contact Info:

- Wesley Bishop, [wbishop@marian.edu](mailto:wbishop@marian.edu)
- Nancy Gabin, [ngabin@purdue.edu](mailto:ngabin@purdue.edu)
- Micki Morahn, [michelle.morahn@debsfoundation.org](mailto:michelle.morahn@debsfoundation.org)
- Lisa Phillips, [Lisa.Phillips@indstate.edu](mailto:Lisa.Phillips@indstate.edu)

Contact Email:

[wbishop@marian.edu](mailto:wbishop@marian.edu)

Citation: Wesley Bishop. *Labor History UPDATE: "While There Is A Soul In Prison, I Am Not Free": The History of Solidarity in Social and Economic Justice*. H-Announce. 05-27-2022.

<https://networks.h-net.org/node/73374/announcements/6979209/labor-history-update-%E2%80%9Cwhile-there-soul-prison-i-am-not-free%E2%80%9D>

Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 United States License.