



Labor and Freedom

Eugene V. Debs

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A collection of writings and speeches of socialist leader Eugene Debs.

Labor and Freedom Details

Date : Published 1916 by Phil Wagner

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Author : Eugene V. Debs

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From Reader Review Labor and Freedom for online ebook

Jakob says

Charming, inspiring collection of articles and speeches.

Mary says

Man, this guy could write a speech.

Also: The free audio version available on Librivox is pretty good. Recommended, especially as most of these essays were written to be read out loud.

<https://librivox.org/labor-and-freedom...>

Mary Ralph says

A fine introduction to Debs and his philosophy of socialism in the U.S. Obviously, it is a bit dated, but it is a great primary source to give context to understanding of the 1912 election and labor in that era.

EDIT: This is public domain and thus available for free. I listened to the audiobook on Librivox. J complained that the reader sounded like Rev. Lovejoy, but other than that ?

J.L. Sutton says

I hadn't read much of Debs' work when I visited his home in Terre Haute, Indiana, a few years ago. I'm glad that has changed. Labor and Freedom is an impressive collection of essays and speeches from a progressive voice from the late 19th century and early 20th century. Debs is a champion of the working class. That rings loud and clear in everything in this collection. While Debs is sometimes a bit over the top (in terms of his rhetoric), his arguments for freedom and his appeals to equality are as applicable today as they were 100 years ago. One of his most interesting essays is on Theodore Roosevelt; Debs blasts the hero worship of Roosevelt while providing a counterbalance to our current popular image of this president. Debs also writes about women's suffrage (and Susan B. Anthony) in this collection as well as the abuses of power inherent in the economy.

Corey says

It is interesting to read this 100 years later, not much has changed.

Lunar Snowflake says

Eugene V. Debs had a way with words, and these orations are as important now as they were when penned.

Loránd says

Eugene Debs can write like no other politician! I am usually a cool-headed person, and I also disagree with him on his revolutionary stance, but his way with words simply managed to instill a bit of revolutionary fervor in me. I'm just glad that no modern-day politician has the incredible oratory, and writing skills of Eugene Debs, otherwise, I just might fall for their political rhetoric.

Beauty of prose aside, this collection of articles, and speeches exposes a long forgotten, or dare I say suppressed, struggle of the US working class to gain a more decent standard of living. Few people today know that workers (including children) used to be shamelessly exploited for up to 12-14 hours a day by an economic system not all that different from the one we find ourselves in now. Few people know about the Ludlow Massacre, and even fewer people know about a myriad of other similar struggles.

His views on the plight of the common people are extremely progressive for his time, he was staunch supported of Susan B Anthony's efforts, he spoke out against systematic racism; and at no time did he support abolishing of democracy (as people with misconceptions about socialism are wont to believe), on the contrary, he argues for a world where the workers directly, and democratically control their workplace environments, rather than the private owners, or the state. This collection of essays is probably a must read for anyone who doesn't understand what *socialism*, in the original sense, meant.

Also, the following passage is written in 1912, does it sound familiar?

There is one infallible test that fixes the status of a political party and its candidates. Who finances them?

Travis Dicken says

An excellent summary of Debs.

Of the few works available on the United States most important labour leader, this collection of Eugene Victor Debs selected essays and speeches provides an excellent if brief introduction to his thought, his view of socialism, women's emancipation, the Socialist Party, and other issues. By presenting the man in his own words, it also allows the reader to grasp just why Debs was such an inspiring figure for the labour movement, as well as one of the best examples of a genuinely socialist man. Highly recommended for all comrades, students of American history, and anyone with a desire to encounter socialism first hand, as opposed to through the demagoguery of the Republican and Democratic parties.

Mickey Hernandez says

Debs is an eloquent and talented reader. He knows how to use his pen and writes in such a way that one cannot help to be stirred, wherever they may fall on the political spectrum. However, this collection of writings has no detailed and compelling arguments for why communism is, in Debs eyes, the best system of

governing. This book simply offers a collection of speeches and essays (possibly originally published in pamphlets) that were handed out to common working people, and they serve no other purpose than to touch at the emotional sphere of the argument for socialism. While still a good read, if one is looking for essays that discuss the economic advantages of socialism then look elsewhere.

Oliver Larkin says

Quite good. I've always been a fan of Debs, and while this doesn't contain some of his best speeches, it's a great collection to introduce others to Debs with.

Especially relevant given the current political climate in America.
