



PRISONER WORK in the AMERICAS

CALL FOR PAPERS

ORGANIZED BY

- **Crime and Society Program and Master in Criminology, Faculty of Social and Juridical Sciences, National University of Litoral (Argentina)**
- **Department of Sociology, University of Toronto (Canada)**

COORDINATION

- **Prof. Philip Goodman (Universidad de Toronto Mississauga)**
- **Prof. Máximo Sozzo (National University of Litoral, Argentina)**

THEME

From the very birth of the prison in the Global North between the 18th and 19th centuries onwards, the practice of prisoners developing some kind of work within these confinement contexts has had a certain importance, although not exempt from variations over time and space.

Prisoner labor has often been promoted and justified as a means of realizing the ideal of rehabilitation - with its various theoretical and political incarnations - which has played a very important role throughout the history of the modern prison. The work of prisoners is understood in this framework as a generator of habits and skills that, after deprivation of liberty, will be used by the ex-convict to obtain a position in the labor market and, therefore, a way of legal income that allows them to survive and keeps him away from reoffending. In turn, the work of the prisoners is often claimed as a generator of a "moralization" that implies a subjective reconfiguration of a deeper nature, which reconstructs the perspectives of the prisoner about what is good and what is desirable, in their present and future.

However, this has not been the only rationality that has been created to justify and promote the work of prisoners throughout the history and geography of the modern prison. The idea that the work of the prisoners implies a physical effort that endows the time of deprivation of liberty with a greater hardness that is connected with the ideal of punishment has also framed this practice in certain times and places. In turn, linking the work of the prisoners with the production of positive effects for the operation of the prison -from the production of the bread that the prisoners and guards eat to the cleaning and maintenance of the prison- reducing their costs to the state budget, has also given meaning to this practice in certain times and places. Finally, more recently and in some scenarios, the work of prisoners is claimed as a "right", within the framework of a broader construction of the prisoner as a subject of rights rooted in constitutional and legal texts and the object of judicial and political struggles and debates. These various rationalities that promote and justify prisoner labor can often overlap and hybridize in the complex and varied history and geography of the modern prison.

In turn, the work of the prisoners as an ensemble of practices has acquired very different characteristics throughout time and space. We can mention some of its fundamental alternatives: work inside or outside the prison walls; work of production of goods or production of services; work organized and supervised by the state, organized and supervised by private companies, organized and supervised by social organizations and self-managed by the prisoners (in turn, individually or collectively); work oriented to meet the needs of the prison/inmates or oriented to other recipients beyond the prison, paid and unpaid work, formally recognized and not formally recognized work, etc.



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Finally, the diffusion of the prisoners' work also has a high level of variation through time and space. There are prisons in which there are no prisoners who work, at least formally. And there are prisons where most of the prisoners work formally. This, moreover, has changed a lot throughout history, even in the same jurisdiction -and even in the same prison.

At this international conference we are interested in exploring and discussing multiple possible approaches to the work of prisoners in the Americas, oriented towards identifying similarities and differences both in time and space. For this reason, it seeks to bring together more junior and senior researchers who work on this subject in North America, Central America and the Caribbean and South America. The call is for works that are dedicated to both the past and the present of prison labor, that refer to a specific scenario or a plurality of them, crossing borders.

CONFERENCE CHARACTERISTICS

The conference will be face-to-face. Exceptionally, the possibility of a speaker participating online may be considered. There will be simultaneous translation between English and Spanish so that the presentations can be made in either of the two languages.

The organization of the conference will provide the speakers with three nights of accommodation and lunch and dinner during the days of the conference at Santa Fe (Argentina). Please clarify when making the proposal of the paper proposal if you need it.

PAPER PROPOSALS

Paper proposals can be written in Spanish or English and must have a maximum length of two pages, including the title, abstract and basic academic data of the author(s) – place of work, research project in which it is inscribed, undergraduate and postgraduate training, etc.

The deadline for submitting these proposals will be **July 1, 2023** and they must be sent to the email:
delitoysociedad@unl.edu.ar

Final papers may not exceed 8000 words, including notes and references. They must be sent to the same email address until **November 1, 2023**.

The acceptance of these proposals will be communicated before July 15, 2023.

Contact **delitoysociedad@unl.edu.ar**