

Terence MacSwiney, Cork Men's Gaol, and the Political Hunger Strike, 1920-2020

9 – 10 October, 2020

University College Cork



2020 marks the centenary of the hunger strike of Irish republicans in Brixton Prison and Cork Men's Gaol. The hunger strike tactic had been deployed prior to 1920, but the Cork/Brixton strike was distinctive for its length (three months) and the ultimate deaths of Cork Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney, Joe Murphy and Michael Fitzgerald. Drawing intense public interest, the strike created a political crisis in Britain and Ireland, and made Terence MacSwiney into a global figure. Events in Cork and Brixton also brought the hunger strike into broader political consciousness, contributing to its use by different political and social movements during the twentieth century. Paper proposals are invited on all aspects of the 1920 Cork/Brixton hunger strike; its participants, including Terence MacSwiney; and the national and international evolution of the hunger strike tactic. Historical, medical, ethical, cultural, and political perspectives, and comparative and multi-disciplinary approaches are particularly welcome.

Suggested topics may include:

- Cork/Brixton solidarity protests and support efforts
- the appropriation of Terence MacSwiney by political and social movements
- the global influence of MacSwiney and the Cork/Brixton strike
- Historical and international comparisons, including strikes by women suffragists
- the hunger strike as an embodied protest
- the hunger strike as performance and as media spectacle
- Medical, legal and ethical aspects of hunger strikes, including interventions/force-feeding

Those interested in presenting a 20-minute paper are invited to submit a title, brief abstract of 250 words, and short CV. The proposals deadline is **15 May 2020**. Acceptance notifications will be sent by 1 June 2020. Proposals should be emailed to: 1920cork@gmail.com

Conference organizers: Dr John Borgonovo and Dr Seán Lucey, University College Cork.