

Ireland and the Wobbly World: Irish labour radicals & the Industrial Workers of the World in the early 20th century



'One Big Union' was a motto of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), founded in Chicago in 1905. Reflecting disappointment with the achievements of political Labour, the IWW was 'syndicalist' in advocating that working people rely on militant trade unionism (and not politics) to create a fair society. Prominently associated with the IWW's revolutionary 'Wobbly' wing were Cork-born **Mother Jones**, **Tom Glynn** of Gurteen, Co. Galway, and **James Connolly**, an IWW organiser in New York. '**Big Jim**' **Larkin** gave a graveside oration for **Joe Hill**, best-known of the Wobbly martyrs.

This conference will examine the contribution of Irish people to the IWW in America, Australia and South Africa, and consider the influence of the IWW's syndicalism on bodies like the **Irish Transport & General Workers' Union** and the **Irish Citizen Army**.

Irish Centre for the Histories of Labour & Class
NUI Galway

11-12 November 2016

In association with 1916-2016: *The Promise & Challenge of National Sovereignty* conference



FRIDAY, 11 NOVEMBER, Hardiman Building, GO10

Panel 1, 2.00 pm: Chair: *Sarah-Anne Buckley, ICHLC*

Jim Larkin, Jack Carney and the *American Irish Worker* (1917), *James Curry*

Patrick J. Read's 'Irishness' & the Creation of the Wobbly Mythos, *Matthew White*

Joe Hill and Ireland, *Francis Devine*

Panel 2: 3.45: Chair: *Prof. Terrence McDonough, ICHLC*

The Rebel Irish & the IWW: The Roots of American Syndicalism, *Kristin Lawler*

Sacco and Vanzetti and the Radical Irish World, *Niall Whelehan*

From Socialist to Syndicalist, to Communist: The political development of William Z. Foster, 1904-1922, *Liam Ó Discín*

8 pm Function Room, **John Keogh's, Upper Dominick Street**

'Rebel Voices: Galway Wobbly Connections'. Chair: *Catherine Connolly TD*

Peter Yorke: A Galway priest & the San Francisco labor movement, *Tadhg Foley*

Elizabeth Gurley Flynn: A Galway Rebel Girl, *Meredith Meagher*

The Syndicalist Trajectories of Tom Glynn & Mary Fitzgerald, *John Cunningham*

SATURDAY, 12 NOVEMBER, Hardiman Building, GO10

Panel 3, 10.15 am. Chair: *Jamie Canavan, NUI Galway*

Connolly the Marxist Socialist, but what sort? Bolshevik, Menshevik or Industrial Democrat? The ideological impact of the IWW, *Manus O'Riordan*

Industrial Unionism and Social Democracy: Connolly as vector of organising principles, *Gavin Mendel-Gleason*

'We Irish are a working race': Connolly & Flynn in the United States, *Stephen Thornton*

Panel 4, 12.00, Chair: *Mary Gibbons, Galway Council of Trade Unions*

Captain Jack White: Syndicalist? *Leo Keohane*

Syndicalism as a dirty word: Press coverage of radical trade unionism in early twentieth century Ireland, *Donal Fallon*

Patrick Quinlan: nationalist or militant IWW member? *Gerry Watts*

Keynote address, 2.15 pm: Chair: *Tish Gibbons, Siptu*

'Romances and Erasures', *David Howell*

Panel 5, 3.30 pm Chair: *Jackie Uí Chionna, NUI Galway*

American Reactions to the 1916 Rising, *Luke Gibbons*

Rebel Women and the IWW, *Teresa Moriarty*

The Irish & the Mooney case: a miscarriage of Justice in California, *John Borgonovo*