

Quebec student strike speaking tour.



In 2012 the attempt by the government of Quebec to introduce a 75% fee hike was defeated by the organisation of a mass student strike that lasted over 6 months. That fee increase was part of the global process of imposing the privatisation and commodification of education. Since the victory, organisers of the strike have been being doing speaking tours to aid the process whereby "youth and students everywhere are becoming increasingly conscious of the need to organize as a means to defend education as a social right". In September this tour reaches Ireland where we need to hear how a sustained and militant student movement that can win is built.

There are two purposes to the tour. Firstly so that we can learn how the successful strike was organised in Quebec and discuss whether similar methods might work here. But as importantly we want to use the organisation of the tour in order to aid in the building of a network of militant student activists across the island.

> WHY QUEBEC IS DIFFERENT.

"In Quebec, a student strike isn't just a bunch of rallies, marches and occupations. The strike is a complete shutdown of all isn't just a bunch of rallies, marches and occupations. The strike is a complete shutdown of all courses on campus : no classes, no exams and no evaluations are to take place while the strike is on. Once the strike is voted in a general assembly and comes into effect, picket lines are erected and classrooms are emptied. Everyone, students and faculty alike, is forced to respect the strike mandate. Universities and colleges affected by the strike see their academic calendars disrupted, and since no classes or grading is allowed to happen, degrees can't be awarded.

During the 2012 strike, most student unions held general assemblies every week to decide whether or not to stay on strike until the next assembly. While doing so, students meeting each other could also discuss the orientation and the actions of the movement. These regular and populous assemblies were fundamental in creating empowerment and a deep investment into the movement among students." (from <http://www.studentstrike.net>)

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>ABOUT THE TOUR.

Vanessa will be talking to a couple of hundred students who we hope want to see a militant student movement emerge in Ireland. We hope that this will be looked back on as one important moment in the creation of a fighting student movement that won in Ireland. Our speaker Vanessa participated and organised at many levels of the strike in small horizontal and autonomous groups, but also as a delegate for her local student union in the most combative national student union (CLASSE).

She says "as a feminist activist I was involved in the organization of many collective projects directly linked with the strike, and as a delegate elected by my general assembly, I was one of the transmitting tools necessary for the practice of direct democracy on a large scale. My analysis of the experience of the strike is formed by my political ideas of feminism, class struggle and anti-hierarchy."

>TOUR DATES:

- UCC (Cork) - 7pm. Mon 23rd. West Wing 9. Co-hosted by Cork Feminist Society.
- NUIG (Galway) - 7pm. Tues 24th. Kirwan Theatre. Co-hosted by the Socialist Society.
- UCD (Dublin) - 1pm, Wed 25th Sept. Library Building, UCD from Co-hosted by Women's Studies Programme within the School of Social Justice.
- TCD (Dublin) - 7pm on Sept 25th. Jonathan Swift theatre in the arts block (2041a). Co-hosted by Dept of Sociology.
- NUI Maynooth - 1pm. Thursday 26th Sept. John Hume 5,(JH 5).
- Magee College (Derry) - 1pm, Friday 27th. Minor Hall, Main Building, Magee Campus, University of Ulster, Derry. Co-hosted by SWSS.
- Queens Uni. (Belfast) - 7pm, Mon 30th Sept. Clubroom 3&4 in the Peter Froggatt Centre. Co-hosted by Feminist Society.

For more information, or to help out with this tour, visit: www.wsm.ie/tour

Get updates via #Q2012 on Twitter.



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