



Health and the Global Irish Nation:  
Perspectives on Environment, Disease, and the Body in Irish Studies

Ottawa, Ontario  
May 31-June 3, 2003

The COVID-19 pandemic in Ireland and the Irish diaspora instigated considerable challenges to networks of public health, invited reflection on past crises and epidemics, and prompted interrogations into how Irish society conceives of healthcare more generally. Whether one considers the evolution of the modern hospital system, struggles with typhus and cholera during the Great Famine, the 'Spanish Flu' of 1918-1919, twentieth-century efforts to eliminate tuberculosis, or the most recent policies and measures taken by the Irish state to combat Covid-19, there are multiple historical and contemporary vantage points from which to view Irish engagements with health-centred issues. Such issues can refer to not only the physical and mental health of individuals but also transformations in natural and built environments for the benefit of local, regional and national populations. There is also the question of how the lives of Irish emigrants intersected with healthcare systems and institutions in other national and/or colonial societies. Diaspora-related perspectives could include the contributions of Irish missionaries and medical professionals as well as the experiences of emigrants in different parts of the globe.

The Canadian Association of Irish Studies looks forward to welcoming members and guests in person once again for its traditional mix of the scholarly and the social. Our 2023 conference will take place in the national capital of Ottawa and at two venues: the University of Ottawa and the Irish Ambassadorial Residence. The City of Ottawa was incorporated in 1855, selected as the national capital two years later, and the first session of Parliament was held there in the now-renowned Gothic buildings in 1866. The University of Ottawa originated in 1848 as the College of Bytown and is today the largest English-French bilingual university in the world, with a wide variety of academic programs administered across ten faculties.

Ireland has been represented in Ottawa since 1939, and the present Ambassadorial Residence, located in the Rockcliffe neighbourhood, dates from the same decade. The design for its extensive renovation won a 2010 City of Ottawa award for infill and restoration of a heritage property. Irish immigrants were prominent in the city's pre-1855 development as Bytown, chiefly through their participation in the building of the Rideau Canal and in the region's timber industry. Ottawa continues to be home for many Irish, with the Irish Society for the National Capital Region founded in 1957. The conference will include an optional field trip to sites of Irish interest in Ottawa and its vicinity.

CAIS/ACEI 2023 welcomes papers from all disciplines in English, French, and Irish that connect with the themes described above. Possible paper topics include:

- Irish medical professionals in domestic and international contexts
- Encounters in Institutions in fiction and non-fiction
- Transitions in reproductive health
- Health and the Irish military body in wartime
- The health of pediatric populations
- Charity, poverty, and the Irish missionary
- Folklore and the practices of traditional Irish medicine
- Famine, trauma, and healing
- Ireland and global health
- The contexts and traditions of fasting
- Representations of mortality in Irish media and popular culture
- Science, technology, and Irish environmental history
- The Irish climate and population health
- Disease and sanitary reform in Irish towns and cities
- Religious and secular responses to epidemics
- Public Health and Ireland: theory and experience
- Disability, illness, and addiction in Irish literature, music, and theatre
- Science and sexuality
- Ireland, Medicine, and Empire: Impositions and Resistances
- Nutrition and the Irish body
- Health and housing in Ireland, past and present

CAIS/ACEI also welcomes other general topics concerning Irish Studies and the Irish in Canada. Individual papers and full panel proposals (three papers plus chair) are equally encouraged.

Presenters must be members of the Canadian Association for Irish Studies. For more information, please visit our website <https://www.canadianirishstudies.org/>

The deadline for submissions is **13 February 2023**. Please send abstracts of 200-250 words (500 words for a panel) with a 50-word bio and correspondence details, including an email address, to **canadianirishstudies2023@gmail.com**. Panel submissions should include a title and short overview alongside abstracts and presenter bios.

### **COVID-19 Advisory**

CAIS/ACEI 2023 is designed to be an in-person event. The organizers direct you to <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html> for the latest updates. Information on COVID in the province of Ontario can be accessed at <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/>

All attendees are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated against COVID, and to wear masks indoors where appropriate.