

Popular Culture and the Sociology of Knowledge in Politics and International Relations

Friday, 19 June 2020 16:15 (1h 30m)

This panel has two aims, both explicitly addressing the conference theme, urging exploration of how we ‘do’ international studies, in dialogue with cognate disciplines and open to different ways of knowing, at formalised IR’s centenary. First, it interrogates and critiques the sociology of knowledge in Politics and IR, revealing the impacts of efforts at gatekeeping and their links to the disciplinary imaginary, whether performed through the re-telling of origin stories, enacted in higher education policy, or reproduced in the practices of everyday academic life. Second, it promotes a more open vision of the discipline(s) that does not exclude crucial analyses of the popular, the cultural, and the everyday, which are vital to understanding contemporary world politics, tackling global challenges, and resisting dangerous political discourses. To do so, the panel begins by tracing the marginalisation and exclusion of work capable of more fully making sense of recent political developments, such as the rise of Jeremy Corbyn, the election of Donald Trump, and the UK’s decision to leave the European Union. From here, with the deck cleared, the panel moves to consider insights from approaches often deemed marginal or ‘heretical’ in Politics and IR, taking seriously the centrality of gender, popular culture, emotion, and everyday politics in making sense of broader patterns of international relations.

Track Classification: International Relations as a Social Science Working Group