

Silly IR: Interventions Into A Serious Discipline

Wednesday, 21 June 2023 13:15 (1h 30m)

This panel interrogates the politics and limits of the binary between seriousness and silliness in International Relations as a discipline that fundamentally takes itself seriously. Through a series of theoretical and empirical interventions, and against disciplinary boundaries that produce the site of International Relations as “serious” for the exclusion of alternative spaces of expression and knowing, this panel disrupts, decenters, and deconstructs the binary of the silly and the serious. In doing so, it explores the productive and creative possibilities and limits of silly objects, subjects, and performances in International Relations and IR scholarship. Three of the papers ask various theoretical questions about how seriousness is expected, imposed, and structured in processes of knowledge production in the discipline and the ways in which silliness, play, and parody may disentangle such boundaries. These papers are then followed by two empirical interventions which respectively interrogate the possibilities of children’s play and silly resistance in India’s Shaheen Bagh protests and the reactionary politics of Alt-Right humour that functions through ambiguating the lines between silliness and seriousness.

Membership

Track Classification: Post-Structural Politics Working Group