

Mothering, Motherhood and (Feminist) International Relations 2.0: An open roundtable conversation

Friday 7 June 2024 10:45 (1h 30m)

This “open roundtable” continues the conversation begun at BISA 2023. Last year’s roundtable focused on our personal experience of mothering and motherhood in a discipline and an HE sector often hostile to it. The attendance numbers, feedback received, and affective encounters experienced made it clear that there was a pressing need to create spaces where conversations about the intersection between our “home lives” and our “work lives” can be had.

Rather than submit a full roundtable, this year we want to facilitate a generous and supportive conversation between ourselves as students, teachers, colleagues, and leaders in IR. We intend this roundtable to be a space where we can share our diverse experiences of the joys and pleasures –as well as the grief and frustrations –of motherhood, parenting, and caring. We welcome gentle, yet honest conversations about pregnancy and pregnancy loss, infertility and the inability to have children due to systemic barriers and institutionalised exclusions, mothering, parenting, IVF, adoption, fostering, step-parenting, co-parenting, queer families, and raising children with a variety of needs, as well as care and caring practices outside that for children.

Prompted by Cynthia Enloe’s call to explore how “the personal is international” and Sara Motta’s to co-create “a politics (m)otherwise” through “care-full pedagogies” and practices that make space for (pluri)diverse, intersectional ways of being-knowing-doing the international, we ask participants to reflect on and, for our panel, to respond to the following:

- How do our caring experiences frame the way we interact with international relations?
- How do our caring experiences impact on how we teach, research, mentor, and lead IR?
- What are the international dimensions of our own experiences of the blurring of “home” and “work” life?
- How can IR better care for those who call it their disciplinary home?
- What home(s) can we (un)make in IR to enable us to nurture and sustain alternative ways of being and working in, against, and outside the discipline and academy itself?

Track Classification: Gendering International Relations Working Group