

Proximity and/or Distance: Navigating Ethics and Methodology when Researching Militarized Spaces, Subjects and Participants

Thursday, 19 June 2025 15:00 (1h 30m)

Research on military and militarized actors is a core aspect of Critical Military Studies (CMS), whether those actors are current or former military members, policy makers, part of irregular movements or those whose lives are entangled with military actors. Today, as some military and military-adjacent organizations are opening up to external scrutiny, others are becoming increasingly closed. This necessitates new techniques for accessing these organizations and their members in uncertain times. However, new challenges to access must also be balanced with ethical and methodological considerations. To tackle the coming challenges to International Relations (IR) and to CMS in particular, in times of crisis, this panel reflects on navigating proximity and distance to research participants in militarized spaces, and the productive and unproductive tensions which are created in our efforts to build trust in order to do our research. Building on the reflections by junior scholars who discuss ethics, trust, criticality and empathy in CMS, the panelists will explore how they navigate these tensions as early career researchers.

Track Classification: Critical Military Studies Working Group