

Home and Homemaking in International Relations

Thursday, 19 June 2025 09:00 (1h 30m)

Home is one of those concepts that we all, consciously or not, relate to on a daily basis. Simultaneously the most universal and particular of concepts, home is fraught with contestation. Whether home is understood as a politically demarcated territory which 'The Home Office' governs and wars are declared in the name of; a spatially defined dwelling where people live, work and die; a site for political, social and cultural formation; a ghostly reminder of a place one used to belong to; or a destination one wishes to arrive at, home is as Katherine Brickell has argued 'one of the most idealized sites of human existence'. Idealised for the promises it holds and the hope it contains, how it is supposed to function, who is welcome in it, who is responsible for running it, how this is done, and with what emotional, economic and creative input.

With some exceptions, Home, in whichever way it is approached, is not a common site for investigations in the discipline of IR. Wishing to rectify this, through an exploration of home at various levels – the personal, the communal, the national, and the international – this roundtable explores the how home functions in international relations. Phenomenologically it explores the 'emotional desire' (Diane Chambers) of home at these various levels, as well as unpacking the material and embodied practices and costs associated with home and homemaking in several different sites. From this the roundtable invites a space from which to begin an examination of what it recognises as a neglected focus for the discipline.

Track Classification: Gendering International Relations Working Group