

FORMS OF WRITING – FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE

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WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

Inspired by constructivist and critical scholarship in international relations, we now know that the way we write is intrinsically linked with what and how we know about international politics. Broadening the frontiers of academic writing is not just to challenge the constraining conventions of the discipline. It has always been in an intimate dialogue with the kind of knowledge we build and where we seek that knowledge. It also interrogates the nature of politics, and with it, our deepest questions: what truth and the “good life” is; on which values we build our communities and how we make them resilient. Clifford Geertz (1973) taught anthropologists long ago that all writing, including academic writing, is fiction. Introducing the novel form, Elizabeth Dauphinee’s *The Politics of Exile* juxtaposed the uncertainty and relative truths the form holds (Kundera 2003) with the goal of achieving certainty and objective truths through scientific research (Naumes 2015). Lily Ling’s fable *Imagining World Politics* speaks both to the most political questions on the one hand – how to govern wisely – and to core interests in IR theorizing, such as how to balance feminine and masculine. Marie Beauchamps argues that creative writing, in particular, poetry, allows us to access layers of knowledge in and among us that is inaccessible through conventional forms of academic writing. Poetry mobilizes knowledge through the senses, deeper layers of consciousness, generational and emotional experiences that make up the “stuff” of international politics.

Writing about international politics in these forms carefully investigates the kinds of knowledge we create about it and the values this knowledge endears. Ultimately, these forms of writing also become sites to imagine alternative presents and futures. They are all resources to think together about sustainability, non-human others, climate change, and most importantly, generating new imaginaries of peace and war – EWIS’ 2023 theme. Experimenting with the form of writing allows accessing further layers of knowledge that may be currently beyond the possibilities of conventional writing that is kinder, more sensitive and inclusive, and can hold various experiences without necessarily privileging one over the other. Building on the success of last years’ Writing International Politics, this workshop is to strengthen the community that reflects on writing in academic settings. It also goes further in its exploration of the relationship between *writing* as practice, form and medium and *knowledge about world politics*. *Whom may we reach if we write differently? What kinds of knowledge may become possible?* Open in spirit, it invites contributions from scholars that interrogate this relationship, from various disciplinary vantage points and all career stages.

In particular, we encourage contributions that explore:

- Writing as generative of knowledge
- Writing and connectivity (with ourselves, with peers, with broader communities, imaginary others etc), how to achieve and what kind of connection, the value of connectivity
- The relationship between writing and knowledge
- Writing (form, practice) as the exploration of the political (nature of politics)
- Writing as a repository of alternative imageries
- Giving permissions (to ourselves and to others) to incorporate various forms of writing