

BSA Theory Study Group Annual Report (2025)

Name: Theory Study Group (THE)

Appointment of Conveners: **July 2022** (Ioana Cerasella Chis, Joe Davidson, Sebastian Raza-Mejia) and **July 2025** (Birgan Gokmenoglu, Maria Volkova, Neal Harris, Sarah Bufkin, Zheng Liu)

Number of members: 534 on JISCmail, out of whom 94 are BSA members and 440 are non-members; as of the 8th of July – 6,847 followers on X and 770 followers on BlueSky.

Income: closing balance as of 31st December 2024: £522.50.

Aims:

Key aims of THE include:

- provide a forum for those interested in sociological and social theory
- host events on current debates in the field of sociological theory
- coordinate the organisation of the Theory stream at the annual BSA conference
- facilitate research on and about sociological theory and its history

Review of the 2024/2025 academic year, since our last 2024 report:

- organised and hosted a BSA Theory Symposium on the legacy of Margaret Archer;
- created and shared a call for papers aimed at Early Career Researchers and hosted two events as a result of the call;
- organised a joint event with a newly elected co-convening committee of the Childhood Studies Study Group of the BSA;
- organised and hosted a book launch together with The Bauman Institute (University of Leeds);
- applied for and secured BSA ECR Regional Funds (£1,000) to cover most of the costs for a One-Day symposium at the University of Cambridge;
- organised and hosted a BSA Theory Symposium with workshops for work-in-progress and a roundtable event;
- organised and hosted an event on Academic Freedom and the Politics of Free Speech;
- organised and hosted an event on the Frankfurt School beyond its Centenary.

3 August 2024 (10am – 5pm BST)

The Legacy of Margaret Archer (One-Day Symposium, University of Warwick)

- **Presenters:** Ismael Al-Amoudi, William Outhwaite, Douglas Porpora, Sally Tomlinson, Karim Knio, Juan David Parra, Krzysztof Wielecki, Lakshman Wimalasena, Richard Remelie, Ka Lok Yip, Anzhela Popyk, Catherine Hastings
- **Organisers/Chairs:** Sebastian Raza-Mejia and Mark Carrigan
- [event poster](#)

27 September 2024 (4:30pm - 6:00pm BST)

Academic Freedom and the Politics of Free Speech with Jana Bacevic - online

- o **Presenter:** Jana Bacevic
- o **Discussant:** Naomi Waltham-Smith
- o **Organiser/Chair:** Ioana Cerasella Chis
- o [event poster](#) - video recording to become available later in the year

6 November 2024 (4pm - 6pm GMT)

The Frankfurt School Beyond Its Centenary: Exploring Contemporary Critical Social Theory and its Critique of Political Economy - online

- **Presenters:** Stephan Lessenich, Chris O'Kane, Cecilia Sebastian, Esteban Torres
- **Organiser/Chair:** Ioana Cerasella Chis
- [video recording](#) - [event poster](#)

13 December 2024 (2:00pm - 3:30pm GMT)

Theory and Society: Zygmunt Bauman - Book Launch (a joint BSA Theory Study Group & The Bauman Institute event) - online

- **Presenters:** Tom Campbell, Katarzyna Bartoszyńska
- **Discussants:** Elena Álvarez Álvarez, Martin Aidnik
- **Organiser:** Ioana Cerasella Chis
- **Chair:** Matt Dawson
- [event poster](#) - video recording to become available later in the year

11 February 2025 (3:00pm - 4:30pm GMT)

Meaningful Silences: Possibilities of a New Theoretical and Methodological Agenda (a joint BSA Social Theory Study Group and Childhood Study Group Event) - online

- **Presenters:** Xiaorong Gu & Doris Bühler-Niederberger
- **Organiser:** Joe Davidson
- **Chair:** Joe Davidson
- [event poster](#)

23 May 2025 (10am - 5pm BST)

The Process and Implications of Doing Social Theory - A BSA Early Career Regional Funded Symposium (organised by the BSA Theory Study Group), held at the University of Cambridge

- Paper authors: Nabila Islam (Brown University), Hochan Kim (University of Oxford), Ningxiang Sun (University of Edinburgh), D'Arcy Ritchie (University of Birmingham), Vanessa Schofield (University of Leeds), Sacha Hilhorst (London School of Economics), Sara McHaffie (Northumbria University), Barbara

Neukirchinger (Hochschule Bremen - City University of Applied Sciences), Christian Koutny (University of Hertfordshire), Sophie Shall (Glasgow Caledonian University), Maria Volkova (University of Exeter)

- **Paper discussants and roundtable presenters:** Sarah Bufkin (University of Birmingham), Birgan Gokmenoglu (Birmingham City University), Teodor Mladenov (University of Dundee), Kristin Surak (LSE)
- **Organisers:** Ioana Cerasella Chis, Joe Davidson, Sebastian Raza
- [event poster](#)

Review of the year:

We have recruited five new co-convenors - thus, for 2025/2026, the co-convening team comprises eight members. The three members who have been co-convening the group since July 2022 will leave their roles at the end of June 2026.

In the run-up to the BSA 2026 Annual Conference (to be held at the University of Edinburgh), the Theory Study Group will coordinate the Theory Stream. We continue to uphold the arrangement made with the New Materialisms Study Group so that each Study Group coordinates the Conference's Theory Stream every two years. This arrangement should be revisited with the new convenors and updated when/as needed.

Concluding remarks:

We have begun discussions regarding the events and activities that we wish to organise for the next academic year, and the new convenors have proposed a series of exciting initiatives. The first meeting with the new convenors will take place after the deadline for submitting this report.

Convenors:

July 2022 - present: Ioana Cerasella Chis (ioana.chis.research@gmail.com), Sebastian Raza-Mejia (slr75@cam.ac.uk), and Joe Davidson (jpld2@cam.ac.uk).

July 2025 - present: Sarah Bufkin (s.m.bufkin@bham.ac.uk), Birgan Gokmenoglu (birgan.gokmenoglu@bcu.ac.uk), Neal Harris (nharris@brookes.ac.uk), Zheng Liu (zheng.liu@exeter.ac.uk), and Maria Volkova (m.volkova@exeter.ac.uk).