



Theorizing from Lived Experience: A Roundtable on Feminist and Queer Theory

A BSA Theory Study Group Event

21 April 2026 (2.30-4.00pm BST)
Online

About the Event

Many social theorists and sociologists worry that relying too heavily on the first-person vantage point for theorizing can lead to an uncritical subjectivism that mistakes specific experiences for generalizable ones. Such concerns should certainly give social theorists pause. Abstractions that misrepresent or misunderstand what is shared about an experience can function ideologically in the sense that they conceal more than they disclose. And yet feminists, antiracist scholars, ethnographers, and scholar activists remind us that theorizing from lived experience remains a vital source of knowledge, especially when it comes to challenging the “inert violence in the order of things” (Bourdieu 1999, 64) and revealing emergent sites of injustice, oppression, and unfreedom.

This online roundtable explores what feminist and queer scholarship on the dialectic between theory and praxis contributes to social theorizing. Join us on Tuesday, April 21 from 2.30-4pm UK time to explore the methodological advantages and limits of working from lived experience to advance social critique.

Speakers

- Jo Littler (Goldsmiths)
- Billy Holzberg (KCL)
- Nicola Smith (Birmingham)
- Lois McNay (Oxford)

This is the second in a series of three roundtables that explore how lived experience informs and contributes to social theorizing. The first seminar explored what phenomenology offers sociologists and social theorists in February, and the final roundtable will focus on activist scholarship with Akwugo Emejulu (Warwick), AK Thompson (College of the Holy Cross), and Panos Theodoropoulos (KCL). That session will run on Tuesday, May 12. More details and an event registration page to follow!

Registration

This event is free to attend but registration is required.