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About the Social Theory Forum (STF)

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About the Social Theory Forum (STF)

Department of Sociology
UMass Boston

Histories of sociology tell us how the discipline was formed in the nineteenth century struggles to understand the combined upheavals of socio-political revolutions and the industrial revolution that gradually expanded throughout the world. These events radically changed the established order and posed various questions that are still with us today: questions about class, race, community, gender, the nature of social integration, and processes of social change, among others. But as we all know, the world again changed radically during the twentieth century, with great implications for social theory.

The Social Theory Forum (STF) is a series of conference-workshops organized jointly by the sociology and other interested faculty and students at UMB in order to creatively explore, develop, promote, and publish cross-disciplinary social theory in an applied and liberating (critical) framework. STF will offer the faculty and students of UMass Boston and other colleges and universities an interactive medium to discuss various aspects of the way in which particular theoretical traditions can be relevant to present everyday issues, the current state of social theory, and the future of social theory—recognizing that it is caught between its past successes and a situation that threatens to make its achievements less relevant if it does not deal successfully with the prospects of continuity and change.

STF's goals are:

- To critically engage with and evaluate classical and contemporary social theories in a cross-disciplinary and comparative cross-cultural framework in order to develop new integrative theoretical structures and practices;
- To foster individual and collective self-reflexivity in exploring social theories in global and world-historical contexts to aid people effectively address social problems and engage in liberatory social struggles;
- To foster interactive and dialogical learning experience and research in theory within and across faculty, students, and community divides on and off-campus, characterized by respect for the dignity and empowerment of ordinary individual lives and opinions in everyday life;
- To foster dialectical exchange of ideas open to constructive and integrative exploration of diverse and conflicting viewpoints, modes of thinking, and world-views;
- To foster theoretical education and research within a praxis-oriented and applied sociological framework capable of addressing concrete issues arising from intrapersonal, interpersonal and global contexts;
- To foster theoretical education and research as practices of freedom in favor of transformative and emancipatory personal and global social experience.

STF Organizing Committee

Mohammad H. (Behrooz) Tamdgidi, Assistant Professor of Sociology, UMass Boston
Co-Founder, Committee Chair/Co-Organizer, and Proceedings Editor
mohammad.tamdgidi@umb.edu

Jorge Capetillo-Ponce, Assistant Professor of Sociology, UMass Boston
Co-Founder and Co-Organizer
jorge.capetillo@umb.edu

Panayota Gounari, Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics, UMass Boston
Co-Organizer
panagiota.gounari@umb.edu

Glenn Jacobs, Associate Professor of Sociology, UMass Boston
Co-Founder and Co-Organizer
glenn.jacobs@umb.edu

Estelle Disch, Professor of Sociology, UMass Boston
Co-Organizer
estelle.disch@umb.edu

Correspondence Address
Attn.: Social Theory Forum • Department of Sociology
University of Massachusetts Boston • 100 Morrissey Boulevard • Boston, MA 02125 • U.S.A.