

Call for Conference Papers



## ReVindications

*The distortion of social “looking-glasses”: bodies, power, affectivity*

November 24–25, 2026

Department of Political Science and International Relations – University of Palermo

The ReVindications conference aims to provide a space for interdisciplinary reflection on contemporary challenges affecting gender issues, with particular attention to the relationships between bodies, power, violence, and digital worlds.

The title ReVindication recalls the critical tradition inaugurated by **Mary Wollstonecraft** with her *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, situating itself within the broader trajectory of claims for women’s rights and autonomy, now reinterpreted considering modern transformations in gender relations.

Intertwined with this horizon is the symbolic and well-known image of “looking-glasses” developed by **Virginia Woolf** in *A Room of One’s Own*, according to which “Women have served all these centuries as looking-glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size” a faculty in the absence of which “The glories of all our wars would be unknown”.

Today, such social “mirrors” are constantly being called into question: the dynamics of recognition, desire, and power that run through bodies, relationships, and social structures are being reconfigured within contexts marked by new forms of conflict and vulnerability. Within this framework, the conference aims to critically examine the intersections between bodies, power, and affectivity, highlighting how gender-based violence manifests both in material dimensions and in symbolic and linguistic ones. Attention will be paid to digital environments, where the phenomenon of the manosphere and related incel communities reveal radicalized forms of resentment and rejection – symptoms of a distorted social mirror, in which the original lack of recognition, rooted in the subordinate and ancillary position historically assigned to women, is now translated into hostility, exclusion, and violence. The conference thus positions itself as a space for interdisciplinary analysis and exchange on the contemporary transformations of gender relations, between practices of domination and possibilities for re-signification.

From this perspective, the “distortion of social mirrors” will serve as a key interpretive lens for understanding current configurations of gender structures: from processes of the construction and regulation of bodies to the articulations of power, and up to the often ambivalent forms of affectivity and relationships in the digital age. It is, therefore, an invitation to critically reread the genealogies of inequality and their present-day metamorphoses, between continuities and ruptures.

## Topics and Areas of Interest

We welcome submissions that engage with the following thematic areas:

### 1. Body and Subjectivity

- The body as a political, legal, and symbolic space
- Biopolitics, control, and the normativity of bodies
- Intersectionality and differences

### 2. Gender and Power Relations

- Gender and institutions
- Inclusion/exclusion and citizenship
- Leadership, representation, and agency

### 3. Gender-Based Violence: Practices, Languages, and Representations

- Physical, psychological, economic, and symbolic violence
- Gender-based violence and public policies: prevention, protection, and counteraction
- Language, hate speech, and gender stereotypes
- Media, narratives, and the social construction of violence
- Rape culture and the normalization of violence

### 4. Digital Sociality and New Forms of Misogyny

- Online communities and radicalization (e.g., the manosphere: incels, redpills, etc.)
- Algorithms, platforms, and the reproduction of gender inequalities
- Digital activism and practices of resistance
- Digital languages and cultures: memes and symbolic violence

## Types of Contributions

- Theoretical contributions
- Empirical analyses and case studies
- Comparative perspectives

## Submission Guidelines

Interested contributors are invited to submit: An abstract (max. 300 words); 5 keywords; A short biography (max. 100 words) to the following address:  
**pariopportunita.dems@unipa.it**

## Deadlines

- Abstract submission: **May 18, 2026**
- Notification of acceptance: by July 14, 2026
- Conference: **November 24-25, 2026**

## Conference Languages

Italian and English

## Scientific Committee

Luana M. Alagna; Laura Azzolina; Giulia Iapichino; Paola Maggio; Carla Monteleone; Manoela Patti; Giuseppina Tumminelli.

## Final Notes

The conference aims to provide an inclusive and critical space for discussion. Attention will be given to contributions that bring theoretical and practical perspectives into dialogue and that address the contemporary transformations of gender issues in global and digital contexts.

The call is open to both individual paper proposals and panel proposals. A selection of the contributions presented at the conference will be considered for publication in an edited volume.