



Leonardo Campagna



✉ Email:

ABOUT ME

PhD in History of Europe. Adjunct Professor in Fashion & Gender at Sapienza University of Rome. My research interests are: Italian LGBTQ+ and feminist history and politics, gender studies and queer theory, fashion and its relationship with the contemporary political scenario, popular music and celebrity culture.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

[11/2020 – 09/09/2024]

PhD in History of Europe

Sapienza University of Rome

City: Rome | **Country:** Italy | **Field(s) of study:** Arts and humanities | **Final grade:** Cum Laude | **Level in EQF:** EQF level 8 | **Thesis:** Gioiattiva: Narratives of LGBTQ+ Sicily from the 1970s to the Present

Research project aimed at reconstructing and analyzing the rhetorics through which the Sicilian LGBTQ+ community has been narrated and narrated itself through national, regional, and local press, LGBTQ+ themed magazines, and documents such as conference proceedings, correspondence, posters and flyers, art catalogues and mimeographs, analyzed using a qualitative and quantitative methodology (textual analysis and content analysis) in order to identify the connections between LGBTQ+ politics and the Southern Question.

[10/2018 – 09/2020]

Master's Degree in Fashion Studies

Sapienza University of Rome

City: Rome | **Country:** Italy | **Field(s) of study:** Arts and humanities | **Final grade:** Cum Laude | **Level in EQF:** EQF level 7 | **Thesis:** Radical Chic: Deconstructing Politics in Art and Fashion

Thesis on the analysis of the ethical and political meanings contained in contemporary fashion and art in the age of new populism and fascism through the method of the construction developed by Jacques Derrida.

[10/2015 – 09/2018]

Bachelor's Degree in Sciences of Fashion

Sapienza University of Rome

City: Rome | **Country:** Italy | **Field(s) of study:** Arts and humanities | **Final grade:** Cum Laude | **Level in EQF:** EQF level 6 | **Thesis:** The Clothed Otherness: Apparel, Gender, and Queerness

Thesis on the analysis of contemporary trends of a-gender, gender-bending and gender-neutral through queer and feminist philosophies (Judith Butler, Donna Haraway, Rosi Braidotti) and their links with the scenario of contemporary pop music.

[09/2008 – 06/2014]

Linguistic High School Degree

Istituto Magistrale Rosina Salvo

City: Trapani | **Country:** Italy |

WORK EXPERIENCE

[14/02/2024 – Current]

Adjunct Professor

Sapienza University of Rome

City: Rome | **Country:** Italy

Teaching and mentoring activity about gender dynamics in fashion from a socio-historical perspective, starting from the explosion of feminist politics in the mid-1800s throughout the 1900s to the present, focusing on how different thinkers, in different social and political contexts, have broadened the notions of gender, sexuality, and desire, encompassing issues such as class, race, geographical positioning, disability, health and illness (especially concerning the HIV/AIDS pandemic), and how these notions can serve a critical analysis on fashion and clothing.

[11/2020 – Current]

Research Assistant

University of Exeter

City: Exeter | **Country:** United Kingdom

For the research project *A Girls' Eye View* of the University of Exeter (UK) and Sapienza University of Rome (IT), I actively participate in research activities such as ethnographic interviews and qualitative data analysis, and present the results of the research through conferences, workshops, and scientific papers.

[08/2019 – 09/2019]

Intern

Circolo di Cultura Omosessuale Mario Mieli

City: Rome | **Country:** Italy

During the 150-hour long internship at the Circolo di Cultura Omosessuale Mario Mieli, the main LGBTQ+ association in the city of Rome, and one of the most influential in the Italian LGBTQ+ scenario, I took care of the cataloguing and digitalization process of its press archive, and of the photographic archive of the historical Roman queer club Muccassassina.

RESEARCH GRANTS

[2022 – 2023]

"Pregherò per il mio posto vuoto": l'AIDS in Sicilia dagli anni Ottanta ad oggi

"Bando di Avvio alla Ricerca" Research Grant funded by Sapienza University of Rome, for a research titled "'Pregherò per il mio posto vuoto': AIDS in Sicily from the 1980s to the present" (ERC Code SH6_12 Gender history; cultural history; history of collective identities and memories), about the history and politics of HIV/AIDS in Sicily, between the ostracism of the media and local political institutions, and the activism of care done by Sicilian LGBTQ+ militants.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Mother tongue(s): Italian

Other language(s):

English

LISTENING C2 READING C2 WRITING C2

SPOKEN PRODUCTION C2 SPOKEN INTERACTION C2

Levels: A1 and A2: Basic user; B1 and B2: Independent user; C1 and C2: Proficient user

PUBLICATIONS

[2024]

[Tutto chiede salvezza e cura. Comprendere la salute mentale attraverso una serie TV](#)

Reference: Romana Andò, Leonardo Campagna & Federico Gorziglia, 2024, Mediascapes Journal 24/2024

The aim of this paper is to reflect on the role of a contemporary Italian TV show, *Tutto chiede salvezza* (Everything Calls for Salvation) (Netflix 2022 -), in addressing mental health among young people, who are dramatically affected by the increasing prevalence of mental disorders, with the aim to generate awareness and promote a new sense of caring. These goals are particularly crucial when we consider that media narration of mental disorders has always been extremely controversial, too often ending up consolidating their social marginality while guaranteeing them a negative visibility in horror and thriller movies or police/detective dramas. According to cultivation theory, media representations can produce very negative cultural responses among audiences, reinforcing social stigma. But what if the same media can have the power to destigmatize mental disorders, contributing to building or reinforcing mental health literacy? In the last decade, the representation of mental disorders among adolescents and young adults has increased, and a significant diversification of these narratives has emerged, with the effect of highlighting the mental health issue within the public agenda both at international and national levels. *Everything Calls for Salvation* is a TV show produced by Netflix in 2022 and based on Daniele Mencarelli's autobiographical novel. It is the story of his own hospitalization under a psychiatric Mandatory Medical Treatment when he was 20. Through qualitative interviews, the level of awareness, knowledge, and emotional proximity to mental illness were analyzed by collecting more than 30 interviews among people aged between 14 and 24 years who watched the show. The results demonstrated the effectiveness of this specific representation of psychiatric disturbances, which is perceived as less stereotypical and superficial compared to other contemporary Italian content and able to engage affective publics on such a crucial topic, opening new possibilities in the collective process of caring.

[2023] [Carla Lonzi's Wardrobe](#)

Reference: Leonardo Campagna, 2023, *ZoneModa Journal*, Vol. 13 No. 1, pp. 33-50

According to common sense, fashion and feminism do not get along. Often in history, male fashion designers have exploited the female body for their artistic whims, and just as often, women have refused to comply with the dictates of fashion as the embodiment of an aestheticizing and fetishistic male gaze. However, on many occasions, feminists have reappropriated and resemantized the domestic practices of knitting, sewing and embroidery, conceptualizing them as different ways to think about politics, community, the self, and relationality. Among the many philosophers and activists of Italian second wave feminism, the most influential is undoubtedly Carla Lonzi. Over the years, Carla Lonzi has almost been turned into an idol, exploring every nuance of her thought both in feminism and art criticism. However, her image has remained unexplored, probably considered not particularly relevant. Through her work, this article analyzes the complex dynamics between fashion and feminism, and reconstructs Carla Lonzi's wardrobe starting from the photographs in her books and in archives, interpreting it with the help of her diary *Taci, anzi parla*, and of her collection of poems *Scacco ragionato*.

[2023] [The hero and the heroin. Inscriptions of AIDS on the male body.](#)

Reference: Leonardo Campagna, 2023, *Critical Studies in Men's Fashion*, Vol. 10 No. 1, pp. 59-73.

Contrary to popular belief, the HIV/AIDS pandemic has not only impacted on the languages of fashion and clothing in matters of communication and corporate social responsibility, but also on the very creation of the fashioned bodies. Two very different examples of the metaphorization and inscription of AIDS on the male body are the heroic, muscular and healthy figures of the Versace and Calvin Klein models, inherited from the white Yuppie culture, and the popularization of the heroin chic aesthetics of Marc Jacobs and, later, Hedi Slimane's Dior Homme. Much more than simple body types, the hero and

the heroin might be considered as different answers to the same epistemic crisis that the HIV/AIDS pandemic has caused in terms of body, sexuality, otherness, health and illness, from the late 1980s to the 1990s. The aim of this

article is to read and deconstruct western high fashion of that period through a critical discourse analysis involving masculinity studies and queer theory concerning AIDS, to understand the narratives that the pandemic has created on the male fashioned bodies.

[2022] **Judith Butler. Moda e performatività.**

Reference: Agnès Rocamora & Anneke Smelik (eds.), "Pensare attraverso la moda", Meltemi, pp. 405-424

Translation of Elizabeth Wissinger's essay "Judith Butler. Fashion and Performativity" in the Italian edition of "Thinking Through Fashion" by Agnès Rocamora & Anneke Smelik.

[2022] **Jacques Derrida. Moda sotto cancellazione.**

Reference: Agnès Rocamora & Anneke Smelik (eds.), "Pensare attraverso la moda", Meltemi, pp. 361-382

Translation of Alison Gill's essay "Jacques Derrida. Fashion Under Erasure" in the Italian edition of "Thinking Through Fashion" by Agnès Rocamora & Anneke Smelik.

[2022] **Intellectual Fashion/Fashion Intellectual: Luxury, Branding, and the Glamorization of Theory**

Reference: Romana Andò & Leonardo Campagna, 2022, ZoneModa Journal, Vol. 12 No. 1, pp. 145-162.

In *No Logo*, Naomi Klein states: "It is not to sponsor culture but to be the culture", referring to world-famous brands that started approaching new and experimental marketing techniques. Yet, as early as 1974, Pierre Bourdieu argued that the discourse on haute couture was already a discourse on haute culture, undoing the exquisitely philosophical prejudice that collocated fashion among small and frivolous things, unworthy of observation. This paper returns to this question through investigating the case of *Gucci Aria*, which used famous books of philosophy and critical theory as props. Even if this is not a novelty in the fashion world — from Miuccia Prada's "radical chic-ism" to Martin Margiela's deconstruction — what is new is that fashion has found itself having to study and incorporate knowledge that comes from the so-called high culture usually aimed at a niche audience of intellectuals. This is more than the attempt of lifestyle branding to address social and political movements' vindications as part of the social corporate responsibility strategy. What is the purpose behind selling theory itself? How can this exploitation carried out by fashion brands be read as a way of popularizing high culture? Are fashion designers playing at being organic intellectuals and is conspicuous consumption finding its new goal?

[2022] **La colpevolezza degli oggetti. Materializzazioni di genere e classe nel corpus di Elena Ferrante**

Reference: Romana Andò & Leonardo Campagna, 2022, chapter in "Raccontare il cambiamento" by Giovanna Motta

There are different aspects that encourage us to read Elena Ferrante's novels through a sociological perspective. The first one is the relationship with the city, Naples, its neighborhoods and streets, the sea, the trajectories drawn by its inhabitants, the dialect, the noises and smells. Naples talks about women, men, families, of patriarchal society and suffocating bonds, that do not leave any possibility for something new. In Ferrante's novels we find an incessant dialogue, or reciprocal hybridization, between the

bildungsroman and the reflections on the social positions in a city that is not yet a metropolis in the Simmelian sense. Ferrante's pages are a choral tale of women in the Italy of the 1900s.

CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

[12/12/2024 – 13/12/2024]

Associazione Italiana di Sociologia - Le Metamorfosi del Corpo

Accademia di Costume e Moda, Rome

Conference organized by the Associazione Italiana di Sociologia - Sezione Immaginario and Accademia di Costume e Moda where I presented by paper titled "Dis/affezioni depressive del corpo vestito", an autoethnographic research focused on understanding the relationship between clothing and body during periods of depression.

[22/10/2024]

Keynote Lecture, CIEE Rome Rome

Keynote Lecture for Dr. Federica Perazzini's Course in "Media, Gender, and Identity" at the Council of International Educational Exchange in Rome, titled "Italian LGBTQ+ History: Perspectives From The South", on the marginalization of Sicily and the South from Italian LGBTQ+ historiography and the academic and political need to merge queer theory with the Italian Southern Question.

[20/06/2024 – 21/06/2024]

VI Convegno della Società Scientifica Italiana di Sociologia, Cultura, Comunicazione – SISCC

Rome

Conference organized by the Società Scientifica Italiana di Sociologia, Cultura, Comunicazione - SISCC, titled *Possiamo ancora capire la società. Comprensione, previsione, critica*, where I presented, with my colleagues Romana Andò, Samuele Briatore, and Arianna Terrinoni, a paper titled "Media e rappresentazione del disturbo psichiatrico in adolescenza,

tra cura e intrattenimento" (Media and Representation of mental illness in adolescence, between care and entertainment).

[06/06/2024 – 09/06/2024]

AAIS 2024 Annual Conference Sorrento

Conference organized by the American Association of Italian Studies, where I presented my paper titled "Girls' Bodies and the Social Media Gaze" in the *A Girls' Eye View: Italian Girlhood and Contemporary Media* panel, an ethnographic research on girls' perception of their bodies in terms of change and struggle and how this relationship is mediated by social media.

[19/10/2024 – 21/10/2024]

FASHION IN 3D: Decolonizing, Deconstructing, Decentering - ZoneModa International Conference

Campus Rimini, Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna

Conference organized by ZoneModa and held by the Alma Mater Studiorum University Of Bologna, where I presented the paper "Clothing and Womanhood in Italian Contemporary Literature: Notes on Teresa Ciabatti, Valeria Parrella, Igiaba Scego", a textual analysis focused on clothing in the literary works of Teresa Ciabatti, Valeria Parrella and Igiaba Scego, and the role it plays in describing different types of womanhood that intersect with multiple issues concerning the Italian contemporary social and political scenario.

[21/09/2023 – 22/09/2023]

New Queer South: Perspectives on Italian Society and Culture University of Oxford

Conference organized by the New Queer South committee and the University of Oxford, where I presented the paper "«Facciamo delle nostre case e dei nostri corpi focolai

spirituali»: (contro)narrazioni dell'HIV/AIDS in Sicilia negli anni Ottanta e Novanta", an archive-based research on the dominant narratives of HIV/AIDS in Sicily in the 1980s and 1990s between medical malpractice, heterosexual romanticization of illness, and the socialization of care work.

[20/06/2023 – 22/06/2023] **A Girls' Eye View Network Workshop** Santa Severa Castle

Workshop organized by the research project A Girls' Eye View of the University of Exeter and Sapienza University of Rome, where I presented my papers "«Dateci una bomba, facciamo una strage»: Teresa Ciabatti's Estellas", on the topics of mean girls and affective dissonance in Teresa Ciabatti's literary works, and "Conflictuality in Clothing and Girlhood", based on ethnographic work concerning the relationship of teenage girls with clothing and fashion intercepting issues such as the male gaze and cat-calling, shame, and beauty standards.

[13/06/2023 – 17/06/2023] **Care - The NECS 2023 Conference** University of Oslo

NECS Conference held by the University of Oslo, where I and Romana Andò presented the paper "*Everything Calls For Salvation: caring for mental health among adolescents through a TV show*", a research based on ethnographic work concerning the representation of mental health issues in the Italian TV series *Tutto chiede salvezza*.

[30/11/2022] **Non solo COVID: Sensibilizzazione all'HIV e all'AIDS** Sapienza University of Rome

Conference organized by Link Sapienza, Collettivo di Medicina Studenti Indipendenti, Collettivo Prisma LGBTQIA+, with the patronage of Sapienza University of Rome, with paper titled "L'HIV e l'AIDS nella cultura popolare e nella storiografia", focused on the state of Italian historiography in narrating the HIV/AIDS crisis.

[15/09/2022 – 17/09/2022] **Emergent Femininities and Masculinities in 21st Century** National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

Conference organized by the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens where I and Romana Andò presented the paper "A Girls' Eye View: Exploring Girlhood Media Representation Through The Lens of Italian Female Adolescence", where we discussed

some of the results from the ethnographic work conducted for the research project *A Girls' Eye View*, concerning contemporary representations of girlhood in Italian cinema and TV series related to the topics of body issues, perception and reality of gender issues, female friendship and mother-daughter relationships.

[17/06/2021 – 19/06/2021] **Fashion Tales 2020+1. Politics Through The Wardrobes** Online (held by the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan)

Online conference held by the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan, where I presented my paper titled "Just Clothes. Derrida's Deconstruction for the Political Analysis of Fashion", a research on how deconstruction can be used as an theoretical tool for the analysis of the political value of fashion and clothing, using the case study of Miuccia Prada's *Anatomy of Romance* collection.

[11/05/2021 – 13/05/2021] **Celebrity and Crisis, Celebrity in Crisis** Online (held by the Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna)

Online conference held by the Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna, where I presented my paper titled "To Hold Together: Pop Music During Covid-19", a netnography based on YouTube reaction videos where I proved the influence of Covid-19 in signifying works of pop music such as *Chromatica* by Lady Gaga and *folklore* by Taylor Swift.