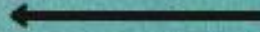


Lecturer:
Patricia Hill Collins
Università del Maryland,
College Park



16-17/04

↑

From femininity to femininities

"Rehearsal" for an
intersectional gender
paradigm

University of Palermo
Viale delle Scienze (Building 16)

**From femininity to femininities.
“Rehearsal” for an intersectional gender paradigm
Mid-term Conference 2026**

Edited by Italian Sociological Association – Gender Studies Section Scientific Committee

ISBN 979-12-243-2895-7

ISBN-A 10.979.12243/28957

April 2026



Scientific and Organising Committee:

Ignazia Maria Bartholini, Raffaella Monia Calia, Francesca Colella, Marianna Coppola, Daniela Grignoli,
Luca Guizzardi, Giuseppe Masullo, Mariella Nocenzi, Carmine Urciuoli

Session 11 - Emerging forms of masculinity and non-hegemonic relational dynamics

Popular Masculinities and Intersectional Tensions: The Construction of Masculine Desirability between Urban Peripheries and TikTok

Roberto Graziano, University Federico II of Naples, robertograziano17@gmail.com

Keywords: Desirable masculinity, TikTok, digital sociology, urban peripheries, gender studies

This contribution presents part of an ongoing research project devoted to the construction of desirable masculinity in Italian urban peripheries, currently under development for journal publication. In this context, the focus is placed on the implications for gender studies and intersectionality, interrogating the relationship between cultural transformations, class position, and platformised visibility.

The study examines how the historical and cultural roots of desirable masculinity are reproduced and updated through TikTok's digital trends. In particular, it analyses three subcultural phenomena emerging from the peripheries of Naples, Rome, and Milan, Malessere, Maranza, and Coatti, which have gained wide visibility on the platform. These configurations, rooted in popular contexts and characterised by specific aesthetic and behavioural practices, propose models of masculinity grounded in traditional repertoires reactivated and made circulable through algorithmic virality.

The qualitative analysis of 150 TikTok profiles highlights how representations centred on respect, dominance, jealousy, control over gender relations, bodily discipline, and symbolic consumption configure recognisable models of masculine legitimacy. These elements, far from being exclusively digital products, find their conditions of possibility in autochthonous contexts where class position, territorial belonging, and gender hierarchies intersect. Through a theoretical re-elaboration grounded in the concept of habitus, the contribution shows how everyday practices, incorporated dispositions, and aesthetic codes tend to sediment in common sense and become naturalised over time, first through traditional media and later through digital media.

From an intersectional perspective, the visibility afforded by the platform does not necessarily correspond to linear processes of gender transformation. Despite significant cultural changes promoted by feminist struggles and critical masculinity studies, there remain social contexts in which such transformations have not achieved full legitimacy. In this sense, TikTok operates as a device of observability and comparison, rendering visible and at times normalising situated repertoires of hegemonic masculinity that become recognisable, imitable, and commentable beyond their original territorial settings.

The contribution thus seeks to stimulate reflection on the uneven circulation of gender change and on the persistence of masculine configurations rooted in popular contexts, interrogating the role of digital platforms in their contemporary amplification.