



UMBERTO SPATICCHIA

CURRENT POSITION

University of Messina. PhD in Political Science.

EDUCATION

- 2025–present Subject Matter Expert - SSD Sociology of Cultural and Communication Processes (SPS/08) for the discipline “*Social Media and Corporate Communication*”
- 2024 - present Ph.D. in Political Science, University of Messina. **Research project:** “*The transformative role of artificial intelligence on the national identity of European democratic countries.*”
- 2023 Specialization in Secondary Education Support, University of Messina.
- 2020 Master’s Degree in Contemporary Philosophy, University of Messina – 110/110 cum laude. Thesis title: *Role-playing as a pedagogical tool: an empirical study on moral education.*
- 2018 Bachelor’s Degree in Information Sciences: Public Communication and Journalism Techniques, University of Messina – 102/110. Thesis title: *How imagination rules: ludic-pedagogical aspects of role-playing.*
- 2018 University internship at RTP – *Radio Televisione Peloritana* as an advertising representative and journalist, Messina.
- 2014 High School Diploma in Science (89/100) – “Brocca” Maxi-Experimental Program. Archimede Scientific High School, Messina

CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

- 10/16/2025
October 17,
2025 Speaker at the Sud Innovation Summit conference—with a presentation titled: “*Beyond Death: AI-Driven Augmented Reality and Post-Mortem Avatars*”—University of Messina.
- June 6, 2025
June 7, 2025 Speaker at the **AIS** Conference – Sports Section, “Sports and the Social Dimensions of the Present,” University of Trento, with a presentation titled: “*They Will Be Famous: Youth, Social Media, and the Ideology of Celebrity in Spectator Sports.*”

Umberto Spaticchia

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- May 13, 2025
May 14, 2025 Speaker at the international conference "Kiedy boli dusza i życie traci sens," Jaroslaw (Poland), with a presentation titled: "*AI and Depression: Technology, Diagnosis, and Support in the Future of Mental Health.*"
- May 14, 2025
to
May 16, 2025 Speaker and poster presenter at the ECREA OSC Conference with a presentation titled: "Synthetic Influencers and AI Avatars: The Future of Organizational Identity in a Virtual World," University of Cagliari
- June 19,
2025
June 20,
2025 Speaker at the 7th Conference of the Italian Scientific Society of Sociology, Culture, and Communication (SISCC 2025) titled "There Is No Time Left! Crises and Emergencies in Contemporary Society," University of Cagliari
- April 8, 2025
April 9, 2025 Speaker at the "10th World Conference on Media and Mass Communication 2025 - 'Transforming Media Landscapes: Ethics, Innovation, Spatiality, and Education'" in Bangkok, Thailand, presenting two research papers: "*Simulations of Absence: The Role of AI and AR in the Future of Grief*" and "*Dark Patterns and Soft Manipulation: The Hidden Dangers of AI-Driven Communication*"
- 12/10/2024 Director and Speaker at the workshop "*Teaching with AI: Useful Applications for Modern Educators*" organized at the Medical University of Lublin
- 12/09/2024 Speaker at the seminar "Contemporary Challenges in the Professional Workplace," with a presentation titled "*Video Games and AI: Creation, Potential Risks, and Benefits*"
- November
26, 2024 Speaker at the seminar "Interpersonal Communication: The Key to Effective Professional Work," with a presentation titled "*Beyond Death: AI-Driven Augmented Reality and Post-Mortem Avatars*"
- 11/14/2024
on
11/26/2024 Speaker and organizer of the 2024 Student Conference: "Power and Control: State and Society in Transformation" (Messina) with the presentation of the research "*Combating with AI Algorithms and the Future of Military Power.*"
- 09/18/2024
to
09/20/2024 Speaker at the Mid-Term Conference of the Italian Sociological Association (AIS) - "Emotions and Reason in Neoliberal Society" (Lecce, Italy) with the presentation of the research "*Reviving the Past: AI and Postmortem Augmented Reality.*"
- June 26,
2024 Speaker at the conference "*XV Congreso Español de Sociología - FES 2024*" in Seville (Spain) with the presentation of the research "*Information Sharing and Social Polarization: the role of social media and Artificial Intelligence.*"
- 05/09/2024
May 10, 2024 Speaker at the conference "*9th World Conference on Media and Mass Communication 2024 - 'Reshaping and Challenging the Neoliberal Model: Evolving Practices in Crisis, Conflict, and Creative Communication'*" in Colombo, Sri Lanka (remotely) with the presentation of the research "*IN THE SHADOW OF AI CATFISH AND COMPLEX DYNAMICS OF DIGITAL IDENTITY*"
- May 7, 2024
08/05/2024 Speaker at the conference "*Conflict: Historical-anthropological, philosophical-social, philological-literary, and archaeological perspectives*" at the DICAM Department with the presentation of the research "*Digital Hate: The Rise and Conflict Between Humans and Artificial Intelligence*"
- 03/07/2024
to
03/09/2024 Participation in the *Amnesty International Winter School – Human Rights Today: An Ascending or Descending Parabola?*

- 10/18/2023 Speaker at the “*Officine Sociologiche*” conference, presenting a talk titled “*EDUCATIONAL GAMING: Inclusion and New Educational Games*” in the Aula Magna, COSPECS, University of Messina
- May 20, 2023 Speaker at the International Conference “*Moral Issues in Contemporary Times*” with a presentation titled “*Dilemma: An Empirical Study on Moral Development Through Role-Playing*” at the Hall of the Accademia Peloritana dei Pericolanti (Rectorate of the University of Messina).
- May 20, 2023 Speaker at the conference “*The Sound of a Setting: Music and Narrative in Role-Playing Games*” at Modena Fiere - PLAY 2023: Game Fair. With a presentation dedicated to role-playing games as an inclusive tool, with a particular focus on the combination of music and storytelling for sensory disabilities.
- 04/13/2023 Speaker at the closing conference of the international project “*Open Innovative Resources for High-Quality Inclusive Digital Higher Education (OIR) – DIDATTICA HITECH – Know, Include, Grow*” with a presentation in the session dedicated to Educational Gaming and technologies for inclusion in the Aula Magna of the Rectorate of the University of Messina.
- May 20, 2022 Speaker and moderator at the conference “*Streaming & Dice: How Role-Playing Survives a Pandemic*” at Modena Fiere - PLAY 2022: Game Fair. With a presentation dedicated to Role-Playing as an innovative tool for addressing the recent COVID-19 pandemic through features aimed at inclusion and the digitization of the game.

PUBLICATIONS

Spaticchia, U., Pira, F., & Casagrande, R. (2026). *Post-Human Communities: Reorganizing Social Relations in the Age of Interspecies Communication*. In **Artificial Intelligence and Networks for a Sustainable Future**. Springer Nature, Contributions to Economics. https://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-032-13458-5_3

Spaticchia, U., Pira, F., & Casagrande, R. (2026). *Fake Sex, Real Hate: Deepfake Pornography as Technological Violence in 4chan’s Manosphere*. **Sociology of Communication**. FrancoAngeli. <https://dx.doi.org/10.3280/SC2025-070006>

Spaticchia, U., Pira, F., Casagrande, R., & (2025). *Sports Journalism: New Narratives from Traditional Media to eSports*. **FrancoAngeli**. <https://www.francoangeli.it/Libro/Giornalismo-sportivo-Le-nuove-narrazioni-dai-media-tradizionali-agli-eSports?Id=30041>

Spaticchia, U. (2025). *Fighting with Algorithms: AI and the Future of Military Power*. Conference Proceedings - **(forthcoming)**.

Spaticchia, U. (2025). *Synthetic Influencers and AI Avatars: The Future of Organizational Identity in a Virtual World*. In **The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly in Organizational and Strategic Communication**. LabCom Books **(forthcoming)**.

Spaticchia, U. & Casagrande, R., (2025). *New forms of gender-based violence: Between deepreal and deepfake*. **Studia Humanitatis Journal**, 5(1), 41–59. <https://doi.org/10.33732/shj.v5i1.110>

Spaticchia, U. (2025). *Digital Hatred: The Rise of Conflict Between Humans and Artificial Intelligence*. ***Peloro***. **Journal of the Doctoral Program in Humanities**, 10(2), 777–790. <https://doi.org/10.13129/2499-8923/2025/2/5177>

Spaticchia, U. (2024). *Dilemma: An Empirical Investigation into the Moral Development of Adolescents and Young People through Role Play*. In A. M. Passaseo (Ed.), **Current Issues in Moral Matters: A Call for Education** (pp. 281–296). Messina University Press. <https://doi.org/10.13129/979-12-80899-14-9>

Spaticchia, U. (2024). *Generational Transformations and Digital Media: Continuity and Change*. **Addiction & Social Media Communication (ASMC)**. Messina University Press. <https://cab.unime.it/journals/index.php/ASMC/article/view/4506>

Spaticchia, U. (2024). *Synthetic Empathy: How Digital Technology Transforms Authentic Relationships*. *Itinerarium*, 32(86–87), 95–108. “San Tommaso” Theological Institute. ISSN: 1127-3216.

ASSIGNMENTS

- Assignment within the framework of the International *ERASMUS+ KA226* project - *Open Innovative Resources for High-Quality Inclusive Digital Higher Education (OIR)*, - Assignment within the international *Erasmus+ KA226 – OIR* project, carried out by the University of Messina in partnership with **Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin (Poland)**, the project lead, and **the University of Oviedo (Spain)**. As part of the project activities, I oversaw the **editing and post-production of scientific dissemination materials** (lectures and podcasts) developed by the University of Messina’s research group, and also contributed to **the design and creation of the YouTube channel dedicated to sharing the project’s results** and making them accessible to the academic community and the interested public.
- **Teacher Training – ASACOM and Methodological Skills for School Inclusion** - A training program for teachers and **ASACOM** staff, aimed at developing **methodological and managerial skills in the context of ADHD and Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)**. The training program explored strategies for creating **inclusive educational environments**, with a particular focus on managing educational relationships and promoting teaching practices that foster learning processes at **the IIS Minutoli Institute in Messina**. Technical consulting assignment for the organizational management of the closing conference of the international project “*Open Innovative Resources for High-Quality Inclusive Digital Higher Education (OIR)*.”
- **International Conference “Moral Issues in Contemporary Times”**
Assignment to **develop and design the visual identity and graphic materials** for the International Conference “**Moral Issues in Contemporary Times**,” held at the **Sala dell’Accademia Peloritana dei Pericolanti (Rectorate of the University of Messina)**.

COLLABORATIONS

- PhD Ambassador – University of Messina**
Collaboration on the University of Messina’s institutional activities related to **academic advising and science outreach** as a **PhD Ambassador** during the **University’s Open Days**. As part of this initiative, I participated in activities presenting the University’s academic programs and research tracks, contributing to dialogue with students and prospective applicants, and promoting the role of university research and doctoral programs within the academic context.
- 2025
- Addiction & Social Media Communication Journal** – Collaboration with the scientific journal **ASMC** – serving as Art Director and providing support for the editorial review of scientific articles, contributing to the graphic design of content and the editorial preparation process
- 2024 – present

for publications.

- 2022 Erasmus+ KA226 Project “Open Innovative Resources for High Quality Inclusive Digital Higher Education (OIR)” – Collaboration on the scientific dissemination of the initial results of the **Erasmus+ KA226 – OIR** project, carried out by the University of Messina in partnership with **Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin (Poland)**, the project lead, and **the University of Oviedo (Spain)**. As part of the project activities, I participated in **the international seminar presenting the training activities**, held on **November 15, 2022**, in the Aula Magna of the University of Messina’s Rectorate, and in **the 4th International Meeting** of the project, held in Messina from **November 14 to 17, 2022**. At the **project’s closing conference**, I also participated as a **speaker**, presenting a talk on the role of **gamification in educational innovation and digital inclusion in higher education**.
Radio UniVersoMe - Radio host and lead graphic designer for the UniVersoMe university radio project, developed at the Press Office of the Rectorate of the University of Messina. I participated in the production and hosting of radio content and in the design of the platform’s graphic identity and visual materials.
- 2016 -
2017

INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY

- 2025 **Erasmus+ KA171, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University (Georgia)**
Selected as an **Erasmus+ KA171 scholar** for an international research mobility program at the *Faculty of Humanities*. During my stay, I participated in a series of **advanced seminars for doctoral students and researchers**, actively contributing to the academic debate by presenting the initial findings of my research project **“Post Mortem Avatar,”** which explores the sociological implications of posthumous digital identities and new forms of symbolic presence mediated by artificial intelligence. The experience fostered interdisciplinary dialogue on digital media, emerging technologies, and transformations in the contemporary public sphere.
- 2022 **Research Mobility – Visiting PhD Student, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University (UMCS), Lublin (Poland)**
International research mobility period funded by the PNRR, conducted at **the Ecotech Complex – UMCS**, a center of excellence for the interdisciplinary analysis of social and technological data. Under the supervision of Professors **Jarosław Chodak** and **Kamil Filipek**, I explored **advanced quantitative research** methodologies, with a particular focus on the use of the **R** programming language for statistical data analysis and for the systematization of scientific sources in my doctoral research. During my stay, I also collaborated with the **Department of Pedagogy and Psychology**, presenting my work as a speaker at **three international academic events**, contributing to the scientific dialogue on digital media, society, and technological transformations.

WORK EXPERIENCE

- May 20, *Freelancer with VAT number*
2023 **Graphic Designer** specializing in layout, digital graphics, commercial design, visual design, and brand identity for clients in the gaming industry (Hasbro, Shockdom, Officina Meningi, Horrible Guild, Grumpy Bear, Isshobi Studio)
- Present
- 2023 **“RAYN,”** a work of game fiction, a role-playing gamebook published by *Edizioni Aristeia* (graphic design)

- 2022 *"Bloodsword,"* a work of interactive fiction, a role-playing game manual published by the publishers *Tambù*, *Officina Meningi*, and *Edizioni Librarsi* (graphic design)
- 2022 *"Last Sabbath,"* a work of playful fiction and a role-playing game manual published by *Officina Meningi* and *Shockdom* (graphic design).
- 2022 *"Il sangue del Barbaro,"* a work of playful fiction and role-playing game book published by *Officina Meningi* (graphic design).
- 2022 *"O.S.R."*, a work of game fiction and role-playing game book published by *Tin Hat Games* (graphic design).
- 2022 *"Odyssey – Black Tales,"* a work of interactive fiction and role-playing game published by *Officina Meningi* (graphic design).
- 2022 *"The Amazing Workshop of the Copper Brothers,"* a digital supplement for the Dungeons & Dragons role-playing game, in collaboration with the Italian gaming channel [D20 Nation](#).
- 2022 *"The Extravagant Dream of Aralea,"* a digital supplement for the Dungeons & Dragons role-playing game, in collaboration with the Italian gaming channel [D20 Nation](#).
- 2021 *"The Marvelous Tower of Droniel,"* a digital supplement for the Dungeons & Dragons role-playing game, in collaboration with the Italian gaming channel [D20 Nation](#).
- 2022 *"Clickbait,"* a short story for *VHS – Very Horror Story*, a role-playing game manual published by the Italian publisher Aces Games.
- 2021 *"Zona Morta,"* a short story for *Farsight*, a role-playing game manual published by the Italian publisher Lightfish Games.
- 2020 *"Rugantino,"* a short story for *Brancalonia*, a role-playing game manual published by the Italian publisher Acheron Books.
- 2016 *"Null01 – The Story of Downey,"* a novel, published by Armenio Editore. ISBN: 8869020428, publication date: 09/2016.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Italian: native speaker

English: Level C2 Certificate in ESOL International

COMPUTER / DIGITAL SKILLS

- ECDL CERTIFICATION – IT SECURITY – Specialized Level
- Professional use – Office (Excel, PowerPoint, Word)
- Professional Use – Adobe Creative Cloud (Photoshop, Illustrator, Premiere, InDesign)
- Website creation and customization
- IT CERTIFICATIONS: Coding, ForLim, ForTablet, For Teacher

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

May 15, 2015 National Youth Award – Cultura NO STOP – 8th Edition “The Number One in Contemporary Italian Poetry” Award for “*Alle Porte di Sicilia*,” Turin

AREAS OF INTEREST

- **Artificial Intelligence and Transformations of the Public Sphere:** My research falls within the field of media sociology and digital communication, with a particular focus on the role of artificial intelligence in transforming the contemporary public sphere. I am interested in analyzing how algorithms, recommendation systems, and AI-generated content influence the production, circulation, and interpretation of information, helping to redefine the dynamics of public debate.
- **Social media, digital conflicts, and political participation:** I study emerging forms of conflict and participation in the digital public sphere, with particular reference to social media as spaces for the construction of political discourse. My research focuses on how digital platforms structure social interactions, polarization, and new forms of online mobilization and protest.
- **Emerging technologies and social impact:** I am interested in the social implications of emerging technologies, particularly the intersection between technological innovation, cultural processes, and transformations of democratic institutions. My sociological approach aims to understand how artificial intelligence is redefining power relations, decision-making processes, and forms of participation in contemporary society.

Umberto Spaticchia

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SUBSTITUTIVE DECLARATIONS IN LIEU OF A NOTARIAL CERTIFICATE

(Art. 47 of Presidential Decree No. 445/2000)

I, the undersigned, UMBERTO SPATICCHIA, Tax ID: SPTMRT95H23F158F, born in MESSINA (ME) on June 23, 1995, and residing in MESSINA, at Viale Giostra, CPL. Scacciapensieri 98, ZIP code 98152

Pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 445 of December 28, 2000, concerning the “Consolidated Law on Legislative and Regulatory Provisions Regarding Administrative Documentation” and subsequent amendments and additions;

Pursuant to Law No. 183 of November 12, 2011, and in particular Article 15 concerning the new provisions regarding certificates and substitute declarations;

Aware that false declarations are punishable under Article 76 of Presidential Decree No. 445/2000

DECLARES

that the information contained in the curriculum vitae is true and accurate.

Finally, the undersigned hereby consents to the processing of the personal data provided, in accordance with Legislative Decree No. 196/2003, for the purposes of this procedure.

MESSINA, March 10, 2026

The declarant

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Umberto Spaticchia', written over a horizontal line.