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Abstract: A brief summary of essays included in *g/s/i* no. 3 Invited Perspectives

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Editorial: Gender and Language: Contributions and Response to a 2016 AAIS Roundtable

PAOLA BONIFAZIO

The “Invited Perspectives” section of this *g/s/i* issue features videos and written reports from the Roundtable on Gender and Language that was sponsored by this journal and held at the 2016 American Association for Italian Studies (AAIS) Convention. The AAIS Convention took place in Baton Rouge (LO) on April 21-23; Paolo Chirumbolo from Louisiana State University organized the event, which turned out to be an engaging and well-attended series of panels and roundtables on a variety of topics in Italian Studies. Our roundtable organizers were Michela Baldo (University of Leicester), who also chaired the session, and Nicoletta Marini-Maio (Dickinson College). Participants to the roundtable included Michela Baldo and other international scholars: Serena Bassi (Cardiff University), Juliet Guzzetta (Michigan State University), and Cinzia Russi (University of Texas at Austin). As you can see from the videos and reports, presenters explored, from different approaches, the mutual relationships between social change and evolution of language usage in connection to gender and sexual orientation. Emphasis was given to the permanence in Italy of discourses on gender and sexuality explicitly or implicitly oriented in a homophobic and transphobic as well as sexist and misogynist way but also to the ways in which language can become a tool to fight discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation. In the last video of this section, you can watch the lively debate that followed our participants’ presentations.

An additional contribution to this section consists in Cecilia Robustelli’s response to the round-table presentations and to related questions, such as the role played in language change by institutions and communities such as the Accademia della Crusca and the Italian Government, and the relationship between heteronormative frameworks of language usage in Italy and the issue of inclusiveness put forward by LGBTQ+ communities world-wide. Robustelli is professor of Linguistics at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia and an outspoken supporter of gender awareness in language usage. A link to a short video broadcast by the Italian State Television (RAI) on this topic is included in her report.