

# CALL FOR ABSTRACT

## Public Vices: The individual and collective dimensions of civic and epistemic vices

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1-2 October 2021, [Università di Genova](#), Genova (Italy).

**Keynote Speakers:** Heather D Battaly, Emanuela Ceva, Fabienne Peter, Alessandra Tanesini



## PUBLIC VICES: The individual and collective dimensions of civic and epistemic vices

1-2 October 2021, Università di Genova, Genova (Italy)

The conference aims to bring together political and moral philosophers to discuss key civic and epistemic vices, to assess their corrupting impact on public life, and to devise effective countermeasures.

Political deliberation is increasingly characterized by **epistemic vices**, e.g. inaccuracy (Chambers 2020), arrogance (Tanesini 2018), closed-mindedness (Battaly 2020) and epistemic insouciance (Cassam 2018). Consequently, many citizens worry that the public sphere is being polluted by an unprecedented number of misleading claims and inaccurate statements (Matsa and Shearer, 2018; Mitchell et al., 2016, 2019). Furthermore, certain epistemic vices could even compromise the legitimacy of democratic deliberation (Peter 2020).

On the other side, the conference will focus on **civic vices**. There has been a growing debate on civic virtues which facilitate public life (Croce & Vaccarezza 2018), e.g. prudence (Ottonelli 2018), effectiveness (Zuolo 2020), resilience (Snow 2018) or civic friendship (Schwarzenbach 1996). Yet, comparably less attention has been paid to *civic vices*, which are not limited to the negative side of civic virtues, but include new character traits with dangerous impact on democratic well-functioning e.g. hyperbolic partisanship (Muirhead 2010), polarization (Aikin & Talisse 2020), radicalization (Waldner and Lust 2018, 109), or corruption (Ceva & Ferretti 2017, 2021).

We welcome submissions relevant to this research aim, broadly construed. Possible topics include, but are not limited to, the following questions:

- What are civic and epistemic vices? What is the harm in them?
- Are individuals blameworthy for the development of civic and epistemic vices?
- Are there genuinely collective civic and epistemic vices?
- How do civic and epistemic vices impact democratic politics?
- How can civic and epistemic vices be curtailed or corrected?
- Are there specific virtues that should be cultivated among democratic citizens? Under what conditions could these be fostered?
- Where does the responsibility lie for rectifying civic and epistemic vices?
- What institutional mechanisms, if any, should be ordained to control civic and epistemic vices?

To apply for the conference, send an abstract (500 words) to: [callpublicvices@gmail.com](mailto:callpublicvices@gmail.com) by June 30. Notification of acceptance will be sent within a month.

**COVID DISCLAIMER:** the conference is organized aiming for **personal attendance**, as vaccination should have reached significant levels in Italy by the end of September. If circumstances require it, we will consider online alternatives or a hybrid format.

**Organizing Committee:** Valeria Ottonelli, Angelo Campodonico, Maria Silvia Vaccarezza, Federico Zuolo, Carlo Burelli, Carline Klijnman.

*This workshop is part of a research project: Deceit and Self-Deception. How We Should Address Fake News and Other Cognitive Failures of the Democratic Public ([www.deceitproject.com](http://www.deceitproject.com)) and it is supported by Aretai Center on Virtues ([www.aretaicenter.com](http://www.aretaicenter.com)).*



**Deceit and Self-Deception**  
PRIN 2017

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