



CHALLENGING RACISM SERIES

Challenging Racism Project
School of Social Sciences and Psychology

SEMINAR

The extreme political far-right in Poland: an analysis of leaders' discourse and audience responses



ABSTRACT

This talk is a work-in-progress focusing on how the discourse of the extreme political far-right in Poland resonates with the audience's responses. Far-right movements have been gaining considerable public support in recent times in many Western democracies. Here we focus on Poland where extreme far-right political groups are even represented in the Parliament. We collected linguistic data on a recent incident that shocked the international public: the assassination of Pawel Adamowicz, the liberal mayor of Gdansk, a major city in north Poland. He was stabbed at a public charity event in full view of thousands attending and also a huge TV audience. Pawel Adamowicz was subjected to intense hate speech for a long time before his assassination. Political commentators and members of his family argue that there was a clear connection between his assassination and the hate speech which targeted him in the broadcast on government television. We analyse the speech given by the far-right leader Robert Winnicki in the Polish Parliament and online responses to this speech which was distributed on YouTube. We conducted qualitative analysis of the key themes emerging in both the leader's discourse and audience responses as well as computerised linguistic analysis of them. We discuss our findings and their potential implications on brutalization of language and increasing the polarization of political attitudes in the context of Poland and beyond.

PRESENTERS

Zofia Kinowska is an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Department of Social and Institutional Transformations. Her PhD work concerned women's participation in civic activities in local settings in Poland. Recently, her work focuses on cultural and ethnic diversity issues, adaptation and integration of migrants. She currently researches the social profile and the organizational landscape of Polish diaspora in Australia.

Ana-Maria Bliuc is a social and political psychologist in the School of Social Sciences, Western Sydney University. She is also part of the Challenging Racism Project at WSU. Her research focuses primarily on understanding how social identities influence people's behaviour in health, environmental (climate change), and socio-political contexts. Recently, she has conducted research on online communities of the far-right in Australia and Europe.

DATE: Tuesday 28 May 2019

TIME: 12pm-1pm

VENUE: Western Sydney University, Parramatta South Campus, EH.a.1.30