



**European Association for Studies of Australia (EASA) International Conference**  
***Australia as a Risk Society: Hope and Fears of the Past, the Present and the Future***

**Convenor: Katherine E. Russo**

**University of Naples “L’Orientale”, Italy**

**29 March – 1 April 2021**

**CFP Panel:**

**“Antipodean Populism and the Fabrication of a Risk Society”**

Panel Convenors:

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Over the past decades, populism has increasingly gained ground both on a national and global scale, turning from an epiphenomenon into a structural aspect of contemporary world politics. Despite its idiosyncratic features within the manifold socio-historical contexts worldwide, at the core of populism lies the constitution of an anti-establishment and anti-intellectual group claiming sovereign powers for a putative homogeneous collectivity, “the people” (Laclau 2005). As recent events have painfully demonstrated, the communication of risk is far from being stable and unproblematic (Latour, 1987). While outcomes, such as car mortality and premature birth, are widely defined as risks, outcomes such as human mobility, environmental sustainability and climate change are often contested and their measurement leads to controversies. Furthermore, risk communication faces the challenge of conveying specialized information to lay people, and bridging the gap between experts and lay decision-makers may be extremely difficult in the case of ‘contested science’. Experts adopt non-persuasive communication, trusting data to speak for themselves, and describe both benefits and risks, often in quantitative terms. In contrast, populist leaders explicitly address the fears of the lay public in a language that leaves lingering emotional effects and avoid technical terms, thus reaching a wider public. The nationalist drives articulated by populist leaders are propagated within offline as much as online settings, fostering in the latter case the diffusion and intensification of “webpopulism” (Mojca and Birgit 2018). These rhetorical strategies nevertheless risk disseminating manipulative propaganda and alarmist discourses of fear and hatred among citizens, with the effect of exacerbating stereotypical representations and hostility towards an imagined Other. Amidst this scenario of uncertainty, Australia and New Zealand, among other Antipodean countries, have not been spared from the populist surge. However, while forms of traditional and digital populism have been comprehensively explored in the European and

American continent, other sub-regional forms have been excluded from scholarly attention, substantiating the so-called “Atlantic-bias” (Moffitt 2017).

The panel aims to offer a space of critical discussion on these still-to-be thoroughly investigated aspects of Antipodean populism and invites contributions on the following subjects:

- Ideologies and Populist Propaganda
- Populism and its Meanings
- Persuasion and Manipulation in the Cyberspace
- Hate Speech in Populist Discourses
- Refugee Crisis and Migration
- Hansonism
- Imagined Others
- Islamophobia and White Fundamentalism
- Neo- and Techno- Colonialism
- Telepopulism and Webpopulism
- Emotionality, Attitudes and Populism
- Post-Truth and Digital Era
- Indigenous Politics and Antipodean Populism
- Populist Narratives and Counter-Narratives
- Cross-National and Trans-National Populisms
- Multimodality of Populism
- Left versus Right Populisms
- Populism and Gender
- Populism and Identity Politics

Please send a 250-words abstract and a 100-words bio-note clearly identifying the title of the panel in the object of your email to the email address [esanaples2020@gmail.com](mailto:esanaples2020@gmail.com) and [ariannagrasso@unior.it](mailto:ariannagrasso@unior.it) by **November 15, 2020**.

All accepted participants will be expected to become members of EASA as a precondition to presenting their papers. Details of EASA membership are available on the association’s website at this address: <http://www.easaustralianstudies.net/easa/office>. A call for full-academic length papers derived from conference presentations will be issued after the conference for publication in the Association’s online journal JEASA (<http://www.easaustralianstudies.net/ejournal/call>)

***Suggested readings:***

Alharbi, Ahlam Mohammad. “Risk Communication Discourse: A Content Analysis of Some Australian Media Coverage of Cyclones in Queensland, Australia in 2011.” *International Journal of Human Sciences* 11 (2014): 1019–1036.

- Bednarek, Monika. *Emotion Talk across Corpora*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.
- Bondi, Marina, Cacchiani, Silvia and Davide Mazzi. *Discourse In and Through the Media: Recontextualizing and Reconceptualizing Expert Discourse*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015: 1-19.
- Hidalgo-Tenorio, Encarnación, Benítez-Castro, Miguel-Ángel, and Francesca De Cesare, eds. *Populist Discourse: Critical Approaches to Contemporary Politics*, Routledge, London and New York, 2019.
- Laclau, Ernesto. *On Populist Reason*. London: Verso, 2005.
- Martin, J. R. and White P. R.R. *The Language of Evaluation: The Appraisal Framework*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Moffitt, B. 2017. "Populism in Australia and New Zealand." in eds. Cristobal Kaltwasser, et al. *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 121-139.
- Mojca, P. and Birgit B. 2018. *Populism and the Web: Communicative Practices of Parties and Movements in Europe*. London: Routledge.
- Wodak, R. 2015. *The Politics of Fear: What Right-Wing Populist Discourses Mean*. Sage Publications.