



Saying the Quiet Part Loud: How Figleaves Facilitate the Rise of Blatant Racism and Falsehood



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Date: February 4, 2022

Time: 3 P.M. – 5 P.M.

Location: Session will be held via Zoom

Registration Link:

<https://uci.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJltcuqtpjsjHtdlfaTFemqHtj5q6rd7fLQm>

It is widely held that something has changed with respect to both blatantly racist speech and obvious falsehood in recent years. Both seem to have gone mainstream, to a shocking degree, in political speech. There's obviously nothing new at all about racism in politics, or about false political speech. Yet since the Civil Rights movement politicians felt a need to conceal their racism at least partially, in response to the social unacceptability of explicit racism. And concealment of falsehood obviously has a very long tradition in politics. With the rise of the Far Right, and the increasingly high profile of conspiracy theories, there seem to have been dramatic shifts. In this paper, I explain the linguistic mechanism of Figleaves, and argue that they have helped to facilitate both blatantly racist and blatantly false political speech.

If you have any questions, please contact philos@uci.edu.

