



**Dr hab. Ewa Majewska**

***What Is feminist  
anti-fascism?***

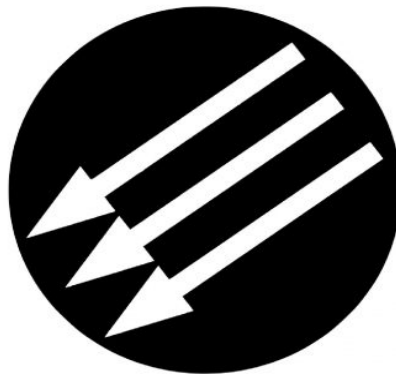
**questions**



## **1) How did the fascists intend to “order” gender?**

At the beginning of the 20th century, a vital element of far-right political ideologies was the desire to explicitly “order” people into hierarchical superhuman, subhuman and nonhuman groups. From the perspective of the fascist in the first half of the 20th Century, gender and ethnicity were crucial categories. The man was to dominate the family and society, while the woman was to be the reproducer and the nurturer, engaged exclusively in motherhood and the work of caring. Homosexual, gender non-binary and other people who did not fit into rigidly understood gender categories were to be forcibly adapted to normative roles or exterminated, like homosexual men who were locked up in concentration camps.

See Klaus Theweleit, *Męskie fantazje*, PWN, Warsaw, 2015.



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## **2) How did the fascists want to “order” people in racial terms?**

In addition to this - racial categories were created that were not supported by scientific evidence but having the characteristics of pseudo-science, in which white people (the so-called Aryan races, mainly white western Europeans), were considered superhumans created for domination, white people and others from Slavic societies were considered sub-human best suited to hard labour and non-humans including especially Jews but also Roma and other groups. This exclusion of the last group outside the category of humanity was particularly cruel and led to their extermination.

Today, anti-fascist movements, like Black Lives Matter, are being built to combat racism. These movements are interestingly influencing society, for example in the context of sport, seeking to exclude racism.

See reports of sports events inspired by Black Lives Matter:  
**[www.sport.pl/black-lives-matter](http://www.sport.pl/black-lives-matter)**

## **3) What is a stereotype? What is discrimination?**

**Stereotypes, stereotypical thinking:** a simplistic view lacking rational or scientific justification, handed down through tradition or custom, usually articulated in colloquial speech, often in the form of an unjustified generalisation. Stereotypes are ready-made, fixed beliefs in a given language about members of another, “foreign” group. They undoubtedly have the function of explaining complex phenomena, but they are also usually statements that bind their adherents together in a particular kind of community (since my whole family is convinced that blondes are stupid, I cannot claim otherwise if I really want to get involved with them). Examples of stereotypes: all Roma steal, all immigrants are lazy, All women are physically weaker than men.



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**Discrimination:** the inferior treatment of a person or group of people based on the victim's membership of a particular social, gender, ethnic or other group. (usually women, people with disabilities or minorities). We can distinguish between direct discrimination (here the motive for inferior treatment is explicit) and indirect discrimination (the motive for the behaviour is implicit). The latter occurs when a provision, criterion or practice that apparently has the same consequences for everyone places some people at a disadvantage. Examples of discrimination: assigning someone a lower value simply because they are from an ethnic or religious group other than the dominant one; higher salaries for men than for women doing the same job in the same position.

See: E. Majewska i E. Rutkowska, *Równa Szkoła*. Gliwice, 2007.

#### **4) Is there any relationship between stereotyping, discrimination, violence and extermination?**

It is acknowledged that there is a relationship of outcome between discrimination, stereotyping, violence and the extermination of a group considered inferior like Jews, Roma, homosexuals or women that runs from stereotyping, through discrimination to violence and finally extermination. If we judge a group less favourably, we are more likely to act unjustly towards it, it is easier for us to commit violence against its representatives and, in extreme situations, we may not hesitate to seek or call for the extermination of that group.

See: Projekt „Niebieskoocy” Jane Elliott:



## 5) Why is feminism key to contemporary anti-fascism?

In recent years, there have been two important transformations on both the fascist and anti-fascist side of political practice and theory. The first is that there are more and more women and non-binary people among the anti-fascists, which demonstrates a redefinition of mainstream political categories and – this is the second point – more and more far-right groups are focusing on „gender”; issues – related to reproduction, sexuality and gender identity.

See lecture: E. Korolczuk i A. Graff:

[www.krytykapolityczna.pl/kraj/januszewska-sutowski-agnieszka-graff-elzbieta-korolczuk-kto-sie-boi-gender-prawica](http://www.krytykapolityczna.pl/kraj/januszewska-sutowski-agnieszka-graff-elzbieta-korolczuk-kto-sie-boi-gender-prawica)

See also: też E. Majewska, *Feminist Antifascism*, Verso, 2021.

[www.ifispan.pl/feministyczny-antyfaszyzm-kontrpublicznosci-wspolnoty](http://www.ifispan.pl/feministyczny-antyfaszyzm-kontrpublicznosci-wspolnoty)

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