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# 1<sup>st</sup> International Conference on Marketing (as) Rhetoric

## Call for Papers

Bournemouth University, U.K., June 14<sup>th</sup> 2017

### Introduction

It is fifteen years since Tonks (2002) argued that “rhetoric needs to have a more central location in making sense of marketing management” (p. 806). How far has this clarion call been answered? Are we any closer to an understanding of what it might mean to recast marketing theory and practice as a *rhetoric*? Or are we all still in thrall to the latest *logic*? To what degree has the ‘rhetorical turn’ in the human sciences had an influence on scholarship and teaching in marketing? We hope to enlist your contribution in starting to answer these and related questions at the *1<sup>st</sup> International Conference on Marketing (as) Rhetoric*, to be held at Bournemouth University, June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017 under the auspices of the Promotional Cultures and Communication Centre’s Advertising Research group.

While rhetorical approaches have become part of the standard toolbox in management studies (Bonet & Saquet, 2010; Hartelius & Browning, 2008) and have made a notable impact in economic scholarship (McCloskey, 1983, 1985) their adoption in marketing has been comparatively slow. A small but dedicated group of advertising scholars have perhaps had the most visible success in applying rhetorical criticism to a marketing topic area (McQuarrie & Mick, 1992, 1996, 2003; Phillips & McQuarrie, 2002, 2004; Scott, 1994; Stern, 1998, 1990). At the same time, there has been some investigation of the substantial part that rhetorical strategies play in the success of our most valued marketing scholars and marketing concepts (Brown, 2004, 2005; Hackley, 2003; Miles, 2010, 2013, 2015; O’Reilly, 2000) as well as efforts to situate aspects of marketing practice within a rhetorical frame (Marsh, 2013; Nilsson, 2015; O’Shaughnessy & O’Shaughnessy, 2004; Palmer et al, 2014; Persuit, 2013; Press & Arnould, 2014).

Given the historically central place that strategies of persuasion and control have at the heart of marketing thought it is remarkable that rhetoric remains such a rare framework for marketing thinking and scholarship. Has academic marketing’s (unrequited) love for the trappings of ‘science’ made rhetoric an unworthy research partner? Is there something at the root of rhetoric that makes marketers uncomfortable? Why are some young marketing scholars happy to adopt discourse analysis but remain wary of the far more developed traditions of rhetorical criticism? The *International Conference on Marketing (as) Rhetoric* hopes to deal with these challenging questions. Additionally, we are keen to encourage engagements with rhetorical themes across all aspects of marketing theory and practice. Below is an indicative (but not exclusive) list of possible research areas for papers:

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Rhetoric and the ‘attention economy’ (Lanham, 2007)  
Rhetorical strategies as marketing strategies  
Advertising/PR and rhetoric  
Rhetoric and social media marketing  
The rhetoric of marketing relationships  
The rhetoric of marketing pedagogy  
Rhetoric as a unifying theory for marketing  
Propaganda, political marketing, and rhetoric  
Sales and rhetoric  
Critical marketing / postmodern marketing and rhetorical theory and criticism  
Explications of particular rhetorical figures and schools and their relevance for marketing  
Contemporary rhetorical criticism and marketing theory  
*Kairos* and marketing techniques  
*Logos/ethos/pathos* as marketing frames  
*Copia* and marketing pedagogy  
Sophism and modern marketing

We particularly welcome contributions that examine the legacy of Sophism as it relates to the marketing function and to the overall understanding of marketing. Given that Laufer and Paredeise’s (1990) dictum that “marketing is the bureaucratic form of Sophism” was so clearly an inspiration for Tonks’ (2002) own stance and that the reappraisal of Sophism continues to go from strength to strength (Poulakos, 1983; Lanham 1993, 2007; Cassin, 2000; Corey, 2015; Tindale, 2010), we would encourage scholars to continue this line of investigation and submit abstracts which examine the relationships between Sophism and all aspects of marketing.

We also invite contributions from scholars with an interest in marketing and rhetoric but residing in fields other than marketing, including organization studies, human resource, management, leadership, etc., as well as scholars from other disciplines, including rhetoric, sociology, philosophy, linguistics, cultural studies, etc.

## Practical information

**Conference Date:** 14 June 2017

**Keynote Speakers:**

- Dr. Nicholas O’Shaughnessy (Visiting Professor in the Department of War Studies King's College London, Centre for Strategic Communications; Professor of Communications, Queen Mary University of London)
- Dr. Chris Hackley (Professor of Marketing, Royal Holloway University of London)

**Conference Location:** Bournemouth University, Talbot Campus, Dorset, United Kingdom.

**Conference registration:** £50

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**Conference website/registration page:** <https://marketingasrhetoric.eventbrite.co.uk/>

**Abstracts:** Abstracts of 250 words to be submitted to [cjmiles@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:cjmiles@bournemouth.ac.uk) by 14<sup>th</sup> March

**Review procedure:** Notification of acceptance of abstracts will be communicated by 5<sup>th</sup> April.

The *Journal of Marketing Management* is calling for submissions to a special issue edited by the conference organizers exploring the ramifications of "marketing (as) rhetoric". This call is running in parallel with the *1st International Conference on Marketing (as) Rhetoric*, however, participation in the conference is not a prerequisite for submission to the *JMM* special issue. The submission deadline is 16<sup>th</sup> October 2017 and we encourage conference presenters to submit their worked-up conference papers for consideration in the special issue.

## Organizers

Dr. Chris Miles (Department of Corporate and Marketing Communication, Bournemouth University, UK). Email: [cjmiles@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:cjmiles@bournemouth.ac.uk)

Dr. Tomas Nilsson (Department of Marketing, Linnaeus University, Sweden). Email: [tomas.nilsson@lnu.se](mailto:tomas.nilsson@lnu.se)

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