
Call for papers

1st International Conference on Marketing (as) Rhetoric

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 *1st International Conference on Marketing (as) Rhetoric*, to be held at Bournemouth University, June 14th, 2017.

While rhetorical approaches have become part of the standard toolbox in management studies (Hartelius & Browning, 2008; Bonet & Saquet, 2010) 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, 2005; Hackley, 2003; Miles, 2010, 2013, 2015) as well as efforts to situate aspects of marketing practice within a rhetorical frame (O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy, 2004; Nilsson, 2015; Marsh, 2013; Pursuit, 2013).

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:

Rhetoric and the ‘attention economy’

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. 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 (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

Abstracts: Abstracts of 250 words to be submitted to cjmiles@bournemouth.ac.uk by 14th March

Review procedure: Notification of acceptance of abstracts will be communicated by 5th April.

The *Journal of Marketing Management* has agreed to publish a special issue in 2019 on the conference theme. There will be a general call for papers for the special issue and we hope that conference presenters will submit their papers for selection for the special issue.

Organizers

Dr. Chris Miles (Department of Corporate and Marketing Communication, Bournemouth University, UK)

Dr. Tomas Nilsson (Department of Marketing, Linnaeus University, Sweden)

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