

**The Sixth “Rhetoric in Society” Conference of the RSE
University of East Anglia,
Norwich, July 3rd-5th 2017**

Hosted by

*The Rhetoric Society of Europe (RSE)
The Rhetoric and Politics Group of the UK Political Studies Association
The School of Politics, Philosophy, Language and Communication Studies, University of East
Anglia*

“Rhetorics of Unity and Division”

Keynote speakers include:

**Gerard Hauser (University of Colorado, Boulder)
Quentin Skinner (Queen Mary University London)
Plus more to be confirmed.**

CALL FOR PAPERS

Proposals are invited for panels, papers, roundtables and other forms of presentation to be delivered at the Sixth Conference of the Rhetoric Society of Europe. The conference will take place from July 3rd to 5th 2017 at The University of East Anglia in the medieval city of Norwich, in the United Kingdom.

We welcome proposals for:

- papers or panels which speak to the conference theme (explained below)
- papers or panels which address general issues related to the theory, analysis & practice of rhetoric in society
- other kinds of presentation such as roundtables or debates

Conference Theme: Rhetorics of Unity and Division

We particularly welcome proposals which speak to the conference theme of ***Rhetorics of Unity and Division***. As Kenneth Burke showed us, rhetoric has the capacity to generate ‘identification’ between people, forging and affirming community. It also has the capacity to create divisions, distinctions and differences – as a way of creating new communities but also as a way of maintaining hierarchies and exclusions or of promoting and prolonging hostility. This is not only a social or political effect of rhetoric. It goes to the core of what rhetoric is: a practice which involves inventive ‘division’ - persuading people by breaking up issues and phenomena in particular ways, connecting some ideas while constituting others as antithetical.

It is possible to see the present day as marked by a rise in rhetorics of division – between ‘them’ and ‘us’, nations and regions, religions and classes. What forms does such rhetoric take? Does it repeat old and well-known rhetorical strategies or are there new forms of divisive rhetoric? To what extent is such rhetoric merely reflecting deep social divisions and to what extent does it create them? How are changes in the modes and means of communication enabling or disabling such division? Are these best conceived of as private or public, everyday and vernacular or exceptional and elite forms of rhetoric?

It is also possible to see the present as marked by a rise in new kinds of rhetoric of unity. There are many examples of new claims about identity and community (sometimes made against 'traditional' identifications) and contemporary means of communication are enabling people to form new rhetorics of unity across once impermeable borders (and with new kinds of intensity). How can we best understand these new kinds of rhetorical identity? What kinds of distinct strategies do we find in contemporary rhetorics of unity? What sorts of division, or unity, can be identified as outcomes of rhetorical strategies and actions?

We welcome proposals for papers or panels that address these themes and issues in any way.

General Papers

We also invite proposals for papers and panels more generally concerned with the theory, practice or analysis of rhetoric. This may include, for example, historical scholarship, theoretical analysis and contemporary cultural or political critique; work grounded in political theory, philosophy, languages and linguistics, argumentation, literary studies, communication studies, composition, media studies, psychology, sociology, history, cultural studies and more. Papers might be comparative, national or international in focus, concerned with particular orators, ideologies or movements; they might draw on queer theory, critical race theory, post colonialism and focus on spoken, written or audio-visual communication.

Alternative Presentations

We welcome proposals for forms of presentation other than panels and papers. This might include: roundtables addressing key rhetorical themes, works or phenomena; debates between contending positions; other, novel and effective ways of communicating research findings, claims and arguments.

How to Submit a Proposal

Please email: RSEconference6@gmail.com

In your proposal be sure to provide the following details:

Your name and institutional affiliation

What you are proposing (paper, panel, roundtable etc.)

Title

Abstract (250 words exclusive of references)

If you are proposing a panel or roundtable please include details of the overall theme and of the other participants.

Deadline for Submissions: December 16th 2016.

Notification by: January 20th 2017.