

The Rhetorical Construction of Brexit on the Right

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Abstract

This paper examines rhetorical construction of Brexit in relation to British party politics. Specifically, how party leaders have responded to the growth of Euroscepticism across the United Kingdom particularly in the post-Thatcher period. To do so the paper will employ classic rhetorical theories to deconstruct arguments surrounding national sovereignty, identity, and culture as well as the economic relationship between the UK and the EU prior to Brexit.

The theories are rooted in the Aristotelian modes of persuasion – ethos, pathos, logos. As an analytical framework the modes of persuasion provide an intellectually robust system of analysis that allow us to see the character of political elites, their uses of emotional language, and also the extent to which they employ logical arguments. By using this framework, the paper will be able to deconstruct which techniques are most effective on audiences, and which prove most significant in driving the arguments for Brexit.

The paper will draw upon representative case-studies to develop its conclusions – for example, Nigel Farage, Theresa May, Boris Johnson, amongst others. Given these political figures were key in framing the legitimising arguments for Brexit, an analysis of their language will enable the paper to draw out their political and intellectual significance.

Author information

Dr Andrew S. Roe-Crines is a senior lecturer in British Politics at the University of Liverpool, where he researches political language, ideologies, and leadership selection. He has published in leading national and international journals, as well as the author/editor of over ten books.

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Wednesday, 23 June - Session 12 - **9,00-10,30 CET (Webex)** - Panel co-sponsored by the British Political Studies Association Politics and History Specialist Group – *The Conservative Party, Conservative Ideology and the Challenge of Change*

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