Bending Opinion: Essays on Persuasion in the Public Domain presents an overview of interdisciplinary scholarship on rhetoric and its approaches and methodologies.

With communication playing an increasingly important role in contemporary society, rhetoric appears to have gained in influence and importance. The ancients knew all along: power belongs to those who know how to use their words. Nowadays, we know that rhetoric pervades all discourse. There is no communication without rhetoric. In a society with ever-increasing amounts of information, and with media whose significance cannot be overestimated, we need to know all the mechanisms playing a role in the gathering, making and reporting of information and opinions, and in processing by an audience. Rhetoric is, from both a practical and a theoretical perspective, essential to the conduct, analysis and evaluation of public debate. After all, the idea of democracy is closely intertwined with the ideal of transparent decision-making based on open, informed discussions in the public domain, in political, organizational and journalistic discourse.

Bending Opinion cites a host of relevant examples, from Barack Obama, Tony Blair to Geert Wilders, as well as compelling case studies.

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Rhetoric in Society presents and discusses different approaches to rhetoric and its applications, from historical, traditional use to new rhetoric and rhetorical criticism in contemporary society. Rhetoric in Society is an initiative of scholars from several European universities.