

Call for Papers: Law and Mass Persuasion**Senate House London****March 12, 2027.**

Convened by Professor Anat Rosenberg and Dr. Alexander Damianos.

Mass persuasion is a constitutive feature of democratic life. It helps secure democratic legitimacy and viability, yet, paradoxically, also threatens both, unsettling ideals of autonomy, public reason, and the free human spirit. Amid a shifting global political landscape, we are witnessing renewed alarm about our vulnerability to persuasion as well as renewed interest in persuasion's legacies and calls to defend democracy by persuasive means.

This conference inquires into the role of law in the relationship between democracy and mass persuasion. Law is often invoked as the answer to persuasion's excesses, and just as often accused of being an instrument thereof. We invite contributions that take law's entanglement with mass persuasion seriously, historically and in contemporary societies, and along three lines in particular:

Law as a regulating and shaping force. How have legal regimes constituted, licensed, and constrained persuasion, and with what assumptions about publics, psychologies, and media? We welcome work on freedom of speech, freedom of thought, and censorship; advertising and consumer law; media governance and platform regulation; election finance and electoral law; the regulation of international propaganda and information warfare, and more, within an exploratory approach to the concept of mass persuasion.

Law as a tool of persuasion. How do legal forms, institutions, and rhetoric persuade in mass democracy? We are interested in the persuasive work of constitutions, courts, trials, and legislation; in law's claims to reason, neutrality, and expertise; and in the affective, enchanted, and non-rational registers on which legal authority has also relied to persuade.

Law as an object of persuasive campaigns. How have legal institutions and actors themselves been made targets of mass persuasion, from populist attacks on courts and judges, to campaigns and social movements for and against legal reform, and contests over what counts as lawful, expert, or true?

We are also interested in work that situates today's platforms, targeted persuasion, generative media, and information warfare within a longer arc of democratic formations, from antiquity to the present, and that attends to the persuasive milieus with which law operates: media technologies, spaces of assembly, literacies, financial models, regimes of expertise, and assumptions about human psychology.

Our approach is deliberately open-ended. We welcome contributions from law, history, political theory, philosophy, classical studies, rhetoric, literary and narrative studies, media and

communications, visual and affect studies, environmental humanities, STS, and digital humanities, as well as from creative and archival practice.

Please submit proposals by November 22nd through [this submission form](#). Some travel support may be available. Please indicate on the form if required to enable participation.