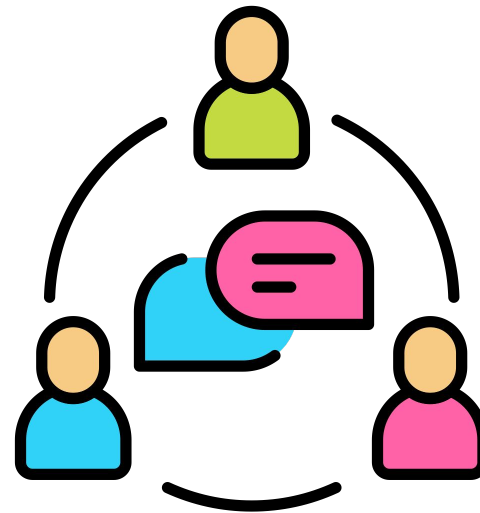


# 2.2

## Manipulative Rhetoric

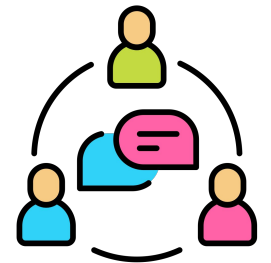
# Note

- Interactive symbol: tasks for groups



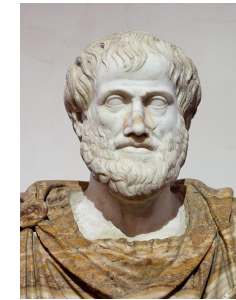
# Rhetoric

- Build groups: What is “rhetoric”?
  - Think of political figures. Who are good rhetors in your opinion?



# Rhetoric

- **Rhetoric:** Using symbolic communication to persuade others and influence social action via appealing to *pathos (emotions)*, *logos (reason)*, and *ethos (values)* (Hoefer & Green, 2016)



Source:  
[wikipedia  
dia.org](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Aristotle_Borghese.jpg)  
(link)

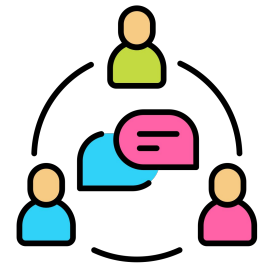
- **Manipulation:** using techniques such as appeals to irrational impulses and emotions to influence the beliefs, choices, or actions of recipients without their consent or awareness (Klemp, 2010)

# Rhetoric

- **Manipulative rhetoric:** Using symbolic communication, especially appeals to irrational impulses and emotions, to influence the beliefs, choices, or actions of a target audience according to the desired ends of the rhetor or principal.

# Rhetoric

- In your group: Do you know of any rhetorical “tricks” to manipulate others? Make a short list and prepare some examples.



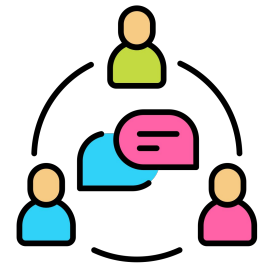
# Manipulative rhetoric

- **Manipulative rhetoric**

- **Ad hominem:** Rejecting a claim by attacking someone's character or identity (Purdue University)
- **Strawman:** Deliberately misrepresenting and misinterpreting an argument (Ruggeri, 2024; Purdue University)
- **False dichotomy:** Reducing complex decision situations to opposing either-or decision options (Ruggeri, 2024)
- **Whataboutism:** drawing comparisons to unrelated topics to distract attention and suppress factual debate (Ruggeri, 2024)
- **Ad populum:** Using the (alleged) majority opinion of a group as an argument (Purdue University)
- **Questionable-cause:** presenting a correlation as causation (Nikolopoulou, 2023)

# Rhetoric

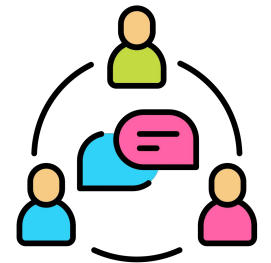
- In your group: Imagine you want to manipulate public discourse on a certain topic.
  - Choose a highly polarising topic (e. g. climate change, migration, war, etc.) and a speaker position (e. g. you are a politician, a foreign government, an activist, a lobbyist, etc.).
  - Create a social media statement using the manipulative devices discussed above.
  - Prepare to read out your statement in class





# Rhetoric

- In your group: In what sense and to what extend are the techniques discussed above dangerous for public discourse?



# Literature

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<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20240709-seven-ways-to-spot-a-bad-argument> (Retrieved 2025, Feb. 18)

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