

Clifford Bates
Norwich University

Aristotle on Force, Fraud, and Consent: Re-evaluating the Importance of Politics 5, Chapter 4.

This paper looks at the section of Politics 5, chapter 4, where Aristotle explicitly raises the use of Force and Fraud and its role in political action in his political teaching. It is at the end of his general account of political change before examining in more detail how (and in what ways and in what directions) change will impact specific regimes, that he drops this discussion of the role of deceit and coercion not only in public political deliberations but also within political action itself. Here we will have Aristotle talk in a way that has more in common with Machiavelli than with the common presentation of Aristotle who is a promoter of virtue and the common good. Here we will see that any discussion of the common good in Aristotle's needs must address the role that coercion and deception need must play in successful or unsuccessful political action.