AN INTRODUCTION TO REASON-
ING. By Stephen Toulmin, Richard
Rieke, and Allan Janik. New York:
Macmillan, 1979; pp. viii+343.

This is an unusual book. It is not a
text in symbolic logic, but it does not
quite fit the mold of an ordinary argu-
mentation text. What it provides is what
its title promises: an' introduction to
reasoning, to the activity of giving rea-
sons in support of a claim. And as one
might expect, the scheme used to
analyze reasoning is Toulmin's familiar
model of argument.

Following a useful introduction to
the volume (Part I), a lucid description
of the elements of Toulmin's general
model of argument is offered (Part II).
Part III is concerned with the assessment
of arguments, and Part IV discusses rea-
soning in various "special fields" (with

one-chapter each to the law, science, the arts, management, and ethics). This echoes the distinction offered in *Uses of Argument* between field-dependent and field-invariant features of argument, and it is here that the theorist of argument may find this undergraduate textbook illuminating.

While the distinction between field-dependent and field-invariant features of argument was central to *Uses of Argument*, in *Uses* the concept of "field" was never very satisfactorily explicated. Toulmin's *Human Understanding*, while putatively an elaboration of the ideas first offered in *Uses*, nevertheless seemed not to address very directly the nature of a "field of argument." But the present volume suggests that *Human Understanding*, in its elaboration of the concept of a "rational enterprise," in fact does amplify the idea of "field." In the present work, the first hint is given early on: "In all these fields of human activity [law, science, medicine, business, politics], reasoning and argumentation find a place as central elements within a larger human enterprise. And to mark this feature—the fact that all these activities place reliance on the presentation and critical assessment of 'reasons' and 'arguments'—we shall refer to them all as *rational enterprises*" (p. 28). And "field" and "rational enterprise" are used interchangably throughout, including the all-too-brief discussion (in the introduction to Part IV) of the several ways in which rational enterprises may differ in their argumentative procedures. The concept of a rational enterprise, of course, holds center stage in *Human Understanding*, and one should not think that the present volume attempts to match that work's careful discussion. The only point I wish to make here is that *An Introduction to Reasoning* may be profitably read as cementing the relationship between *Uses of Argument* and

Human Understanding, by clearly specifying the notion of "rational enterprise" as the lynchpin of Toulmin's analysis.

But this is a book designed for introductory undergraduate courses, and the authors are quite successful in bringing Toulmin's model into a classroom text. There are many thoughtfully constructed examples and exercises; the writing is lucid and direct, yet conversational (without being overly familiar or "California"). The central question an argumentation instructor will want to raise, however, concerns the utility of a book that focuses on reasoning *per se* rather than on the rhetorical/dialectical aspects of argumentation that commonly receive emphasis in debate and argumentation courses. But this text is better-adapted to such courses than one might imagine from its title, for "reasoning" is construed by the authors to be "not a way of *arriving at ideas* but rather a way of *testing ideas critically*. It is concerned less with how people think than with how they share their ideas and thoughts in situations that raise the question of whether those ideas are *worth* sharing" (p. 9). This orientation is buttressed by the relabeling of what was called (in *Uses*) the "conclusion" in the model of argument; that element of the model is now termed "claim," to help convey the sense that the "endpoint" of an argument is not conclusionary but rather is something open to revision and reformulation. .

This approach is all of a piece with the view underlying *Uses of Argument* and *Human Understanding*. This book is thus not a "logic" text which emphasizes modus tollens and its brethren as ways of arriving at conclusions given specified premises. It is genuinely an "arguing" text, in which many concepts familiar to argumentation teachers will be found, though occasionally in new garb. While it is not an academic debate

text (and hence there is no mention of, say, counterplans or inherency or cross-examination techniques), ideas such as burden of proof and presumption are treated quite adequately, and there is extensive consideration of the varieties of argument (sign, analogy, etc.) and fallacy (hasty generalization, question-begging, etc.). Those who find Toulmin's model an inadequate tool for the analysis of argument or who emphasize the recondite style and concepts of academic debate will likely find this book wanting as a text. But one who wishes to provide his or her students with an introduction to the understanding and rational assessment of practical argumentation should examine Toulmin, Rieke, and Janik's book.

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