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This book is a brief introduction to the art of making arguments. It sticks to the bare essentials. I have found that students and writers often need just such a list of reminders and rules, not lengthy introductory explanations. This book is therefore organized around specific rules, illustrated and explained soundly but above all briefly. It is not a textbook but a *rulebook*.

Instructors too, I have found, often wish to assign such a rulebook, a treatment that students can consult and understand on their own and that therefore does not claim too much class time. Here again, it is important to be brief—the point is to help students get on with their actual arguments—but the rules must be stated with enough substance that an instructor can simply refer a student to Rule 6 or Rule 16 rather than give an entire explanation each time it is needed. Brief but self-sufficient—that is the fine line I have tried to follow.

This rulebook also can be used in a course that gives critical attention to arguments. It will need to be supplemented with exercises and more examples, but many texts are already available that consist largely or wholly of such exercises and examples. *Those* texts, however, also need to be supplemented—with what this rulebook offers: simple rules for putting good arguments together. We do not want our students to come out of critical thinking courses knowing only how to shoot down (or just at) selected fallacies. Critical thinking can be practiced in a far more constructive spirit. This book is one attempt to suggest how.