Winning Arguments: What Works and Doesn't Work in Politics, the Bedroom, the Courtroom and the Classroom

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Excerpt
A lively and accessible guide to understanding rhetoric by the world class English and Law professor and bestselling author of How to Write a Sentence. Filled with the wit and observational prowess that shaped Stanley Fish’s acclaimed bestseller How to Write a Sentence, Winning Arguments guides readers through the “greatest hits” of rhetoric. In this clever and engaging guide, Fish offers insight and outlines the crucial keys you need to win any debate, anywhere, anytime—drawn from landmark legal cases, politics, his own career, and even popular film and television. A celebration of clashing minds and viewpoints, Winning Arguments is sure to become a classic.

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Winning Arguments is sure to become a classic. In a bounded-argument space, the things one is obliged to say and the things one is forbidden to say are known in advance, either because they are set down in a list of rules or because they are part of the tacit knowledge internalized by every competent practitioner. The categories “that’s not the kind of thing we do around here” and “that’s not the kind of thing we say around here” are always in force for those in the know and are likely to be mysterious to outsiders. This is certainly the case in the law. “Fish mines cultural touchstones from Milton to ‘Married with Children’ to explain how various types of arguments are structured and how that understanding can lead to victory” – New York Times Book Review.

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