Stephen Toulmin and Charles Arthur Willard have championed the idea of argument fields, the former drawing upon Ludwig Wittgenstein's notion of language games, (Sprachspiel) the latter drawing from communication and argumentation theory, sociology, political science, and social epistemology. By far, the most influential theorist has been Stephen Toulmin, the Cambridge educated philosopher and educator,[18] best known for his Toulmin model of argument...

In The Uses of Argument (1958), Toulmin introduced what became known as the Toulmin Model of Argument, which broke argument into six interrelated components... The first three elements "claim", "data", and "warrant" are considered as the essential components of practical arguments, while the second triad "qualifier", "backing", and "rebuttal" may not be needed in some arguments.

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Stephen E. Toulmin (SET)

Stakeholder(s):

Fields:
For Toulmin, the term “field” designates discourses within which arguments and factual claims are grounded.[13] ... Field studies might focus on social movements, issue-centered publics (for instance, pro-life versus pro-choice in the abortion dispute), small activist groups, corporate public relations campaigns and issue management, scientific communities and disputes, political campaigns, and intellectual traditions.[17]

Social Movements
Issue-Centered Publics
Activist Groups
Corporate Public Relations Officers
Campaigners
Issue Managers
Scientific Communities
Dispute Resolvers
Political Campaigns
Intellectuals

Field Theorists:
In the manner of a sociologist, ethnographer, anthropologist, participant-observer, and journalist, the field theorist gathers and reports on real-world human discourses, gathering case studies that might eventually be combined to produce high-order explanations of argumentation processes. This is not a quest for some master language or master theory covering all specifics of human activity. Field theorists are agnostic about the possibility of a single grand theory and skeptical about the usefulness of such a theory. Theirs is a more modest quest for “mid-range” theories that might permit generalizations about families of discourses...

Communities:
For Willard, the term “field” is interchangeable with “community”, “audience”, or “readership”. [14] Along similar lines, G. Thomas Goodnight has studied “spheres” of argument and sparked a large literature created by younger scholars responding to or using his ideas.[15] The general tenor of these field theories is that the premises of arguments take their meaning from social communities.[16]

Audiences
Readers

Rhetoricians:
When first proposed, this layout of argumentation is based on legal arguments and intended to be used to analyze the rationality of arguments typically found in the courtroom; in fact, Toulmin did not realize that this layout would be applicable to the field of rhetoric and communication until his works were introduced to rhetoricians by Wayne Brockriede and Douglas Ehninger.

Wayne Brockriede:
Their "Decision by Debate" (1963) streamlined Toulmin’s terminology and broadly introduced his model to the field of debate.[19] Only after he published Introduction to Reasoning (1979) were the rhetorical applications of this layout mentioned in his works.

Douglas Ehninger

Mission
To permit generalizations about families of discourses

Values
Reality: An alternative to absolutism and relativism -- Toulmin has argued that absolutism (represented by theoretical or analytic arguments) has limited practical value. Absolutism is derived from Plato's idealized formal logic, which advocates universal truth; thus absolutists believe that moral issues can be resolved by adhering to a standard set of moral principles, regardless of context. By contrast, Toulmin asserts that many of these so-called standard principles are irrelevant to real situations encountered by human beings in daily life.
**Field Dependence:** To describe his vision of daily life, Toulmin introduced the concept of argument fields; in *The Uses of Argument* (1958), Toulmin states that some aspects of arguments vary from field to field, and are hence called "field-dependent"; while other aspects of argument are the same throughout all fields, and are hence called "field-invariant". The flaw of absolutism, Toulmin believes, lies in its unawareness of the field-dependent aspect of argument; absolutism assumes that all aspects of argument are field invariant.

**Morality:** Toulmin's theories resolve to avoid the defects of absolutism without resorting to relativism: relativism, Toulmin asserted, provides no basis for distinguishing between a moral or immoral argument. In *Human Understanding* (1972), Toulmin suggests that anthropologists have been tempted to side with relativists because they have noticed the influence of cultural variations on rational arguments; in other words, the anthropologist or relativist overemphasizes the importance of the "field-dependent" aspect of arguments, and becomes unaware of the "field-invariant" elements.

**Standards:** In an attempt to provide solutions to the problems of absolutism and relativism, Toulmin attempts throughout his work to develop standards that are neither absolutist nor relativist for assessing the worth of ideas.

**Justification:** Toulmin believes that a good argument can succeed in providing good justification to a claim, which will stand up to criticism and earn a favourable verdict.
1. Claim

*Document conclusions whose merit are to be evaluated.*

Conclusions whose merit must be established. For example, if a person tries to convince a listener that he is a British citizen, the claim would be "I am a British citizen." (1)
2. Data

Document facts supporting the claim.

The facts we appeal to as a foundation for the claim. For example, the person introduced in 1 can support his claim with the supporting data "I was born in Bermuda." (2)
3. Warrant

*Document information leading from the data to the claim.*

The statement authorizing our movement from the data to the claim. In order to move from the data established in 2, "I was born in Bermuda," to the claim in 1, "I am a British citizen," the person must supply a warrant to bridge the gap between 1 & 2 with the statement "A man born in Bermuda will legally be a British Citizen." (3)
4. Backing

*Provide credentials to certify the statement expressed in the warrant.*

Credentials designed to certify the statement expressed in the warrant; backing must be introduced when the warrant itself is not convincing enough to the readers or the listeners. For example, if the listener does not deem the warrant in 3 as credible, the speaker will supply the legal provisions as backing statement to show that it is true that “A man born in Bermuda will legally be a British Citizen.”
5. Rebuttal

_Document restrictions to the claim._

Statements recognizing the restrictions to which the claim may legitimately be applied. The rebuttal is exemplified as follows, "A man born in Bermuda will legally be a British citizen, unless he has betrayed Britain and has become a spy of another country."
6. Qualifier

Document the degree of force or certainty of the claim.

Words or phrases expressing the speaker's degree of force or certainty concerning the claim. Such words or phrases include "possible," "probably," "impossible," "certainly," "presumably," "as far as the evidence goes," or "necessarily." The claim "I am definitely a British citizen" has a greater degree of force than the claim "I am a British citizen, presumably."