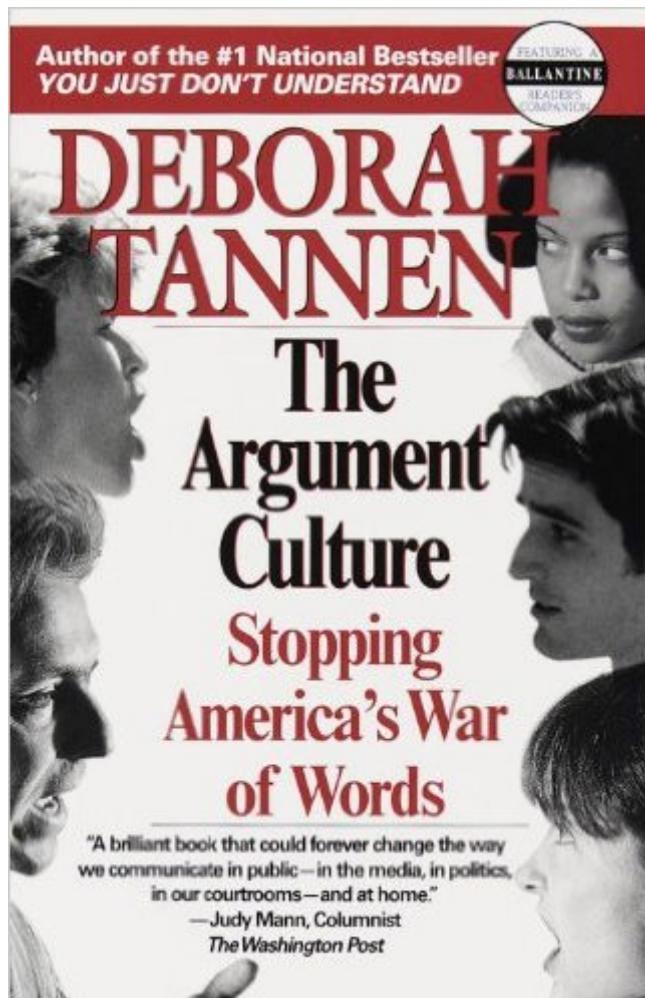


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# The Argument Culture: Stopping America's War Of Words



## **Synopsis**

THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS LINGUIST OFFERS A COMPLETELY ORIGINAL ANALYSIS OF THE WAY WE COMMUNICATE--AND A REVOLUTIONARY LANGUAGE TO LIVE BY!In her #1 bestseller You Just Don't Understand, Deborah Tannen showed why talking to someone of the opposite sex can be like talking to someone from another world. Now Tannen is back with another groundbreaking book, this time widening her lens to examine the way we communicate in public--in the media, in politics, in our courtrooms, and classrooms--once again letting us see in a new way forces that have powerfully shaped our lives. The war on drugs, the battle of the sexes, political turf combat--in the argument culture, war metaphors pervade our talk and influence our thinking. We approach anything we need to accomplish as a fight between two opposing sides. In this fascinating book, Tannen shows how deeply entrenched this cultural tendency is, the forms it takes, and how it affects us every day--sometimes in useful ways, but often causing damage. The Argument Culture is a remarkable book that will change forever the way you perceive--and communicate with--the world.

## **Book Information**

Paperback: 384 pages

Publisher: Ballantine Books (February 9, 1999)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0345407512

ISBN-13: 978-0345407511

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.8 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 starsÂ  See all reviewsÂ  (38 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #312,032 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #101 inÂ  Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Reference #506 inÂ  Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Customs & Traditions #916 inÂ  Books > Reference > Words, Language & Grammar > Rhetoric

## **Customer Reviews**

How often does a person get to argue about a book that says we argue too much! I disagree, with a smile, with the other reviewers, and think that Tannen has deepened and extended her research by focusing her linguistic talents on the broader cultural domains of politics, journalism, and academia. While some overlap with her former work regarding the difficulty in communication gender, I found her other insights quite relevant and sagacious. I live and work in Japan, and I can assure you that

this book has opened my eyes to look at myself and how often I approach discussions here with the argument attitude. Alfie Kohn (No Contest) and others have pointed out how our competitive attitudes are a result of the social structures that we inhabit. Tannen skillfully paints a accurate picture of the American system that reinforces and rewards arguments and achievement. It is easy to see how easily how distrust, skepticism, and misunderstanding occurs when discussion is replaced with debate. It is easy to see too why we have become such a violent society when you have to fight to be heard. Our whole system is built on persuasion and politics, geared to attack people and their positions, not to promote cooperation and dialogue. As an academic, I can certainly identify with the one-upmanship that constantly occurs among university professors. Tannen has not covered all of the bases regarding conflict, nor needs to. I would recommend other works like Morton Deutsch's Handbook of Conflict Resolution, or Stephen Toulmin's The Uses of Argument, or William Ury's work Getting to Yes, Getting Past No for some practical applications.

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