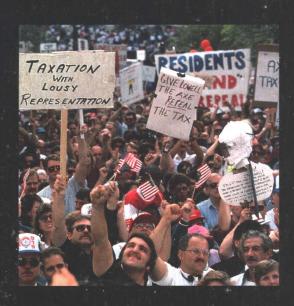
# CROSSFIRE



An
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Rhetoric
and
Reader



GARY GOSHGARIAN KATHLEEN KRUEGER



## Crossfire An Argument Rhetoric and Reader

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### **Preface**

Crossfire: An Argument Rhetoric and Reader is about arguments: how to read them and how to write them. As indicated by the title, the book has two parts. The first, the "rhetoric" section, consists of eight chapters explaining the strategies of writing persuasively. The second, the "reader" portion, consists of 9 thematic units containing 88 arguments in action—an assortment of provocative contemporary debates. As you will see, the two parts are interrelated. The rhetoric chapters point out how to argue effectively and illustrate such skills by analyzing sample arguments from professional writers and students. Each of the essays contained in the reader section has pre-reading and post-reading exercises that ask students to apply what they have learned about argumentation in the rhetoric chapters. The efforts to link the reading and writing processes reflect our fundamental belief that the two skills are bound, that students learn how to write persuasively by reading critically.

Why the focus on arguments? There are two good reasons. First, skillful argumentation draws on highly developed thought processes. It requires clear thinking, a strong grasp of an issue, awareness of opposing points of view, the ability to distinguish between opinion and fact, the use of solid supporting evidence, a clear sense of one's audience, logical organization, and a well-reasoned conclusion. Second, most pieces of writing produced by college students will be exercises in persuasion—efforts to demonstrate the validity of an opinion, observation or an idea. This is true whether one is discussing tragic irony in *Oedipus Rex*, analyzing the causes of World War I, explaining the strengths of a favorite movie, or writing a letter to a school newspaper protesting next year's tuition increase. Even in a lab report on the refraction of light, a writer needs to convince the instructor of the validity of the findings. Furthermore, the need for these skills doesn't end with graduation. The demands for writing persuasively will extend into professional life every time one is required to write a business letter, proposal, project report, or memorandum.

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

#### The Rhetoric

Since our overall goal is to stimulate student's thinking about how issues are argued, we organized the rhetoric chapters so that they emphasize the actual process of writing arguments, moving from pre-writing "brainstorming" exercises to the shaping of the final product. Each of the seven chapters focuses on a particular facet or principle of argumentation. The hierarchical nature of these chapters allows students to build on the knowledge of the previous one to work

through the next. At the end of most chapters there are exercises keyed to the particular feature of argument addressed therein, thus allowing students to test themselves immediately on those features.

Chapter 1 offers an overview of argumentation, making clear the kinds of topics that are arguable and those that are not. Chapter 2 discusses how to begin writing arguments. Here we have emphasized brainstorming techniques to develop argumentative topics as well as suggestions on refining topics and anticipating opposing views. Chapter 3 focuses on ways to organize the material the writer has gathered. Here we distinguish two basic kinds of arguments—positions and proposals—with some advice on how to outline each. Chapter 4 moves outward to readers, encouraging students to think about the different kinds of audiences they may have to address. This chapter stresses the importance of appreciating the views and needs of others (that there are more sides to an argument than one's own) and of establishing the arguer's credibility. Chapter 5 is concerned with evidence. How writers create persuasive arguments or "prove" their claims largely depends on how well they marshal evidence supporting what they argue—that is, facts, testimony, statistics, and observations—without which their assertions are simply weak generalizations. Chapter 6 offers two views on logic: the formalistic induction\deduction process of reasoning, and the socially constructed Toulmin model. Chapter 7 is a summary of how to read arguments and test them for logical fallacies.

Chapter 8, "Documenting Arguments," is a handbook on writing argumentation research papers. Here we discuss how to find sources in the library, how to provide readers with documentation of supporting evidence, and the proper format of research papers, including the importance and use of endnotes, references, bibliographies, quotations, and so on. As in most of the preceding chapters, we include here samples of student writing, one of which is a fully documented research paper.

#### The Readings

The 79 contemporary and 9 classical essays that constitute the readings cover a wide range of provocative issues that we think will interest students and instructors alike. Our hope is that the selections will get students thinking about the various debates going on in their world, acquainting them with current controversial issues and diverse points of view. But more than that, we hope the readings will generate lively class discussions, inviting students into the debates so as to broaden their thinking and inspire their writing. In short, we hope to make students part of the "crossfire" exchange of views that charge our age.

The 79 contemporary essays are organized according to 8 broad thematic chapters: "Gender Identity," "Race and Ethnicity," "Some Persistent Social Issues," "Freedom of Expression," "The Environment," "Animal Rights," "Education," and "Advertising." Each chapter is subdivided into three or four specific topical categories containing two or more essays that take different argumentative slants on a particular issue. Our intention is to demonstrate that most controversial subjects have multiple facets and cannot be reduced to an either-or stand.

For instance, of the nine essays in Chapter 12, "Freedom of Expression," three clustered under "Racial Slurs" question what to do about racist language, each pressing for a different solution. While Charles R. Lawrence III argues for censorship and Nat Hentoff argues for freedom of expression, Garry Wills offers a solution that falls midway between the two. Even such hotly controversial issues as abortion don't always draw clear battle lines. Anna Quindlen's essay, "Some Thoughts About Abortion" (in Chapter 11, "Some Persistent Social Issues"), for example, reveals the anguishing ambivalence of many people torn between the legal and moral aspects of a woman's right to terminate a pregnancy.

Although it is true that many arguments cannot be reduced to simple pro-orcon stances—that there are shades of gray—some issues tend to invite strong oppositions. Consider capital punishment. Most people are either for it or against it. Thus, Chapters 9 through 16 end with a section called "Oppositions," which pit head-to-head two essays taking opposite stands on a particular issue—for example, capital punishment, gays in the military, sex in advertising, and hunting. We hope that these "Oppositions" pieces inspire students to join the debate and defend or attack either position while providing the shades of gray. It is our belief that beginning writers need to appreciate a dichotomy on issues before branching out to finer aspects.

All of the essays in Chapters 9 through 16 represent not only a wide range of provocative topics but different kinds of argumentative strategies. Some pieces persuade with ironclad logic. Others are strong emotional appeals. Still others base their cases on ethical or moral grounds. Some are quiet, subtle pieces. And some are impassioned pleas.

The final unit of essays, "Arguments That Shaped History," includes nine classical pieces ranging from Plato to Martin Luther King, Jr. Besides reflecting a diversity of argumentation strategies, these selections are powerful examples of persuasion that have proven their timeless value in the classroom. Their words are as relevant today as when they were composed.

#### **Study Apparatus**

In order to help students get the most out of the readings, we have included a variety of apparatus. First, each of the reading chapters opens with an introduction underscoring the importance of the essays and the rationale behind their selection. Second, each essay is preceded by an introduction containing thematic and biographic information as well as questions to consider before and during the actual reading process. Third, each essay is followed by a set of review questions. "Topical Considerations" focus on important matters of content, with an emphasis on the student's own experience, beliefs, and values. "Rhetorical Considerations" include a number of questions about the different motives and writing strategies of the authors—questions intended to stimulate analytical thinking about the logic, organization, and quality of supporting evidence as well as the adequacy of the representation of opposing views. Because all of the arguments are clustered in groups of two or more, we have tried to frame questions of comparison and contrast. "Writing Assignments" contain suggested expository and

research paper topics in response to the issues covered in the essays. Finally, at the end of the book is a glossary of rhetorical terms used throughout the text.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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Gary Goshgarian Kathleen Krueger

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"The N.R.A. runs feel-good ads saying guns are not the problem and there is nothing we can do to prevent criminals from getting guns. . . . I guess I'm just not willing to hand the next John Hinckley a deadly handgun."

Gun Owners Are Not Bad People Warren Cassidy "Gun owners have never been, nor will they ever be, a threat to law-and-order."

Have Gun Will Travel? Jeanie Pyun

"Perhaps all individuals have the right to bear arms, but not all of them necessarily should."

#### Poverty and Homelessness

Helping and Hating the Homeless, *Peter Marin* 

"Our response to the homeless is fed by a complex set of cultural attitudes, habits of thought, and fantasies and fears."

Brother, Don't Spare a Dime, Christopher Awalt "The homeless themselves must bear the blame for their manifold troubles."

The New Untouchables, Jonathan Kozol

"[Relegating] so many . . . children to the role of outcasts in a rich society is going to come back to haunt us."

Yes, Something Will Work: Work, Mickey Kaus "Welfare is how the underclass . . . survives. Change welfare, and the underclass will have to change as well."

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