

GARY GOSHGARIAN • KATHLEEN KRUEGER

CROSSFIRE

SECOND **AN** EDITION

ARGUMENT

RHETORIC AND READER

Crossfire

An Argument Rhetoric and Reader

**Second
Edition**

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PREFACE

C*rossfire: 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 “rhetoric” section consists of eight chapters explaining the strategies of writing persuasively. The “reader” section, consists of eight thematic units containing 78 arguments in action—an assortment of provocative contemporary debates. As you will see, the two parts are interrelated. The rhetoric chapters illustrate how to argue effectively by analyzing sample arguments from professional writers and students. Each of the essays contained in the reader section has prereading and postreading 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 and 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 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 persuasive writing 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 prewriting “brainstorming” exercises to shaping the final product. Each of the eight 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 chapter to work through the next. At the end of each chapter, 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, clarifying arguable topics from 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 provided 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 introduces the socially constructed Toulmin model of logic. Chapter 7 summarizes 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 in both MLA and APA styles, 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 written in MLA style.

The Readings

The 69 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 69 contemporary essays are organized according to 7 broad thematic chapters: "Gender Identity," "Race and Ethnicity," "Social Issues," "Ethical and Moral Issues," "Freedom of Expression," "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 8 essays in Chapter 13, “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 12, “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-or-con 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 9–15 end with a section called “Oppositions,” which pit head-to-head two essays taking opposite stands on a particular issue—for example, capital punishment, immigration policy, sex in advertising, and feminism. We hope that these “Oppositions” pieces inspire students to 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 distinctions.

All of the essays in Chapters 9–15 represent not only a wide range of provocative topics but different kinds of argumentative strategies. Some pieces persuade with iron-clad 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 adequate 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.

New to This Edition

The wide acceptance of our first edition of *Crossfire: An Argument Rhetoric and Reader* is more than gratifying. It clearly suggests that our original efforts at making an accessible argumentation text were not lost. Nonetheless, this second edition is, we think, even better as it reflects the insights and suggestions of many of the instructors and students who used the first edition. Those particular features that people found most useful we left unchanged; we made careful revisions where improvement was needed. We have also been guided by some of the exciting research being done in composition studies in the past few years.

Although our principles and approach have remained the same in the Rhetoric chapters (1–8), we have made a number of changes. In Chapter 1, “Understanding Persuasion,” we have added a detailed discussion of critical reading. We demonstrate the vital connection between critical reading and critical writing: The more adept one becomes at analyzing and reacting to another’s written work, the better one is at analyzing and reacting to one’s own. In this chapter we offer some clear tips on how to read critically, demonstrating each in detail with a critical analysis of a sample essay. In the Exercises, we ask students to critically read a sample essay, applying the strategies outlined in the chapter.

Chapter 2, “Finding Arguments,” contains new graphics and some helpful exercises. In Chapter 3, “Shaping Arguments,” the discussion of outlines has been expanded with more samples. As with all the rhetoric chapters, the presentation has been enhanced with boxes of tips and important points.

Chapter 4, “Addressing Audiences,” has been significantly expanded. Although instructors liked the discussion of different audiences, they requested more detailed discussion of language. In response, we added a new section, “Choosing Your Words,” in which we discuss the importance of using language that is appropriate and accurate. We begin with a detailed explanation of the difference between denotation and connotation. With the aid of charts and boxes, we then discuss the importance of replacing abstract and vague language with concrete and specific words. Toward the end of the chapter is a section on figurative language and a discussion of metaphors, similes, personification, euphemisms and clichés. The chapter closes on the importance of defining technical terms and creating stipulative definitions of familiar ones. Reflecting the expansion of the chapter are the new exercises that ask students to apply what they have learned to a variety of samples, including writing a full essay.

Chapter 5, “Using Evidence,” has been reorganized and expanded. The discussion of supporting evidence now includes a discussion of the values of drawing on one’s own experience as evidence. We also explain, with examples, how arguments can manipulate audience response by use of slanted evidence. And as in other chapters, boxes and charts enhance the opportunities for quick reference and review.

Chapter 6, “Establishing Claims: Thinking Like a Skeptic,” has been completely revised; it now focuses on the Toulmin model of argument and provides analyses of two sample essays, one written by a student. Chapter 7, which examines logical fallacies, has been expanded with more examples and exercises.

Chapter 8, “Documenting Arguments,” keeps the user-friendly, step-by-step process which so many instructors and students found useful. The revised chapter adds coverage of primary and secondary research sources and much specific information on finding information in the library, in the community, and on-line. A new student research paper prepared in MLA (4th edition) style has been added, and new entries in the MLA and APA style guide cover how to document electronic sources.

Part Two, Current Debates, contains 69 essays, over a third of which are new to this edition, and most written since the last. Those essays from the first edition that proved dated or no longer useful to students and instructors were dropped. We have retained those essays that were popular, while adding essays that reflect some recent public controversies and which we feel would have special appeal to students: teenage pregnancy, euthanasia, legalization of drugs, movie and television violence, and the classroom experience.

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Kathleen Krueger

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"Perhaps the ideal cultural heritage is not one based on ethnicity or religion, but one made up of attributes like "skepticism, curiosity, and wide-eyed ecumenical tolerance."