

The stanza that opened this review is part of an untitled poem by John Dewey that was written sometime after World War I, only "discovered" by accident, and not publicly acknowledged until after Dewey's death. This poetic musing (see Boydston [Ed.], *The Poems of John Dewey*, 1977) are somewhat of an enigma as Dewey himself seems not to have mentioned them and, furthermore, he left them at the back of his desk, apparently forgotten, at the University. What compelled Dewey to write poetry and why did he apparently ignore such an intimate personal experience? While *Works About John Dewey: 1886-1995* will not answer these particular literary questions, it will, on the other hand, prove to be an invaluable resource that will bring the writings of thousands of individuals who share a Deweyan commonality to one's finger tips.

Works About is a required reference book for every education library and for every professional educator. John Dewey was a major figure who had an important impact upon the educational scene in North America. Many of his ideas are still current to this day and have clearly stood the test of time. His attempts to reinterpret Aristotle and Plato to a modern and rapidly changing society bear reconsideration by contemporary educators and philosophers. Dewey was a visionary who attempted to bring quality and ethics to the most important of professions — teaching. *Works About John Dewey: 1886-1995* provides a solid and indispensable base of selected material that will allow interested individuals to increase their professional understandings of the ideas of John Dewey and, at the same time, engage in a personal voyage of rediscovery.

JON BRADLEY *McGill University*

RICHARD FULKERSON. *Teaching the Argument in Writing*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English (1996). 184 pp. \$19.95 (NCTE members \$14.95). ISBN 0-8141-0190-9.

Richard Fulkerson's *Teaching the Argument in Writing* is an unusual argumentation text in many aspects. It clearly targets high school and college teachers, not college students, as its audience and it is a very readable book. These two aspects alone make it worth investigating.

Fulkerson's voice is strong throughout, from the opening pages where he clearly positions himself as a teacher of argumentation and informal logic at the undergraduate and graduate levels. He tells us about other specific aspects of his life and ways that he engages in argumentation

that might not traditionally be thought of as argument, and he follows this up in the introduction and first chapter where he uses nontraditional argumentation forms, such as an extended dialogue, to argue that all discourse is actually one form of argument or another.

This is an unusual opening for a book on argumentation, and some might say that he undercuts his own title by so doing. However, Fulkerson's approach suits his purpose of helping teachers become "more committed to the teaching of argumentative writing and more confident about how to teach and respond to it." He achieves this well in a book which is very readable, well organized, founded on a deep understanding of argumentation theory, and littered with specific examples from the writing of his own students. The book is thus relevant and easy for busy professionals to use as and when they need it, for it is possible to read the book in just a few sittings, cover to cover, or to use it as a source for helping solve difficulties that the teaching of written argument presents. Fulkerson assumes audience familiarity with procedures for teaching writing as an extended activity and he assumes little or no familiarity with argumentation theory. These two assumptions guide a very consistent approach throughout the volume and make it an especially valuable book for teachers.

The book includes succinct instruction on well accepted strategies of writing western argument, with chapters devoted to the Toulmin model of argument, general argumentation strategies and four chapters devoted to arguing different types of claims. He also gives attention to material fallacies and fallacious use of statistics and in each of these chapters makes extensive use of student examples to demonstrate the kinds of difficulties students have and how a teacher can help students understand the nature of their difficulties. This is, of course, what most books on argumentation do through the extensive delineation of taxonomies of argumentation. The great difference is that Fulkerson's purpose is to make this theory easily accessible to busy professionals. He succeeds well, giving the novice in argumentation theory an introduction to concepts but then foregoing a detailed traditional exploration of those concepts in favour of very practical application of them, always in terms of helping the teacher respond to written argument as well as his own guide, the STAR guide, for testing the substantiation of claims.

The book obviously serves a need and serves it so well, that my only regret is that attention is not given to issues surrounding audience, particularly when students now come from many different cultures and

themselves carry many different assumptions and interpretations. These issues are articulated in my edited volume, *Perspectives on Written Argument* where various chapters demonstrate that argument operates best in contexts of connectedness and community, that argumentative processes are learning processes, that in argumentation it is important to maintain the tension of difference for as long as possible rather than seeking closure or resolution too quickly, and that the acknowledgment of difference is a way to maintain relationship and community. Fulkerson would agree with these tenets, I am sure. However, many authors in *Perspectives on Written Argument* would stress that writers from different cultures, whether those be racial or ethnic or gendered or sexual orientation, might well attribute different degrees of legitimacy and validity to different grounds, authority, relevance, and the like. These become thorny teaching issues for classroom teachers who are trying to acknowledge and support students from different cultures while at the same time trying to help them become critical thinkers. As a white female academic at a university located near Toronto, a large metropolitan center with significant numbers of people from many different cultural and language backgrounds, this is of central concern to me.

However, I am still taken by Fulkerson's book which serves well the intended audience and I would recommend that the book be in every English department. The only qualifier is that every department also seek other volumes which will speak to cultural pluralities unacknowledged by traditional approaches to western argumentation.

DEBORAH P. BERRILL *Trent University*

REFERENCE

Berrill, D.P. (1996). *Perspectives on Written Argument*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.