

NOTES, QUERIES & DISCUSSIONS

DISCUSSION:

REVIEW OF A REVIEWER: REPLY TO WOLENSKI

by

STEVEN J. BARTLETT

Senior Research Professor of Philosophy

Oregon State University

and

Visiting Scholar in Psychology and Philosophy

Willamette University

Modern Logic recently published a three-page review by Jan Wolenski of *Reflexivity: A Source Book in Self-Reference* (Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1992), edited by Steven J. Bartlett. It is customary for authors and editors seldom to respond to reviewers: It is to be expected that some reviewers of a work will be positive in their assessments, and others negative. Often it is clear from a reviewer's comments that his or her judgment is no more, no less than a reflection of personal or professional interests or prejudices. Certainly, as any author can testify, impartial, well-qualified reviewers are a comparative rarity.

In the case of Wolenski's review, however, neither personal nor professional predispositions appear, at least on the surface, to be involved, but rather a fundamental lack of familiarity with the pertinent literature and recent research. Readers of his review who are not themselves specialists in the field of study in question will not be served by a reviewer's "decisive evaluation," when that evaluation is based on an acquaintanceship with the pertinent literature and research that is limited and fragmentary, and hence narrow.