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## In Memoriam-Jo Ann Boydston (1924–2011)

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# In Memoriam

## Jo Ann Boydston (1924–2011)

Larry A. Hickman

Jo Ann Boydston enjoyed a distinguished career as general editor of the *Collected Works of John Dewey* and director of the Center for Dewey Studies at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. Born in Poteau, Oklahoma, of Choctaw Indian heritage, she graduated summa cum laude from Oklahoma State University in 1944. She received an M.A. from Oklahoma State in 1947, a Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1950, and honorary doctorates from Indiana University (1994) and Southern Illinois University (2004).

In 1961 Boydston joined the staff of a modest research project at Southern Illinois University called “Co-operative Research on Dewey Publications” as assistant to project director, George E. Axtelle. The goal of the project was to produce a concordance of the works of John Dewey. It was soon realized that an adequate concordance would require a standard edition of Dewey’s works. By 1971 Axtelle had left the university, Boydston had become the director of the renamed Center for Dewey Studies, and the first four of the thirty-seven volumes of the *Collected Works* had been published utilizing standards of modern documentary editing. The thirty-seventh volume of the *Collected Works* was published in 1990 and an index volume was published in 1991. Boydston retired as director of the Center in 1993.

In addition to the *Collected Works* volumes, Boydston’s many publications include *John Dewey: A Checklist of Translations, 1900–1967* (with Robert L. Andresen, 1969), *Checklist of Writings about John Dewey* (with Kathleen Poulos, 1974, 1978), and *John Dewey’s Personal and Professional Library: A Checklist* (1982). She took particular delight in the publication of *The Poems of John Dewey* (1977), which, she reported, involved some detective work on her part. In order to authenticate Dewey’s authorship of the poems she compared the typewriter faces that appear on the poetry typescripts with peculiarities that appear in



Dewey's typed correspondence, and she dated many of the poems by examining the typewriter faces—his own and those of others—that Dewey used at various times during his career.

Boydston relished her service in professional organizations. She served as a member of the executive committee of the Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy (1980–82), as member (1987–88) and then chair (1988–92) of the Modern Language Association Committee on Scholarly Editions, as archivist (1975–93), secretary-treasurer (1962–70), and president (1972–74) of the John Dewey Society, and as president of the Association for Documentary Editing (1984–85).

Boydston also served on a number of advisory boards, including the Textual Standards Committee of the Library of America and the editorial boards of the Charles Sanders Peirce Edition, the Library of Living Philosophers, the Jonathan Edwards Edition, the Mark Twain Papers and Correspondence, and after retirement, the Center for Dewey Studies. She served as the Committee on Scholarly Editions' inspector for volumes in the Mark Twain, William James, William Dean Howells, and Washington Irving editions, and as textual consultant for the Frederick Douglass Papers, the Bertrand Russell Edition, and the George Santayana Edition.

When she received an honorary doctorate from Indiana University, the citation read, in part: "Jo Ann Boydston is recognized for her exemplary and innovative work as an acclaimed scholar and textual editor. As the world's foremost authority on John Dewey, her academic scholarship ranks unparalleled. As a human being, her generous spirit graciously manifests in the time, advice and encouragement she shares with others. Indiana University salutes Jo Ann Boydston as a rare human being, who has contributed significantly to scholarly learning."

Jo Ann Boydston will be missed.