



## 2015 CCCC Exemplar Award Winner

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**Sharon Crowley**

Professor Emerita,  
Arizona State University

Sharon Crowley embodies the true spirit and practice of an exemplar, for she has done nothing less than lead a profound rethinking of our field. She has played an important role in reanimating the classical traditions of rhetoric for contemporary students and faculty. She has been a key figure in the turn toward embodied rhetorics and the place of the body in public discourse. She has addressed the political forces that surround (and inhabit) our classrooms, but she has also written for a broad readership, bravely addressing the fundamentalisms that obstruct civic exchange.

Sharon Crowley has always been brave and consistently contrarian, and she has carried her sword not only to battles with those outside the academy (or outside our curriculum) but to our very own meetings, lectures and professional journals. She is impressive in her clear-sighted views, her formidable intellect, her bluntness and candor. She has reliably been a tough audience, steadily pointing out cant, political correctness, and shabby arguments. She has been strong in her role as a reader, editor and mentor, and an inspiration to women in the profession. She has made us all tougher and braver and less likely to rest on our laurels or to assume an easy consensus.

The list of her books written for peers reminds us of her influence on the field: *Toward a Civil Discourse: Rhetoric and Fundamentalisms*, *Rhetorical Bodies: Towards a Material Rhetoric* (co-edited with Jack Selzer), *Composition in the University: Historical and Polemical Essays*, *The Methodical Memory: Invention in Current-traditional Rhetoric*, and *A Teacher's Introduction to Deconstruction*.

Her textbooks, which have the same scholarly rigor as her other books, also have played important roles in our teaching: *Ancient Rhetorics for Contemporary Students* (with Debra Hawhee), *Critical Situations: A Rhetoric for Writing in Communities* (with Michael Stancliff), and *Ancient Rhetorics for Contemporary Students*.

In noting Sharon Crowley's influence on writing programs, Shirley Rose observes, "Crowley's contributions to discussions of issues in writing program administration, especially her work on the history of the universally required course in first-year college composition, have been of profound importance to developing a critical understanding of the competing definitions and expectations of first-year composition, an enterprise which has drawn on our discipline's intellectual and human resources while it has sustained our interest for nearly two-thirds of a century."

The quality and impact of Sharon Crowley's books have been recognized with highly coveted awards: Ross Winterowd Award for Best Book in the Field of Rhetoric and Composition Studies (1990), Mina P. Shaughnessy Prize for Best Book on

the Teaching of English (MLA, 1998), Gary Olson Award for Book of the Year in Rhetoric and Composition (2006), David H. Russell Award for Best Book of the Year (NCTE, 2006), Conference on Composition and Communication Best Book of the Year (2006), Rhetoric Society of America Award for Best Book of the Year (2006).

The sheer quantity, quality, and impact of Sharon Crowley's research overall also warrant acknowledgement: three monographs, three textbooks, one co-edited collection, thirty-nine articles and chapters, and seventy-two presentations and invited talks (including many keynote and featured speaking roles). Her work has been published in the most prestigious journals and with the leading presses in our field. Further, her books and articles have been cited widely by scholars and integrated into our teaching, appearing on countless course syllabi as required and highly recommended reading.

Professor Crowley's work as a mentor has been far-reaching, generous, and has taken many forms. For example, as a member of the editorial boards for five major journals in the field and for ERIC, she has shared her time and insights to strengthen the impact of those outlets, as well as the individual articles that they publish. At the state level, she edited *Arizona English Bulletin* for three years, making it one of the leading NCTE affiliate journals of the time by working closely with contributors to develop their thinking. At scores of professional conferences during the last four decades, she has helped scholars at all experience levels refine their thinking so that their conference presentations and publications can have greater impact. In her roles as teacher, dissertation and thesis committee member, new-TA mentor, and program director, she has challenged undergraduate and graduate students to think more critically. Legions of us—from graduate students to full professors—have benefited from her wisdom and lively engagement more informally, in conference sessions, hallway conversations, coffee shops, and other venues.

CCCC is honored to recognize Sharon Crowley, Professor Emerita, Arizona State University, with its most prestigious honor, the 2015 CCCC Exemplar Award. She exquisitely exemplifies the criteria for the award: "a person whose years of service as an exemplar for our organization represents the highest ideals of scholarship, teaching, and service to the entire profession."

In the words of nominator Kelly Ritter, "Many of us will write books and articles, teach undergraduate and graduate students, serve the profession within and beyond our institution, and one day, finally, retreat from it. But few of us will do all of these things with the widespread admiration and recognition that Sharon has, and fewer of us still will enter, occupy, and exit the world of academia with such forceful grace."

**2015 Award Committee:** David Bartholomae, Michael Day, Gesa Kirsch, Sondra Perl, Duane Roen (chair).