

## **In Memoriam**

Charles Arthur Willard  
1945-2021

Our beloved colleague, Charles Arthur Willard, has died at the age of 76. He will be remembered within the argumentation community not only as an influential theorist but also as one of the chief architects of an international and interdisciplinary field devoted to the study of argumentation. In the late 1970s, he was part of the founding group for the Alta Argumentation Conferences (held biennially since 1979), and in the mid-1980s, he joined with J. Anthony Blair, Frans H. van Eemeren, and Rob Grootendorst to organize a conference that spawned the International Society for the Study of Argumentation and led to a series of international conferences held once every four years since 1986. In 2013, he was honored with the ISSA Distinguished Research Award. Willard will be missed for the many other ways in which he enriched our community: his drive toward inclusiveness, his exuberant playfulness, and his (sometimes exasperating) intellectual flamboyance.

Willard grew up in Hutchinson, Kansas, and attended Kansas State Teachers College, where he was an elite competitive debater on the national tournament circuit. He later studied rhetoric at the University of Illinois, earning his doctorate under the supervision of Joseph W. Wenzel. His first faculty job was as Director of Forensics at Dartmouth College, and subsequently, he held positions at Slippery Rock State College, at the University of Pittsburgh, and at the University of Louisville, where he served many years as Chair of the Department of Communication and was honored with the title of University Professor.

There was no acknowledged argumentation theory in American communication studies until Willard and a handful of colleagues argued it into being. Pedagogical interest in argumentation had been a central concern of academic programs in communication from their first appearance as speech departments in the early 1900s, and well into the twentieth century, it was difficult to find an American communication scholar who had not been drawn into the field