



# PRESIDENT'S LETTER

BY MICHAEL S. ROTH '78

Cynicism. We hear about it all the time. The level of public discourse has gotten so low, so mean-spirited, that it is turning off people who might otherwise want to participate in the public sphere. The Wesleyan Media Project, led on campus by Assistant Professor of Government Erika Franklin Fowler, did a great job this fall of tracking and analyzing the enormous increase in political advertising, much of it negative in tone. We can all see a general decline of confidence that any meaningful discussions are to be found in the public sphere. Should we describe this decline of confidence as the growth of cynicism, or just as an intelligent reaction to our contemporary context?

Cynics are no fools, and one might even describe cynicism as the effort to protect oneself from appearing foolish. One of the hallmarks of contemporary cynicism (with ancient roots) is the rejection of conventional standards. The cynic delights in rejecting the criteria of those with power and privilege, and this rejection is often mixed with contempt. Cynics “know” that the established order is wrong—corrupt, unnatural and unjust—and their knowledge can give them a sense of superiority. We reject the established ways of the world because we know better.

But cynicism about politics and the public sphere doesn't lead to efforts to change the way things are. Instead, it leads to a withdrawal from public life, a withdrawal that is justified by the cynic's belief in his or her own superiority. We cynics know better, and we know that participation in public life is for those who just don't understand the ways things really work.

Another dimension of cynicism is the belief in one's own self-sufficiency. Cynics don't have to engage in the public sphere because they have developed a way of life that doesn't require engagement. They have

“...our students resist the temptation to withdraw from public life in jaded self-satisfaction...”

nothing to gain from interacting with others who don't share their views, and they find reinforcement from other cynics who also reject this kind of interaction. A community based on rejection reinforces its members' contempt for the dominant culture and their proud alienation from it. They feel they don't need to engage because their cynicism gives them a sense of self-righteous autonomy.

Cynicism may be particularly prevalent among young people, and psychologists even have a specific measure for adolescent cynicism, A-cyn2, on the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory. As an educator, I find this youthful attitude to be particularly worrisome, because above all it protects students from learning. Behind the façade of the knowing rejection of the status quo, behind the defense of the self-sufficient community, is the fearful refusal to engage with new possibilities. Cynics have already made up their minds, and people who have made up their minds believe they have nothing to learn.

When you participate in the public sphere, you have to open yourself up to the views of

others, and real engagement means being open to change. That's why civic participation should be part of every student's education. Participation is a public experiment through which you discover things about the world, about yourself and about the possibilities for change. Public engagement is challenging because you may be surprised that the people or systems about which you've already reached conclusions are more complex than you'd ever imagined—more complex and more important for shaping the future.

I am so pleased with our efforts thus far to build on the educational value of Wesleyan's traditions of civic engagement. Our students are working in so many contexts—from hospitals and homeless shelters to regulatory agencies and public schools—and then reflecting on their experiences when back on campus. They are learning that the liberal arts aren't just relevant to the four years of college, but that our broad education can have an immediate connection to the work they are doing in the public sphere.

In this age of degraded political discourse and anonymously funded attack ads, it's easy to see the reasons for the cynical withdrawal from public life. But when students turn themselves off to engagement and participation, they are cutting themselves off from learning as well as depriving our public sphere of their energy and ideas. At places like Wesleyan we turn back the tide of cynicism; our students resist the temptation to withdraw from public life in jaded self-satisfaction; we remind them that if they don't engage in shaping their future, somebody else will do it for them. Students at Wesleyan discover that stimulating and rewarding work is to be found by engaging with others in trying to make the public sphere a more meaningful environment for all of us. We not only wish them well. We depend on them! **UPRONT**

## INSTITUTE BLENDS CURATORIAL PRACTICES FROM VISUAL, PERFORMING ARTS

The Center for the Arts has launched the Institute for Curatorial Practice in Performance (ICPP), which brings arts professionals together to examine curatorial practices from the fields of visual arts and performance, in order to better understand and improve the ways in which performance is managed, produced, and presented in this country.

Starting in summer 2011, the ICPP will offer a professional certificate program in Curatorial Practice in Performance. Students will study artistic and curatorial practice, social and cultural context, and entrepreneurial strategies. They will complete an independent project in consultation with an adviser.

The certificate is a low-residency, nine-month program intended for early- and mid-career working professionals.

Through a close examination of the practical and theoretical concerns of performance work, ICPP students will deepen their knowledge and skills, enhance their professional relationships, and become better advocates for performance in the marketplace.

The ICPP was founded in 2010 by its director, Samuel A. Miller '75, and Pamela Tatge '84, MALS '10, director of the CFA, in partnership with Judy Hussie-Taylor, executive director of the Danspace Project.

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation is partially funding the program.

“The ICPP aims to understand how performance can function within multiple landscapes, by building new models for understanding contemporary performance practice,” explains Tatge. “The ICPP will serve as a meeting point for academics, professionals, and students to share ideas and resources in both formal and informal ways. By creating a rigorous and creative learning environment, enhanced and energized by the outside activities of its students and instructors, the ICPP will provide students and instructors with a base for their future professional endeavors.”

Currently there is no post-graduate program in the United States that is dedicated to addressing curatorial practice in performance. The ICPP looks to fill this gap, as an interest in contemporary performance continues to thrive even though the recent economic recession has hit arts organizations particularly hard. **UPRONT**

### 'BEST OF THE BEST'

The American Physical Society awarded Chia Wei “Wade” Hsu '10 this year with its prestigious LeRoy Apker Award for his achievements while at Wesleyan.

Only one student from a PhD-granting institution receives the award each year. Reinhold Blümel, the Charlotte Augusta Ayres Professor of Physics, calls it a “mini-Nobel Prize.”

The award provides encouragement to young physicists who have demonstrated potential for scientific accomplishment.

“This means that Wade out-competed students from MIT, Stanford, Harvard, Princeton and CalTech,” says Hsu's former adviser Francis Starr, associate professor of physics. “He's the best of the best.”

Hsu graduated first in his class last May with high honors in physics. He is currently a graduate student in physics at Harvard.

On Oct. 8, the physics department hosted a reception in his honor.

“The celebration that people in the physics department threw for me was a total surprise. I did not expect an event of such a scale, with so many professors, grads, undergrads,” Hsu says. “Certainly I had never felt as honored as on that day.”

The Apker Award came with \$5,000, an allowance for travel to the APS meeting where the award will be presented, and a certificate citing the work and school of the recipient. Wesleyan's physics department also received \$5,000 for nominating Hsu. These funds will be used to support undergraduate research.

Hsu was a member of Starr's theoretical/computational physics group.

Hsu published five papers while an undergraduate, including a paper both in *The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences USA* and *Physical Review Letters*, the most prestigious journal in physics.

A Freeman Scholar, Hsu maintained his interest in East Asian culture while at Wesleyan, played multiple instruments and even made time to tutor a middle school student on *guzheng* (a stringed instrument). He speaks three languages and has tutored himself in two more. **UPRONT**

## ELECTION DAY WAS A GREAT DAY FOR WESLEYAN ALUMNI CANDIDATES



**JOHN HICKENLOOPER '74** was elected Governor of Colorado, and **MICHAEL BENNET '87** was elected Senator from Colorado.

**PETER SHUMLIN '79** won the race for Governor of Vermont.

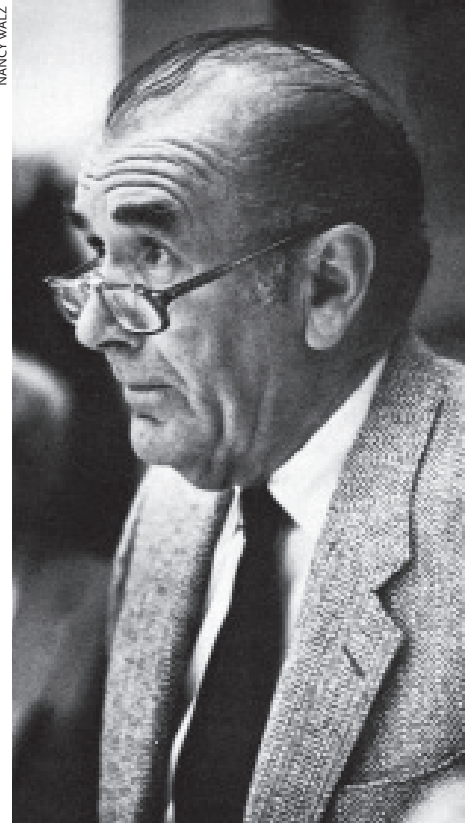
**KATHLEEN CLYDE '01** was elected to the Ohio State House of Representatives.

**MATT LESSER** (in-process) was re-elected to the Connecticut House of Representatives.

**DAN WOLF '79** was elected to the State Senate in Massachusetts, representing Cape Cod and the Islands.

And **BRIAN FROSH '68** was reelected to the Maryland State Senate.

## DEVOTED PHILANTHROPIST HOUGHTON "BUCK" FREEMAN '43 DIES AT THE AGE OF 89



Houghton "Buck" Freeman '43, whose generosity continues to have an enormous impact on Wesleyan, died December 1, 2010. He was the son of Mary Houghton and Mansfield Freeman '16, a distinguished scholar of Chinese philosophy and a co-founder of the international insurance firm that became known as American International Group. Buck Freeman grew up in China and acquired fluency in Mandarin. He interrupted his studies at Wesleyan to serve in the Navy during World War II and provided intelligence reports from southern China behind Japanese lines. After the war, he became the first Wesleyan student to earn a degree in Japanese. Before the war he had starred on Wesleyan's undefeated New England Soccer Championship team. In 1946, he captained a 6-1-1 team that almost matched the '40 squad.

In 1947 he joined AIG, where he spent the rest of his career, rising to the top levels of company leadership.

He was chairman of the Freeman Foundation, which he ran with his wife Doreen, Hon. '03, and their son, Graeme '77. He had assumed that position in 1992, following the death of his father, Mansfield Freeman, who had contributed generously to Wesleyan's East Asian Studies Program. Buck's and Doreen's \$5 million gift at the end of the Campaign for Liberal Learning in the 1980s was the largest single gift to that campaign, and it jump-started construction of Bacon Field House and the new pool in the Freeman Athletic Center—a project that reflected Freeman's enthusiasm for competitive athletics and fitness.

The Freeman Foundation's landmark contribution to Wesleyan is the Freeman Asian Scholars Program. Begun in 1995, this program has provided full scholarships at Wesleyan for more than 300 talented students from Asia. The program's objective is to promote cross-cultural understanding between the United States and the countries of Asia. Freeman especially valued the affirmative culture of Wesleyan that provided a supportive context for Asian students far from home. By any measure, the Freeman Scholars Program has had a profound effect on Wesleyan and on the many Freeman scholars who care deeply about the future of their own countries.

Freeman served as a Wesleyan trustee from 1982 to 1991, and Wesleyan awarded him an honorary doctor of laws degree in 1993. In the fall of 2010, he was inducted into Wesleyan's Athletics Hall of Fame. Through personal gifts and the Freeman Foundation, he is the largest donor in Wesleyan's history.

President Roth wrote on his blog, "In recent days I have heard from former Wesleyan presidents and trustees, who have spoken of Buck's modesty, his devotion to alma mater, and his deeply moral character. They also remembered his wry sense of humor and the twinkle in his eye when he heard about the latest news concerning the students he and Doreen considered family.

"Our hearts go out to his entire family, to his daughter, Linda, and to his wife, Doreen, and their son, Graeme, both of whom I have had the privilege of getting to know over the last few years," he said. **UPFRONT**

See the memorial webpage: [www.wesleyan.edu/Freeman](http://www.wesleyan.edu/Freeman).

## THE COLLEGE OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND FINANCIAL AID RECEIVE \$5 MILLION IN GIFTS

Wesleyan has received gifts totaling \$5 million from Terry Huffington, her family and the Huffington Foundation to fund an endowed faculty chair in the College of the Environment and endowed scholarships.

The Huffington Foundation Endowed Chair in the College of the Environment, created with a \$3 million gift from the Foundation, will benefit the nascent college, devoted to the development of environmental knowledge and the exploration of innovative approaches to environmental problems.

A separate \$2 million gift establishes endowed scholarships that will support Wesleyan's need-blind financial aid program.

"Through these very generous gifts, Terry Huffington, her family, and the Huffington Foundation have contributed to our highest priorities—curricular innovation and access to a Wesleyan education," says Wesleyan President Michael S. Roth. "Their support helps Wesleyan maintain its leadership position in liberal arts education and secure its future with a stronger endowment. I am deeply grateful."

Ms. Huffington P'11, P'14, of Houston, Texas, says that access to education has always been a family priority. "I was brought up with the mantra that the most important thing you could do for people is to give them an opportunity to get an education. We welcome the opportunity to support Wesleyan's efforts to enroll students regardless of their economic circumstances."

The first holder of the Huffington Foundation Endowed Chair is Gary Yohe, a Wesleyan economist renowned for his work on global climate issues. He is a senior member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) that was awarded a share of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize. He is also a member of the standing Committee on the Human Dimensions of Global Change of the National Academy of Sciences.

"We are delighted that Dr. Yohe is to be named to the Huffington Foundation Endowed Chair in the College of the

Environment," says Ms. Huffington. "It is a privilege to support a researcher and educator of his caliber in an area of study that is of such vital importance to our global community."

The College of the Environment is an interdisciplinary initiative that draws faculty from 18 departments or programs at Wesleyan. Among its innovative features is a think tank, which brings together faculty, prominent scholars from other institutions, and students to produce scholarly works intended to influence thinking and action on environmental issues.

Ms. Huffington, a former geologist, has a long-standing interest in stewardship of energy supplies and achieving a decreased reliance on hydrocarbon fuels. Her interest led her to develop Elkstone Farm in Steamboat Springs, Colo., which features a permaculture greenhouse designed to grow organic produce year-round in a sustainable, energy-efficient manner. **UPFRONT**

## ROYER RECEIVES DONATH MEDAL

Dana Royer, assistant professor of earth and environmental sciences, accepted the gold Donath Medal at the Geological Society of America's (GSA) annual meeting in Denver on Nov. 1.

The award came with a cash prize of \$10,000.

The award recognizes a scientist, aged 35 or younger, for outstanding original research marking a major advance in the earth sciences.

Royer researches how plants can be used to reconstruct ancient environments.

In a GSA press release, Peter D. Wilf of Pennsylvania State University said, "Dana is a true innovator who successfully tackles extremely important questions in paleoclimatology and paleoecology, in part using paleobotanical proxies calibrated with a remarkable series of careful modern analog studies.

He often connects the deep-time climate and CO<sub>2</sub> record to the present day in highly societally-relevant ways that are widely cited in the 'modern' climate change literature."

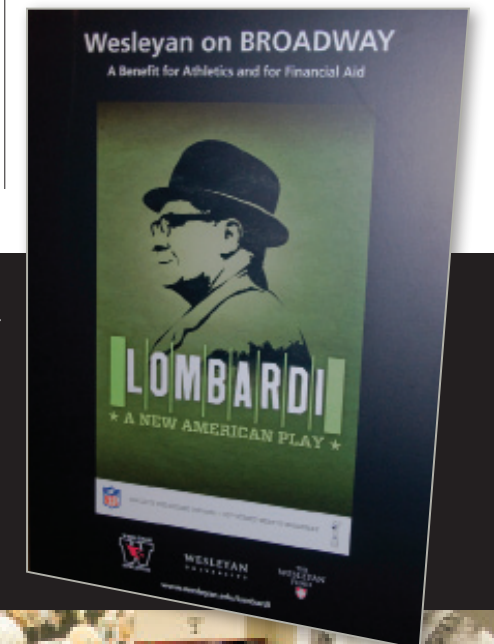
"Without Dana's contributions we would know much less about Earth's climate history and its great importance to today's world," Wilf said.

Leo Hickey, professor of geology and Curator of Paleobotany at Yale University, said, "In the rapidly developing field of plant paleoecology and ecophysiology, Dana Royer stands out in terms of innovation and sheer breadth and depth of knowledge. He is truly an emerging leader in the geological sciences." **UPFRONT**

## Wesleyan on BROADWAY A Benefit for Athletics and for Financial Aid



Director Tommy Kail '99, President Michael Roth '78, and Vice President for University Relations Barbara-Jan Wilson applaud the news of \$312,000 raised for Wesleyan athletics and financial aid at the Broadway performance of *Lombardi*, which attracted a Wesleyan audience of nearly 700 in November.





## NO TOMORROW: FILMMAKER WEISBERG '75 ON CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

**N**o Tomorrow, a documentary produced by Roger Weisberg's Public Policy Productions, examines the death penalty through the lens of a single capital murder case in which he knew the victim, a central figure in his previous film, *Aging Out*.

In 2004 PBS aired *Aging Out*, about three teenagers who are forced to fend for themselves after leaving the foster care system. One of the young people featured in the film was Risa Bejarano. *Aging Out* chronicles Risa's struggles as she graduates from high school and heads off to college at UC, Santa Barbara. Despite difficulties during her first year as an emancipated adult—including school breaks that left her essentially homeless—Risa seemed to be in a hopeful place by the film's end.

It turned out that Weisberg had chronicled the last year of Risa's life.

"Several months after our film was completed, we got a call one morning from Risa's former foster mother," he recalls, "telling us that Risa was found shot and killed in an alley in downtown L.A. The police located both Risa's foster mother and us through Risa's diary, which was found near her body at the crime scene."

Weisberg and his crew were stunned. They had stayed in touch with Bejarano, as they had with so many of the subjects of other

documentaries. The very week of her murder, Risa was scheduled to join the filmmakers at a screening of *Aging Out* at a national governors' conference.

When the homicide detective asked for a copy of Weisberg's film in order to learn more about Bejarano and, hopefully, help find her killer, Weisberg was glad to share a DVD. But law enforcement's interest in the documentary didn't end after they'd apprehended a suspect.

"The district attorney wanted to use *Aging Out* in the death-penalty trial of Juan Chavez, the young man eventually accused of killing Risa," Weisberg said. "He hoped the film would help convince the jury to impose the death penalty by increasing sympathy for the victim and hatred for the defendant."

The irony was overpowering: "We were deeply disturbed that a film that we'd made, designed to give a second chance to young people aging out of foster care, was unexpectedly going to be used to push the jury to give the death penalty to a young man who suffered from the same childhood abuse as Risa Bejarano. Here was a young man who had grown up in the same environment as Risa, surrounded by drugs, gangs, domestic violence, and sexual molestation. You could hardly have found two young people who grew up in more similar circumstances," he marvels.

Initially, Weisberg and company envisioned a film that would illustrate the defendant's backstory and paint a picture of the tragic end of two young lives. However,

that narrative relied on access to the defendant, his family members, and footage of the young man growing up. "And we had no access to any of that footage," Weisberg said. "The lawyers would not permit us to interview the defendant, and, once he was convicted, the prison would not permit us access to death row."

The filmmakers did, however, have access to the jury. Presiding Judge Lance Ito (who also presided over O. J. Simpson's 1995 murder trial) wrote to each juror, endorsing the idea behind the film and inviting them to respond to Weisberg's interview request.

"Eight of the 12 jurors decided to come forward and talk about their experiences during the trial, their ambivalence, and ultimately how they decided the verdict," recalls Weisberg. Additionally Weisberg's team interviewed legal scholars and attorneys on both sides of the capital punishment debate.

"Our film then became much more of an investigation of the death penalty itself," he says. "*No Tomorrow* is not only our window into the complexity and controversy surrounding capital punishment but also a very sad personal story for us."

Asked his feelings on the death penalty, Weisberg defers to his film:

"As one of the experts in the film says, the right question is not 'Does Juan Chavez deserve to die?' The right question is, 'Do we deserve to kill?'" **UPFRONT**

*No Tomorrow premieres on PBS in March 2011. See [pbs.org/no-tomorrow/](http://pbs.org/no-tomorrow/).*

## SCHOLAR ATHLETE SHEA DWYER '10

Running Back **Shea Dwyer '10**, of Marlborough, Conn., became just the second Wesleyan player (after Matt Perceval '00) to receive the distinction of being a finalist for the Gagliardi Trophy—Division III's version of the Heisman Trophy. He broke a 24-year-old school record for rushing yards in a game on Oct. 2 (213), earning the Gold Helmet Award as the top performer in New England for Small Colleges—and broke his own record, with 255 yards against Colby, the following week. At the end of the season, Dwyer ended up fourth among NCAA Division III runners and sixth in all divisions with 155.2 yards a game.

A government major, he is now a student in Wesleyan's Graduate Liberal Studies and is doing substitute teaching at the elementary level. "I really enjoy playing football," he says, adding, "My parents gave me a good work ethic." As for the magic of this season: "This was one of the closest teams I've ever played on. We're family. And Coach Whalen ['83] is an amazing, amazing coach. He brought in an awesome staff."

DON CHAPIN

UPFRONT



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PETER STEIN '84





# HISTORICAL ROW “REVEREND DOCTOR JEKYLL AND PROFESSOR HYDE”

The new College of the Environment stands firmly on the foundation of nearly 180 years of science at Wesleyan. From its beginning in 1831, the natural sciences have been a key part of the University’s curriculum. Early science instruction was especially strong in geology and astronomy, and several early alumni made their marks in these fields.

The most prominent of Wesleyan’s early natural scientists, William North Rice, Class of 1865, earned the first PhD in geology from an American university and was one of the first dozen scholars to receive a doctorate from Yale in any subject. When he returned to Wesleyan as professor of geology and natural history in 1868, he was also Wesleyan’s first faculty member to hold a PhD. Rice studied at the Institute of Natural History at the University of Berlin and at Yale’s Sheffield Scientific School under prominent geologist James Dwight Dana. Rice’s dissertation critiqued Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution.

The controversy surrounding the publication of *On the Origin of Species* in 1859 had captivated the young Rice, and it shaped his life’s work. An ardent Methodist and an ordained minister, Rice’s devotion to science was as strong as his belief in God. The apparent tensions between his religious faith and his concern with scientific truth fueled his teaching and his scholarship. Despite his early skepticism, by the middle of the 1870s Rice believed strongly in the scientific veracity of the evolutionary model, and he felt that it did not contradict Christian teachings.

Rice refused to undermine the book’s science to appease church officials.



William North Rice in the field, 1920s.

In his book *The Poet of Science and Other Addresses* (1919), Rice writes: “... I have lived a double life, functioning sometimes ... as the Reverend Dr. Jekyll, and sometimes as Professor Hyde.”

Beginning in the mid 1890s, during a period of Wesleyan’s affiliation with Methodism, Rice taught one of the university’s earliest interdisciplinary elective courses. This was well before courses crossing disciplinary boundaries were common anywhere, and when the elective system was just beginning to take hold. According to the 1895–96 course catalog, “Relations of Science and Religion” covered “heliocentric astronomy, the antiquity of earth and man, [and] the theory of evolution,” among other topics. Rice’s closely related book, *Christian Faith in an Age of Science* (1903), was originally commissioned by the Methodist Book Concern, but it turned out to be too controversial for the denomination’s publishing arm. Rice refused to undermine the book’s science to appease church officials. He opted instead to publish commercially with A. C. Armstrong of New York. A review in the January 23, 1904, *New York Times* states, “We have ev-

ery reason to believe that Prof. Rice’s book will serve a very useful purpose as a buffer to soften the jolt of transition for a great many persons from their traditional conceptions of religion to those homogeneously rational and scientific.”

Throughout his 51-year career at Wesleyan, William North Rice taught so many different courses that he quipped that his professorial chair was really a “settee.” An active field geologist, he traveled to Bermuda, Europe, Mexico, the Grand Canyon, the Rocky Mountains, and Alaska’s Yakutat Bay. From 1903 to 1916, he supervised the Connecticut state geological survey. He revised later editions of his mentor’s geology text and served as an officer of national and local scientific societies. Rice was one of the founders of the Middletown Scientific Association, a town/gown organization before which he gave an amazing 85 talks. A sought-after preacher, Rice also devoted years of service to the Middletown Board of Education. His dedication to Wesleyan was no less impressive, and he worked on a project to recatalog the library’s holdings, helped to edit the early volumes of the *Alumni Record*, and participated in numerous committees. A strong supporter of coeducation, Rice served as Wesleyan’s acting president three times over his long career. In 1925, near the end of his life, both William North Rice and his son, Edward Loranus Rice (Class of 1892), a prominent zoologist at Ohio Wesleyan University, served as expert consultants to Clarence Darrow on the losing side of the infamous Scopes trial, in which a high school biology teacher in Tennessee was convicted of teaching evolution in violation of state law.

Many other illustrious natural scientists have succeeded William North Rice at Wesleyan, and his—and their—dedication to scientific inquiry alongside community and professional service is still a hallmark of the university’s science programs. **UPFRONT**

Suzy Taraba ’77, MALS ’10,  
University Archivist

*The Wesleyan University Archives welcomes researchers interested in William North Rice, science, religion, or any other topic related to Wesleyan.*

OLIN LIBRARY ARCHIVES

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### NORMAN SHAPIRO RECEIVES HIGH HONOR FROM FRENCH GOVERNMENT

Norman Shapiro, professor of Romance languages and literatures, was recently honored by the French government for his work as a translator, receiving the distinction *Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*. The Order of Arts and Letters was established in 1957 to recognize eminent artists, writers, and others who have contributed significantly to furthering the arts in France and throughout the world.

Previous recipients of one of the three ranks of distinction include T. S. Eliot, Jeanne Moreau, Nadine Gordimer, Rudolph

Nureyev, Clint Eastwood, Paul Auster, Ornette Coleman, Marilyn Horne, and Deborah Voigt, among others.

Shapiro, a prolific and award-winning translator of theater and poetry, most recently published *Préversities: A Jacques Prévert Sampler and Selected Lyrics*, a collection of the poems of Théophile Gautier for Yale University Press, as part of the Margellos World Republic of Letters translation series. **UPFRONT**



SR PAREDON