

Distinguished Achievement Citation

Lowell “Ed” Folsom, Ph.D.

Class of 1969

With this presentation of Ohio Wesleyan’s Distinguished Achievement Citation, the Ohio Wesleyan University Alumni Association Board of Directors is honored and privileged to recognize Lowell “Ed” Folsom as a teacher, one of the nation’s premier scholars, and world’s foremost experts on the work of Walt Whitman.

At Ohio Wesleyan, Ed was an English major, a member of Phi Delta Theta, Omicron Delta Kappa, and Phi Beta Kappa. He also was active in WCSA and WSLN Radio.

Following his graduation, Ed earned an M.A. in English and a Ph.D. in English and American Literature from the University of Rochester. He is currently the Roy J. Carver Professor of English at the University of Iowa in Iowa City.

Ed’s scholarly work, especially related to the life and writings of Walt Whitman, has made him the nation’s and world’s go-to Whitman expert. He has been particularly interested in the ways American poets have talked back to Whitman over the years and how Whitman tapped into American culture to construct a radical new kind of writing. Ed’s books include *Walt Whitman: The Measure of His Song*, *Walt Whitman’s Native Representations*, and *Walt Whitman and the World*. In 2000, he directed a conference on Whitman in Beijing, and his book *Whitman East and West* gathers some of the essays by the North American, European, and Asian scholars who participated in that conference. In fall 2005, he organized a symposium on Whitman as a bookmaker and curated a large exhibit at the University of Iowa, Museum of Art of all the books Whitman made. His book *Whitman Making Books/Books Making Whitman*, is based on that event.

Beyond his writing about Whitman, Ed has been featured on national outlets such as the PBS documentary series *The American Experience*; NPR’s *Talk of the Nation*, *On the Media*, and *Morning Edition*; *What’s My Word?*; *Fox News In Depth*; and *CBS Sunday Morning*, all on the myriad aspects of Whitman’s work and life.

In recent years, Ed has co-edited a CD-ROM and online hypertext Whitman archive and has joined with ten other professors to construct “The Classroom Electric,” a gathering of websites that facilitates the teaching of Whitman and Emily Dickinson.

Of course, Ed is widely published in scholarly journals and contributes in countless ways to the life of the University of Iowa—and what we have said here is only the barest representation of all he has accomplished.

Today, Ohio Wesleyan applauds and recognizes Ed’s success by honoring him with this Distinguished Achievement Citation.

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