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Professor Neil Leroux receives Faculty Research Award

Summary: A professor of communication, media, and rhetoric, Leroux researches the rhetoric of Martin Luther.

(April 12, 2011)-Neil Leroux, professor of communication, media, and rhetoric, has been chosen for the 2011 University of Minnesota, Morris Faculty Distinguished Research Award. The award recognizes sustained research over the course of a faculty member's career. Since graduate school, Leroux has researched the rhetoric of Martin Luther (1483–1546).

“It is not difficult to make the case for the impact Luther had,” says Leroux. “He was a tremendous communicator, a powerful preacher, with an ability to write well. He was the driving force behind the reformation, criticized and scorned, and appreciated, for his radical commitment.”

Leroux first discerned an “untapped, unexplored” research opportunity in Luther as a graduate student in a course on 15–16th century rhetoric. Leroux notes that while Luther is well known in history for writing *The Ninety-Five Theses*, which initiated the Protestant Reformation, he also wrote and preached for a variety of audiences for several years before and many years after that historic moment. Throughout his career, Leroux has been and continues to be intrigued and excited by the work of the “literary giant” Luther, whose “terrified conscience” fueled his writing, whose translation of the Bible into German impacted today's modern German language, and whose words and actions influenced world history.

Leroux has written two books, *Martin Luther as Comforter: Writings on Death* and *Luther's Rhetoric: Strategies and Style from the Invocavit Sermons*, as well as numerous journal articles and book chapters. He holds a doctorate in rhetorical theory, rhetorical criticism, and public address from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. He has taught at the University of Minnesota, Morris since 1990.

The Faculty Distinguished Research Award was established in 2000. Leroux joins fellow faculty recipients David P. Roberts, mathematics, Seung-Ho Joo, political science, Cyrus Bina, management, Vicente Cabrera, Spanish, Ishtiyaque Haji, philosophy, Vasilikie Demos, sociology, Eric Klinger, psychology, Harold Hinds, history, Dwight Purdy, English, David Hoppe, biology, James Cotter, geology, and James Carlson, music.

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