



American Society for Cybernetics

The Wiener Gold Medal of the American Society for Cybernetics
is awarded to

Robert Vallée

for outstanding and profound lifelong contributions to the nurturing of cybernetics.

An exchange student of Norbert Wiener (whose *Cybernetics* was first published in Paris), Robert Vallée introduced courses on dynamic systems at the University of Pantheon-Sorbonne, Paris (France), in 1975. He founded the Cercle d'Etudes Cybernétiques, with Louis de Broglie as president. He developed his interests in the Association Française pour la Cybernétique Economique et Technique. He has been president of WO(G)SC (and won their Norbert Wiener Memorial medal in 1990); a council member of the International Association of Cybernetics; Association Française de science des Systèmes Cybernétiques cognitifs Et Techniques; and on the board of several journals.

Vallée's main academic contributions have been in the development of precise mathematical formulations and extensions of systems theory (for instance, he extended Wiener's contributions in Generalized Harmonic Analysis, defining the epsilon distribution), and by realising early on that cybernetics would always be essentially second order. In the early 1950s, Vallée wrote his first publications on what he named opérateur d'observation (operator of observation), allowing a cybernetic system to observe the state of its environment and itself. He refined this position in his 1995 book on Epistemo-praxeology. He has also published in the order of 150 papers.

He is particularly proud of his use of the Law of Requisite Variety to defend the French language.

In awarding Robert Vallée the Wiener Gold Medal of the American Society for Cybernetics, we salute him not only for his own work, but also for his consistent efforts to bring French contributions in cybernetics and systems theory to an international public.

Ranulph Glanville
President of the American Society for Cybernetics
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