



Civil Courage News

Journal of the Civil Courage Prize

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For Steadfast Resistance to Evil at Great Personal Risk

Micklethwait Seeks To Define Civil Courage At The Ceremony

John Micklethwait, Bloomberg Editor-in-Chief, began his thought-provoking keynote speech with the words, "Why me?" He went on to say that he suspected that many of his predecessors have had the same reaction. He stated that his job as keynote speaker was not to talk about what he referred to as the remarkable stories of the esteemed winners, but to discuss civil courage.

He defined civil courage as an "an awkward unsettling idea - in good ways and bad;" and difficult to define, as well. Although it honors valor outside war, he noted that before the prize was announced, "there was no word for civil courage."

He then asked, "So what is it?" He said that we know it when we see it in people like Nelson Mandela, Rosa Parks, and Raoul Wallenberg, "the virtue that all these people exemplify."

Micklethwait is intrigued by how many keynote speakers have been journalists and went on to say, "at our best, journalists can indeed display civil courage, witness Solzhenitsyn and Anna Politkovskaya." Although he feels that journalism can rise to that level, he also believes that a journalist tends to be more of a voyeur or a sensation-



John Micklethwait

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The 2015 Civil Courage Prize Winners Speak About Restoring The Rule of Law in Guatemala

At the 2015 Civil Courage Prize ceremony honoring Dr. Claudia Paz y Paz and Judge Yassmín Barrios, John Train described Guatemala's past civil administrations as having long been ranked "among the most corrupt in the world." He then spoke of a "Guatemala Spring:" how the tide has begun to turn because of the winners' courageous actions.

In 2012, *Forbes* magazine named her one of the "five most powerful women changing the world," yet in her acceptance speech, Dr. Paz y Paz spoke about how the process is not about one person but the efforts of many women and men who have the "courage to take on the very difficult cases to ensure that justice is done: lawyers, prosecutors, judges." She spoke of the crisis that existed in the judicial system when she became attorney general; the lack of belief the people had of "law as a way of confronting violence," and what she and her team accomplished in demonstrating "that no one is above the law and that it is possible to combat crime and violence with absolute respect for human rights and the rule of law."

Dr. Paz y Paz ended her speech with a nod to the survivors of genocide, the poor and excluded who fought for justice for over thirty years and never lost hope. "To them, my gratitude for teaching me the meaning of citizenship."



Judge Yassmín Barrios, CCP Trustee Louis Bickford, Dr. Claudia Paz y Paz, CCP Trustee Ariadne Calvo-Platero

Dr. Paz y Paz also expressed her deep respect for Judge Yassmín Barrios, who has "faced these cases with absolute independence and commitment to justice."

Judge Barrios then spoke about the importance of judging in society and how a judge should be a leader in the community in addition to being "a strong bastion of justice."

She went on to acknowledge that there is a huge responsibility in administering justice and emphasized the contribution that a human being can make to society.

She sees the judge's role as an "agent of change within society," and the real significance of a judge is to "restore the social fabric and the peace." For her, that role includes helping to strengthen the rule of law and what she calls "the sacred mission of administering justice." Judge Barrios feels that judges are "builders of a more democratic society in which the law is enforced with equal effect, free from pressure and privileges."

Reception Honors Civil Courage Prize Laureates



Judge Yasmín Barrios, Ambassador Samantha Power, Dr. Claudia Paz Y Paz

On October 13th, The Open Society Foundation hosted a reception honoring the Civil Courage Prize winners, Claudia Paz y Paz and Yasmín Barrios.

Ambassador Samantha Power, U.S. Permanent Representative to the U.N., delivered the keynote speech. A human rights advocate, she praised the "courage and persistence" of both Dr. Paz y Paz and Judge Barrios in the fight for justice in Guatemala, a country

known for its history of impunity.

Ambassador Power focused on the importance of the genocide trial of former President Rios Montt and how, during one year of his term, the genocide against the indigenous Ixil Maya accounted for "nearly half of the 36-year civil war's killings and disappearances." She described how Paz y Paz's office built a meticulous case that included eye-witness testimony, compelling statistical evidence and forensic testimony that convinced a panel of three judges headed by Barrios to render a verdict of genocide in a 718-page ruling. She feels that both women were the lynchpins in Montt's conviction.

Ambassador Power noted that these women "were defenders of the same principles – the rule of law, human dignity, and accountability," which made them "bound together by more than history." She described three qualities that both prize-winners share: The first, courage, braving risks and the willingness to make profound personal sacrifices; the second, the rigor and quality of their work; the third, their profound humility. Yet they see themselves as merely "public servants and citizens who did their jobs." Most of all, Power said, their commitment helped to expose "one of the darkest periods in their country's history."

Power noted that when the verdict was overturned on a technicality, they did not feel defeat. For Judge Barrios, the trial was a breakthrough: "we managed to demonstrate that Guatemala indeed does have an independent legal system." Paz y Paz spoke about brave survivors, "For the first time, the victims had the opportunity to say in front of the perpetrator what happened in their villages...and by telling this, they recovered part of the dignity that was stolen when they suffered so many human rights violations." One Ixil woman's testimony closed with, "I say all this so that it doesn't happen again." Ambassador Power's speech concluded that, "In no small part because of the efforts of Claudia Paz y Paz and Yasmín Barrios, people in Guatemala heard that woman." They heard her voice and believed her. "Guatemalans better understand their past, and know deep down what cannot be allowed to happen again."

Micklethwait Speaks About The Public Duty Of Civil Courage

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alist, which is indicative of the fact that "we live in a society that likes to stand back and watch." His view of civil courage is that it is not voyeuristic, sensational or glamorous. As such, "it often does not fit the 24 hour news cycle. It does not have a convenient narrative, or even convenient sounds." Compared to military valor where "you march towards the sound of gunfire," and battles inspire poetry and song, he notes that civil courage is often mundane. "What could be more mundane than where you sit in the bus?" These battles are even fought in libraries, with the "typewriter as the sword." In his view, civil courage can engender "staggering acts of bravery," but the heroism often takes place in private, "behind closed doors, away in a gulag, behind the bamboo curtain."

And this, he feels, is where civil courage challenges our voyeuristic society. "Its proximity to normality means we are all capable of it. There are so many things that we can all do and yet, unlike these two brave women, we don't."

Micklethwait sees civil courage as close to home, often dealing with refugees, injustices and minorities; causes that we can all volunteer for; "hypocrisies that we all walk past." It is the small battles that help build what he sees as the core of the society in which we live and the many freedoms that we enjoy. He wonders, "Why do we, who inherited those freedoms, not scream more?"

To conclude his speech, Micklethwait returned to his original question. He said that the correct response to listening to the winners' stories, the really "awkward" question for everyone, is not "why me?" but "why not me?"

Mayor Bill DeBlasio sent his congratulations: "We salute Judge Barrios and Dr. Paz y Paz for their efforts and commitment on behalf of human rights and justice. Their work is impressive, and we congratulate them on receiving the Train Foundation Award for Civil Courage."

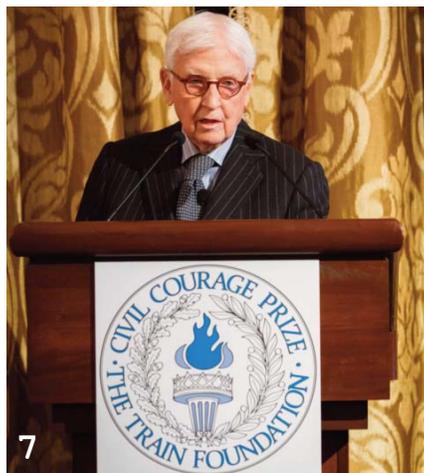
For further information and updates on current and previous prizewinners, please go to:

www.civildCourageprize.org

twitter.com/TrainFoundation

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2015 Civil Courage Prize Reception and Ceremony



1. John Micklethwait, Louis Bickford, Nina Train Choa
2. Ed Epstein and Daria Braga
3. Charles and Kathryn Berry
4. Amb. Nicholas and Sheila Platt
5. Nancy Kamel, Ariadne Calvo-Platero, Herman Pirchner
6. Prize-winner Claudia Paz y Paz, Bowdy Train

7. The Hon. John Train
8. Robert Varenik and Marcie Mersky
9. Amb. Edward Streator
10. Prize-winner Yassmín Barrios, Nina Train Choa
11. Teige Carroll, Jonathan Becker

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Past Honorees

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| <p>2015 Claudia Paz y Paz
<i>Prosecutor of Human Rights Abuses, Guatemala</i></p> <p>Yassmín Barrios
<i>Presiding Judge in Ríos Montt Genocide Trial, Guatemala</i></p> <p>2014 Nicola Gratteri
<i>Relentless Prosecutor of the Italian Mafia</i></p> <p>2013 Dr. Denis Mukwege
<i>Physician and advocate for victims of violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo</i></p> <p>2012 Yu Jie
<i>Author and advocate for reform in China</i></p> <p>2011 Triveni Acharya
<i>Defender of victims of human trafficking in India</i></p> <p>Lydia Cacho Ribeiro
<i>Champion of abused women and children in Mexico</i></p> <p>2010 Andrew White
<i>Steadfast advocate for peace in the Middle East</i></p> <p>2009 Aminatou Haidar
<i>Champion of the non-violent campaign for self-determination in Western Sahara</i></p> <p>2008 Ali Salem
<i>Egyptian author and journalist. Voice for peace and reason in the Middle East</i></p> <p>2007 Phillip Buck
<i>Imprisoned in China for guiding North Korean refugees in their escape to freedom</i></p> | <p>2006 Rafael Marques de Morais
<i>Journalist who exposed the slaughter of Angolans and the plundering of national assets</i></p> <p>2005 Min Ko Naing
<i>Long-imprisoned campaigner for democracy in Burma</i></p> <p>Anna Politkovskaya
<i>Fearless reporter on atrocities in Chechnya, assassinated</i></p> <p>Munir Said Thalib†
<i>Exposed disappearances and corruption in Indonesia, assassinated</i></p> <p>2004 Emadeddin Baghi
<i>Imprisoned for exposing assassinations of Iranian intellectuals</i></p> <p>Lovemore Madhuku
<i>Lawyer persecuted for demanding constitutional reform in Zimbabwe</i></p> <p>Abdul al-Latif al-Mayah†
<i>Iraqi political scientist and human rights advocate, assassinated</i></p> <p>2003 Shahnaz Bukhari
<i>Battler against the burning and other abuse of Pakistani women</i></p> <p>2002 Vladimiro Roca Antunez
<i>Champion of freedom, Cuba</i></p> <p>Gustavo Arcos Bergnes
<i>(Honorable Mention) Early democracy activist, Cuba</i></p> | <p>2001 Paul Kamara
<i>Editor and journalist fighting tyranny in Sierra Leone</i></p> <p>2000 Natasa Kandic
<i>Persecuted journalist and activist, Belgrade</i></p> <p>Sergei Khodorovich
<i>(Honorable Mention) Solzhenitsyn collaborator exiled to hard labor in Siberia</i></p> <p>Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer†
<i>Anti-Nazi martyr</i></p> <p>Judge Giovanni Falcone†
<i>Assassinated while prosecuting the Sicilian Mafia</i></p> <p>Rosemary Nelson†
<i>Civil rights lawyer, assassinated while defending accused persons in Northern Ireland</i></p> <p>Neelan Tiruchelvam†
<i>Lawyer and educator, killed by a suicide bomber while working for solutions to Tamil-Sri Lankan conflict</i></p> <p>Raoul Wallenberg†
<i>Saved thousands of Jews from extermination</i></p> |
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† = posthumous

The Civil Courage Prize honors civil courage—steadfast resistance to evil at great personal risk—rather than military valor. The acts so recognized should have taken place deliberately, over time.

Nominations for the Prize are solicited primarily from non-profit, non-governmental organizations worldwide. Further information may be obtained from our website: www.civildcourageprize.org.

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”

—Edmund Burke



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