

= Conscience @-@ in @-@ Media Award =

The Conscience @-@ in @-@ Media Award is presented by the American Society of Journalists and Authors ( ASJA ) to journalists that the society deems worthy of recognition for their distinctive contributions . The award is not given out often , and is awarded to those journalists which the ASJA feels have demonstrated integrity to journalistic values , while enduring personal costs to themselves . Candidates are decided by an initial vote of the ASJA 's First Amendment Committee , which must then be confirmed by a separate vote of the ASJA 's Board of Directors .

The award has been presented a total of twelve times since the first award was given out in 1975 . Notable recipients have included Jonathan Kozol , for work researching homelessness while writing his book *Rachel and Her Children* , Richard Behar and Paulette Cooper , for separate pieces investigating the Church of Scientology , and Anna Rosmus , for her investigation into the Nazi history of her hometown in Passau , Germany . In 2005 , the committee voted to present the Award to Judith Miller , but this vote was later overturned by a unanimous decision of the board not to honor Miller with the award .

= = History = =

The award is given by the ASJA , to recognize " distinctive contributions by any journalist in any medium " . The first award was given to Jerald F. terHorst in 1975 , and in total the award has been presented twelve times . The award criteria are stringent . The American Society of Journalists and Authors maintains that those honored must have knowingly taken risks in the course of researching their story , going beyond the normal call of duty . Specifically , the award is given : " for singular commitment to the highest principles of journalism at notable personal cost " .

Jonathan Kozol was honored with the 1988 Award , for work done on his book *Rachel and Her Children : Homeless Families in America* . In order to research the plight of homeless people in New York City , Kozol spent the majority of a winter season at the Martinique Hotel in Manhattan , where he grew close with the residents of the government subsidized shelter . During his time spent learning about the experiences of the homeless , he most empathized with homeless mothers - who constantly fear that sickness , poverty or intervention from the state of New York will result in the loss of their children . Kozol attempted to analyze the causes of homelessness , and to provide an estimate of what the future would be for the homeless .

1992 was the only time in ASJA history in which two writers were honored in the same year . The ASJA had already decided to honor investigative journalist Richard Behar , for his *Time* magazine article about the Church of Scientology : " The Thriving Cult of Greed and Power " . Paulette Cooper , a longtime member of the ASJA , had also written about Scientology in her book *The Scandal of Scientology* , and was the subject of a " Fair Game " tactic that the Church of Scientology Guardian 's Office called " Operation Freakout " . As the award was not in existence at the time Cooper wrote her book , the ASJA decided that recognizing Cooper at the same time as Behar emphasized the commitment and courage both writers imbued in the face of risk to themselves .

Anna Rosmus received the 1994 award , in honor of work related to her research on the Nazi past of her hometown in Bavaria . Rosmus researched anti @-@ Semitism , and opposed neo @-@ Nazis and the extreme right in Germany . She also located and published artwork of Jews that had once lived in her hometown of Passau , Germany . As a result of her work , Rosmus endured threats against her life . In a 1996 Yom HaShoah ceremony , Rosmus recounted threats she faced after conducting her research : " Once @-@ friendly neighbors threatened me openly - on the telephone , in person , in letters ... They threatened to kill me and kidnap my children . Some even attacked me physically , a room where I was to speak in Munich was bombed just before I was to be there , and several times I was sued . Nobody ever claimed I had said anything false or made mistakes . They just claimed all this would damage their reputations . " Rosmus was profiled on *60 Minutes* , and her story was the subject of the 1990 West German drama film , *The Nasty Girl* . Rosmus was presented with the Conscience @-@ in @-@ Media Award in a special ceremony at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum .

In 2005 , the ASJA 's First Amendment Committee narrowly voted to present Judith Miller with the award , in recognition of her dedication to protecting sources . However , the full board of the ASJA later voted not to accept the decision of its committee , due to its opinion that her career as a whole and her actions in the Valerie Plame CIA leak case had cast doubt on her merits . ASJA president Jack El @-@ Hai stated that the ASJA board 's vote to reject the committee 's recommendation had been unanimous . This decision sparked controversy , and Jack El @-@ Hai received correspondence both praising the board for its decision , and accusing it of various political motives .

In 2015 three freelance journalists , James Foley , Steven Sotloff , and Austin Tice were honored with the award , presented at the National Press Club . " These three men represent the highest values of journalism : courage , sacrifice and a firm commitment to the truth , " said Randy Dotinga , president of ASJA . " Their bravery and dedication are especially inspiring to us as fellow independent writers . "

= = Award recipients = =

2015 - James Foley , Steven Sotloff , Austin Tice , freelance journalists killed or captured in the Middle East

1994 - Anna Rosmus , real @-@ life heroine of the film The Nasty Girl .

1992 - Richard Behar , associate editor , TIME and author , " Scientology : The Cult of Greed " ( TIME , May 6 , 1991 ) .

1992 - Paulette Cooper , ASJA member and author , The Scandal of Scientology

1988 - Jonathan Kozol , author , Rachel and Her Children .

1981 - Jacobo Timerman , former Argentine editor @-@ publisher

1981 - Erwin Knoll , editor , The Progressive

1978 - Donald Woods , South African expatriate journalist

1977 - Investigative Reporters and Editors

1977 - Don Bolles ( posthumous award )

1976 - I.F. Stone

1975 - Jerald F. terHorst

Additional source