

THE WORLD ASSOCIATION  
FOR PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

Presents the

2007 Helen Dinerman Award

to

*Wolfgang Donsbach*

In appreciation of his extraordinary achievements in furthering the methodological development, the scholarly level of excellence and the social reputation of public opinion research throughout the world.

Wolfgang Donsbach has gained much respect in various subfields of public opinion research. Among his many merits, his efforts to increase freedom to conduct and publish survey research everywhere in the world deserve special mention. In his term as President of WAPOR 1996/1997, and in the years before and after, he has sought to give voice to public opinion research wherever it was threatened by government regulation or social pressure. His publications on this subject have noticeably affected public deliberations on the issue in several countries.

In the field of method development, Donsbach has made great contributions primarily in investigating the interplay between survey research, the mass media, and the formation of opinion in the population. To be mentioned here are, among other works, his research on the limits of selective perception, on the effects of representative surveys on the people's opinion formation, and his efforts to further the combination of survey research and media content analysis.

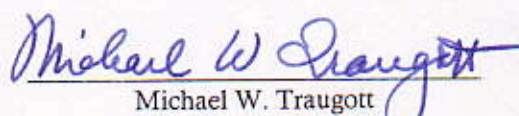
Finally, Wolfgang Donsbach has rendered invaluable service to the scientific community in his function as the Managing Editor of the *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* – a position he has held, with only a short interruption, since the foundation of the journal in 1989. It is thanks to him that the IJPOR today not only reaches an exceptionally high scholarly standard, and enjoys a correspondingly high reputation internationally, but also displays a substantive profile that makes it unique among the journals in the field. It is, as was confirmed a few years ago in an analysis of the *Journal of Communication*, the only "classic communication journal" that can be called "truly international." Wolfgang Donsbach has created, in the IJPOR, a forum in which survey researchers from all over the world can level with each other and share their results, which is an invaluable service to the development of survey research as a scholarly discipline.

Donsbach's scholarly activities are characterized by a typical ethical conception of a scientist's role. He develops his scholarly interests with a passion that characterizes a human being whose convictions rest on firm values. But this engagement does not keep him from applying greatest care and neutrality in research. The ability to engage emotionally in a matter and simultaneously investigate it *sine ira et studio* is not frequently met among scholars (or elsewhere). It is an important quality, for it warrants that research does not degenerate into the production of arguments for pre-conceived opinions, nor lead to arbitrariness in substance.

Wolfgang Donsbach, with apparently untiring energy, commits himself to international exchange in the social sciences. It was not without reason that he, as the first German ever and only the third non-American scholar, became President of the International Communication Association in 2004/2005. The exceedingly international and intercultural perspective, which is among his qualities, also characterizes his most recent project, the 11-volume *International Encyclopedia of Communication*, for which he serves as General Editor.

WAPOR is very pleased to be able to bestow the 2007 Helen Dinerman Award to Wolfgang Donsbach, in gratitude of his services to public opinion research to date, and in expectation of manifold other services to come.

*The Dinerman Prize Committee*  
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September 19, 2007