

PRESS RELEASE

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ROBERT LEVY, PHIL BARKER, POPPY BUCHANAN-BARKER WIN 2008 SZASZ CIVIL LIBERTIES AWARDS

Legal scholar Robert A. Levy, whose U.S. Supreme Court case led to the striking down of Washington, D.C.'s ban on handguns, psychotherapist Phil Barker, and counselor Poppy Buchanan-Barker are the 2008 winners of the Thomas Szasz Awards for Outstanding Contributions to the Cause of Civil Liberties. Levy won in the general category, Barker and Buchanan-Barker in the professional category.

Levy is chairman of the Cato Institute and formerly Cato's senior fellow in constitutional studies. He is the coauthor, with William Mellor, of *The Dirty Dozen: How Twelve Supreme Court Cases Radically Expanded Government and Eroded Freedom*, and author of *Shakedown: How Corporations, Government, and Trial Lawyers Abuse the Judicial Process*.

Barker is a psychotherapist in private practice and honorary professor at the University of Dundee in Scotland. He was a mental-health nurse for more than 35 years and the UK's first professor of psychiatric nursing practice. He is also professor of health science at Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland.

Buchanan-Barker has been a family counselor and is director of Clan Unity International (Scotland), which focuses on "the reclamation of the human context of mental health."

Levy's achievements in advancing civil liberties lie in his constitutional work at the Cato Institute and his successful litigation in *District of Columbia v. Heller*. In the case, Levy challenged the District's ban on handgun ownership as a violation of the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms. This year's 5-4 decision striking down the ban was hailed as a landmark case for affirming that the Second Amendment refers to an individual right to self-defense. Among his other work in civil liberties, Levy critiqued the executive branch's claim of inherent power to wiretap without warrants, the government's handling of detainees at Guantanamo Bay, the antitrust prosecution of Microsoft, and the "extorted" settlement with tobacco companies. Throughout his work, Levy emphasizes that the rule of law protects the rights and privacy of individuals.

Barker and Buchanan-Barker both have made important and influential contributions to removing psychiatric care from the purview of medicine and

repositioning it as a type of secular-spiritual, humane service, addressing their message especially to the nursing profession. Their published work includes *The Tidal Model: A Guide for Mental Health Professionals*, *Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing: The Craft of Caring*, and *Spirituality and Mental Health: Breakthrough*.