

Former NYT columnist Bob Herbert joins Demos

By Allen McDuffee

New York-based think tank, [Demos](#), has announced that former New York Times columnist Bob Herbert will join the organization as their newest distinguished senior fellow.

At the think tank's annual gala this evening, Herbert was simultaneously awarded the Transforming America Award and named a distinguished senior fellow. According to Demos, Herbert will "continue his work on behalf of low- and middle-income Americans, providing expertise and writing on economic, social and policy issues."

"Bob Herbert's sharp, clear voice has long played an extraordinary role in public debate. He elevates the stark challenges and historical injustices that face too many Americans, while promoting the ideals that should drive our policies," said Miles Rapoport, President of Demos and The American Prospect magazine, in a released statement.

As a Demos fellow, Herbert will continue to work on a new book, "Wounded Colossus," and contribute to the think tank's blog, [Policy Shop](#), as well as The American Prospect--a publishing partner of Demos.

"Demos' commitment to advancing bold policy solutions to create a more just, equitable and inclusive America makes them a natural partner for my ongoing work," said Herbert. "Together, we will continue to sound the alarm on the growing economic and opportunity divide, and advocate for those with too little access to good jobs, retirement security, healthcare, and many other hallmarks of the American Dream."

The mutual admiration between the two has been apparent for some time. Herbert has been a speaker at Demos and has also cited the think tank over his years as a New York Times columnist. He [wrote](#) in one that almost exclusively centered on Demos that the think tank has responded to right-wing zealotry with "admirable real-world scholarship, a highly respected fellows program to encourage new writers and thinkers and steadfast efforts to promote civic engagement. (It's a big champion, among other things, of same-day voter registration.)"

And Rapoport, who was also honored at the gala for 10 years as Demos president, took to a bullet-pointed [statement](#) to express his grief and explain Herbert's importance two days after his last column.

- He listens, truly listens to the stories, lives, and voices of ordinary people. He writes about people unjustly accused by the criminal justice system, of people unjustly victimized by the predatory practices that characterize so much of our economy, of the lives ruined by war.

- He writes about what is important, and fundamental, like the people whose dream of a middle class life for themselves and their children is slipping away, and the "unconscionable" ways inequality is eating away at our society and our soul.

•He refuses to heed the constraints of the world of “excluded alternatives.” The fact that some ideas—like raising taxes, expanding services for poor and working people, ignoring the deficit hawks in favor of real social investment—are “off the table” in our political debate is exactly why we have needed journalists like Bob to try to expand those boundaries and help us do the right thing as a nation.

No word on Herbert’s official start date, but if [posting today](#) at the Demos blog is any indication, it looks like things are already well underway.

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