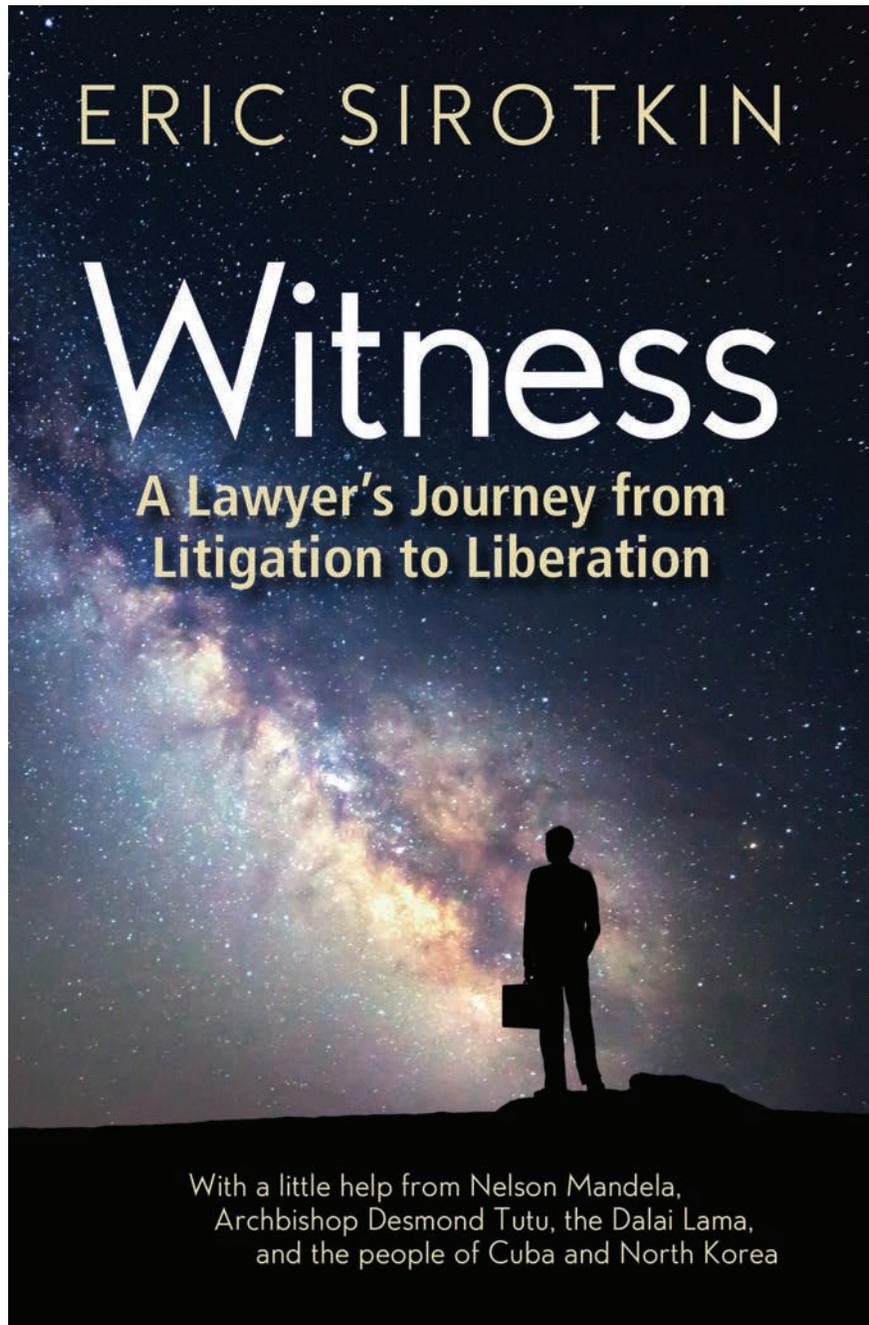

M e d i a I n f o r m a t i o n



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A b o u t t h e A u t h o r



ERIC SIROTKIN helps people and nations navigate conflict in a way that enhances their well-being and health. He trains lawyers to integrate wellness principles into their practices to benefit both themselves and their clients wherein the conflict becomes an opportunity for transformation and growth.

Since 1981 he has engaged in complex litigation in many cases against major multi-billion dollar corporations, universities, and governmental entities that have addressed constitutional violations, free speech rights, discrimination, fraud, and more. He served as an adjunct professor of law at the University of New Mexico School of Law and regularly guest lectures on campuses.

Around the world he has spoken about ubuntu, peace and justice, and engaged in peacebuilding activities in India, Peru, Cuba, South Africa, Japan, Vietnam, North and South Korea, France, Canada, the Netherlands, and China. In 1991 he assisted with the new Constitution in South Africa, was a UN-sponsored election observer at President Mandela's election, and coordinated an international monitoring Project of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It was through this experience that he learned about the wisdom of ubuntu and interjected a new more holistic method to his efforts to resolve conflict and into his life.

Eric helped found the New Mexico Human Rights Coalition, the Ashland Culture of Peace Commission, the Ubuntuworks Education Project, the NLG Korean Peace Project and is the Executive Producer of the award-winning film *Committing Poetry in Times of War*. He was the recipient of the City of Albuquerque Human Rights Award.

Eric received his Juris Doctorate from the University of Detroit School of Law. He maintains an active law practice in Albuquerque, New Mexico and is the CEO of Interactive Entertainment Company, whose patented processes are impacting the convergence of television, the internet and reality. His boys also let him tag along as their business manager in their music careers and he has built homes of adobe, straw bale, and other ecological materials in New Mexico, Oregon, and Mexico.

To contact Eric write him at eric@ericsirotkin.com or visit www.ericsirotkin.com.

A b o u t t h e B o o k

ERIC SIROTKIN'S *WITNESS* speaks to something innate in each of us: the desire to feel connected to those around us and live from our highest potential as human beings. This was brought home in Sirotkin's first meeting with Archbishop Desmond Tutu in South Africa, while Sirotkin co-chaired the International Monitoring Project of the South Africa Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Tutu smiled as he told the author, "We are human through our relations with others. If I undermine your humanity, I dehumanize myself. This is ubuntu."

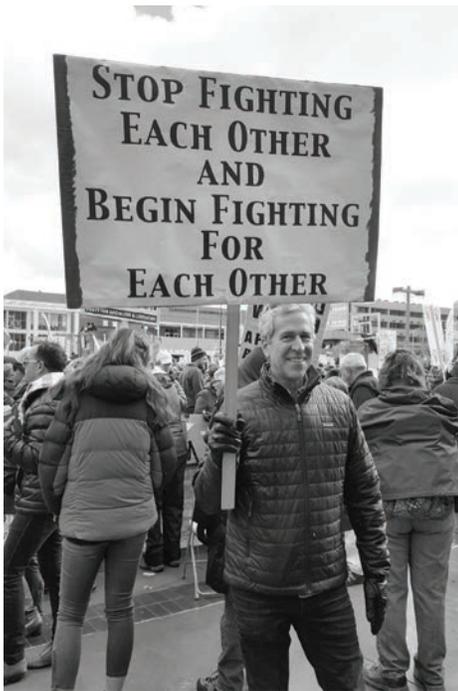
As an activist litigator for social causes in America, Sirotkin engaged in the "good fight," but felt something missing. Learning to actively live and work from ubuntu became a roar of awakening to a journey from litigation to liberation. *Witness* is filled with profound moments of compassion and quiet heroism from world famous activists and unknown women and men whose lives will inspire you to be the change the world needs, now more than ever.

A u t h o r E v e n t s

Eric Sirotkin is available for bookstore readings and signings as well as lectures at universities, bar associations, conferences or community centers. As an experienced international lecturer and trial lawyer his talks are filled with humor, insight and hope for a positive future. Eric has traveled the country in the past with his one man show “Lawyer Charged with Committing Poetry” and his work with peacebuilding between North and South Korea and Washington makes his remarks highly timely. In our current politically volatile moment, his nonviolent advocacy and working to reduce the *us vs them* framework helps people realize that we can make the necessary changes to save our nation and the planet.

Bookstore: Suggested Reading/talk 30-45 minutes and Q &A and signing.

Lectures: 30 - 90 minutes on various subjects from he book or from the realm of building a new approach to conflict and reconciliation for the planet.



Bringing the spirit of ubuntu to the Women's March, Albuquerque, NM, January 21, 2017



Eric speaking at a gathering of a thousand North Koreans at Sinchon Memorial in DRPK.

Q&A with Eric Sirotkin author of *Witness: A Lawyer's Journey from Litigation to Liberation*

Q: What does it mean to be an active witness?

ES: We all have experienced the frustration of a world out of control. Being an active witness means we do not have to be passive witnesses to the challenges of our times, but can actively find out way to stand for change. We do not have to become victims but can find ways in our everyday lives, in our work and in our community to carefully witness what is happening and have an active response to it. How we choose to respond to the world around us can determine the future of humanity.

Q: What is this ubuntu you talk about isn't he book and how did you discover it? What is the impact it has had on you?

ES: Ubuntu, as Archbishop Tutu once told me, is the “essence of being human.” It is the understanding that we are connected, not separate and that everything we do impacts others and the world around us. I learned about it first in South Africa working with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, where the statute said, “there shall be ubuntu rather than victimization.” We all have a connected interest in our future. To divide the world between “us and them” or “victim and perpetrator” ignores a deeply held truth that exists in most non-dominant cultures around the world. As I experience in the stories in *Witness*, the discovery has changed the way I practice law and how I view the world. It has made me a more compassionate warrior for peace. But what stands out most is that it continually reminds me that we are a hair's breath away from great change. That it is just a changing of our angle of vision from a filter of separation to one of ubuntu that changes everything — our relationships and our very definition of success.

Q: You write about several trips to North Korea? With tensions increasing, what do your experiences teach us about how to deal with this more than 70-year conflict?

ES: My heart feels so sad for the separation of the Korean people and the forces that maintain this instability in Asia. My discovery of a true roadmap for peace as laid out in *Witness*, is not simply about politics and visiting North Korea. It's gleaned from my years of dealing with separation in conflict in courtrooms, the racial and class divisions of South Africa, and our own separation from our heart. I've also been to South Korea and met with government officials and activists, as well as having gone to the US State Department and Congress to propose alternative ways to viewing this dispute. I put the Korea chapters at the end of the book as my roadmap to peace can apply to anyone's individual conflict or to international relations. We cannot demonize and expect peace. As Aleksander Solzhenitsyn said, “If only it were so simple! If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds, and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being. And who is willing to destroy a piece of his own heart.”

Q: You're a unique lawyer who seems to have risen above the fray and approaches conflict differently. How do you do it in such an adversarial profession?

ES: I'm still learning. It's a lifelong journey. But what I have discovered over the years is that you do not have to accept the battle. And it's not just me. There are thousands of lawyers practicing “collaborative law” in family relations, holistic lawyers, and those who have used mediation to find common ground. Victim/perpetrator programs explore law as healing and we can learn to be made greater from conflict, instead of being destroyed by it. Lawyers burn out after a number of years most often from growing tired of the battle. We can practice non-violent advocacy and be better human beings along the way.

more Q&A next page

Q: In Witness you describe some powerful experiences that emerge from almost spiritual experiences? How do those encounters impact your message?

ES: Some of them are pretty out there I admit. What I have learned most from them is the power of an open heart and to not accept that we know everything. When you have a very different experience it helps you to think out of the box and help change the way we view our place on the planet. Particularly in these times of drone attacks, police abuse, and disempowerment, we need to go a little deeper and not be afraid of what lies just behind the human imagination.

Q: You've been fortunate to travel the world, from Europe, to India, to Cuba and Asia. What about that activities impacted you as a human being or a lawyer?

ES: It is hard to look into the eyes of children or play sports or games with your "enemy" without feeling a human connection that lies beyond the geo-political framework. There is more that unites us than separates us and we spend too long on our differences rather than celebrate our commonality. Connection actually makes war impossible. We cannot bomb those we have known and whose love of family, safety and joy is so universal. Most wars happen with a deep depersonalization campaign.

Q: You started young as peace activist. What does peace mean to you and why is it such a marginalized concept in our world?

ES: Peace is so much more than the absence of war. It is a state of being. It is a way of life. It is about relationship and the power we have to build a world we can be proud of, rather than tear it down. Peace is about Ubuntu — that we are all connected and the awareness that brings. Too often the peace movement has ignored the bigger picture and further divided us into opposing camps. This does little to build a more peaceful world. It's why I could dine with North Koreans, or with State Department managers, or politicians and still laugh, cry and maintain my connection to something greater.

Q: What do you want the reader to get from Witness?

ES: Mostly inspiration that they can make a difference in our world. I hope it will make people laugh, cry, and envision something greater for themselves and the planet. My liberation has been from my cynicism, from my sense that I am in a battle with others. What emerges for me, and I hope for others, in a sense that they can change the world and that we no longer have to settle for less. My experiences came to me by choice, plugging in and reaching out. It's about relinquishing the result and realizing that it is about the process. How we walk in this land, separate or connected, will determine the fate of the human species. And it's fun too.

Praise for *Witness* and the Activism of Eric Sirotkin

Eric Sirotkin does what only the very best lawyers can do — transform combat into co-creation, aggression into appreciation, and ultimately fear into love. In *Witness*, he creates new and positive possibilities for his clients, their attorneys, and the world. —**Gary Zukav, author of *The Seat of the Soul* and *The Dancing Wu Li Masters***

“Justice has always been a constant struggle and Eric Sirotkin exemplifies the type of lawyer activist that impacts hearts and minds and our world at large. *Witness* is a personal journey but one that reminds us all that we can make a difference.” —**Paul Bardacke, former New Mexico Attorney General and mediator**

In a world driven by crass consumerism and conspicuous consumption, with an exaggerated emphasis on self indulgence and self fulfillment, Eric Sirotkin is that rarest of creatures: an internationalist in every best sense of that word; a champion of selfless service to others, performing great feats/deeds of self sacrifice. Eric is a grassroots intellectual, with a brilliant intellect and rare intellectual acuity and excellence, a great analytical mind and impeccable integrity. He is that rarest of lawyers, always being humble yet caring, placing his clients cause foremost; imbued by a great work ethic, and by always being the consummate professional. Eric epitomizes what I regard as the perfect progressive lawyer, by: firstly, regarding himself as a human being and humanitarian; secondly, as an activist (both socially and politically); and only, thirdly, as a lawyer. —**Johnny Delange member of Parliament South Africa 1996 – 2016 and Chair of the Parliament Justice Committee**

“The interest and support of your project has been a great encouragement to us at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.” —**Archbishop Desmond Tutu**

“Your contribution and suggestions for the new constitution for South Africa have been very useful. I must say that your warmth and comradeship here in Cape Town was very much appreciated and has added to our faith in the struggle of the poor and the exploited.” —**Dullah Omar South Africa Minister of Justice (1994 - 2005)**

Travel an astounding journey, as I did, with tireless attorney Eric Sirotkin as he invents “nonviolent advocacy.” *Witness* brilliantly covers the course of a professional career, from “adversarial” civil liberties cases in Albuquerque, NM, to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in post-apartheid South Africa, to the Navajo Nation, and beyond to Cuba and North Korea, Eric opens his heart to show us that the practice of law can be, at its core, about humanity and spirit. My hope is that every future attorney will read this beautiful, peaceful warrior’s testament. —**Mark Rudd, political activist, founding member of Weather Underground, author of *Underground***

“The depth and sincerity of Eric Sirotkin’s commitment to equality and human rights never ceases to amaze me. His capacity to communicate this knowledge in such a spell binding, down-to-earth and -easy-to-comprehend way is refreshing—a master in the art of reaching out and truly educating others.” —**Frank Miranda, former SNCC activist and Director of the New Mexico Human Rights Office**

“Eric Sirotkin is a leading attorney in the human rights arena. I have worked closely with him in the area of human rights and he has demonstrated to me the knowledge, insight and ability to relate to younger people.” —**Prof. Arthur Kinoy, author of *Rights of Trial***

“Eric Sirotkin has delivered a powerful account of his extraordinary life of social advocacy. *Witness* will take its place amongst those rare stories that inspire us to take our own stand and join the heroes of the world who have always relied on the power of love and the justice of integrity to finally prevail against the forces that seek to divide us.” —**Will Wilkinson, co-founder The Academy of Natural Wisdom, author of *Now or Never***
