



Overseas Press Club of America

BULLETIN

CNN's Jeff Zucker to Keynote Annual Awards Dinner in April

EVENT PREVIEW: APRIL 27

THIS YEAR'S Annual Awards Dinner on April 27 will highlight the challenges of reporting in Syria and other conflict areas.

Jeff Zucker, president of CNN Worldwide, will be the keynote speaker, and the host of the dinner will be Lydia Polgreen, editor-in-chief of The Huffington Post. The President's Award will go to journalists who died covering the war in Syria.

Zucker took the helm at CNN in 2013, and oversees the network's foreign and domestic television operations, including HLN and CNN's new documentary platform, Great Big Story. Polgreen was named editor-in-chief at the Huffington Post in



December 2016 after spending nearly 15 years at *The New York Times*, where she led an initiative to expand its audience outside the United States, with an initial focus on Latin America.

Before Zucker joined CNN, he worked at NBC Universal for 25 years, including a stint as executive producer for the Today Show, which became the highest

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Judith Matloff to Discuss Book on Mountain Wars

EVENT PREVIEW: MARCH 22

IN PARTNERSHIP with the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism, the OPC will host a book night on March 22 to discuss Judith Matloff's *No Friends but the Mountains – Dispatches from the World's Violent Highlands*. The book is an exploration into why mountains host a strikingly disproportionate share of the world's conflicts.

Matloff is an adjunct associate professor of journalism at the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism and writes extensively about international affairs.

The event will be held at the Stabile Student Center at 116th Street and Broadway at 6:00 p.m. ❖

Click here
to RSVP for the
Book Night

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78TH ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER

April 27, 2017

MANDARIN ORIENTAL HOTEL

Cocktail Reception
6:00pm
sponsored by



Dinner and Program
7:00pm



**Meet-the-Winners
Post-Dinner Reception**
sponsored by





*'Annual Awards Dinner'
Continued From Page 1*

rated morning news program in the US under his leadership. He also served as CEO of the network from 2007 to 2011.

Zucker recently made headlines in media news surrounding CNN's battle with President Donald Trump. Zucker defended the network after Trump's accusations of bias and "fake news," saying network staff consider the president's insults to be badges of honor. A *New York Times* article said that under Zucker's guidance CNN is becoming an "elbows-out player in national politics, vociferously pledging to hold a truth-averse White House to account." ❖

Click here to read more about the Annual Awards Dinner.

The OPC's 78th Annual Awards Dinner will be held at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel on April 27, 2017. A cocktail reception, sponsored by Alibaba Group, will begin at 6:00 p.m. The dinner and program will start at 7:00 p.m., featuring acceptance speeches from this year's winners in 22 award categories. A Meet-the-Winners Post-Dinner reception, sponsored by Reuters, will follow.

For OPC members, individual tickets can be purchased for \$295, with one member's guest ticket allowed at the same price. Non-member tickets are \$750. Tables of 10 can be purchased at the following levels: Fellow, \$19,000; Patron, \$15,000; Sponsor, \$10,000; Friend, \$8,000.

For more information, please contact OPC Executive Director Patricia Kranz at 212 626-9220 or patricia@opcofamerica.org.

Middle East Experts Voice Concern Over Trump's Murky Policies

BY CHAD BOUCHARD

PRESIDENT DONALD Trump still lacks a clear policy in the Middle East, which could leave the U.S. open to manipulation from autocratic governments in the region and embolden terrorists, experts said during a panel on March 1.

The forum, hosted by the OPC and International House, was part of a gathering of foreign correspondents who covered the Middle East.

Ben Taub, the 2015 Emanuel R. Freedman scholar and a contributor to *The New Yorker* who has written extensively on jihadism in Europe and the war in Syria for the last two years, said Trump does not have "any grasp" over what's going on in the region, favors a simplistic view of affairs and strong-man oppression to maintain stability.

He said meanwhile the United Nations is enabling the Bashar al-Assad regime and losing credibility by failing to act decisively against war crimes.

"Every failure in Syria contributes to the inability of these institutions to represent their fundamental founding principles, and creates an environment in which future war crimes can be perpetrated with impunity all

over the world."

Leila Fadel, the Edward R. Murrow Press Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations who won the 2013 Lowell Thomas Award, has worked for 11 years in the Middle East and was most recently National Public Radio's international correspondent based in Egypt. She said authoritarian leaders like Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi see Trump's lack of policy as an opportunity for influence. She said al-Sisi and other leaders are eager for the U.S. to name the Muslim Brotherhood, a key political opponent, as a terrorist organization.

"And that will have huge ramifications not only in the region but also in the United States and Canada, where organizations have connections to this not only religious but also political organization."

She adds that Saudi Arabia, Iran and other Middle Eastern countries are testing boundaries right now, jockeying for position before U.S. policy becomes defined, perhaps as a result of a future catastrophe.

Deborah Amos, the OPC's first vice president who covered the Middle East for NPR News, moderated the discussion. She

asked Mohamad Bazzi, an associate professor of journalism at New York University who is currently writing a book on the proxy wars between Saudi Arabia and Iran, if Trump's administration – including cabinet members like National Security Adviser Herbert Raymond McMaster with strong anti-Iran ties – can "tame" Iran.

He said Trump will likely soon find that the few policy goals he has made public, including getting tougher on Iran and focusing on defeating ISIS without committing ground troops, are incompatible.

"He's not going to be able to effectively confront ISIS and at the same time isolate Iran and take on Iran in the way that he thinks he says he wants to do," Bazzi said. "This is not an administration that handles nuance too well."

Bazzi added that Trump's tendency to take attacks personally, as an affront to his "honor," makes it very tempting for terrorists to attack and provoke.

"He's giving ISIS such leverage over him." ❖

Click here to see video clips from the Middle East panel.



Left to right:
Deborah Amos, Ben
Taub, Leila Fadel and
Mohamad Bazzi.

SIMON LUETHI



Blumenstein

MICHAEL DAVES

Blumenstein Tells OPC Foundation Scholars Foreign Reporting Is Crucial for Modern News

EVENT RECAP

BY CHAD BOUCHARD

ON FEB. 24, Rebecca Blumenstein, deputy managing editor of *The New York Times*, told a capacity crowd at the OPC Foundation Scholar Awards Luncheon that foreign correspondents play a crucial role in the future of journalism.

"It's not a secret that major news organizations are looking closely at the cost of foreign correspondents, and in some cases have cut back. But I believe that foreign reporting is what will distinguish modern news organizations," she said.

Until recently, Blumenstein had been deputy editor-in-chief of *The Wall Street Journal*. She was the highest-ranking woman to lead the paper's news organization. In her 22 years at the Journal, she also served as page-one editor, deputy managing editor, international editor and China bureau chief, where she and her team won the Pulitzer Prize for International Reporting in 2007.

OPC Foundation President Bill Holstein, in his introductory

remarks, underscored the urgent need for a new generation of international journalists.

"Not only must we contend with an increasingly hostile international environment that's dangerous for all journalists, but we also are facing a new administration that is attacking the very foundations of our legitimacy as journalists. Today, here, we are fighting for our values by identifying the next generation of correspondents."

The list of recipients included 15 graduate and undergraduate students aspiring to become foreign correspondents, with scholars from City University of New York, Columbia, Duke, Harvard, Johns Hopkins, New York University, University of California-Berkeley, University of Florida, University of Missouri, University of Texas at Austin and Yale.

The scholars' acceptance speeches this year highlighted sources of inspiration as well as the dangers of international reporting. The luncheon was part of a three-day event that also included a welcome reception hosted by Reuters, career panels and

breakfast, and a day of situational awareness/risk management training for journalists.

H.L. Stevenson Fellowship winner Tik Root, who spent two weeks incarcerated in Damascus, wrote about a family in Yemen torn apart by al-Qaida, a story he said "introduced me to the idea of storytelling in reporting and what the power of human subjects can do to explain very complex ideas of tribalism, terrorism and politics," he said. Root has an OPC Foundation fellowship in The Associated Press bureau in Jerusalem.

Sarah Dadouch, who grew up in Syria, received the Emanuel R. Freedman Scholarship for an essay about the plight of refugees escaping Aleppo.

"I never thought I could be a journalist because real journalism doesn't exist in my country," she said. "But hope is a really powerful thing."

She graduated from UC Berkely and worked in Istanbul and as a fixer near the Syrian border for several U.S. clients. She'll return to Istanbul on an OPC Foundation fellowship for Reuters.

Theo Wilson Scholarship winner Uliana Pavlova wrote about Yazidi girls in northern Iraq who survived sexual slavery.

"We live in an era where each person in the world is connected with another by an invisible thread of stories. I want to make it my job to tell the untold stories of the world in all their depth and complexity," she said.

The Roy Rowan Scholarship went to Joseph Ataman, a British Flubright scholar who wrote about migrant children from the Middle East. Ataman recounted his reporting on a 13-year-old Eritrean migrant child who made his way across the Mediterranean in a rickety boat. Ataman has an OPC Foundation fellowship with AP in Istanbul.

Marc Rowan presented the scholarship on behalf of his father, a former OPC president who

died in September last year. He announced that the Rowan family would increase its contribution and the amount of the scholarship.

"If there ever was a time when the media is needed, it's today. We live in a very fast-moving, fragile world. The truth is needed, and needed now," he said.

He closed with advice from his father: "Report right, write short and live long." ♦



Coming up in May, the Jerusalem Press Club will host a Freedom of the Press conference in Jerusalem, with a focus on Press Freedom issues in the digital era.

With encouragement from the International Association of Press Clubs, of which the OPC is a longtime member, and the Federation of European Press Clubs, JPC is holding its Second International Conference on the Freedom of the Press in Jerusalem, on May 8-9, 2017. Lynn Walsh, president of the Society of Professional Journalists, Rob Mahoney of the Committee to Protect Journalists, and speakers from Reporters Without Borders and the International Press Institute have confirmed their attendance. Carl Bernstein of *The Washington Post*, partner of Bob Woodward in breaking the Watergate story, will be the keynote speaker. The club will offer hotel rooms in Jerusalem at a significant discount.

CONTACT:
JCPressFreedom@gmail.



GABRIELA BHASKAR

Left to right: Sarah Dadouch, Donna Airoidi, Katherine Sullivan, Uliana Pavlova, Yi-Ling Liu, Elizabeth Miles, Rajiv Golla, Cate Malek, Tik Root, Joseph Ataman, Lisa Martine Jenkins, Charles Rollet, Serginho Roosblad, Amaury Sablon and Gabriela Bhaskar.

2017 OPC Foundation Scholarship Winners

Following is a list of the fifteen 2017 scholarship and fellowship recipients, their affiliations, the prize they won, the presenter, and a brief description of their winning applications. The winners were selected from a highly competitive field of 175 applicants from around 55 different colleges and universities.

GABRIELA BHASKAR

Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism

David R. Schweisberg Memorial Scholarship

Sponsored by the Schweisberg Family; presented by David's brother, Matthew Schweisberg

Having lived in Jakarta for almost four years, Gabriela described the spectrum of complexity that embodies Indonesian life, the juxtaposition of the practical and irrational that she vividly portrayed in a stunning photo essay of the country's mentally ill. Primarily a photojournalist with investigative skills, she speaks Indonesian, French and Spanish. A graduate of the University of California at Davis, she intends to return to cover the conflicts in "this wild archipelago."

DONNA AIROLDI

CUNY Graduate School of Journalism

Reuters Fellowship

Sponsored by Reuters and funded by The Correspondents Fund; presented by Mike Williams, Global Enterprise Editor, Reuters

A veteran journalist in New York City, Donna returned to graduate school to improve her business expertise and multimedia skills. Last summer she returned to Cambodia, to work as an editor at the *Phnom Penh Post*. In keeping with her focus on the intersection of commerce and human rights, she wrote her essay about the unintended consequences of wage hikes in Cambodia. A DePaul grad, she has an OPC Foundation fellowship in the Reuters bureau in Bangkok.

SERGINHO ROOSBLAD

UC-Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism

Harper's Magazine Scholarship in memory of I.F. Stone

Endowed by John R. MacArthur

and the Pierre F. Simon Charitable Trust; presented by Rick MacArthur, publisher, Harper's Magazine

A multimedia journalist, Serginho has already reported from a dozen African and European countries. A native of the Netherlands and the son of Dutch Caribbean immigrants, he intends to return to Uganda to film a documentary on climate change. In his winning essay, he wrote about the legacy of Uganda's brutal past. With degrees from both Dutch and South African universities, he speaks Dutch, English and Sranangtongo with a basic understanding of Kiswahili and German.

CATE MALEK

University of Texas at Austin

Irene Corbally Kuhn Scholarship

Endowed by the Scripps Howard Foundation; presented by Pamela Howard of the Pamela Howard Family Foundation

A graduate of the University of Colorado-Boulder, Cate spent five

years in the Middle East compiling and co-editing a book of oral histories titled *Palestine Speaks*, about human rights violations in the occupied territories for McSweeney Publishing. In her essay, she wrote about a Syrian family in Texas trying to recreate a chocolate manufacturing business. The Levant Arabic speaker has an OPC Foundation fellowship with the GroundTruth Project to cover Muslim-Christian relations.

TIK ROOT

Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism

H.L. Stevenson Fellowship

Funded by the Gamsin family and sponsored by family and friends; presented by 2016 HL Stevenson winner, Gabrielle Paluch

Tik's unique path to journalism began with a two-week stint in a Damascus prison as a student and has already taken him to Spain, Turkey, Rwanda, Russia and Brazil. He spent 15 months freelancing in Yemen where he encountered the Dhahab family split by deadly loyalties to al-Qaida, the subject of his essay. A graduate of Middlebury College, he is proficient in two dialects of Arabic, Egyptian and Yemini. Tik has an OPC Foundation fellowship with *The Associated Press* in the Middle East.

LISA MARTINE JENKINS

Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies

Stan Swinton Fellowship

Endowed by the Swinton Family; presented by John Daniszewski, Editor at Large for Standards, The Associated Press

Lisa's main interest is international food policy and its impact on health, the environment and global economy. In her essay, she wrote how Turkey, the world's seventh largest agricultural producer, is facing a food crisis as it tries to absorb and feed vast numbers of

migrants and refugees crossing its borders. Proficient in Spanish and French with some Italian, the UC-Berkeley graduate has an OPC Foundation fellowship with The Associated Press in Mexico City.

SARAH DADOUCH

Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism

Emanuel R. Freedman Scholarship

Endowed by family; presented by Alix Freedman, Manny's daughter and Ethics Editor, Reuters

Born in Connecticut, raised in Damascus and a graduate of UC-Berkeley, Sarah intends to return to the Middle East to report on such stories as the disastrous plight of those escaping Aleppo, the subject of her winning essay. She has previously worked as a fixer for major news organizations in Syria and Turkey, including *The New York Times*, Reuters and BuzzFeed. Fluent in Arabic and proficient in Turkish, Sarah has an OPC Foundation fellowship in the Reuters bureau in Istanbul.

ULIANA PAVLOVA

University of Missouri

Theo Wilson Scholarship

Sponsored by donations from family and friends; presented by OPC Foundation treasurer, Steve Swanson, New York Botanical Garden

Already aware of the fate some journalists face, Uliana nevertheless left her native Russia to study journalism in the U.S. Now a college senior, she wrote about German efforts to help Yazidi women recover from being enslaved by the Islamic State – a story she covered last spring as a semester-long intern for Politico Europe in Brussels. Skilled in various media, she has produced both breaking news and long-form video projects. Uliana is also fluent in Ukrainian.

JOSEPH ATAMAN

Harvard University

Roy Rowan Scholarship

Endowed by family, friends and admirers; presented by Roy's son, Marc Rowan

A British Fulbright scholar who attended Cambridge University on a choir scholarship, Joseph intends to return to the Middle East to follow such stories as the thousands of unaccompanied migrant children scattered across Europe, the subject of his essay. Having reported from Lebanon and Iraq on Syria's civil war and fight against IS, he is fluent in French and Turkish and conversant in Russian and Levantine Arabic. He has an OPC Foundation fellowship with The Associated Press in Istanbul.

ELIZABETH MILES

Yale University

Flora Lewis Fellowship

Endowed by the Pierre F. Simon Charitable Trust; presented by Jackie Albert-Simon, Flora's friend

A central theme of Elizabeth's reporting so far has been civil conflicts and their legacies. A native speaker in both English and Spanish and proficient in French, she wrote about a funeral she attended in Spain for a mother and son killed in 1948 by Franco's security forces and how such events remain intensely political nearly seven decades later. The college senior has an OPC Fellowship in the Reuters bureau in Brussels.

KATHERINE SULLIVAN

Columbia University School of International Public Affairs

S&P Global Award for Economic and Business Reporting

S&P Global Award for Economic and Business Reporting; presented by John Piecuch, Head of Communications, LATAM, S&P Global

As an editor at a Rwanda newspaper during some of the three plus

years she lived in Kigali, Katherine watched international journalists fly in and out and miss the most important stories. In her time there, she witnessed how rising prosperity affected the developing country, its economy and even its diet, the subject of her essay. A University of Scranton graduate, she is proficient in Arabic and French. She has an OPC Foundation fellowship with *Forbes Asia* in Mumbai.

CHARLES ROLLET

New York University

Jerry Flint Fellowship for International Business Reporting

Endowed by family and friends; presented by Kate McLeod, Jerry's wife and Joe Flint, his son

At the *Phnom Penh Post* for two years, Charles witnessed how culture and corruption defined Cambodia's dire business environment. His essay was about the politics of beer distribution, how Heineken's efforts to establish its own delivery chain led to a nationwide Heineken shortage and permanent loss of market share. A French national, he graduated from Northwestern University. He is fluent in Russian, Spanish and French with some Khmer. Charles has an OPC Foundation fellowship with *The Wall Street Journal* in Hong Kong.

RAJIV GOLLA

Duke University

The Walter & Betsy Cronkite Scholarship

Funded by Daimler and Supported by CBS News and friends; presented by David Rhodes, President, CBS News

A college senior, Rajiv has traveled to and reported from South Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia and Mali. His main focus has been the South Sudanese conflict as well as the impact of the Indian diaspora in shaping modern African commerce, a topic he intends to pursue. His essay concerned

Indian businessmen who chose to remain amid war in South Sudan. With a background in Arabic, Swahili and French, he has an OPC Foundation fellowship in the Reuters bureau in Nairobi.

AMAURY SABLON

University of Florida

Nathan S. Bienstock Memorial Scholarship

Endowed by the Richard Leibner and Carole Cooper Family Foundation; presented by Richard Leibner, Co-President, Bienstock, a UTA Company

Amaury and his family moved to the U.S. from Cuba nearly 10 years ago. Now a college junior, he self-funded a trip to Haiti to cover the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew, the subject of his winning essay. He wrote about remote areas not receiving aid. Currently he anchors the only Spanish radio show in North Central Florida for a local NPR affiliate. His background is in radio and television news. He has an OPC Foundation fellowship with the GroundTruth Project in Cuba.

YI-LING LIU

Yale University

The Fritz Beebe Fellowship

Endowed by Anne and Larry Martz; presented by Larry Martz

Born and raised in Hong Kong, a haven of free speech situated next to an authoritarian nation, Yi-Ling is fascinated by China, its untapped stories constrained by rigid censorship. With experience in both print and film, she intends to combine rigorous reporting with innovative new forms of media. In her winning essay, she wrote about how a popular Taiwanese bookstore chain had to adapt its product mix after opening its first branch in mainland China. Also proficient in French, the college senior has an OPC Foundation fellowship with The Associated Press in Beijing. ❖

OPC Foundation Scholar Awards Luncheon



Left to right:
Serginho Roosblad,
Lisa Martine Jenkins,
Yi-Ling Liu and
Uliana Pavlova.



Rajiv Golla, left,
and David Rhodes.



Left to right:
Bill Holstein, Rebecca
Blumenstein and Jane
Reilly.

MANY THANKS

The OPC Foundation is especially grateful for its Patrons and Friends who supported the 2017 Scholar Awards Luncheon. Their contributions ensure the continued success of our scholarship/fellowship program.

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Pamela Howard
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International House
Knight-Bagehot
Fellowship, Columbia University
PepsiCo
Quest Diagnostics
William S. Rukeyser
The Wall Street Journal



Lisa Martine Jenkins,
John Daniszewski and Valerie Komor.

The Roy Rowan Memorial — A Glowing Tribute

BY WILLIAM J. HOLSTEIN

ROY ROWAN officially departed this world the same way he lived it — with complete integrity displayed through a globe-trotting seven-decade career, with humor and deep friendship, with love of wife and family, and indeed with gallantry. He embodied the essence of the 20th century foreign correspondent. Those who sang his praises at a memorial at the Century Club in Manhattan on Feb. 3 even argued that his example might help guide the media profession as it moves further into the uncharted waters of governments attacking its legitimacy and of an economic model that continues to shift beneath its feet.

Reflecting the depth and length of a 50-year friendship, Richard Stolley, a former OPC president, spoke first. Stolley said Roy helped train him to undertake the style of writing that he later established at *People* magazine. “He taught me to write short,” Stolley said. “Anyone can write long. But it takes courage to write short.”

When Stolley flew in from the Los Angeles bureau of *Life* magazine to cover the assassination of John F. Kennedy in Dallas in November 1963, he quickly obtained the frame-by-frame Zapruder tapes of the actual killing. Roy went to Chicago to supervise production of the magazine and decided to exclude the particularly gruesome image of the president’s head exploding. The trust and partnership between Rowan and Stolley was deep.

Roger Cohen, an OPC member and former correspondent and current columnist with *The New York Times*, eulogized Rowan as “a friend, a role model and an inspiration to me.” Cohen continued: “He was fearless. He was indomitable. He had gusto, a lust for life. He could not stand injustice or inhumanity.”

Invoking a theme repeated during the two-hour-long memorial, Cohen said that Rowan and those of like mind “would have relished the fight for the liberties that we all hold sacred. Phrases like ‘alternative facts,’ ‘post-truth’ and even the tautological ‘face-based journalism’ would have sparked their ire and made their antennae for every hint of authoritarianism quiver.”

[Click here to read more tributes to Roy Rowan.](#)

And he added: “In the end, it’s very simple. Without truth, democracy dies.”

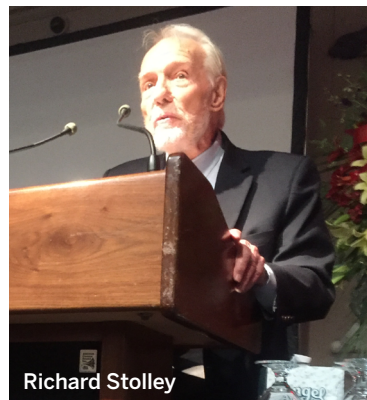
Other media giants rose to praise Roy such as Tom Brokaw, television anchor and author of *The Greatest Generation*, and Norman Pearlstine, who has held senior positions at *The Wall Street Journal*, Bloomberg and Time Inc.

Pearlstine told a particularly hilarious tale of Roy inviting him to go on a 6:30 a.m. jog through the streets of Seoul in 1974 and talking while he ran of all the intrigue in the Blue House, the presidential mansion. A huge bus suddenly appeared and threatened to crush Pearlstine. Roy pulled him out of harm’s way — and continued talking politics. “I was only face-to-face with death once,” Pearlstine explained. “Roy was responsible for it. He also saved me.”

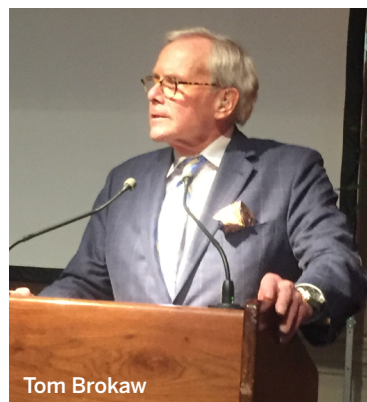
One of the most personally revealing comments came from David Hume Kennerly, a world-famed photographer, who spent time with Roy in Vietnam. Kennerly confessed: “He taught me to see.”

For my part, I explained how Roy was president of the club from 1998 to 2000 and wrote letters to all his friends beseeching them to join the club. Then at the OPC Foundation, whose board he joined, he raised the money to create the Roy Rowan scholarship in 2000. Every year for 16 years, I explained, he came to our annual luncheon, met the young winner of his award and took a keen interest in that young person. He kept coming even in recent years even as his physical condition deteriorated. “Roy was my hero,” I said. “He taught me to never give up, to never stop doing the things you believe in.”

The OPC was represented by former OPC President Larry Martz and his wife Ann Martz; as well as former presidents Allan Dodds Frank, Michael Serrill, John Corporon, Alexis Gelber and David Andelman, and longtime OPC office manager Boots Duque. Former Executive Director Sonya Fry also attended, as did current board member Bill Collins of Ford Motor Company, and his wife Catherine Collins, and OPC members Jeremy Main, Jordan Bonfante and Evelyn Bausman, widow of John Bausman. ❖



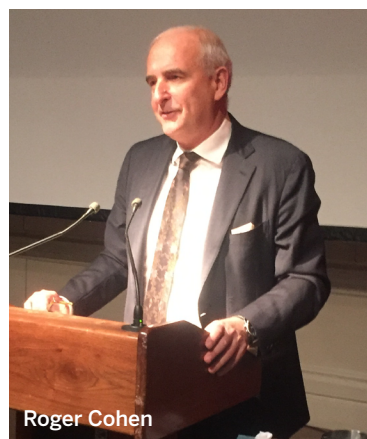
Richard Stolley



Tom Brokaw



Marcus Rowan



Roger Cohen

Dear Journalists Who Are Thinking About Going to the Rebel-Held Bits of Syria or Any Other Newsworthy Place We Have Bombed

A LETTER FROM THEO PADNOS

OPC member Theo Padnos was captured and held hostage for nearly two years by Syrian rebel groups with ties to Al Qaeda fighting against the Syrian Government. He was released in August 2014.

DON'T DO it. In the name of god, forget it. You dummies! Stop thinking what you're thinking. Choose poetry, for heaven's sakes. Can't you choose chess? Cricket?

You insist? I thought you might. Very well then. In that case, I want to share something of what I know, not that you'll listen.

Here are some traveler's tips I picked up during my twenty-two month voyage through the Jebhat al Nusra prison system in Syria.

I suggest, in the first place, that you memorize something long from Shakespeare before you go. There will be nothing to read in your jail cell. Eventually, you will long for a rich and complicated poem. There will be snippets of "Oops, I Did It Again" in your brain. You'll be surprised by how little actual literature you will find. I recommend "Song of Myself." It has a positive, upbeat tone, and the author considers the present moment to be a tiny, forgettable blip in the vast and gorgeous architecture of time. In prison, you'll want to take the long view.

Here's another tip: after they arrest you, you will find yourself playing the moments before your arrest back to yourself, over and over. Just how, you will want to know, did things go so horribly wrong? The people around you will know what the real problem was. I suggest you listen to them.

During my time as a prisoner

in Syria, I learned that all prisoners were thought to have committed a black, unforgivable crime. Everyone you speak to will think this of you and eventually, you will think so, too. Go on, give in to these thoughts. Anyway, you won't really have a choice.

At first, of course you will think yourself innocent. You will plead your case to the other prisoners. But they cannot forgive you even if they wanted to. You are wasting your breath. Later you will plead with visitors to your cell. Everyone does so. It would be odd if you did not. But only the highest, top-most commanders can give you what you want and they will not come to you in a thousand years. Meanwhile, the foot soldiers and the middle management commanders will never let you forget what you've done. "How will you atone?" they will ask. But it is a joking question, one to which there is no answer, and they ask it only to see you stammer and beg.

Anyway, as I was saying, they will know you by your crime. This is true of all prisons I've been in, not just those in Syria. You are your crime. Your crime is you and the other prisoners are their crimes. Things are different in Syria, however, in this respect: you will not know, at first, what your crime is. Many, many people are arrested in silence. The newcomers arrive in the cell with plastic zip ties around their wrists, a bandanna over their eyes, and a half dozen toughs pushing at their heads and kicking their legs. The door slams. "What did I do?" the person exclaims.

The first thing the prisoner discovers about his crime is that, whatever it was, it was so plainly wicked, and so inhuman that the prisoner isn't fit to look a respect-

able person in the eyes. "Face against the wall!" the commanders will say when they pass you on the hallway, or "Head down, eyes on the ground!" You will do as you are asked. If you hesitate, someone nearby will teach you – usually by means of a blunt instrument – not to hesitate.

The unforgivable thing the regime soldiers with whom I was imprisoned did was being regime soldiers. They should have defected. They should have run away to Turkey or Lebanon. Instead, they chose to bear arms for Bashar. Not many such prisoners survive the Jebhat al Nusra jails.

In some of the prisons in which I lived in Syria, I met prisoners accused of speaking impolitely to women in the street. To our captors, these prisoners had committed the crime of losing themselves in lust, of having forgotten the immanence of god, and as a consequence of this forgetfulness, of carrying on like animals. Animals, the Jebhat al Nusra commanders often told us, could be traded of slaughtered or set free, according to the whim of the animal's owner.

The prisoners accused of acting as regime thugs had committed the crime of valuing dirty cash over Muslim lives. This too was an unforgivable crime. What kind of filth would you have to be to sell out your co-religionist for a mess of worthless Syrian lira?

The people who supported the ISIS chief, Abu Bakr al Baghdadi, were, for their part, enemies of Islam. Did not Baghdadi kill Muslims? Was he not a creature of the Americans, deployed by their spy agency, to hoodwink simple Muslims and to provoke them into unconscionable crimes? He was. His followers, if they had killed, and many of those in my prisons

had killed, could not be forgiven.

As for me: my original sin was simpler than the rest. In the eyes of almost everyone I talked to, pro-regime, anti-regime, over twenty-two months in the North, the East, and the South of the country, my crime was that I had come to Syria. This was the black thing in my past, the act of self-involved idiocy no one could understand, my original sin. I couldn't explain it away. I couldn't deny it. I was guilty.

Accordingly, every few days, a commander or a foot soldier, an ISIS fighter or Jebhat loyalist would come to me with the frankest kind of bewilderment in his face. He would search my eyes. Maybe he would smile a bit. He would shake his head slowly and then ask, using the same words everyone else had used, "what on earth brought you to Syria?"

At first, I answered the way any journalist would answer: I came to tell the world about the disaster occurring in Syria, I would say. I would say that I came to stand up for the Syrian people, and to be a part of history and because reporting was my job. This answer often brought a sharp smack across the back of my head. If the person I was talking to was holding a handgun, as was often the case, my questioner would clock me on the skull with the butt of the gun. "Everyone on earth knows what's happening in Syria," the person would say. "Why did you really come?" Another typical reply to my "I came for the story" line: "you think we don't have journalists of our own?" And the reply that came from calmer, friendlier commanders: "regardless of your intentions, the information you turn up here will end up in the hands of the US military. We cannot let that happen. Since we cannot trust you not to talk when we let you go, we cannot let you go."

I could list a half dozen further rejoinders. But what would be the point? The most powerful, most well-informed military formations among the rebels in Syria do not

want independent journalists in their areas. If they catch you – when they catch you – they will have a dozen replies to every one of your pleas. It won't take you too long to understand the reality of the situation. They control the land. You made a terrible error in traveling there. It's quite possible the error will cost you your life.

In the end, I found myself persuaded by the logic of my captors. They do indeed have their own journalists. Bilal Abdul Kareem, to mention a rebel-allied journalist, is taking risks no sane, mainstream journalist would take, is providing riveting, often heartbreaking footage, and has interviewed rebel commanders on camera who're likely to be leading the jihad for generations to come. Who can do better than this? The Syrian regime has similarly well-placed journalists.

Also: the rebel commanders are right to point out that people in Yemen, Iraq, and Afghanistan have been watching the American military blow up their neighbors for more than a decade. Syrians have watched the killing on TV. Now it's happening to them in real life. They are supposed to greet Americans who pay taxes to this world-bombing government in peace?

I know there are many peaceful people in these places who long to reach out to foreigners. Yet the neighbors of these peaceful people are stronger. It's the neighbors you need to worry about. They are longing for revenge.

My dear journalist friends: in the regions the Syrian government does not control, you will not be met in peace. The men here (the powerful, worrisome ones always are men) won't greet Americans – particularly those who come with fancy cell phones and expensive shoes, for the purpose of ferreting out information – in peace for the next fifty years. If you want to live, you will stay away. ❖

OPC/West Panel Discusses China And Trump

BY ERIC WESTERVELT

DESPITE DONALD Trump's tough talk about China, author and journalist John Pomfret told an OPC/West gathering in the San Francisco area in early January that history shows that the relationship is deep, complex, and "simply too important" to fail.

Pomfret's new book, *The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom: America and China, 1776 to the Present*, charts the history of that relationship, and how, from the American Founding Fathers to the present, each country has influenced the other in abiding and often surprising ways, including how the Founding Fathers studied and admired aspects of Chinese culture, and how trade with China just after the birth of the American nation helped the US economy get going.

Donald Trump's apparent preference for closer ties with Russia may over time prove to be a new twist on an old theme – US presidents coming in with one set of assumptions about China, and adjusting them upon realizing how a constructive, multi-faceted relationship with China serves US interests. An added challenge this time is how to deal with China's efforts to cement its desired role as the region's predominant military, economic and political power, including by creating islands and putting military bases in the contested South China Sea.

Joining the conversation was Xiao Qiang, an adjunct professor in UC Berkeley's School of Information, and founder and editor-in-chief of China Digital Times.net,

which monitors and translates Chinese journalism and social media. He said while many Chinese on social media initially expressed a preference that Trump would win the election, because they figured a businessman would be all about transactional business and not about ideology, the post-election tone has become more uncertain.

"Right now, I see confusion and silence," said Xiao Qiang, "There is uncertainty... people just don't know what to do."

Xiao Qiang grew up in China and, like Pomfret, was in Tiananmen Square during the 1989 pro-democracy protests, Pomfret as a correspondent, Xiao as a protester. Shortly after, Pomfret was kicked out of the country, and Xiao went into exile in the United States, first helping to lead the human rights group Human Rights in China, and then founding China Digital Times.

Xiao recalled how, growing up under Mao Zedong's leadership, during the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s and '70s, he heard plenty of anti-American propaganda, but as soon as China started opening up, American films, music and culture poured in, and his generation – like the pre-Mao generation – couldn't get enough of them. America was initially idealized and emulated, both at the personal and the official levels – as China rose as a global power and global economy, America set the standard, but was also increasingly – and is still – seen as the competitor to beat.

How that will play out between President Trump and current Chinese leader Xi Jinping, who has shown

a willingness to be muscular in consolidating power at home and claiming territory in contested waters, will be a critical variable in determining the stability, or lack thereof, in the Asia/Pacific region, and whether the United States might get pulled into a conflict there – or choose to cooperate on an issue like halting North Korea's progress on building up its nuclear weapons capabilities.

The conversation was moderated by OPC member Mary Kay Magistad, who opened NPR's bureau in China in 1996, and returned to Beijing for more than a decade for the BBC/PRI program "The World." She now hosts the "Whose Century Is It?" podcast with The World.

The Center for Investigative Reporting/Reveal hosted the event, attended by more than 30 former foreign correspondents, at its Emeryville headquarters, just across the Bay Bridge from San Francisco. ❖

Eric Westervelt served for more than a decade as foreign correspondent with NPR's international desk, returning to domestic news in 2013 to cover a national beat covering education.

OPC/West is an informal affiliate of the OPC. The group of about 70 current and former foreign correspondents based in the San Francisco Bay Area, first formed in the spring of 2016. New members are welcome. Interested? Contact OPC members Markos Kounalakis at kounalakis@gmail.com, or Mary Kay Magistad at mkmagistad@gmail.com.

PEOPLE

By Trish Anderton

OPC SCHOLARS

The American Society of Magazine Editors has honored 2015 Emanuel R. Freedman scholar **Ben Taub** with an ASME Next Award for Journalists Under 30. Taub, who spent his OPC fellowship at the Reuters bureau in Jerusalem, is currently a contributing writer at *The New Yorker*. He has written extensively about Syria and ISIS.

The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists has won the George Polk Award for Financial Reporting for its massive Panama Papers project, which was co-managed by **Marina Walker Guevara**, the 2005 Emanuel R. Freedman scholar. Guevara is deputy director of the ICIJ. More than 370 reporters in 76 countries were involved in the project, which exposed the secret offshore bank accounts where super-wealthy individuals and corporations stash their money.

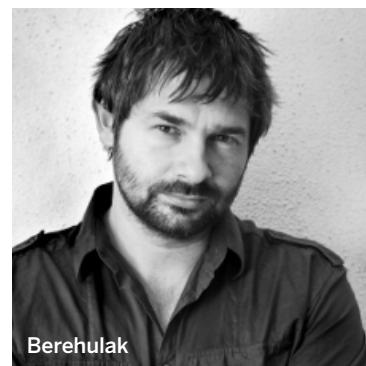
Mariano Castillo, who won the 2008 Harper's Magazine Scholarship in Memory of I.F. Stone, has been recognized with the LASA Media Award. The award, given out by the Latin American Studies Association, honors long-term journalistic contributions to analysis and public debate about Latin America in the United States and in Latin America, as well as breakthrough journalism.

WINNERS

Longtime OPC member **Kathy Gannon** of the AP is a finalist for the 2017 Anthony Shadid Award in Journalism Ethics. The University of Wisconsin-Madison Center for Journalism Ethics, which sponsors the award, praised her series "Honor Bound" for taking "fairness and balance to an unusual level by seeking to understand the motives of men in some parts of the world who torture and murder women." Gannon has covered the Middle East for the AP as a correspondent and bureau chief for nearly 30 years.



OPC member **Daniel Berehulak** has won the George Polk Award for Photojournalism for "They Are Slaughtering Us Like Animals," his harrowing photo essay for *The New York Times* on the extrajudicial killings of alleged drug dealers and users in Manila. It is his second Polk Award. Berehulak is a former staff news photographer with Getty Images; he now freelances and is a regular contributor to the *Times*.



Reporters Without Borders USA Director **Delphine Halgand** will receive the James W. Foley American Hostage Freedom Award in May for her work on behalf of American journalists taken hostage. Emma Beals, co-founder of the Frontline Freelance Register, will be presented with the James W. Foley World Press Freedom Award; CNN Senior International Correspondent Arwa Damon will receive the James W. Foley Humanitarian Award.

UPDATES

NEW YORK: OPC Governor **Steven L. Herman** is the new White House bureau chief for Voice of America. Herman had moved to Washington from Bangkok just last fall to cover the State Department for VOA. He spent 26 years in Asia, including serving as VOA correspondent and bureau chief in India, Korea and Thailand.

OPC Governor **Hannah Allam** is moving to BuzzFeed to cover Muslim life in America. Allam was previously at McClatchy, where she wrote about race, culture and identity; she has also done stints as the newswire's bureau chief in Baghdad and Cairo.

Mort Rosenblum, who has been an OPC member since 1980, has won a McGraw Fellowship for Business Journalism from the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism. He'll team up with international investigative journalist Ana Arana to explore the impacts of the copper mining boom in Arizona and beyond. Rosenblum is a former editor of *The International Herald Tribune*. He won the OPC's Hal Boyle Award in 1990.

The New York Times has put **Rebecca Blumenstein** on its masthead as a deputy managing editor. Blumenstein, an OPC member who keyed the annual OPC Foundation Scholar Awards Luncheon in late February, is now one of the highest-ranking women at the paper. She previously worked at *The Wall Street Journal* as deputy editor-in-chief. Blumenstein started at the *Journal* in 1995 and was part of a team that won the Gerald Loeb Award in 2003 for coverage of WorldCom. In 2007 she oversaw the China team that won the Pulitzer Prize for International Reporting.

OPC members **Alan Riding**, **Nicholas Kristof**, **Rachel Donadio**, **Roger Cohen** and **Jim Brooke** are part of a star-studded cast of journalists participating in *The New York Times*' Journeys program, which sells package tours with reporters and editors serving as expert guides. The trips range from shorter jaunts, such as the 11-day Silk Road tour Brooke will accompany, to a \$135,000, 26-day voyage around the world featuring Kristof and Riding, and including time in Iran, Cuba, Colombia, Australia, Myanmar and Iceland. Times Journeys launched in 2012.

The Wall Street Journal made a series of cuts to its European bureaus on and around January 31. According to *The Atlantic* magazine, the Budapest, Madrid and Riyadh bureaus have been shuttered, while Moscow and India lost two reporters and Warsaw one. A staffer was reportedly cut in Berlin, while the Scandinavian bureau has been reduced to one. The cuts, combined with internal controversy over what some see as

the paper's too-friendly coverage of Donald Trump, have created a "pretty grim and pretty depressing" mood at the nation's premiere business daily, an anonymous reporter told *The Atlantic*. In a statement to the magazine, a *Journal* spokesperson declined to clarify the number of layoffs and said the paper remained committed to covering the world.

American CEOs must speak out against a rising global tide of anti-trade sentiment, argues OPC Foundation chairman **William J. Holstein** in a recent column for *Chief Executive* magazine. Among his suggested talking points for business leaders: "Tell people that trade is not a one-way street" and "Attack the myth that 'Americans don't make things.'" He also recommends investing in training to create American jobs and repatriating funds stashed in offshore accounts. "Revving up the success of American companies and their international strategies," Holstein posits, "would be a far more effective way of generating jobs than imposing tariffs."

OPC member **Lisa De Bode** has teamed up with fellow reporters and photographers to produce a handbook for refugees entering Europe. *Europa: An Illustrated Introduction to Europe for Migrants and Refugees* is available on the Magnum Photos website. It offers information on routes into Europe, the basics of European society and history, and how the EU works, as well as specific information on settling in individual countries. De Bode said the book is designed partly to counter refugees' shame at leaving their countries by reminding them that Europeans fled war and chaos within their own nations during the 20th century. "Politicians seemed to have forgotten about this history," she told Boston-based WBUR-FM, "or at least, they wanted to enforce a collective amnesia of our own immigration history."

Jim Impoco is stepping down as *Newsweek* editor-in-chief as the magazine transitions into an overtly global brand. Matt McAllester, who was previously the editor of *Newsweek International*, is now *Newsweek*'s global editor in chief. "Jim literally brought this iconic brand back to life and in many ways it is better than it has ever been," said Dev Pragad, CEO of parent company IBT Media. "He leaves an inspiring legacy at *Newsweek* that we will work hard to maintain."

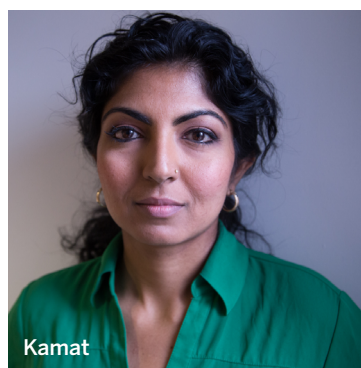
Time Inc. is seeking bids from potential buyers. *AdWeek* reports at least five groups have expressed interest in the company, whose publications include *TIME* magazine, *Sports Illustrated*, *People* and *Fortune*. *TIME* is valued at nearly \$1.8 billion. It rejected a takeover bid by billionaire investor Edgar Bronfman Jr. in November 2016.

Fresh off a \$1 million dollar donation to the journalism-focused **Poynter Institute**, Craigslist multi-millionaire Craig Newmark announced a \$1 million gift to nonprofit investigative outlet **ProPublica** in late February. The fund will "allow ProPublica to deploy resources and address opportunities, including adding staff, where they are most needed over a wide range of issues in the public interest," according to a release from the news organization. Newmark told the Nieman Lab he is committed to giving a total of \$6 million to news and information ventures in the coming months, saying "It's incumbent on me as an ultra-patriot to spend like a sailor on shore leave."

WASHINGTON, DC: Just months after grabbing headlines globally with its Panama Papers investigation, the **International Consortium of Investigative Journalists** has broken away from its founder, the Center for Public Integrity. "As of Feb. 24, ICIJ is a fully independent nonprofit news organization," director Gerard Ryle wrote on the ICIJ blog, adding that "We believe this new structure will allow us to extend our global reach and impact even farther." Poynter.org reports that the move was inspired in no small part by a recent financial squeeze at the CPI.

A fellowship will honor the legacy of pioneering journalist **Gwen Ifill**, who died in November 2016. The Gwen Ifill/PBS NewsHour Journalism Fellowship is a ten-month program for undergraduate and graduate students with financial need who want to pursue a career in journalism. Applications are set to become available in March on the PBS NewsHour Jobs webpage. Ifill was a co-anchor and managing editor of the flagship PBS NewsHour, as well as the moderator of Washington Week.

WYOMING: 2012 Madeline Dane Ross Award winner **Mark Jenkins** is delivering a talk called "Tea, Trade, & Tyranny: Tibet & China Over Time" in six places around Wyoming this spring. Jenkins is currently a University of Wyoming writer-in-residence. The talks are free to the public as part of the UW Center for Global Studies "World to Wyoming Tour."



DHAKA: More than three years after the Rana Plaza disaster claimed more than 1,100 lives, Bangladesh's textile factories have grown somewhat safer – but companies are still literally working working employees to death, OPC Governor **Anjali Kamat** reported for Slate recently. Kamat tells the story of Taslima Aktar, a 23-year-old garment worker who collapsed with a fever and cough, was sent back to work at the sewing machines, and then died. Efforts to unionize have been thwarted and labor conditions were largely ignored in reform efforts inspired by the 2013 factory collapse, Kamat writes.

Our War, a documentary co-written and co-directed by OPC member **Benedetta Argentieri**, made

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Golda Arthur
Senior Producer
Marketplace
New York
Active Resident

Tanya Bindra
Freelance
Morristown, NJ
Active Resident, Young
(29 or under)

Jean Carrere
Freelance
Correspondent,
Paris
Active Overseas, Young
(29 or under)

Christopher Crosby
New York University
New York
Student

Beimeng Fu
World Reporter
BuzzFeed
Shanghai, China
Active Overseas, Young
(29 or under)

Matthew Kaminski
Executive Editor
POLITICO
Brussels
Active Overseas

Daniele Knowles
Media Relations Attaché
Quebec Government
New York
Associate Resident

Joshua Kron
Freelance
Uganda
Active Overseas, Young
(30-34)

Nadine Mansour
Intern
Reuters TV
New York
Active Resident, Young
(29 or under)

Daniel Morrison
Freelance
Washington, DC
Active Non-Resident

Matthew Petti
Freelance
Columbia University
New York
Student

Katie Toth
Freelance
Halifax, Canada
Active Non-Resident

PEOPLE

its debut in Italian movie theaters in January. *Our War* follows three young men who leave their homes in the U.S., Italy and Sweden to fight against ISIS in northern Syria. The 68-minute documentary has already played at film festivals including Venice and Stockholm. Argentieri is a freelance journalist focusing on national security, military issues and social conflicts. Her previous film, *Capulcu: Voices from Gezi*, covered the Gezi Park protests in Istanbul. It won an Amnesty International Award in 2014.

PEOPLE REMEMBERED

Bernard Redmont, a foreign correspondent for outlets including Westinghouse Broadcasting and CBS News, died on Jan. 23 in Canton, Massachusetts at age 98. Redmont covered Leon Trotsky's assassination in Mexico and the Six-Day War in the Middle East. In 1968 he broke the news that North Vietnam was open to peace talks; he was honored with the OPC's Ben Grauer Award in 1969. Redmont joined the OPC in 1948 and remained a member until his death. His son, Dennis Redmont,

is also a veteran foreign correspondent and OPC member.

George Krinsky, who covered the USSR and the Middle East before founding the International Center for Journalists, died in Washington, Connecticut on Jan. 20. He was 75. Krinsky went to the Soviet Union in 1974 for the AP. He was expelled on false charges of espionage after meeting secretly with Josef Stalin's grandson, who wanted to visit the U.S. He was later stationed in Beirut. Krinsky left the AP in 1985 to co-found the organization that became the ICFJ. "He reported bravely and truthfully from Moscow, seeking out dissidents and ordinary Russians at a time when Western reporters were under constant surveillance," AP vice president for standards – and OPC member – John Daniszewski told *Newsday*, adding that "by founding ICFJ he went on to champion a free press globally."

Selig Harrison, who covered Asia in the '60s and early '70s for *The Washington Post*, died on Dec. 30 in Camden, Maine at the age of 89. Harrison started at the *Post* as New Delhi bureau chief in 1962, later becoming Tokyo bureau chief. He left the paper in 1974 to join the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, where he became a noted Asia expert and wrote several books.

Former AP foreign correspondent and former longtime OPC member **Sam Summerlin** died on Feb. 27 in Carlsbad, California. He was 89. Summerlin began his career in 1951, covering the Korean War. Two years later he was the first to report the war's end, a scoop he attributed to being the fastest correspondent in a race to the one phone available at the armistice signing ceremony in Pyongyang. He went on to report from Cuba, Argentina and the Philippines before becoming an executive at *The New York Times*. Later he became a producer of biographical documentaries. ❖

PRESS FREEDOM UPDATE...

The Committee to Protect Journalists is highlighting the cases of ten imprisoned journalists throughout the year in its #Free-ThePress campaign. According to the CPJ, 259 members of the media are currently jailed worldwide; 182 are serving sentences for anti-state charges such as terrorism. The journalists featured in this year's campaign are: Ahmed Abba of Cameroon; Abdullah Kılıç, İnan Kızılkaya and Musa Kart of Turkey; Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Quynh of Vietnam; Issa Saharkhiz of Iran; Darsema Sori of Ethiopia and Saleh Idris Gama of Eritrea/Ethiopia; Mahmoud Abou Zeid (Shawkan) of Egypt; and Santosh Yadav of India.

Media defense organizations are teaming up to create a news site to track **violations of press freedom in the U.S.** The CPJ, the Freedom of the Press Foundation, the Reporters Committee for the Freedom of the Press, the Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University and the Index on Censorship plan to launch a news site to document intimidation, arrests, border stops, equipment seizures, prosecutions and other transgressions. "We have the First Amendment, and we're supposed to have the free-est press in the world," Trevor Timm, executive director of the Freedom of the Press Foundation, told Poynter.org. "If these crackdowns take place, we want to make sure they're broadcast loudly to the American public so they know what's going on."

A CNN producer has sued the **Trump administration** for unlawful detention after being held for additional questioning at the Atlanta airport on Jan. 29. Mohammed Tawfeeq is an Iraqi national who has had permanent legal residency in the United States since 2013, according to the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. BBC reporter Ali Hamedani told CPJ that he too was detained at Chicago O'Hare and that agents searched his phone and computer and read his Twitter feed. Trump issued an executive order on Jan. 27 banning travel from seven Muslim-majority countries for 90 days; he is expected to issue a revised order in early March after the original measure was blocked by the federal courts.



GALIMA BUKHARBAEVA

One of the world's longest-imprisoned journalists has been freed. Uzbek newspaper editor **Muhamad Bekjanov** was released on Feb. 22 after serving 18 years. He was convicted of attempting to assassinate the late President, Islam Karimov, but has said his confession was extracted under duress. Bekjanov edited the opposition newspaper *Erk*. His colleague Yusuf Ruzimuradov, who was arrested at the same time, remains in prison. Reporters without Borders expressed concern about Ruzimuradov in a statement, saying "we have had no news of him for a long time."

Press freedom violations in **Brazil** and **Colombia** rose in 2016, according to new reports. The Brazilian Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters recorded a 66 percent increase over 2015. The most common violation was physical aggression against journalists, which accounted for about a third of the 192 instances. Others included verbal offenses (22 cases), threats (19), and convictions and judicial decisions (18). In Colombia, the Foundation for Press Freedom found 216 violations – a rise of 47 percent. They included 90 threats, 47 physical aggressions and 44 obstructions of journalistic work.

Veteran BBC reporter **Jonathan Head** faces a possible five-year prison sentence in a defamation lawsuit in Thailand. Authorities have

seized Head's passport so that he cannot leave the country. "So I guess for the duration of the trial – possibly two years – I will downgrade myself from Southeast Asia correspondent to Thailand correspondent," Head wrote on his Facebook page, as quoted by the *Sydney Morning Herald*. Thai lawyer Partuan Thanarak filed the case after Head reported that two foreign men were scammed out of their properties in the resort area of Phuket. The BBC says it will fight the allegations.

A former policeman claims Rodrigo Duterte paid him and other members of a death squad to kill radio journalist **Juan "Jun" Pala** in September 2003, when the current Philippine president was the mayor of Davao City. Arturo Lascanas' statement is consistent with testimony given by another alleged death squad member last September; however, it contradicts Lascanas' previous sworn testimony. Pala, who was known for his fiery commentaries on Davao City's DXGO radio, was fatally shot while walking home with a bodyguard and a friend on September 6, 2003, according to the CPJ. Duterte has denied any role in the murder but has been quoted in news reports calling Pala a "rotten son of a bitch" and saying "he deserved it."

MURDERS

● Police reporter **Cecilio Pineda Birto** was shot dead in the state of Guerrero, southern Mexico, on

March 2. He was 38 years old. According to the Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas, Birto had received death threats from organized crime and had survived a previous assassination attempt. Birto wrote for numerous outlets, including *El Universal*, *El Debate de los Calentanos*, *La Voz del Sur* and *La Jornada Guerrero*.

● TV cameraman **Taimoor Khan** was killed while covering a story in Karachi, Pakistan on Feb. 12. Khan, 22, worked for private channel Samaa TV. He had arrived on the scene of a grenade attack on a police vehicle when gunmen opened fire on the Samaa news van. The group Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan claimed responsibility for the attack. "The media is not impartial and we've issued several warnings to them," the group said in a statement quoted by the Karachi-based *Express Tribune* newspaper.

● **Muhammad Jan**, a 37-year old journalist for the Pakistani Urdu-language daily Qudrat, was killed while riding a motorcycle in Qalat, Balochistan on January 12. According to the *Express Tribune*, Jan was shot by two men on a motorbike who subsequently fled. Jan also taught in a government-run school and worked as a press secretary for the Balochistan media council.

● A radio announcer was killed on-air and the station director was also murdered on Feb. 14 in city of San Pedro de Macoris, Dominican Republic. **Luis Manuel Medina** was broadcasting his show "Milenio Caliente" when one or two armed men entered FM 103 and shot him and station director **Leo Martínez**. A third employee, Dayanna Garcia de Fernandez, was wounded in the attack.

● Newspaper reporter **Abdul Hakim Shimul** was shot on Feb. 2 while covering violence between factions of the ruling Awami League party in Shahjampur, Bangladesh. Mayor Halimul Haque Miru reportedly opened fire on the unruly crowd, injuring Shimul. He died the following day, leaving behind a wife and two children, according to the CPJ. Miru has since been arrested. ❖

NEW BOOKS

Two OPC/ West Events Slated for April 29

OPC/WEST IS planning a double feature of events on April 29, starting with a presentation from Peter Klein, executive director & founder of the Global Reporting Centre in Vancouver, who will talk about the center's work, partnering with local journalists, community members, and international correspondents, to do in-depth reporting on important international issues. That program begins at 1:00 p.m.

Then at 2:00 p.m., stay for a discussion about China's complex relationship and history with religion. Panelists will include Ian D Johnson, author of *The Souls of China: The Return of Religion after Mao* and Jennifer Lin, whose new book *Shanghai Faithful: Betrayal and Forgiveness in a Chinese Christian Family* tells the story of the role her own family played in China's embrace of Christianity over the past 150 years. Moderating will be former NPR & PRI China correspondent Mary Kay Magistad. This event will be recorded for Mary Kay's *Whose Century Is It?* podcast. ❖

DATE: April 29, 2017

TIME: GRC at 1:00 p.m., China & Religion at 2:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Mechanics Institute, 57 Post St., San Francisco, CA

CONTACT: Please RSVP to mkmagistad@gmail.com. Friends and partners welcome.

TERRORISM

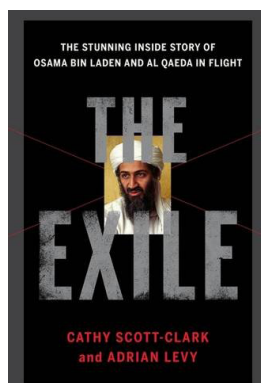
THE EXILE: *the Stunning Inside Story of Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda in Flight* [Bloomsbury, May 2017] is an exhaustive portrait of the aftermath of 9/11, built on interviews and source materials collected across the Middle East, North Africa and the U.S. It paints a newly detailed portrait of an increasingly peevish and ill Osama – cut off from the attention he craved – and his flight from hideout to hideout with a retinue of wives and children in tow.

Cathy Scott-Clark and Adrian Levy have written several books together, including *The Siege: 68 Hours Inside the Taj Hotel*, an account of the 2008 terror attacks in Mumbai. Here, they detail how Osama proceeded with the 9/11 attacks despite the opposition of Al Qaeda's own leadership council. Members of the council objected to the likely deaths of innocent people and warned that Osama was following "a path that contradicts sharia, reason and logic." But Osama remained convinced that the Planes Operation, as he called it, would vault al Qaeda to a leading position among jihadist groups and be "our gateway to a solid future."

The book also turns an unsparing eye on U.S. actions after 9/11. Scott-Clark and Levy detail the torture of alleged al Qaeda operative Abu Zubaydah. The horrors he was subjected to include serial waterboarding, vicious beatings, and being contained in a wooden box "barely the dimensions of a child's coffin." He still has not been charged with any crimes.

The authors also write that the Bush administration failed to pursue an offer by Tehran to turn over Osama's family and Al Qaeda's military council, and that in 2002 it missed a chance to kill Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who would found the group that became ISIS.

In their preface, Scott-Clark and Levy accuse the Obama administration of promulgating a "cherry-picked history" of its relationship with al Qaeda. This detailed book is a significant step toward a more complete record of the U.S. and the terror organization during and after 9/11. ❖



JOURNALISM HISTORY

IN HIS first half-century at the BBC, John Simpson has covered 48 wars, revolutions and insurrections in 140 countries. *We Chose to Speak of War and Strife: The World of the Foreign Correspondent* [Bloomsbury, January 2017] is a tribute to his profession, and a history of its practitioners going all the way back to the dawn of newspapers in the 1600s.

We Chose to Speak – the title is a quote from poet and sometime foreign correspondent James Fenton – celebrates correspon-

dents and the events they covered, from the Thirty Years War to the fall of Baghdad. Some 400 reporters are featured, including William Howard Russell, Martha Gellhorn, Jon Swain, Michael Buerk, Martha Gellhorn, Charles Wheeler, Clare Hollingworth and Kate Adie.

Simpson peppers the book with his personal observations of both the reporters and the events they covered ("Saddam was an appalling man in many ways. But those of us who sat through his trial and had to watch him being hanged on camera, the howls of his executioners ringing in his ears, retained a certain respect for him. And I personally shall never forget meeting his gaze in the courtroom and watching the anger in his eyes turn to a certain humorous warmth.") Along the way, he notes the development of modern war reporting – for example, how the "Our gallant lads gave a cheer and charged over the parapet" tone of World War I gave way to a more sober and objective style in World War II.

The book is also a love letter to his profession. "[I]t's a farewell to the old-fashioned craft of the job, the kind of characters that I grew up knowing," Simpson told the *Daily Express*. "They were grand people who covered the globe. It's sad because I believe they are an endangered tradition; it's becoming too expensive for news outlets to maintain large numbers of them in the field." ❖

— By Trish Anderton



Meet the OPC Members: Q&A With Vernon Silver

BY TRISH ANDERTON

AN OXFORD-TRAINED archaeologist and journalist, **Vernon Silver** is a correspondent in Rome for Bloomberg News' Projects and Investigations team. His reporting on finance, art and culture has appeared in *Bloomberg Businessweek*, *The New York Times*, the Boston Globe, *Spy* magazine, and other publications. Silver won the OPC's Morton Frank award in 2001, and has also won a George Polk Award. He's the author of *The Lost Chalice: The Epic Hunt for a Priceless Masterpiece* (William Morrow, 2009). Silver graduated from Brown University, studied Egyptology at the American University in Cairo and earned a master's and doctorate in archaeology at Oxford.

Hometown: New York

Languages: Italian, Spanish and basic Arabic, Portuguese and French.

First job in journalism: Reporter, The Key West Citizen.

Countries reported from: Antigua, Bahrain, Belgium, Cuba, France, Germany, Greece, Haiti, India, Israel, Italy, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Malta, Palestinian Territories, Portugal, Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Philippines, Qatar, Switzerland, Tunisia,

Turkey, UAE, U.K, Vatican City and Vietnam.

Year you joined the OPC: 2002.

Most over-the-top assignment: Going under cover on a cruise ship to investigate offshore art auctions for Bloomberg Businessweek. (I tried to dress the part to blend in, but nobody else was wearing a teal sports coat.)

How does archaeology inform your work as a journalist? In both fields you're digging up things and writing about them. Techniques that underpin archaeology and anthropology can be important tools for journalists, too – helping them understand change over time, or showing how goods, ideas or people circulate and interact. Newspaper stories that trace where your T-shirt or French fries come from have a whole body of academic literature behind them that journalists might not know about.

Major challenge as a journalist: Connecting every dot in an investigation to remove any need for modifiers, vague language or hypotheticals. One such example was a Bloomberg story that linked a single piece of surveillance equipment made by a specific company to the torture of a dissident – all of whom were named.

Worst experience as a journalist: Being lied to.

How did you get the idea for *The Lost Chalice*?:

A trial here in Rome put the spotlight on how American museums stocked their display cases with artefacts looted from tombs in Italy. The reporting around the trial led me to a smuggler who led me to a rare Greek vase that had been missing for decades, which led to the book. The tale is told as the 2,500-year biography of a pot and the nutty mix of curators, collectors and tomb robbers that swirl around it.

When traveling, you like to ... : Order a club sandwich from room service while writing on deadline.

Hardest story: Physically, Iraq in Spring 2003, for the heat. Mentally, any contentious story involving both complex subject matter and powerful people or institutions.

Journalism heroes: My wife, @nwinfield. And OPC legends Edith Lederer and Morley Safer.

Advice for journalists who want to work overseas:

Learn a foreign language. I keep seeing reporters with relatively minimal experience get a foot in the door that way, both at home and abroad.

Dream job: Any job where I can follow my curiosity while having fun and impact. A Bloomberg Businessweek feature I wrote sparked a trial over Led Zepelin's authorship of *Stairway to Heaven* last year – so the job I've got now.

Favorite quote: "Comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable."

Place you're most eager to visit:

Finland, Scandinavia or Alaska. (After all these hot places, some snow and the northern lights would be good.)

Most common mistake

you've seen: Assuming the dominant narrative is right. From Saddam Hussein's WMD to Trump not having a shot at winning, going with conventional wisdom can be dangerous.

Want to add to the OPC's collection of Q&As with members? Please contact patricia@opcofamerica.org.

Country you most want to return to: Japan.

Twitter handle: @VTSilver ❖

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mixer at THE HALF KING

7:00 p.m.
March 22

Book Night: NO FRIENDS BUT THE MOUNTAINS

6:00 p.m.
March 22



ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER

6:00 p.m.
April 27



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