



# Overseas Press Club of America

## BULLETIN

### 2017 Board Election Slate Broadens Board's Range

BY BILL HOLSTEIN

**A**NOMINATING COMMITTEE has chosen a list of candidates for this year's election. I chaired the committee, which also included club President Deidre Depke, and governors Liam Stack, Abigail Pesta and Roxana Saberi. We strove to create a balanced, mixed slate with younger journalists as well as those who have enjoyed distinguished careers. We offer a geographic balance with candidates based in Washington, Miami, Paris and Kabul. Different forms of media – radio, TV, news agency, photography, print and on-line – are represented. We believe this slate will help the board to continue to provide strong leadership for many years to come and help keep the OPC relevant in a rapidly changing media environment.

The OPC is electing ten governors who are Active members and two who are Associate members.

The club is continuing to use the online voting website

Ballot.com to host its secure election. You will receive an e-mail in early August with a link to the election at the e-mail address where you receive OPC electronic correspondence. If you have not received this link by the end of August please e-mail [patricia@opc.ofamerica.org](mailto:patricia@opc.ofamerica.org) to obtain the link. The deadline for voting is Aug. 31. The results will be announced at the Annual Meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 5. This year the OPC will host a party at the Annual Meeting with free drinks and refreshments. Mark your calendar!

Each ballot requires a login, which is your e-mail address where you received the ballot link. The system allows one voting ballot and delineates between Active and Associate members. For those averse to the Web, fear not: you may still cast a paper ballot by e-mailing [Patricia@opc.ofamerica.org](mailto:Patricia@opc.ofamerica.org) or calling the OPC office at 212-626-9220. ❖

### OPC Bids a 'Bon Voyage' to Boots Duque

**A**SMALL CROWD of OPC notables gathered on July 19 to bid farewell to the club's longtime office manager, Lucrecia "Boots" Duque, who retires after nearly two decades at the end of July.

During a small party at The Playwright Tavern at the heart of the Theater District, about

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Lucrecia 'Boots' Duque

CHAD BOUCHARD

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### Panel to Focus on 'Photojournalists in the Crossfire'

**EVENT PREVIEW: SEPT. 13**

**F**ront lines, once thought of as spaces where opposing militaries clash, are increasingly located amid cities and civilian populations.

Media covering conflicts and internal strife in places like Caracas, Mexico City or Tahrir Square are targets for the police or opposition thugs.

This presents a particular chal-

lenge to photographers and people operating video equipment.

Two photojournalists will discuss how they deal with these issues at a panel co-sponsored by the OPC, the Photojournalism Program at Columbia Graduate School of Journalism and Columbia's Professional Prizes department: Meridith Kohut, an American based in Caracas, Venezuela since 2007, who won the OPC's Feature Photography Award this spring for her work in

*The New York Times* showing the plight of people inside state-run psychiatric hospitals in 2016; and Michael Robinson Chavez, a staff photographer for The Washington Post who has covered assignments in over 60 countries.

Moderating is Judith Matloff, a veteran foreign correspondent who now teaches conflict reporting at Columbia and recently published her third book, *No Friends but the Mountains*, which explores the high proportion of conflict

zones in mountain communities.

The event is presented in partnership with the Photojournalism program at Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and the Professional Prizes department. The panel will be held from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, Lecture Hall, 3rd floor, at 2950 Broadway. ❖

Click here to RSVP for the panel.

# 2017 Election Slate

## Active Members

### DAVID ARIOSTO

I am the supervising producer of National Public Radio's flagship news show, "All Things Considered." I joined NPR in 2017, following stints at Reuters, *National Geographic* and Al Jazeera America, where I covered war, politics, health care and other topics. I spent the previous decade in different roles at CNN, including reporting from Havana, Cuba in 2009 and 2010. My book about Cuba is set for release in spring of 2018, to be published by St. Martin's Press.



As an OPC governor, I'd engage in speaking events and make myself available at universities to advise and encourage the next generation of journalists. I'd also collaborate with other governors to determine best practices and brain storm initiatives for greater impact.

### PAULA E. DWYER

As a Bloomberg News editor and veteran of print and digital media, I believe I'm well-suited to represent the interests of working journalists everywhere. I'm now an editor for QuickTakes, Bloomberg's explanatory journalism project, where I work with numerous young reporters, many of whom are overseas and all of whom have an interest in maintaining press freedoms and learning the latest tools of the trade. Previously I was a columnist and editorial writer at Bloomberg View, where I was a Pulitzer finalist for editorials on Europe's debt crisis. I spent five years at *The New York Times* and 20 years at *Businessweek* magazine, serving in the 1990s as BW's London bureau chief, where I shared an OPC award for coverage of globalization. I am also co-author, with Arthur Levitt, the former Securities and Exchange Commission chairman, of *Take On the Street*, a *New York Times* bestseller about the culture of Wall Street.



### LINDA FASULO

It is an honor to run for the board of the OPC, an organization that plays such an important role in supporting international news reporting. I served on the board more than a decade ago and am excited about the possibility of doing so for a second time.

I am a journalist and author specializing in the United Nations and U.S. foreign policy. Based at the UN, I am a longtime independent correspondent for NPR News.



Other professional experience includes working as UN producer and correspondent for NBC News and MSNBC for a decade and as special UN correspondent for *US News & World Report* for 7 years. My book, *An Insider's Guide to the UN*, published by Yale University Press, is now in its third edition. I serve on the Executive Committee of the UN Correspondents Association (UNCA). I recently served as an OPC Awards judge and organized a program last fall on the UN in the world today. I am very interested in continuing these activities and participating in the press freedom committee.

### JOSH FINE

I'm a senior segment producer for HBO's "Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel." Recently I led our show's reporting team for "The Lords of the Rings," which won the OPC's inaugural Peter Jennings Award. It was my second OPC award. My international sports investigations have also won an Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Award, an Emmy, and were part of Real Sports' Peabody Award for television excellence and meritorious public service. Before HBO I was an associate producer for CBS News' "60 Minutes" and an off-air reporter for the ABC News Investigative Unit. As a governor, I hope to contribute to the planning of events, especially ones that further journalists' understanding of the dynamics at play in various regions around the world (hearing from Chinese dissidents, Russian reporters, etc).



### DAVID FURST

(David is on paternity leave. The OPC compiled this information on his behalf. No profile photo was available at press time.) David Furst is the international picture editor for *The New York Times*. According to World Press Photo, he became an editor after a decade as a photojournalist focusing on the Middle East. Since joining the *Times*, he has overseen coverage around the world that has won numerous awards. *New York Times* photographers supervised by David won all three OPC photo awards this year for work in 2016, and two awards the year before. They have won numerous other prizes, including the Pulitzer Prize, the George Polk Award and the World Press Photo of the Year.



### ANJALI KAMAT

I'm an independent journalist and have spent the past year reporting from South Asia with the Investigative Fund and writing a book on migrant labor in the Middle East for Verso Books. This year I wrote about shrinking press freedoms in India for the OPC's *Dateline* magazine. I grew up in India, studied Arabic, and have reported from the Middle East and South Asia for over a decade for Al Jazeera, Democracy Now!, Slate and other outlets. My work has won a Peabody, four Emmy nominations, an OPC award and an RFK award.



As an OPC governor, I would like to work on increasing the diversity of American foreign correspondents and highlight and support the significant reporting contributions of international journalists who work as fixers.

### AZMAT KHAN

I'm an investigative reporter and Future of War Fellow at New America. On the OPC board, I intend to work to expand the services the OPC offers its members, particularly protections while reporting internationally. As a journalist who's reported abroad both on staff and as a freelancer, and who's served two previous terms, I understand the dual needs of our members and how to forge partnerships that will allow the OPC to grow. Through affiliations with CUNY Journalism School's International Reporting Program, the Carey Institute for Global Good, and other key organizations, I'll also work diligently to recruit a wider member base.



### ROD NORDLAND

I've been an OPC member since 1985, when I worked at *Newsweek*, where I was chief foreign correspondent. I am now international correspondent at large (as well as Kabul bureau chief) at *The New York Times*. I've worked as a foreign correspondent in more than 150 countries, and covered most of the major conflicts and crises of the last three decades, and I continue to do so.

I haven't considered running for the OPC board previously because I am not in the States frequently enough to attend board meetings in person. But nowadays, given the capabilities of video conferencing platforms, even from difficult places like Afghanistan or Iraq, I can commit to attending meetings, at least virtually, and provide the perspective of a working American journalist whose entire career activity remains overseas, often in some of the world's most difficult places.



### MARY RAJKUMAR

I'm the International Enterprise editor for The Associated Press, where I have worked for 10 years. My team won the Pulitzer gold medal for Public Service in 2016 for a project on labor abuse in Southeast Asia, which led to the rescue of more than 500 enslaved fishermen. I also edited a project on how Venezuela is falling apart that won the top award from the OPC this year, the Hal Boyle. I am from Singapore, and currently live in Miami.



I had the honor the past two years of being an OPC governor. I believe the OPC has a critical role to play in fighting for press freedom worldwide and in helping international journalists to do their often dangerous work. I am passionate about diversity, and would like to see the OPC continue to promote it within both the organization and the industry.

### VIVIENNE WALT

I am a correspondent for *TIME* and *FORTUNE* magazines based in Paris, and have served on the OPC board since 2015. I have been a vocal advocate for the OPC among correspondents abroad, and organized programs with visiting American journalists in Paris. For my second term on the board, I want to ramp up the effort to involve journalists based overseas in the OPC.



I have traveled widely around Europe, Africa and the Middle East. I began writing for *TIME* during the Iraq War, and have since reported on multiple conflicts. My work has also been published in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *National Geographic*, and elsewhere. I am a regular guest on TV and radio in the US, and have also served as head judge for several OPC awards.

### OPC ANNUAL MEETING, SEPTEMBER 5th

The OPC Annual Meeting, open to all members, will be held on Tuesday, Sept. 5 at 6:00 p.m. at Club Quarters. Please congratulate the newly elected governors at a reception immediately following the meeting. This year, the OPC will elect ten (10) Active board members and two (2) Associate board members to begin two-year terms. Next month's Bulletin will feature bios and messages from candidates.

To cast your vote, you will receive an email from the OPC with a link to Ballototter, our online voting service, or you can call the office for a paper ballot at 212-626-9220. Results will be announced at the annual meeting.

# Associate Members

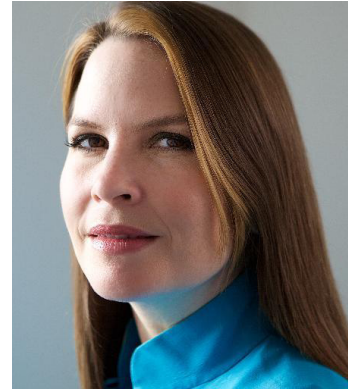
## BRIAN BYRD

I am running for the board because we are living in a time in which journalists have been declared public enemies, are purveyors of fake news, and have been targets for attacks. In no other time in recent history have journalists undergone an onslaught of this magnitude. Since joining OPC, I have been extremely active as a member by working on special events, enlisting new members, and panel discussions. My goal as a returning board member will be to continue to build the momentum OPC has gained in serving as the standard bearer in serving as a resource for journalists. Now, more than ever, journalism needs OPC to ensure the well-being of our members and other journalists.



## MINKY WORDEN

I have been involved with the OPC for nearly two decades, serving on the board, on the Freedom of the Press Committee, and organizing and moderating events. One focus has been building membership, including hosting the periodic “Tchotchke Night” party, a foreign correspondent “show-and-tell” and member-recruiting evening. I also serve on the OPC Foundation board. I am director of global initiatives at Human Rights Watch, where I have worked since 1998. I previously lived and worked in Hong Kong as an adviser to pro-democracy leader Martin Lee, and at the U.S. Department of Justice. A member of the Council on Foreign Relations, I speak Cantonese and German. I have written and edited three books, and have three sons. ❖



## ‘Bon Voyage’ Continued From Page 1

20 guests, including seven former OPC presidents, raised a glass to celebrate her hard work and years of service.

Former OPC President Bill Holstein read the Certificate of Lifetime Achievement from the Board of Governors in appreciation of her loyalty to the club, as well as “devotion, trust and patience” which “provided it with a constancy of purpose and stability of character.”

The proclamation also noted that “her keen eye has caused her to emerge as the sacred keeper of facts and astute proofreader of all manner of written material,” and lauded her “deep knowledge of various and assorted heroes and villains affiliated with the OPC [that] has made her a strategic asset.”

Former OPC Executive Sonya Fry, who worked with Duque from 1998 until 2014, said that “Boots was the perfect combination of attention to detail, politeness and generosity toward members.”

Fry also mused that Duque “has a photographic memory, which was very helpful before Google.” She remembered sharing personal losses and weathering Annual Awards Dinner stresses together over the 16 years they spent in the office together.

She read a letter from former OPC President John Corporon, who could not attend.

“OPC owes you a great debt of gratitude. Thanks again for your splendid service. We will miss you.”

Corporon served as the club’s president from 1996 to 1998.

“I could have never survived without Boots,” said



OPC Executive Director Patricia Kranz, citing her deep knowledge of club members and sharp memory. Kranz also struck an emotional note, thanking Duque for her professional and personal support.

“She’s been my rock at the OPC, and I’ll miss you.”

Duque told the crowd that she strived in her work not only to maintain professional standards, but also treating people with respect and dignity. “That’s my secret,” she said.

Duque plans to return to the country of her birth, Philippines, to enjoy her retirement among family members. ❖



## Bidding a Fond Farewell to Lucrecia 'Boots' Duque

PHOTOS: CHAD BOUCHARD



On left: OPC Executive Director Patricia Kranz, center left, thanks Boots Duque for her work.



On left: Allan Dodds Frank, left, and former OPC Executive Director Sonya Fry look on as Boots Duque speaks to the group.



Boots Duque, in foreground, with former OPC presidents (left to right) Michael Serrill, Marcus Mabry, Larry Martz, Bill Holstein, Alexis Gelber and Allan Dodds Frank.



Above: Bill Holstein, right, reads an OPC proclamation in honor of Boots Duque, center.



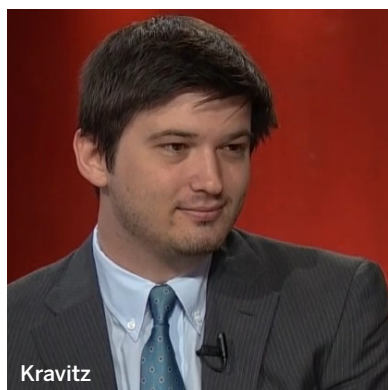
# PEOPLE

By Trish Anderton

## OPC SCHOLARS

**Elizabeth Barchas Prelogar**, who won the Flora Lewis Scholarship in 2006, is joining special counsel Robert Mueller's team to investigate possible coordination between the Trump campaign and Russia. Prelogar is a Harvard Law School grad who clerked for Supreme Court Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Elena Kagan. A former Fulbright scholar to Russia, she used her OPC scholarship to study the legal issues surrounding censorship there.

**Jeff Horwitz**, who won the OPC Foundation scholarship in memory of Fred Wiegold in 2009, is on the investigative team whose probe of an aviation mogul led *The Wall Street Journal* to fire its chief foreign correspondent, Jay Solomon. Horwitz and his colleagues at the AP reported in June that Solomon "was offered a 10 percent stake in a fledgling company, Denx LLC, by Farhad Azima, an Iranian-born aviation magnate who has ferried weapons for the CIA." Azima was one of Solomon's sources. Solomon denied any business involvement with Azima, but apologized in a statement to the AP, saying "I understand why the emails and the conversations I had with Mr. Azima may look like I was involved in some seriously troubling activities." Horwitz joined the wire service's investigative unit in 2014 after a stint as a reporter at *American Banker*.



C-SPAN

Kravitz

**Derek Kravitz** has won a Deadline Award for Newspaper or Digital Local News Reporting from the New York chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists. He shared the prize with colleagues at ProPublica for their series "The Rent Racket," about widespread problems with rent control and other tenant protections

in New York City. Kravitz is the research editor at ProPublica and teaches investigative reporting at Columbia's Stabile Center for Investigative Journalism. He previously

worked at *The Wall Street Journal*, The Associated Press, *The Washington Post* and the *Columbia Daily Tribune*. Kravitz won the 2014 Harper's Magazine Scholarship in memory of I.F.Stone.

The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists' massive Panama Papers project continues racking up honors. It won two Deadline Awards – in the Reporting by Independent Digital Media and Public Service categories – and was a finalist for the Daniel Pearl Investigative Reporting Award. 2005 Emanuel R. Freedman scholar **Marina Walker Guevara** coordinated reporters at more than 100 news outlets in the joint investigation.

## WINNERS

OPC Governor **Abigail Pesta** won the Deadline Award for Magazine Feature Reporting for her *Cosmopolitan* story, "Three Young Women, Killed. Why Do Some People Say It Was All a Hoax?" The story focuses on "truthers" who believe high-profile shootings like the 2012 Sandy Hook massacre were faked, and who harass the victims' families. Meanwhile, Pesta's new book, *How Dare the Sun Rise: Memoirs of a War Child*, written with Sandra Uwiringiyimana, is garnering raves. "This hard-hitting autobiography will have readers reeling as it shows one young woman's challenging path to healing," wrote Kirkus Reviews.

OPC member **David Rohde** has won the Deadline Award for Newspaper for Digital Enterprise Reporting. He shares the honor with his Reuters colleagues for "The Uncounted," a series of stories about the rising threat of antibiotic-resistant infections. The series also received an honorable mention in the Consumer Journalism-Newspapers category of the National Press Club Awards. Rohde has worked at Reuters since 2011. Previously he was a foreign correspondent at *The New York Times*.



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Addario

The Deadline Award winner for Multimedia, Interactive Graphics, and Animation is former OPC member **Lynsey Addario**. She shares the award with Aryn Baker for their *Time* Magazine story "The Only One God Left Alive," a profile of a 13-year old boy who survived a massacre in South Sudan. Addario's photos regularly appear in *The New York Times*, *National Geographic*, and *TIME*. She has covered conflicts and humanitarian crises including Afghanistan, Iraq, Darfur, Libya, Syria, Lebanon, South Sudan, Somalia and Congo.

OPC member **Brett Forrest** was a finalist for the Deadline Award in the Magazine Investigative Reporting category for "The FBI vs FIFA." The *ESPN the Magazine* story, which he wrote with Shaun Assael and Vivek Chaudhary, details how a small team of federal investigators uncovered corruption at the highest levels of soccer's international governing body. Forrest has since left ESPN for *The Wall Street Journal* (see Updates).

**Jordan Robertson, Michael Riley** and **Andrew Willis** of *Bloomberg Businessweek* have won the Deadline Awards Magazine Investigative Reporting prize and the Sigma Delta Chi Magazine Investigative Reporting (National Circulation) prize for "How to Hack an Election." The same crew won 2016 Morton Frank Award for their story, which profiles a man who claims to have rigged elections throughout Latin America.



The 2015 OPC Malcolm Forbes Award honoree, **Stephen Grey**, is a co-winner of this year's Deadline Awards Daniel Pearl Prize for Investigative Reporting. Grey and Reuters colleagues Selam Gebrekidan and Amina Ismail produced the interactive web project "The Migration Machine," which covered Europe's refugee crisis from multiple angles.

**Nelson D. Schwartz** of *The New York Times*, a 2005 OPC Morton Frank citation winner, took home the Deadline Awards Business Feature prize for "Can Trump Save Their Jobs? They're Counting On It," a profile of employees at the Carrier factory in Indianapolis.

**Margie Mason** and **Martha Mendoza** of The Associated Press won the Deadline Awards Business Investigative Reporting category for "Exploited in Paradise," a story about undocumented workers in Hawaii's fishing industry. They won the OPC's Malcolm Forbes Award and Hal Boyle Award in 2015 for their reporting on slavery in the seafood business.

Multiple OPC Award-winner **Tom Burgis** has claimed the Sigma Delta Chi Award for Investigative Reporting (Affiliated). Burgis's story, "The Great Land Rush," was written in partnership with Pilita Clark, Michael Peel and Charlie Bibby of the *Financial Times*. The multimedia series traces the impacts of the worldwide struggle to acquire land.

## UPDATES

**NEW YORK:** OPC member **Norman Pearlstine** retired as vice chairman of Time, Inc. in mid-July. "I'm grateful and proud to have spent 14 years at one of the most influential and storied media companies," Pearlstine said in a statement. In addition to his two stints at *TIME* — one as chief content officer and vice chair from 2013 to 2017, and one as editor-in-chief from 1995 to 2005 — he spent more than two decades at *The Wall Street Journal* and shorter stints at Dow Jones, Bloomberg LP and Forbes. His retirement plans include advising companies and writing.

**NEW YORK:** OPC member **Christopher Sherman** and multiple OPC Award winner **Rodrigo Abd** racked up 3,000 miles in two weeks while traveling the whole of the US-Mexico border for the AP this spring. What they found was "a region convulsed by uncertainty and angst, but rooted in a shared culture and history unlikely to be transformed by any politician, or any barrier man can construct," Sherman wrote. "It's a relationship that can be adversarial at times. Far more often, it's symbiotic." Sherman has been with the AP since 2008; previously he worked at *The Orlando Sentinel*. Abd shot for *La Razón* and *La Nación* newspapers in Buenos Aires before joining the AP in 2003.

*The Wall Street Journal* has hired **Brett Forrest** to cover national security and investigative subjects. Forrest, an OPC member, was previously a senior writer for *ESPN The Magazine*. As a freelancer he has reported from nearly 50 countries, with stories appearing in more than 30 languages.

*Vanity Fair* editor and OPC member **David Friend** has a book coming out in the fall. Friend writes that *The Naughty Nineties: The Triumph of the American Libido* "looks at how Boomers took power in Washington, Madison Avenue, and Hollywood, ratcheting up the culture wars. It addresses the emergence of the Web, reality TV, mainstream porn, 24/7 scandal coverage, and the breakdown between our private and public lives." Interviewees include Anita Hill, Monica Lewinsky, Woody Allen, Frank Rich, and key members of the Clinton and Bush administrations.

OPC member **Adriana Loureiro Fernandez** was one of just 150 photographers selected out of 2900 entrants to the Fifth Annual New York Portfolio Review. Fernandez writes that "Paraíso Perdido," her series of photos from Venezuela, "chronicles the cycle of violence in a decaying country." The Portfolio Review is sponsored by *The New York Times* LENS Blog and the City University of New York Graduate School of

Journalism. It features workshops and private photo critiques for up-and-coming photographers. Fernandez has freelanced for national news outlets in Venezuela; she is currently getting her masters degree in journalism at Columbia.

"Without Us, It's *The New York Times*" and "Copy Editors Save Our Buts" were two of the signs carried by *New York Times* journalists at a 15-minute walkout and demonstration in June. Hundreds of employees took part in the walkout to protest cuts to the copy desk. Executive Editor **Dean Baquet**, an OPC member, and managing editor Joe Kahn have said the editorial reorganization is necessary to speed production and reduce layers of editing. They add that most of the editors being cut will get new editing jobs at the paper.

**WASHINGTON, DC:** The 400 SAG-AFTRA members at **NPR** have reached a contract deal after the group threatened to strike. The union said its talks with the network centered on NPR's desire to offer lower minimum salaries to new hires and to have greater flexibility in contracting work out to member stations. The union's contract expired June 30. In a statement, NPR called the new contract "forward-looking." The union said the new contract "provides for salary increases," adding that a proposed two-tier salary system that would have paid new hires less than veteran staffers was scuttled.

The **News Media Alliance** is seeking an antitrust exemption from Congress in order to negotiate with Facebook and Google on behalf of its members. The Alliance, which represents more than 2,000 newspapers and websites, claims the internet giants have been allowed to gain a stranglehold on digital audiences while failing to properly compensate news outlets for the high cost of journalism.

A new survey finds that Republicans and Republican-leaning independents overwhelmingly feel the news media is bad for America. The **Pew Research Center** found some 85

## Andrea DiCenzo

Freelance  
Erbil, Iraq  
Active Overseas, Young  
(30-34)

## Saba Imtiaz

Freelance  
Amman, Jordan  
Active Overseas, Young  
(30-34)

## Jake Naughton

Freelance  
London  
Active Overseas, Young  
29 or under

# PEOPLE

percent of those on the right feel the news has “a negative effect on the way things are going in the country.” That number has held steady for the past few years. Democrats, however, have begun seeing more value in journalism. Forty-four percent say the news media has a positive impact – an 11 percent rise since last August.

**LOS ANGELES:** *The Los Angeles Times* announced a “limited voluntary buyout plan” in mid-June for employees with more than 15 years in the newsroom. In a memo to staff, editor and publisher Davan Maharaj wrote that “we need to address the current economic realities as we work to secure our future.” A round of buyouts in 2015 resulted in the exit of more than 80 reporters and editors.

**SYDNEY:** Australia’s top journalism awards are under fire after eliminating international reporting from the roster of prizes. In a statement on its website, the **Walkley Foundation** said it was dropping the category because “international journalism can be entered in any Walkley Award category – and these stories frequently win.” Sydney journalism professor Helen Vatsikopoulos called that argument weak. “On any given day in newsrooms around the country, journalists are asked to volunteer for assignments in Syria, Yemen and Iraq,” she wrote on TheConversation.com. “Only a few will ever put their hands up. This is about honouring them.”

**BEIRUT:** OPC member **Alessandra Masi** was chosen as a contributor to this year’s *Attacks on the Press Anthology* from the Committee to Protect Journalists. She wrote about the challenges of covering Syria from outside the country: “It is difficult to call a spade a spade when you haven’t seen it yourself.” But Masi, who is based in Beirut, said the struggle is worthwhile: “As long as there are people in Syria who want to tell their stories, we will try to find a way to make them heard.” Learn more about Masi in this month’s Meet the OPC Members on page 11.

**NAIROBI:** A U.S.-funded counterterrorism program may be threatening the lives of the people it’s trying to help, OPC member **Mukhtar Ibrahim** wrote recently for BuzzFeed. According to documents obtained by BuzzFeed, the U.S. Agency for International Development has spent more than \$3 million on the secret campaign to spread anti-extremism messages through social media, music and religious organizations. But some of the recipients of the cash have been targeted for threats or retaliation by extremists. Meanwhile, according to a local analyst, many Kenyans see the program as irrelevant because it’s imposed on them by the West. Ibrahim is a general assignment reporter for Minnesota Public Radio.

**LAGOS:** Google is working with the World Bank and the nonprofit organization Code for Africa to train 6,000 journalists from around Africa in data journalism skills within the next nine months. The trainings will be held in Abuja, Lagos, Nairobi, Cape Town, Johannesburg, Durban, Casablanca, Dakar, Freetown, Dares Salaam, Kampala and Yaounde. “With the Digital Journalism Initiative, we want to contribute to the growth of Africa’s news and media ecosystem,” OPC member **Daniel Sieberg**, who heads training and development at Google News Lab, told the *Nigerian Tribune*.

## PEOPLE REMEMBERED

Three journalists have died of injuries sustained in an explosion in Mosul, Iraq on June 19. **Bakhtiyar Haddad**, **Stephan Villeneuve** and **Veronique Robert** were embedded with Iraqi forces in the Ras Al-Jadah district when a land mine exploded. Robert, 54, was a veteran war correspondent for France Television, specializing in the Middle East. Haddad, 41, was an Iraqi Kurdish journalist who had worked as a translator and fixer for French journalists in northern Iraq for more than a decade. Villeneuve, a 48-year-old cameraman, was also a veteran journalist who had covered conflicts in Bosnia, Sarajevo, Mogadishu, Rwanda, Kosovo, Congo, Haiti, Yemen, Iraq and Tunisia. The three were working together at the time of the explosion. ❖

# PRESS FREEDOM UPDATE...

Denmark has voted to repeal its **blasphemy law**, but a study by the International Press Institute finds bans on insults to religion remain common in Europe. Of the 57 states in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, 19 still have blasphemy laws, including Austria, Canada, Germany, Greece, Russia, Switzerland, parts of the United Kingdom and Vatican City. IPI Director of Press Freedom Programmes Scott Griffen has warned that such laws “discourage journalistic coverage of, and public discussion on, re-

ligion’s impact on society and public policy.”

The Knight First Amendment Institute has sued **President Trump** and his social team for blocking people on Twitter. The suit filed in the Southern District of New York argues that the blocks violate the right to free speech. “The White House is transforming a public forum into an echo chamber,” Knight senior staff attorney Katie Fallow stated in a press release. “Its actions violate the rights of the people who’ve been

blocked and the rights of those who haven’t been blocked but who now participate in a forum that’s being sanitized of dissent.”

Noted Bahraini blogger and human rights defender **Nabeel Rajab** has been sentenced to two years in prison for “spreading rumours and false information” in national and international TV interviews. Rajab, the head of the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights, has been jailed several times since 2012 and is in poor health. According to Reporters



Without Borders, 14 journalists and citizen journalists are currently in detention in Bahrain.

Reporters Without Borders (RSF)

argues the Chinese government is guilty of “murder by lack of care” in the death of writer **Liu Xiaobo**. Liu, a Nobel Peace Prize winner and RSF press freedom laureate, died of liver cancer on July 13, less than three weeks after being moved from jail to a hospital.

“It is outrageous that the Chinese authorities waited

until Liu Xiaobo’s cancer was in the terminal stage before treating him in hospital,” RSF secretary-general Christophe Deloire said. The organization called on China to release Liu’s wife, Liu Xia, from house arrest.

The phones of Mexican journalists and human rights advocates have been targeted with cyberware that monitors all aspects of their digital activity and can even act as a bug to eavesdrop on conversations. *The New York Times* reports that at least three Mexican security agencies have bought the **sophisticated Israeli spyware** called Pegasus. The purchase agreement limited the program to use against terrorists and criminals. But a *Times* investigation found it had been employed against “some of the government’s most outspoken critics and their families, in what many view as an unprecedented effort to thwart the fight against the corruption infecting every limb of Mexican society.”

Two bills now speeding through Russia’s legislature would “drive one of the last nails into the coffin of **Internet freedom in Russia**,” according to Johann Bihl, head of the Eastern Europe and Central Asia desk at Reporters Without Borders. The first bill would crack down on VPNs, proxy networks and other ways of bypassing government censorship, as well as forcing search engines to remove all references to sites blocked in Russia. The second would require instant messaging platforms like

WhatsApp to work with Russian mobile phone operators to identify their users. Russia currently ranks 148th out of 180 countries in RSF’s World Press Freedom Index.



Journalists deliver an “El Bus TV” report directly to riders in Venezuela.

In an effort to bring unbiased reporting to people disconnected from the internet, Venezuelan journalists are delivering live newscasts on city buses. **El Bus TV** dispatches teams of four to five people to board city buses in Caracas and read about three minutes’ worth of news. Besides the newscaster, the teams include two people to record the event for social media and one to hold a cardboard outline of a tv set. Claudia Lizardo, a creative director for a digital content studio, first had the idea for the effort. “Being read the news in person is really important for this sector of the population and critical for eliminating disinformation,” she told the Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas. The volunteer initiative is now being replicated in the states of Anzoátegui, Barinas and Carabobo.

Qatar’s neighbors are no longer insisting that the Gulf nation shut down **Al Jazeera**. Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates broke ties with Qatar in June, accusing it of supporting terrorism. The four states issued a list of 13 demands, including a requirement that Qatar shutter the state-funded network. But *The New York Times* reported in mid-July that the demands had been dropped, as officials expressed hope of resolving the conflict. “Our aim is to reach a diplomatic solution,” Saudi Arabia’s United Nations ambassador, Abdullah bin Yahya Almuwallimi, told the *Times*.

## MURDERS

● Pakistani journalist **Baksheesh Elahi** was shot to death on his way to work on June 11. Baksheesh was alone when he was attacked by unknown assailants on a motorcycle in Haripur, about 50 miles north of Islamabad, police told the CPJ. There is no known motive for the attack. Elahi was the Haripur bureau chief for the daily newspaper K2. A local journalists’ organization placed Elahi’s body at a major intersection and blocked traffic for hours in protest, local media reported, demanding that their colleague’s killers be arrested.

● The remains of Mexican journalist **Salvador Adame Pardo** were found on June 14, a month after he was abducted by gunmen in the western state of Michoacán. A veteran of the news industry, Adame was the founder and director of local television station 6TV. He and his wife Frida Urtiz had been arrested in April while covering a local protest, but it’s unknown whether that is related to his murder. Pardo is the seventh journalist killed so far this year in Mexico, making it the deadliest country for members of the news media.

● A Honduran cameraman who fled to Mexico seeking safety was shot and killed in Acayucan, Veracruz, on July 9. **Edwin Rivera Paz**, 28, moved Mexico shortly after friend and colleague Igor Padilla Chávez was murdered in January in San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Rivera Paz worked with Padilla on the comedy program “Los Verduleros.” A local news outlet reporter that he feared for his life because of their association, according to the Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas. ❖

# NEW BOOKS

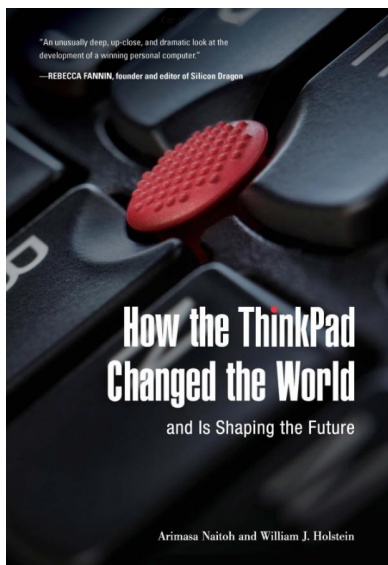
## THINKPADS

**T**HAT OTHER computer company named after a type of fruit may get the lion's share of press, but in their new book, Bill Holstein and Arimasa Naitoh make a compelling case that IBM's Thinkpad laptops have also had a profound impact on our culture.

*How the ThinkPad Changed the World—and is Shaping the Future* [Skyhorse Publishing, June 2017] traces the development of IBM's flagship line from the early days of 35-pound "luggable" computers to today's Thinkpad Yoga, which weighs about as much as a three-ring binder full of paper.

Naitoh is known as the Father of the Thinkpad. He first made a name for himself by methodically tracking down electromagnetic interference problems that threatened to sideline some of IBM's early computers. He was then put in charge of a critical project: producing the company's first battery-powered PCs. In 1989, IBM had beat out Apple and DEC on a project to make portable computers for the Harvard Business School. At the IBM lab in Yamato, Japan, Naitoh set out to prove the company was up to the challenge.

The Japanese team was a good choice, Naitoh



muses, because in Japan, land is scarce: "Our culture encourages us to make everything lighter and smaller, which is the opposite of the United States, where bigger things are desired. Big people need big trucks to go shopping in big stores with wide aisles."

Naitoh and his team succeeded, after a year of work so demanding he told a colleague he thought he was dying from the pressure. The ThinkPad was born — and it quickly spread. Barbara Bush snagged an early model to write her book about Millie, the White House dog. It was the first computer used on the summit of Mt. Everest, and became a staple at the International Space Station.

Holstein, a veteran business journalist and

president of the Overseas Press Club Foundation, has written a lively book that avoids getting bogged down in tech talk. This slender volume isn't just the story of a computer; in many ways it is the story of modern computing, and the challenges engineers overcame to create today's small and powerful devices. ♦

## ICONIC BROADCASTER

**B**EFORE **WALTER** Cronkite, there was Lowell Thomas: the host of America's most popular daily radio newscast and the voice of movie-theater newsreels. In his new book, Mitchell Stephens argues Thomas wasn't just the first broadcast news star: he was also the progenitor of modern American news.

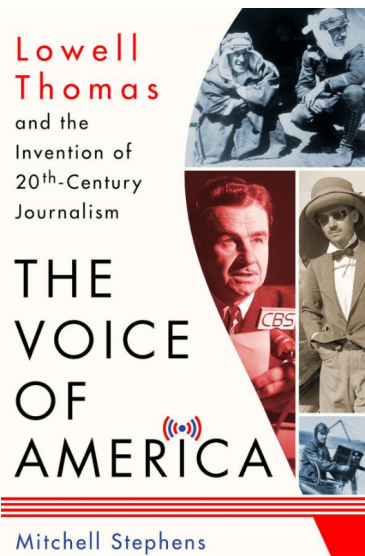
*The Voice of America: Lowell Thomas and the Invention of 20th Century Journalism* [St. Martin's Press, June 2017] traces Thomas's beginnings as a small-town crime and scandal reporter. At age 25 Thomas made a bid for the national stage with a gambit he described as "more colossal than anything of its kind ever tried": with still and film cameras in hand, he sailed off to report on how the First World War was unfolding around the globe.

That trip brought him to Jerusalem, where he met T.E. Lawrence and followed him to Aqaba. The next year he would turn the film and photos from that trip into a multimedia stage show — starring, of course, Thomas himself — that played to large crowds at the Royal Albert Hall. It was called *With Allenby in Palestine and Lawrence in Arabia*, and it transformed both Lawrence and Thomas into celebrities.

It was the daily network radio show, however, that Stephens credits with transforming American journalism. Thomas was

hired to host *Topics in Brief* in 1930. Its sponsor, *Literary Digest*, insisted that the host avoid partisanship. "They wanted me to play it right down the middle," he later recalled, "which was the natural thing for me anyway." Thomas's style, Stephens argues "did as much to further this devotion to balance, to impartiality, in the United States as anything else."

By the start of the Second World War, Lowell Thomas regularly brought the news to an estimated one-quarter of American adults via radio and newsreels. He continued to travel, and report on his adventures, until the end of his life — last circling the globe at age 84. Stephens, an NYU journalism professor and author of several books about journalism, writes vividly about Thomas's life and his lasting impact on the craft. ♦







## Meet the OPC Members: Q&A With *Alessandria Masi*

BY TRISH ANDERTON

**A**LESSANDRIA MASI is the managing editor of Syria Deeply and chief of News Deeply's Beirut bureau. Previously, she served as breaking news reporter, terrorism reporter and Middle East correspondent at IBT Media, and as a reporter at Vocativ. Her coverage of the Syrian refugee crisis won a Society for American Business Editors and Writers (SABEW) international reporting award. She is a graduate of New York University with a double major in journalism and Middle East studies.

**Hometown:** Montreal, Canada.

**Education:** New York University, double major in Journalism and Middle East Studies.

**Languages:** English, French, Italian, Arabic.

**First job in journalism:** Middle East North Africa reporter at Vocativ.

**Countries reported from:** U.S., France, Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey.

**Year you joined the OPC:** 2015.

**How did you become interested in the Middle East?:** I grew up in a family and community that did not know much about the region. This did not really change after 9/11, but they did, however, develop a fear and animosity toward what they perceived as "the other." I think, at first, I wanted to confirm my belief that we're not all as different as I had been told. Once I had established that, living in Lebanon stopped being "on assignment" and the people, the food and the quirks of daily life turned it into home.

**Major challenges as a journalist:** Keeping perspective when covering the same issue or conflict consistently.

**Best journalism advice received:** When first on assignment, pay attention to where all the other reporters are going. Then go the other way.

Bring extra socks and snacks.

**Worst experience as a journalist:** Being asked by superiors why I haven't Tweeted enough, after they heard I was

in a highly-tense and potentially dangerous situation. Then being asked to make sure the photos I did tweet were not too gruesome.

**When traveling, you like to ...** Eat as much of the local cuisine as is acceptable. Through the sharing and eating of food, I've met people who have taught me more about a new place than I could have ever discovered on my own.

**Hardest story:** Syria has been the hardest story for me. I know the toll the war is taking but I haven't yet seen the conflict on the ground myself. Not being able to see what's happening first-hand challenges me every day when trying to find truth in the vastly different narratives and make sense of the huge amount of information coming out of Syria.

**Journalism heroes:** The many women reporters dominating Middle East coverage. Some are seasoned correspondents who have decades of experience and who were my journalistic idols growing up. Some are recently-arrived freelancers fighting for every story they believe is important.

**Advice for journalists who want to work overseas:** Don't be afraid to ask for help. Don't sell yourself short.

**Place you're most eager to visit:** Syria, Afghanistan, Algeria.

**Most common mistake you've seen:** Self-censoring for the sake of balance, or not trusting yourself when you believe you've uncovered information that questions the mainstream narrative. Engaging in what I call "fortune telling journalism" when breaking news happens instead of focusing on only what we know.

**Country you most want to return to:** Belgrade, Morocco.

**Twitter handle:** @alessandriamasi ❖

Want to add to the OPC's collection of Q&As with members? Please contact [patricia@opcofamerica.org](mailto:patricia@opcofamerica.org).

# UPCOMING EVENTS

**Annual Meeting**  
**Open to all members**  
**6 p.m. Sept. 5**

*NOTE: Food and drink will be  
served at a reception  
after the meeting!*

**Photojournalists  
in The Crossfire**  
**6:00 p.m.**  
**Sept. 13**



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