



# Overseas Press Club of America

## BULLETIN

### OPC Renames Commentary and Cartoon Awards; Honors Flora Lewis

BY PATRICIA KRANZ

**T**HE OPC has named its award for best commentary on international news for Flora Lewis, a correspondent and columnist who won four OPC awards during her decades-long career.

"Much of her work, done when foreign policy was made by men who thought women had no place in the world of diplomacy, revealed deep knowledge of history inflected by the experience of living through some of the most turbulent events of an epochal century," said her obituary in *The New York Times*, published on June 3, 2002. She was 79.

The obituary summarized her extraordinary career. She got her first job in 1942 with The Associated Press and over the years covered Europe and Latin America for American and European newspapers. In 1956, when her husband Sydney Gruson was *The New York Times*'s correspondent in Warsaw, she was hired by *The Washington Post*. The *Times*'s nepotism rules at the time barred her from being hired as long as her husband also worked there. "The rules, of course, essentially acted to stop women from becoming correspondents. It took decades for the paper to see the light," said her son Lindsey Gruson.

Lewis later reported from Bonn, Eastern Europe and London for the *Post* and in 1965 was chosen to open the paper's bureau in New York City. After her divorce, she joined *The New York Times* in 1972 as bureau chief in Paris and also became the paper's European diplomatic correspondent. In 1980 she became the paper's third foreign affairs correspondent.

She won the OPC's award for Best Interpretation of Foreign Affairs in 1962 for *The Washington Post* and in 1976 and 1978 for *The New York Times*. In 1956, she won the OPC's Best Magazine Reporting of Foreign Affairs for work in *The New York Times Magazine*.

"Foreign affairs reportage and commentary were her life," said past OPC President David A. Andelman. "She knew everyone and everyone knew and

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Flora Lewis

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NEW YORK TIMES

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## Call For Entries



Eligibility Period: January 1, 2018 – December 31, 2018  
Submission Deadline is: 11:59 pm EST, January 30, 2019

**OVERSEAS PRESS CLUB OF AMERICA ANNUAL AWARDS**

Honoring the Best in International Journalism  
[www.opcofamerica.org](http://www.opcofamerica.org)



The OPC Awards competition is now open for submissions. We invite you to submit entries for international coverage in Newspapers, News Services, Digital, Magazines, Radio, Podcasts, Television, Video, Cartoons, Books and Photography. The general deadline is Jan. 30, and the Cornelius Ryan deadline is Jan. 9, 2019. Click on the banner on the left to read more on the awards submission page, or check the OPC home page at [opcofamerica.org](http://opcofamerica.org).

# Freelance Journalists Discuss Industry Challenges After TV Pilot Screening

## EVENT RECAP

BY CHAD BOUCHARD

**B**ILL GENTILE, a veteran journalist and documentary filmmaker who teaches journalism at American University in Washington, DC, has launched a new documentary TV series to explore the lives and challenges of freelance journalists on the front lines around the world.

On Nov. 14, the OPC hosted a special screening of the pilot episode for 'FREELANCERS,' which profiled several journalists struggling to make a living. As host of the show, Gentile shadows freelancers in Nogales, Mexico as they cover the dangerous world of drug and human traffickers at the Arizona border. He also talks with a couple that both work as freelancers as they weather the turbulence of a restless lifestyle together, as well as a woman who works on her own and struggles to maintain bonds in her personal life.

After the screening, Gentile moderated a discussion with freelancers Sulome Anderson and Jason Motlagh.

"I think one of the myths that we're trying to push back on is the idea that Americans don't want to see foreign news," Gentile said. "And I don't believe that. I really



Left to right: Sulome Anderson, Bill Gentile and Jason Motlagh.

do believe that Americans want to see, read, listen to, learn about foreign events, if it's packaged in the right way."

A group of journalism students from Rutgers University attended the event. Gentile addressed them directly, telling them to learn as many skills as possible.

"Photography, video work, producing, writing – learn all of those skills, because you're going to need them. They're in demand, and you're going to need every skill that you can put to task to survive financially."

Anderson is a journalist based in Beirut, Lebanon and New York City. While she encouraged students to pursue journalism as a career, she cautioned that changes in the industry have made the business of freelancing much more challenging.

"New organizations have been downsizing foreign bureaus and staff for a long time, but there was still a market. And that has increasingly shrunk," she said, adding that news operations have become much more cautious and fraught with legal issues after the ISIS killings of James Foley and Steven Sotloff in 2014.

"News organizations reacted to that in several ways. Obviously with more awareness and concern around the safety of freelance correspondents, which is great, and that needs to happen. But what also happened is that they stopped taking these stories. A lot of them just don't take freelance pitches. To get a freelance pitch through their legal team is an incredibly arduous and difficult process."

Anderson's work has appeared

'COMMENTARY/CARTOON'  
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admired her. She could parachute into the most remote capitals and within hours have tested the temperature, talked with just the right folks and turned out a perfectly crafted column. Her extraordinary legacy will live on admirably in this award."

Gruson said his mother would have been delighted and grateful to have the award named after her. "We hope it will in some way spur other reporters to emulate her," he said.

The OPC Board of Governors also has decided to make a change to the OPC's award for best cartoons on international affairs. Since 1978, the award has been named for Thomas Nast, an influential American cartoonist in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, Nast's legacy includes cartoons that exhibited an ugly bias against immigrants, the Irish and Catholics.

"The Board had a thoughtful and robust conversation regarding the issues brought to light regarding some of Thomas Nast's editorial cartoons," said OPC President Pancho Bernasconi. "Once we became aware of how some groups and ethnicities were portrayed in a manner that is not consistent with how journalists work and view their role today, we voted to remove his name from the award." ♦

Click here to watch video clips from the panel.

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YOU ARE INVITED:

## THE OPC HOLIDAY PARTY

COME CELEBRATE THE SEASON WITH COLLEAGUES ON WEDNESDAY, JAN. 9, FROM 6:00 P.M. TO 8:00 P.M. AT CLUB QUARTERS. THE EVENT WILL BE HELD IN THE DINING ROOM.

THE COST IS \$50 PER PERSON. ADVANCE RESERVATIONS ARE ESSENTIAL. PLEASE CLICK ON THIS IMAGE TO RSVP AND SELECT A PAYMENT OPTION, OR SEND A CHECK TO THE OPC AT: 40 WEST 45TH STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10036.

# Panel Explores US-China 'Cold War' and Impact on Taiwan

## EVENT RECAP

BY CHAD BOUCHARD

**A**MID TRADE disputes, security scuffles and cyberattacks on intellectual property, China analysts and watchers are warning that the U.S. and China may be settling in for a long Cold War. That puts a country like Taiwan, with China still disputing its sovereignty and the U.S. offering some arm's-length support, on a knife's edge.

On Oct. 30, 2018, the OPC hosted a panel discussion about ongoing tension between the two superpowers and its bearing on Taiwan.

Past OPC President William J. Holstein, who was based in Hong Kong and Beijing from 1979 to 1982 for United Press International, moderated the discussion. During his introduction, he held up a recent issue of *The Economist* with a cover story titled "US vs. China, a Dangerous Rivalry."

"Clearly there's been a shift in the American and British media's tone of coverage," Holstein said. With the two nations sparring over tariffs, naval maneuvers in the South China Sea and Taiwan Strait, and diplomatic rows over trade-secret espionage allegations, Holstein asked panelists if the "Cold War" label was warranted.

Andrew Nathan, a professor at Columbia University and one



CHAD BOUCHARD

Left to right: Richard Bernstein, William J. Holstein, Russell Hsiao and Andrew Nathan.

of America's foremost experts on China and its foreign policy, said the U.S. intelligence community is particularly concerned about cyberattacks.

"The Pentagon is very worried about China's ability to potentially attack Taiwan or to prevent the United States from effectively intervening because of the way they've modernized their military to hold the US military forces off the

*Continued on Page 5*

Click here to watch video clips from the panel.

## OPC Press Badge Creates Access in Pittsburgh Crisis

BY CHRISS SWANEY

**O**N A rainy October day in Pittsburgh, Pa., I walked quickly to the first of several press conferences that would unveil the somber and tragic acts of Robert Bowers. Armed with an assault rifle and three handguns, Bowers charged into the sanctuary of the Tree of Life temple in Squirrel Hill, screaming "all Jews must die" before spraying bullets indiscriminately on the worshippers. Killing 11 and wounding six others, FBI officials said the scene was worse than an airplane crash.

Anti-Semitism appeared to run deep for Bowers, 46. Before it was deleted, a social media account believed to belong to him was filled with anti-Jewish slurs and references to anti-Jewish conspiracy theories.

The victims of his unbridled rage were identified in a second press conference where my OPC press tags once again helped me secure a front row seat in a jammed press conference room at Pittsburgh's emergency dispatch center.

As my OPC tags tangled aimlessly around my neck, officials slowly and methodically read the long list of victim names. In addition to the mostly elderly victims who were killed, six people, including four police officers, were wounded before the suspect was arrested. Two

of the surviving victims remain in critical condition.

Following the press conferences, I was assigned to cover the court proceedings. Without proper identification, you simply do not gain access. I flashed my OPC press badges, a driver's license and glint of a smile before being searched. Finally, I was whisked through a labyrinth of police security to courtroom 8A, one of the oldest, ornate court rooms in the city.

I slid into a pew and watched the man charged in the Pittsburgh synagogue massacre appear in court shackled to a wheelchair. The onetime truck driver, who frequently posted anti-Semitic material online and was described by neighbors as a loner, was charged with 29 federal felony counts and could face the death penalty if convicted.

From the courtroom, I jogged back to the bus stop where my OPC press badges afforded me a free ride on public transit. The bus driver was so impressed with the tangled mass of badge colors that I received another front row seat.

The next stop was coverage of a myriad of funerals for the victims. Press was not permitted in the sanctuaries, so I had to snare mourners when they departed from the service. It was heart wrenching to hear their tearful praise of victims.

Mourners remembered brothers Cecil and David Rosenthal as "the helpers" at Pittsburgh's Tree of Life synagogue, where they were among the 11 congregants shot to death on the Jewish Sabbath. Others remembered the kind, giving nature of so many of the victims.

And to my surprise, mourners also thanked me for being there to tell their stories. Unlike some pedantic political pundits who refer to the media as the "enemy of the people;" we are, in fact, teachers and messengers of hope. My mother, Gwen C. Swaney used to define journalists as teachers. She would say, "the best teachers are those who show you where to look, but don't tell you what you should see."

May our readers and listeners always enjoy the journey.

*Chriss Swaney is a freelance writer for Reuters, Pittsburgh Engineer, U.S. News & World Report, Print Newspaper, Workers Compensation.com, Forward Magazine and Antique Trader Magazine. She has been a member of the OPC since 1997.* ❖



Swaney



# What Happened to 'The New Media?'

BY WILLIAM J. HOLSTEIN

AS A fine piece in *The Washington Post* titled "The Digital-Media Bubble Is Bursting" makes abundantly clear, the New Media mavens who once appeared to be the future of journalism are running out of gas. Vice, Quartz, BuzzFeed, Mic and other Internet-based news organizations are not meeting their financial targets and there is a hint of consolidation in the air.

By no means am I gloating about it. My career was torn apart by the rise of the Internet, the dominance of Google and Facebook, and major shifts in advertising dollars.

*BusinessWeek*, where I once worked, was sold to Bloomberg for pennies on the dollar. *U.S. News & World Report*, once a respected news magazine, no longer prints. *Business 2.0*, where I was a senior writer briefly, was taken over by *TIME* and eventually folded. Everywhere we look we can see the carnage that has hit the established media.

So what is the economic model that can sustain an American media that does a quality job of analyzing and interpreting events at home and abroad? The corporate interests that swept in thinking media assets were highly profitable have been getting out. GE sold NBC, for example. The corporate buyers wanted 18 to 20 percent rates of return.

But now technology money is flowing into top media assets. Jeff Bezos bought *The Washington Post* with his personal money and the newspaper is rebuilding under Martin Baron (who will be appearing at the Overseas Press Club dinner on April 18). Patrick Soon-Shiong, a doctor turned entrepreneur, bought the *Los Angeles Times* after a nightmarish number of years under the ownership of Chicago real estate beasts. It's doing well under Norman Pearlstine and Scott Kraft, both OPC members. (Kraft runs the club's award program.)

Elsewhere, the widow of Steve Jobs made a big investment in the *Atlantic* magazine group. And Salesforce billionaire Marc Benioff used his personal wealth to buy *TIME* magazine. (Less positive examples: *Forbes* and *Fortune*, now controlled by Hong Kong Chinese and Thai interests, respectively)

This represents a return in the ownership model to the days when families such as the Bingham in Louisville, Ky., owned *The Courier-Journal*, where I interned as a college student. Other families owned *The Wall Street Journal*, *Los Angeles Times* and other major media entities. They wanted to break even or perhaps make some money but they saw media assets as their contribution to their communities and states and perhaps the country. They certainly did not insist on 18 to 20 percent rates of return.

So it seems we have come full circle. The old media, under new ownership, will be revived. They have websites and all the bells and whistles that younger readers want. But at their core, they have solid editorial teams and possess far more experience and sophistication than the vast majority of the New Media shops.

In the end, I am hopeful that editorial quality will prevail and start to create a healthier debate about the things that matter most to Americans. The shakeout has been painful and will continue to be painful for some. But at long last, there is a glimmer of hope for a stable ownership structure for the American media. ❖

On Dec. 4, the OPC Press Freedom Committee sent a letter to recently elected Mexican President Lopez Obrador to urge the government to stop spying on journalists. The following is a copy of that message.

## OPC Letter to Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador President of Mexico

December 4, 2018

Dear President Lopez Obrador,

On behalf of the Overseas Press Club of America, the oldest U.S.-based journalist organization covering global news, I wish to congratulate you on your inauguration as President of Mexico. You assume leadership of the country with many serious challenges, but the one that concerns us most is a scandal where the Mexican government is using illegal surveillance technology to spy on journalists.

A Nov. 27 story in *The New York Times* detailed how two *Rio Doce* colleagues of slain Mexican journalist Javier Valdez were contacted the day after his murder and invited to open links containing spyware embedded in email messages. Forensic analysis performed by the Citizens Lab at the University of Toronto has confirmed nearly two dozen targets in Mexico's journalist and human rights community.

The Mexican government denounced the spying and opened an investigation after it was reported in *The New York Times*. However, not one individual has been punished or even reprimanded. While this development broke during the administration of your predecessor, Mr. Enrique Pena Nieto, the danger lingers for journalists. Our organization calls on your leadership to ensure that a thorough investigation is completed so the perpetrators can be brought to justice and Mexico's journalists can be assured that surveillance has been stopped.

The Inter-American Press Association (IAPA) approved freedom of expression principles for the digital era on Oct. 22 in Buenos Aires, stating: "*The Authorities must not use digital surveillance mechanisms for the purpose of violating the liberties and privacy of citizens, except in cases where a legitimate goal is being pursued in accordance with the provisions of human rights conventions. Widespread surveillance is unacceptable under any circumstances.*"

We also recall that in 1994, representatives of the Americas gathered in Mexico City for the IAPA's Hemisphere Conference on Free Speech. It adopted 10 Press Freedom Principles, including No. 4: "*Freedom of expression and of the press are severely limited by murder, terrorism, kidnapping, intimidation, the unjust imprisonment of journalists, the destruction of facilities, violence of any kind and impunity for perpetrators. Such acts must be investigated promptly and punished harshly.*"

The OPC hopes that you are the kind of leader aspiring to protect press freedom for Mexican journalists working to inform a democratic society.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bill Collins

Chair of the Press Freedom Committee, Overseas Press Club of America.

# Japan's Foreign Press Club Has a Change of Scene

BY CHAD BOUCHARD

**A**FTER A few years of heated discussion and arrangements, the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan (FCCJ) has finally moved from its longtime home in the Yurakucho Denki Building to Tokyo's Marunouchi business district.

On the eve of the club's relocation on Oct. 29, Robert Whiting, the club's Second Vice President, made a statement looking back fondly at the FCCJ's history in Yurakucho.

"It is with great nostalgia that I write this, given the many memorable events that have taken place here, particularly as I was front row witness to many of them," Whiting wrote in a post on the club's website. The full statement is posted on the club's website at [fccj.or.jp](http://fccj.or.jp).

The club moved to Yurakucho in 1976. The latest move marks the fourth since the club was founded in September 1945. The OPC covered news of the recent move back in 2014, when past OPC President Bill Holstein wrote that "the decline in the number of American correspondents in Tokyo, brought about as news organizations somehow conclude that Japan isn't interesting or important anymore, has damaged the FCCJ's finances and created bitter conflict about the club's future direction."

Lucy Birmingham, who was president of the FCCJ at the time, responded with a letter stating that "the FCCJ is still solidly run by journalists," and that "we decided that as a group of foreign reporters, we were not equipped to handling the complexities of a full restaurant and banqueting operation, which was posting large losses. We therefore decided to bring in an outsource partner, one of Japan's biggest hotel and restaurant operators, allowing the Board and Club management to focus on the journalistic activities that are at the core of what we do." ❖

## 'FREELANCERS' Continued From Page 2

in outlets including *The Atlantic*, *Foreign Policy*, NBC News, *Newsweek*, *Harper's* and *Esquire*. Her book, *The Hostage's Daughter*, was published by HarperCollins in 2016.

She said many news organizations will now tell freelancers that they will only look at material after they have done the reporting and returned safely home, "which is pretty ethically questionable at the very best."

Jason Motlagh is a writer, broadcast journalist and filmmaker whose work focuses on conflict and human rights. He won the OPC's Madeline Dane Ross Award for Best International Reporting on the Human Condition in 2014.

He said the rigors of freelance life in a shrinking market have pushed many veteran reporters out of the game, which leaves room for new freelancers to step in, but at a big cost to the quality of reporting.

"You have really talented people who have put a lot of skin the game for a long time and have risked a lot, who have the credibility and have earned it, and they can't keep doing it. And then someone else might step into their shoes, but you've just lost all that depth of knowledge, and those relationships that really give texture to the reporting."

Motlagh has reported from more than fifty countries and a half-dozen conflicts spanning West Africa to Southeast Asia for National Geographic, Rolling Stone, Outside, *The Washington Post*, The Guardian and The Economist.

Both Anderson and Motlagh stressed that they hoped not to talk students out of freelance reporting or a career in journalism, but also

## 'Taiwan' Continued From Page 3

US's depending on forward deployed airfields and ports and aircraft carriers that are now vulnerable to Chinese attack, and that may deter the US."

"In the policy community, there are a lot of powerful forces that do feel that China is behaving in a way that poses a threat," Nathan said. "They don't really have a good strategy to make China stop doing what it's doing. On the part of Trump, I think he may possibly just be interested in the trade deficit as such, which is a thing that you cannot fix, and which is not a strategy." He added that right-wing operatives like Steve Bannon simply want to use China as a threat to scare the electorate into voting for conservative candidates.

An official document published last year, the so-called National Security Strategy of the United States, identifies China as the primary strategic threat, even ahead of Russia, Nathan noted.

"If China believes that the US is abandoning or softening that position as a way of containing China, which is what they think is happening, the new Cold War that you're alluding to, that's China's view of what the US is doing. That now we're almost ready to overtake the US and they want to push us back into the box. And if Taiwan is viewed as part of that strategy, that's not good for Taiwan."

Russell Hsiao, executive director of the nonprofit think tank Global Taiwan Institute in Washington, said U.S.-China relations have been "due for a course correction for a very long time."

He said that the U.S. and other nations have been making the mistaken assumption that integration of China into the "liberal international order," by

bringing it into the World Trade Organization and other international institutions, would somehow modify its behaviors. "Nearly 20 years down the road now, we can clearly see the verdict that that has not been the case," Hsiao said.

"In fact, it's manipulating the rules of these international institutions to suit its interests, that extend beyond just economic. It's political as well," he said. "China's interference in democracies, either through propaganda or disinformation, but also infiltration in civil society and the manipulation of academic institutions, all highlighted various means in which China's rise is impacting not only how the international institutions work, but also how democracies work."

He said Taiwan could play a critical role as a Chinese-speaking democracy in shepherding China toward more liberal policies.

Richard Bernstein, formerly based in China for *TIME* magazine and a veteran of several foreign postings for *The New York Times*, said one of China's chief interests in the world now is how to make the world safe for authoritarianism.

"One of the things that Xi Jinping has done is make advocacy of the very values that we Americans most cherish practically criminal offences," he said, citing an internal document circulated among Chinese officials in 2013 called "Document Number Nine," which warns against several threatening Western values, including media freedom and judicial independence.

"I worry about Taiwan's long-term ability to determine its own future without being forced into reunification with the mainland," Bernstein said. "And over the long term, will the United States continue to see it in its interest to guarantee Taiwan against a forceful takeover 15 to 25 years from now? I'd like to be confident of that, but I'm not." ❖

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

### Evgeny Afineevsky

Freelance  
Los Angeles  
Active Non-Resident

### Daniel Berehulak

Photojournalist  
The New York Times  
Mexico City  
Active Overseas

### Kelly Nyks

Freelance  
Brooklyn, NY  
Active Resident

### Frederic Wehrey

Senior Fellow  
Middle East Program  
Carnegie Endowment  
for International Peace  
Washington, DC  
Active Non-Resident

# PEOPLE

By Farwa Zaidi and Chad Bouchard

## OPC SCHOLARS

**Ben Taub**, the 2014 Emanuel R. Freedman winner, has been honored by the United Nations Correspondents Association (UNCA) with the Prince Albert II of Monaco and UNCA Global Prize for Climate Change. The award recognizes print, digital and broadcast media for coverage of climate change, biodiversity, and water issues. Taub received the gold medal at the 70th Annual UNCA Awards and Dag Hammarskjöld Fund for Journalists gala event on Dec. 5 in New York. Taub won the OPC's 2016 Best Investigative Reporting Award for coverage of Syria.

**Hiba Diewati**, the Sally Jacobsen Fellowship winner in 2018, worked on a documentary that was just nominated for an IDA Documentary Award for Best Feature. Directed by Joshua Bennett and Talya Tibbon, *Sky and Ground* is an 84-minute film about a large, extended Syrian-Kurdish family as they make their way from their home in Aleppo to Berlin.

**Derek Kravitz**, winner of the 2014 Harper's Magazine Scholarship in memory of IF Stone, along with three other colleagues at ProPublica, were awarded the 2018 Free Speech & Open Government Award from the First Amendment Coalition for its "Trump Town" project, which exposed how dozens of obscure Trump campaign staffers, including conspiracy theorists, had populated the government through hiring mechanisms meant for short-term political appointees. They also found at least 188 former registered lobbyists in the Trump administration, many of whom once lobbied in the same areas that are regulated by the agencies they joined.

**Katherine Sullivan**, the 2017 S&P Global Awardee, won a 2019 duPont-Columbia Award. Sullivan was a researcher on the ProPublica team that partnered with WYNC and the Investigative Fund to produce *Trump Inc.*, a collaborative reporting podcast that tackled the business relations among the Trump administration, the Trump family, the Trump business and the rest of the world. Katherine was an OPC Foundation fellow with Forbes Asia in Mumbai.



MICHAEL DAVES

Taub



Diewati

As special counsel Robert Mueller gains traction in the ongoing investigation into President Trump and his inner circles, **Elizabeth Barchas Prelogar**, the 2006 Flora Lewis Fellowship winner, is among the team of prosecutors in the spotlight. Prelogar was recruited as part of Muller's team from the solicitor general's office last year. A *New York Times* explainer on Nov. 30 covering developments called Prelogar the team's resident Russian speaker, and said she has been "involved in pretrial litigation and witness interviews." She shelved her admission to Harvard Law School to pursue a Fulbright scholarship in St. Petersburg, Russia, and later served as clerk for Supreme Court justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Elena Kagan.

2014 Jerry Flint Fellowship winner **John Ismay** was one of three military veterans at *The New York Times* who spoke on a call-in panel on Nov. 12 for subscribers as part of the paper's observance of Veteran's Day. Ismay served as an explosive-ordnance disposal officer in the Navy. The panel also included **C.J. Chivers**, an OPC award winner in 2011 and 2014, who served as an infantry officer in the Marine Corps, as well as Washington bureau reporter Thomas Gibbons-Neff, who served as a Marine infantryman.

## WINNERS

**Masha Gessen**, winner of the OPC's 2016 Best Commentary Award, recently received the fourth annual Hitchens Prize on Dec. 3 for reporting that "reflects a commitment to free expression and inquiry." In accepting the award, Gessen spoke about the importance of reporting on immigration issues, particularly on refugees seeking

asylum. Gessen identified herself as an immigrant and "technically, a refugee." She recounted her family's immigration from Russia to the United States in 1981, an experience that made her aware of "the right to have rights." The transcript of Gessen's speech was printed in an article for *The Atlantic*. Gessen is a staff writer at *The New Yorker*, and author of multiple books.

OPC member and former Governor **Abigail Pesta** won two awards from *Folio Magazine* during their annual Eddie and Ozzie Awards. Pesta was recognized for two articles: "To Forgive a Killer," featured in *Notre Dame Magazine*, and "Women Who Change the World" which was featured in five different publications. She also received an honorable mention for her article "We All Trusted Him," published in *Cosmopolitan Magazine*. Earlier this year, Pesta won two Front Page Awards from the Newswomen's Club of New York, including Best Magazine Feature for her article in *Texas Monthly*, and the winning entry for Best Magazine Essay, which was told to Pesta by Reverend Sharon Risher and also featured in *Notre Dame Magazine*. One article she wrote highlighted the women who took down predator Larry Nassar, and Pesta is writing a book on the topic which is slated for publication next year.

PBS investigative series **FRONTLINE**, which has won multiple OPC awards over the years, has won the first duPont-Columbia Gold Baton given in a decade. The award is Columbia University's highest honor for excellence in journalism. The program received the award for a range of work across multiple platforms, including broadcast documentaries, digital interactive storytelling, and an original narrative podcast. The podcast series was recognized as a "standard bearer and innovator." In 2015, 2016 and 2017, Frontline received OPC awards for excellence in reporting.

**Fred Ryan**, CEO of *The Washington Post*, was recently honored at the Women's Media Foundation Courage in Journalism Awards, where he dedicated his



speech to slain *Post* contributor Jamal Khashoggi. Ryan recounted in his acceptance speech how Khashoggi was “lured into a death trap,” tortured and murdered by agents of the Saudi government, including members of Crown Prince Mohamed bin Salman’s personal security team. Ryan said that Khashoggi was killed for reporting on corruption in the Saudi government, “but for Jamal, as for too many journalists, the truth he sought to expose was inconvenient – at least for leaders trying to cover up their abuses of power. And so the Saudi government decided to silence Jamal, forever,” he said.

**John Moore**, OPC member and award winner, recently won the Inaugural Impact Award from the Lucie Awards program. The Lucie Awards honor great achievements in photography. A senior staff photographer for Getty Images, Moor has also received a Pulitzer Prize and World Press Photo award for his work. He won the 2007 Robert Capa Gold Medal Award and received a Capa citation for his work in 2015. He started working for Getty in 2005 and has been an OPC member since 2013.

## UPDATES

**Descendants of Hal Boyle** visited the OPC’s office during a holiday in New York in late November to view the club’s archives. The club’s oldest award for best reporting from abroad was given in 1940 and renamed for Hal Boyle in 1978. The award is now for



Left to right: Patricia Kranz, Hazel Youngquist, Kathy Boyle Youngquist and Jack Youngquist.

“best newspaper, news service or digital reporting from abroad.” Kathy Boyle Youngquist, whose grandfather was Hal’s brother, brought her two children, Hazel and Jack, with her to New York from Perry, Kansas. They were happy to see a framed photo of Hal on the wall of the OPC’s office and to receive copies of dozens of photos of him from the OPC’s files. Hal Boyle himself was a legendary war correspondent who won a Pulitzer Prize in 1945 for his coverage of World War II for The Associated Press. Boyle was only 17 years old when he joined the AP in 1928 as a copy boy at the organization’s Kansas City bureau. In an email, Kathy said: “My teenager did a reading for a high school Forensics competition of one of Hal’s stories from [Boyle’s book] *Help, Help! Another Day!* My Dad is in one of the pictures in this book. The Boyle family was very close knit and we still are today.”

In June 2003, OPC member and former Governor **Brian Byrd** was a member of the U.S. delegation for a Saudi Arabian-American relations meeting at the Rockefeller Foundation’s Conference Center in Bellagio, Italy. A photo Byrd sent to the *Bulletin* (above right) shows Jamal Khashoggi, indicated with a red arrow, among those who participated as a member of the Saudi delegation. In an email, Byrd wrote that “during those four days of discussions – which sometimes got heated – he remained a thoughtful and engaging person. I’m still trying to wrap my brain around his senseless murder and our government’s support for the mastermind. Also present: Gary Hart (yellow arrow), the former US Senator and presidential candidate, who – in response to an announcement that lunch will be on a boat on Lake Como – made a funny joke about not

having particularly good luck when it comes to boats.”

**Ingrid Wall**, the mother of OPC member Kim Wall who was murdered in 2017 while reporting on board a submarine, wrote a book about her daughter that was published on Nov. 9. In the book, titled *The Book of Kim Wall: When Words End*, Ingrid said that she wrote the book because “Kim should be presented as the engaged and strong-willed woman she was, as the person and journalist Kim Wall – not as the victim.” Ingrid also said that she feels “no hate” for Peter Madsen, who was convicted of killing her daughter. “I have no energy to waste on Madsen,” she told Swedish news site The Local. “It causes him no pain if I hate him. In fact it certainly makes no difference to him at all.” Ingrid Wall spent 20 years as a reporter for the newspaper *Trelleborgs Allehanda*. Ingrid and Kim’s father, Joachim Wall, lit the Candle of Concern during the OPC’s Annual Awards Dinner in April this year.

**Thomson Reuters Corp.** announced on Dec. 4 that the company plans to cut 3,200 jobs by 2020 as it tries “streamline the business and improve operating efficiencies.” The cuts were announced as part of a strategy overview during an investor day in Toronto. Reuters employs more than 2,000 journalists. The company did not say what part of its operations the job cuts would come from. Executives also said the company would reduce its global office footprint by 30 percent by 2020.

OPC Governor **David Ariosto** released a new book on Dec. 11 that draws on his experience as a photo-journalist in Cuba to examine dramatic changes in the Caribbean nation over the last decade. His book, *This Is Cuba: An American Journalist Under Castro’s*

*Continued on Page 8*



A photo from 2003 from Brian Byrd, on far right, with slain journalist Jamal Khashoggi (red arrow) and Gary Hart (yellow arrow) during a Saudi Arabian-American relations meeting at a conference center in Bellagio, Italy.

COURTESY OF BRIAN BYRD

*Continued From Page 7*

*Shadow*, begins with his first posting in Havana for CNN at the start of a 2-year assignment for the network. He follows the waning days of Fidel Castro's regime and the uncertainty and crisis that now brews in the power vacuum. Ariosto's book was named as one of "10 Books to Read – and gift – in December" in a *Washington Post* year-end article in the Books section.

OPC Governor **Christopher Dickey**, who serves as foreign editor for The

Daily Beast in Paris, covered the violent "yellow vest" protests in Paris on Dec. 8 and reported in an email that "my OPC press pass got me through 9 out of 10 police barricades." He wrote in an article that police drove protesters into his own neighborhood in the city, where teargas floated in the air and "cars and motor scooters burned on the street behind my place, and the street in front, and near my favorite café." Separately, Dickey and OPC Governor John

Avlon, who works for CNN, spoke together at the Charleston to Charleston Literary Festival over the weekend of Nov. 10. Lynsey Addario, a former OPC award winner and photojournalist, also spoke at the event. The four-day festival is now in its second year.

A documentary by OPC member **Benedetta Argentieri** about three women fighting for equality in the Middle East had its world premiere at DOC NYC in early November. The film, titled *I Am the Revolution*, was sold out for weeks beforehand. Argentieri filmed the documentary in three countries. In Afghanistan, she trailed a politician named Selay, who traveled with armed protection to teach

women about their rights. In Iraq, a woman named Yanar pushed for parliamentary reform while running shelters for abused women. Lastly, Rojda, a commander of the Syrian Democratic Army, led 60,000 troops to defeat ISIS. She helped free the city of Raqqa and its people. Argentieri has been a member of the OPC since 2016.

OPC member **Andrew Nagorski** recently donated original cassette tapes of his interviews to The Hoover Institution. The tapes have now been digitized and made available at the Hoover Archives. Nagorski spent more than three decades as a foreign correspondent and editor for *Newsweek*. During his career, he interviewed major political and cultural figures, as well as dissidents and activists from Central and Eastern Europe. The tapes were recorded between 1976 and 2008. Nagorski said he donated the tapes to the Hoover Archives because he has found their collections useful while researching his books, and hopes his tapes will also be useful to students and historians.

OPC member **Murat Bilgincan** has filed a new article for the Al-Monitor site and filmed a documentary on political polarization in Turkey. The article, titled "One Vote, Three Corpses," is a look into how a referendum in Turkey divided a village and a family. Bilgincan wrote about the Yildiz family, who were deeply invested in the election, and how their opposing views tore them apart. His documentary, titled *A Report Card for Democracy* is a thirty-minute look into how the family has grappled with the aftermath of the divisive election. Bilgincan has been a member of the OPC since 2016.

Longtime OPC member **Robert Pledge** wrote a piece in *The New York Times*

about his friend Lu Guang, an internationally acclaimed photographer from China, who disappeared in early November while en route to Urumqi. He was reportedly seen with state security agents. Friends and family have asked the Chinese government about his fate, but have not received answers.

Two-time OPC award winner **Brian Reed** discussed his groundbreaking podcast S-Town at the Bard Fisher Center on Nov. 10. His presentation centered on "developing an entirely new kind of storytelling." S-Town was downloaded over 40 million times in its first month, setting a podcasting record. Reed's research for the podcast spanned more than three years. It began when a man named John B. McLemore asked Reed to investigate an alleged murder in his small Alabama town. In 2012, Reed was part of teams that won The Thomas Lowell Award and The Joe and Laurie Dine Award, both for investigation of a 1982 massacre in Guatemala.

OPC award winner **Adam Ellick** told NPR's Fresh Air host Terry Gross in November that a conspiracy theory about the origin of AIDS that was spread by disinformation agents in the Soviet Union in the 1980s still has traction today. Ellick, who was part of teams that won OPC awards in 2007, 2010 and 2015 for coverage of Pakistan and the Arab Spring, has launched a three-part video series on the *New York Times* website. The series covers fake news operations from Russia, including an episode about a rumor that AIDS virus was created by the U.S. military for use as a biological weapon, specifically against African-Americans and homosexuals. The other episodes are "The Seven Commandments Of Fake News" and "The Worldwide War On Truth." ❖



## PRESS FREEDOM UPDATE...

By Farwa Zaidi  
and Chad Bouchard

On Dec. 4, the OPC made a statement condemning relentless attacks on press freedom by the government of the Philippines as its justice department filed tax evasion charges against Rappler Holdings Corp. and journalist founder, **Maria Ressa**, a longtime critic of President Rodrigo Duterte. Ressa vowed to fight

the government's tax evasion charges and continue her work. "This is an attack on one of the world's bravest journalists," said Marty Baron, the executive editor of *The Washington Post*.

The OPC applauded a U.S. federal district court ruling on Nov. 16 that

temporarily required the White House to reinstate the media credential for **Jim Acosta**, chief White House correspondent, CNN, whose access had previously been revoked. The OPC objected earlier to the administration pulling Acosta's press card on the grounds he inappropriately touched a female White House



intern who tried to take the microphone away from him during a Nov. 8 Q&A with the President Trump, though video of the incident did not support the claim.

The Committee to Protect Journalists announced on Nov. 8 that two staff members from CPJ who had been arrested in Tanzania were released. **Angela Quintal**, CPJ's Africa program coordinator, and **Muthoki Mumo**, CPJ's sub-Saharan Africa representative, were detained in early November. CPJ Executive Director Joel Simon said the incident made it "abundantly clear to anyone who followed the latest developments that Tanzanian journalists work in a climate of fear of intimidation."

On Nov. 8, dozens of police officers raided the **Karachi Press Club** around 10:30 p.m. Armed policemen wearing plain clothes, stormed the club and searched the facility. According to a statement from the Karachi Press Club, police harassed journalists and club officials, and took photos and videos while searching. This was all done without any warrants or permission. Witnesses say that the gunmen arrived at the club in at least six vehicles. When questioned by the club's president, an officer claimed that they didn't know it was a press club and were there to arrest wanted individuals. The day after the raid, Karachi journalists gathered to protest. The Karachi Press Club was founded in 1958 and boasts about 1000 members.

There has recently been a heightened crackdown on journalists in Iran, with several questioned in the past month or arrested over social media posts. On Nov. 5, **Massoud Kazami** was arrested in her home. Kazami is a former reporter for the daily newspaper *Shargh*. Officers in plain clothes arrived at her house and confiscated her files and computer storage devices. She frequently criticizes Iran's policies and its government on her Twitter account, which has been inaccessible since her arrest. On Oct. 29, journalist **Saba Azarpeyk** was arrested during a raid on her home shortly after accusing labor minister Mohammad Shariatmadari of corruption and nepotism. She posted her accusations on social media with supporting documents just before a vote in parliament on Oct.

27. Azarpeyk has previously been arrested for her reporting.

According to Reporters Without Borders, **Belarus** has reached a record this year for persecution of journalists. So far this year, 99 fines have been slapped on Belarusian journalists "working with foreign media without accreditation." Ninety-one of those reporters work for just one media outlet, Belsat TV. The Belarusian TV channel is based in neighboring Poland. RSF says authorities force independent media to base themselves outside the country, and then refuse to give their correspondents press accreditation, which forces journalists to work illegally. The rate at which fines are imposed is increasing exponentially: from 10 in 2016 to 69 in 2017, and almost 100 this year so far.

On Oct. 24, Chinese business journalists **Zou Guangxiang** and **Liu Chengkun** were sentenced to one year and eight months in prison, respectively, on charges of "picking quarrels and provoking troubles." The two had revealed the existence of an investigation against the chairman of Yili Industrial Group, a powerful dairy company. Zou was arrested in March in Beijing, two days after he disclosed on his blog that Pan Gang was being investigated. The information went viral and caused a 3.5 percent fall in the share price of the company. Liu published some elements of the story as fiction, hoping to protect himself, but was arrested a few days later. China is currently holding more than 60 journalists behind bars.

## MURDERS

**Chandan Tiwari**, an Indian reporter for the Hindi daily *Aj* was killed on Oct. 30. Tiwari was abducted on Oct. 29 and found badly beaten the next day. He later died at the hospital. Police said the reporter was found injured in a forest about 175 miles from his town of Jharkhand. At a press conference on Nov. 1, police identified three suspects. Superintendent Akhilesh Variar said that two of the suspects had been arrested, but one fled. Police believe Tawari was targeted for his reporting on one of the killers, Pintu Singh, who is a private contractor. Tawari exposed Singh's alleged financial irregularities. He also published a story

in April alleging Singh's involvement in corruption linked to a government rural employment project. Tiwari was the second journalist to be killed in India in a one-week period.

**Abdullahi Mire Hashi**, a Somali radio journalist, was gunned down and killed on Oct. 27. At least two unidentified gunmen shot Abdullahi in the town of Elasha Bihaya. Abdullahi was the producer and host of a daily show on the privately-owned radio station Darul Sunnah. He was shot dead after attending afternoon prayers at a mosque near his station. The gunmen immediately fled the scene. Abdullahi's radio station focused mainly on religious programming. According to several other journalists, Abdullahi had recently received anonymous phone calls questioning why his station was not covering militant group Al-Shabaab's operations in the region. The director general of the Somali federal ministry of information told CPJ that the attack appeared to be an act of terrorism, and security services are investigating.

**Sohail Khan**, a Pakistani journalist, was shot and killed in Haripur on Oct. 16. Khan was a reporter for *K2 Times*, an Urdu daily. Khan reportedly received threats shortly after he wrote a story about the arrest of an alleged drug dealer named Musarrat Iqbal. On the day he was killed, Khan had gone to the police to file an order of protection. Haripur officials have since said that Khan was killed because of his reporting. According to the officials, local police are searching for Ali Sher and Himayun Iqbal, sons of the drug dealer, who are suspected of ambushing Khan's car and killing him. Last year, the Haripur bureau chief of the *K2 Times* was shot dead. Police have yet to make an arrest in that case. At least 33 journalists have been killed in relation to their work in Pakistan since 1992. ♦

# NEW BOOKS

By Farwa Zaidi

## UPCOMING EVENTS

OPC  
HOLIDAY PARTY  
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
Club Quarters  
Jan. 9

### MEDIA

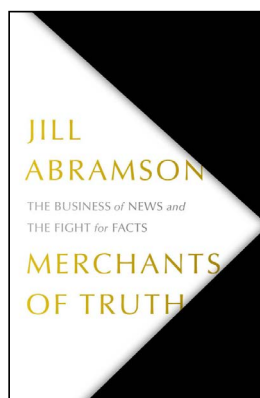
**T**HE WAY audiences consume news has changed drastically over the last few years, with broadcast news thriving and print outlets struggling to stay afloat, and social media sites becoming the primary method of news delivery. In her new book, *The Merchants of Truth: Inside the War for News*, [Simon & Schuster, 2019] former *New York Times* executive editor Jill Abramson takes a deep dive into the ongoing struggle between new and old media.

The book focuses on four media giants: *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, BuzzFeed, and VICE. She compares the two legacy papers with two newcomers that have grown their audiences solely online. Abramson follows the papers over a decade of upheaval and radical adjustment, concluding that new digital realities have made old models unworkable, while online media appeals directly to a growing audience of millennials.

Abramson profiles the work of media players such as Jeff Bezos and Marty Baron of *The Washington Post*, Arthur Sulzberger and Dean Baquet of *The New York Times*, Jonah Peretti of BuzzFeed, and Shane Smith of VICE. Abramson also looks at how the struggle between new and old media affects news consumers as well as journalists.

*Merchants of Truth* gives an insider's perspective on the industry's turmoil, with a candid look at the growing pains of both new and old media as they blurred lines of paid advertising and news and shifted to "click bait" stories to grab readers' attention. *Merchants of Truth* raises pointed questions about the state of news delivery as well as press freedom and waning trust in traditional media.

Abramson is a seasoned reporter herself, having spent seventeen years in the most senior editorial positions at *The New York Times*. She was the first woman to serve as Washington bureau chief, managing editor, and executive editor. Before that, she had spent nine years at *The Wall Street Journal*. She is currently a senior lecturer at Harvard University, as well as a columnist for *The Guardian*, where she writes about US politics. ♦



### SYRIA

**I**N FEBRUARY 2012, Marie Colvin defied government decrees preventing journalists from entering Syria and crossed over the border on the back of a motorcycle. Accompanied by photographer Paul Conroy, she was determined to report on the civil war in Syria, where few other foreign journalists were on the ground. It would be her final reporting trip into a conflict zone. She was killed in an explosion in Homs. Marie Brenner's new book, *A Private War: Marie Colvin and Other Tales of Heroes, Scoundrels, and Renegades* [Simon & Schuster, October 2018] chronicles the final few days of Colvin's life.

Colvin was a veteran war correspondent known for a fearless, outspoken, and unrestrained approach. Before her final trip to Syria, she had covered conflicts in Egypt, Chechnya, Kosovo and Libya. She had witnessed countless tragedies and is even credited for saving thousands of lives during a conflict in East Timor in 1999. Colvin had refused to stop reporting until the endangered civilians were evacuated. Her reporting drew attention to the East Timorese, which helped to protect them while they fled over a tense four-day period.

The explosion that took her life happened just one day after her last broadcasts to several media outlets, including BBC, Channel 4, CNN and ITN News.

That day she told Anderson Cooper in an interview over satellite phone that the bombardment of Homs

was the worst conflict she'd ever seen. French photographer Remi Ochlik also died in the attack that took Colvin's life.

The Syrian government claimed the explosion had been from an improvised explosive device filled with nails that was detonated by terrorists. But several journalists in Syria said that the Syrian Army had shelled the media building that

Colvin had reported from, likely by tracking satellite phone signals.

Brenner first wrote about Colvin for a *Vanity Fair* article shortly after her death. The article inspired Brenner's book, as well as a movie about Colvin's life that was released earlier this year. The film was directed by Matthew Heineman, written by Arash Amel, and stars Rosamund Pike as Colvin. Brenner is an American author, investigative journalist, and writer at large for *Vanity Fair*. She has written for *The New Yorker* and *The Boston Herald*, and has taught at Columbia University's Graduate School for Journalism. ♦





Hasan Mahmud

## Meet the OPC Members: Q&A With *Hasan Mahmud*

**H**ASAN MAHMUD is a Bangladeshi investigative broadcast journalist, writer and social worker.

He has been an editor of *Weekly Sunday Line* since June 2010 and served as special correspondent and chief crime reporter of TV channels Diganta Television and Jamuna Television, working on investigative desks for both outlets. Mahmud covered the United Nations peacekeeping mission in South Sudan in 2007. He has reported in Bangladesh and from many other countries around the world.

**Hometown:** Dhaka, Bangladesh.

**Education:** Masters degree in political science, Dhaka University, 1991.

**Languages you speak:** English and Bangla.

**First job in journalism:** I started working for Bangladesh's most-circulated independent broadsheet and oldest newspaper, *The Daily Inqilab*, in 1991.

**Countries reported from:** Bangladesh, the United States, Greece, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Italy, Bahrain and South Sudan.

**When and why did you join the OPC?** I joined the OPC in 2016. I think the OPC is a very old and prestigious journalist organization, and I feel lucky to have met with OPC Executive Director Patricia Kranz in New York while I was covering the United Nations General Assembly. The OPC is a way of

staying in touch with colleagues around the world.

**What do you make of the state of press freedom in Bangladesh at the moment?** I am saddened by this situation. Very recently, a council of editors in Bangladesh, as well as journalists, were speaking out against a new law that restricts press freedom. My colleagues there are fighting hard for press freedom.

**Major challenge as a journalist:** Journalism is a very challenging job in Bangladesh. We face new problems, including abductions of journalists and intimidation from those who want journalists silenced.

**Best journalism advice received:** "Safety first."

**Worst experience as a journalist:** Covering the massive civil war that continued for 22 years in the South Sudan. Up to 300,000 people are estimated to have been killed in the war overall. As a journalist covering the war in 2007, I witnessed killing and brutality. But this year in 2018, along the Bangladesh-Myanmar border, I saw brutality again, this time against the Rohingya people.

**When traveling, you like to...**  
I like to travel in the winter.

**Hardest story:** Interviewing pirates in the Bay of Bengal.

**Journalism heroes:** Elizabeth Cochrane Seaman, her pen name Nellie Bly, an American journalist who was widely known for her record-breaking trip around the world.

**Dream job:** Investigative reporting.

**Favorite quote:** "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world" – Nelson Mandela

**Place you're most eager to visit:**  
Switzerland

**Most over-the-top assignment:**  
I was in Sundarban in Bangladesh to report on pirate kidnappings. It is the largest contiguous coastal mangrove forest in the world, and is considered one of the world's greatest natural wonders. One day, during that reporting trip, I suddenly found myself facing down a large Royal Bengal Tiger.

**Most common mistake you've seen:**  
When political leaders in my country talk publicly, they make mistakes constantly.

**Country you most want to return to:**  
There is a very popular place in the old part of Dhaka. I want to return there.

**Twitter handle:** @HasanMa27658135 ❖

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

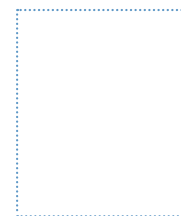




40 West 45th Street  
New York, NY 10036  
USA

**Phone** 212.626.9220

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