



Winners of the
Overseas Press Club Awards
2019 ANNUAL EDITION

DATELINE



Eighty Years
of Courage and
Commitment

Giving Voice to the Voiceless



Imprisoned Reuters journalists Kyaw Soe Oo and Wa Lone are escorted by police as they leave after a court hearing in Yangon, Myanmar, August 20, 2018. REUTERS/Ann Wang

Independent journalism is fundamental to an open society.

Reuters honors the winners of the 2018 Overseas Press Club Awards, including our unjustly imprisoned journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo.

We are committed to defending press freedom and the pursuit of truth.



IT IS MY HONOR AND PLEASURE to welcome you to the 2019 Overseas Press Club of America Awards Dinner. We are here to honor and give well-deserved recognition to work that helps to illuminate news events around the world. The winning entries are a powerful testament to all of you



GETTY IMAGES

who believe in the craft of journalism in whichever form you practice it.

We are also here to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the OPC, founded to uphold the highest ideals of foreign reporting and photography. The OPC is only as successful

as its membership and I am grateful to all OPC members, past and present, who have ensured that the club is as relevant and essential today as it was when it was founded in 1939 by a group of foreign correspondents in New York City.

When I was elected OPC President last September, I was told that I was both the first foreign-born and first visuals person to lead the organization. I related a story at that Board meeting about how my love for journalism came from my father and his passion for storytelling that makes an impact. He was a journalism professor back home at the University of Concepcion in Chile. We came to America in 1973 and settled in Washington D.C. He worked at the Organization of American States in their Public Information office. I will always remember going with him to the OAS offices on weekends and ripping the news off the old AP and UPI teletype machines. So much has changed since those days, especially the technology that helps

us research, report and distribute the stories, podcasts, tweets, videos, gifs, and photographs. At the same time, the essential nature of what it means to report the news hasn't much changed, especially our passion for finding the truth. I am prouder that I can express to lead this celebration of the very best of our profession.

We are fortunate to have Martin Baron, the executive editor of The Washington Post as our keynote speaker. Likewise, we are thrilled to have Lester Holt, anchor of NBC Nightly News and Dateline NBC as our awards presenter. We are grateful to them both for taking time out of their extremely busy schedules to be with us tonight.

I am delighted that Maggie Steber is here in person to accept the President's Award for lifetime achievement. I have always believed that the very best photographers have a preternatural ability to get into a story subject's life in a way that most cannot. This gift allows Maggie to tell the most thoughtful, impactful and empathetic stories on a range of subjects that have brought her to more than 60 countries in her career.

The OPC Candle of Remembrance will be lit tonight in honor of murdered Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi. His death and the confirmed deaths of 53 other journalists worldwide in 2018 cannot be forgotten and their work will be remembered.

Your generosity and attendance tonight ensures that the Overseas

Press Club can continue to support these journalists and their important work.

Many thanks to Sarah Lubman, our Dinner Chair, along with Paula Dwyer. Many of you are here due to their time and effort. The work of putting together this edition of Dateline was done with grace and skill by Michael Serrill, Christopher Dickey, Vera Naughton and OPC Executive Director Patricia Kranz. The OPC could not continue its work without the dedication and passion of my fellow Governors as well as the leadership and patience of Patricia and the skill of Web Manager Chad Bouchard.

Most of all, we are grateful to all of you—individuals, companies and institutions—for making the commitment to be here this evening to celebrate and honor some of the finest journalists working today. Thank you and enjoy the evening. ●



Maggie Steber

80th ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER AT THE
OVERSEAS PRESS CLUB OF AMERICA



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Keila Savioli Mejia comforts her daughter Camila, 4, who sinks to her knees and wails, too tired to continue her journey through Mexico to the U.S. border, in an October photo by Carolyn Van Houten. Carolyn is winner of the Robert Capa Gold Medal Award.

ON THE COVER: Nariman El-Mofty’s February 2018 photo of Yemeni Hagar Yahia and her daughter Awsaf, 5, is one of a group of images that won this year’s Olivier Rebbot Award. Awsaf was surviving on no more than 800 calories a day.

PHOTO BY NARIMAN EL-MOFTY / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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CAROLYN VAN HOUTEN / THE WASHINGTON POST



Our Job: Changing Lives One Story at a Time

A Los Angeles Times reporter has written about assaults on human rights from a dozen countries. She sees her stories as having a slow-motion impact.

By Robyn Dixon

THE LIGHT was always on, with no sense of day or night. Two guards were always in the cell but they rarely spoke to the prisoner. The cell's two security cameras watched constantly. To sleep, the prisoner had to lie on a narrow bed between the guards. He had to squat on the open latrine in front of them to relieve himself.

In China these conditions are common for detained human rights advocates and activists. Lawyer Sui Muqing knew it. He had taken on many such cases. But then the police came for him. He found himself held in the same kind of cell. He faced days of questioning and sleep deprivation that almost broke him.

"I was just doing my job," he said of his lawyering. And I was just doing mine. I sat in his apartment, with its green Snoopy clock on the wall and cheerful yellow teapot, and listened to his story. It would not change government policy—and might lead to harmful repercussions for him.

Conditions have gotten tougher in China for bloggers, activists and both local and foreign journalists. China's long campaign to cow hu-

man rights lawyers saw more than 300 detained at the campaign's peak in 2015, including Sui. He was disbarred last year. Telling his story to a foreign journalist would not bring back the things that his conscience had cost him: his living and his marriage. But he believes in the power of the truth.

Sui's courage made me think about what we hope for when we journalists seek out the world's unpalatable truths: to cast light on problems or abuses, to bring accountability or change. Yet reporting in Africa for 15 years until last year, I found the power of truth is not always as grand and sweeping as we would like it to be. Scribbling down the stories of survivors of ethnic killings or a food emergency or a war seldom has any immediate impact. Usually it is an incremental thing. It creeps up gradually. A story might have to be told many times in dozens or hundreds of voices, over months or even years, before it lands its punch.

There are exceptions. A single photograph can open the world's eyes to a famine or one story can topple a corrupt cabal in a clattering collapse of dominoes. But writing the news is usually more like sending out a lone pigeon, hoping to see it join some great flock

that will eventually get the message through.

One of the first stories I covered in Africa, in 2004, focused on an 18-day-old baby in Darfur, Sudan, nestled naked under a blanket at her 15-year-old mother's side. The community leaders in the refugee camp who told her story were clear about the implications for an infant born of rape by the enemy Janjaweed militias who had swept in, killing men, raping women and girls and burning houses. "If a girl has a baby after this kind of incident, she has no future and no hope," said one. "She can't study and her mind will be destroyed. In the future, everybody will blame the baby and it will always carry the shame."

It wasn't until five years later that Sudanese president Omar al Bashir and others were indicted by the International Criminal Court for genocide. But he remains in power and has traveled to dozens of countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East without anyone enforcing the arrest warrant. The baby girl, if she is still alive, would now be almost the age her mother was when she was raped. Violence in Darfur is still going on.

Mostly the stories I have written, whether about starvation, war or rape, had the slow-motion impact

Peninnah Tombo is a lone voice for equal rights for women in her Maasai community.

ROBYN DIXON / LOS ANGELES TIMES

that journalism brings through gradually creating awareness. Yet the truth did shine its light. It whittled away at public attention.

I met women in Afghanistan and Sudan, jailed for running away from violent husbands or for having lovers. I was there at a government forensic clinic in Kabul, the Afghan capital, when a forensic doctor threatened to poke out the eyes of a young unmarried woman accused of having sex, as he horrifyingly conducted a rough internal examination and declared she was no virgin.

I stood at the grave of an anonymous woman found slain on the streets of Kabul, the suspected victim of an honor killing. I smelled the decay of her body rising through the dry dirt in the heat. I wondered about her story and the terror of her last day. Most of all I wondered why the doctor and other men I interviewed for the story hated women like her so fiercely. I felt compelled to unearth

hurt them “too much.”

In another part of Kenya, a 59-year-old woman named Peninah Tombo rescued teenage girls who contacted her on her ancient, battered cellphone, seeking her help to escape genital cutting. “The pain is so much that tears can’t form,” said Tombo, who experienced FGM and dedicated her life to helping others escape the ritual and early marriage so they could stay in school. “You are fearful. It affects you psychologically, because it’s like a death, like when you lose a person or a loved one.” The campaign against female genital mutilation has been going on for decades. Many governments have outlawed it, without enforcing the law. But it is slowly declining, thanks to women like Tombo.

Long after stories such as these stopped rippling through the news cycle, they remained embedded in me, like sharp little rocks. I cannot forget Martha Yar, an orphan from Rumbek, South Sudan whose

ered a big group of men and kidnapped her. “I cried; I was kicking,” she said. “I was angry and screaming.” He locked her in his house for a week, and then told her he would beat her until she stopped “being stubborn.” There was no way to divorce him without re-paying the price, 20 cows, and that was impossible. “My family have equated my life to 20 cows. But I insist my life is not equal to 20 cows,” she said.

Eleven years later, I found myself telling the same story in South Sudan and nothing much had changed. This time her name was Agnes Keji, age 19. Her prospective husband was 70. His offer was 30 cows. This time, her brother slashed her neck with a machete when she resisted, leaving an ugly protruding scar.

An email dropped into my in-box in February from Oxfam reported that the rate of forced early marriage in South Sudan has increased from 45% to 71% since the 2013 conflict began.

Going on clear, measurable results, perhaps the most solid thing I did in Africa was to pick up a dying man who lay bleeding from a machete wound to his head during Kenya’s 2008 post-election violence. His attackers, armed with long blades hanging from slack arms, were young. Women were frantically loading rocks into sacks to ferry to their men, fighting a rival ethnic group a couple of hundred yards away. They screamed at the young men nearby to show their honor, to get to the front and fight.

The wounded man had just arrived from out of town and taken his usual route on foot to see family, not realizing that during that week of horrendous violence the neighborhood had been divided up by tribe. He had wandered into a no-go zone. Someone demanded his ID. His name gave away his ethnicity. They fell on him with iron bars and machetes moments before I walked by on my way back from looking at the fighting.

A chilly hush fell over the scene when I stopped to help him up.

“I felt compelled to unearth stories of powerless, vulnerable people, not in the hope of changing their lives but because their stories mattered...What had I done over the years? I had channeled people’s outrage, pain or grief.”

stories of powerless, vulnerable people like her, not in any hope of changing their lives but because their stories mattered.

There was Arror Chelagat, 13, one of 23 Kenyan teenage girls from Dorcas village who defied their elders, fled their parents and crossed snake-infested hills in the middle of the night to escape female genital mutilation. One Dorcas father sent his daughter to be cut. “It’s not painful; it’s nothing,” he said scornfully as he hoed a rocky patch of ground. But the local women said it

life was altered by an uneducated former rebel soldier who watched her every day as she walked to school and back home. He decided he would have her. He offered her brother 20 cows. Yar had no say, but she begged her brother to let her go to university so that she would get a good job that would eventually bring in more money. Her brother needed the cows so he could marry, so he threw her down, pulled a knife and threatened to kill her if she did not accept.

The former rebel soldier gath-



ROBYN DIXON / LOS ANGELES TIMES

Then as I led him to my car, there were shouts. I did not understand the Swahili, but they were protesting that I should leave him to die. Don’t bring him here, the nurses at the nearest clinic screamed. As we drove on to the main hospital half an hour away he moaned that he was dying. “You’re not going to die,” I said firmly. Dishon Omondi—that was his name—still sends me thank you messages every year, so I do know that I saved one life. I know how that one turned out, unlike the stories of so many other people I left behind: one life saved, no harm done.

When Dateline magazine’s editors outlined the parameters of this article—stories you have written that had a positive impact—I admit I felt a twinge of anxiety. To be sure, other journalists had done it, but I had toppled no corrupt figures, brought no killers to justice, freed no slaves or prisoners, saved no children or women. Martha Yar would never get her 20 cows. She

had no escape. I knew it when she told me her story. She knew it too.

What had I done over the years? I had channeled people’s outrage, pain or grief and typed it onto a page. In a shrieking hyperpartisan age, the importance of this job can be lost—just portraying reality, with no agenda, one story at a time. In China, where truth is choked off whenever it fails to serve power, Sui reminded me of that. If individual stories are quick to pass into history, their value is in their contribution to a greater canvas.

In the end the positive impact of my work has been less about how people have responded, than how I told the tale, unfurling stories of the complicated, flawed heroism of ordinary people and portraying them with all the nuanced texture I could manage. A Nigerian mechanic’s quiet affection for a young apprentice. An exhilarating “hit-and-run” political theater group in Zimbabwe that

performed rapid-fire plays in the townships but kept the motor running to make a swift getaway when the ruling party thugs got wind of them. A refugee who carried an ultrasound machine in a box on his head out of a war-zone, knowing it would be of use. An impoverished mother to 11 children who picked up a plastic bag by the railway line and found a discarded baby within, then took him into her tiny one-room home and cared for him.

And I did my best to do justice to the story of Sui Muqing, with his neat linen jacket, his square-rimmed glasses, his passion for the rule of law, his belief in the value of words and good sense and his belief in the truth, for its own sake. ●

Robyn Dixon has been Beijing bureau chief for The Los Angeles Times since June 2018. Before that she covered Sub-Saharan Africa for 15 years. From 1993-2003 she reported from Russia and central Asia, including Chechnya, Afghanistan and Iraq.

Dixon wrote the story of Kano, Nigeria’s Amir Yusuf whose life took a positive turn when a mechanic took him on as an apprentice.



Huehuetonoc, Guerrero, Mexico, December 2015: Rosalinda and her daughter Samantha. This is the first time they ever posed for a photograph.



Huehuetonoc, Guerrero, Mexico. April 2016: Monica, Mariana, Celeste and Yaribet, sisters and friends. The Amuzgo people are an indigenous group that lives in the region along the Guerrero/Oaxaca state border. They maintain much of their language and dress and are known for their complicated handwoven textiles. It is a very poor area with an economy mostly dependent on subsistence agriculture and handcraft production.



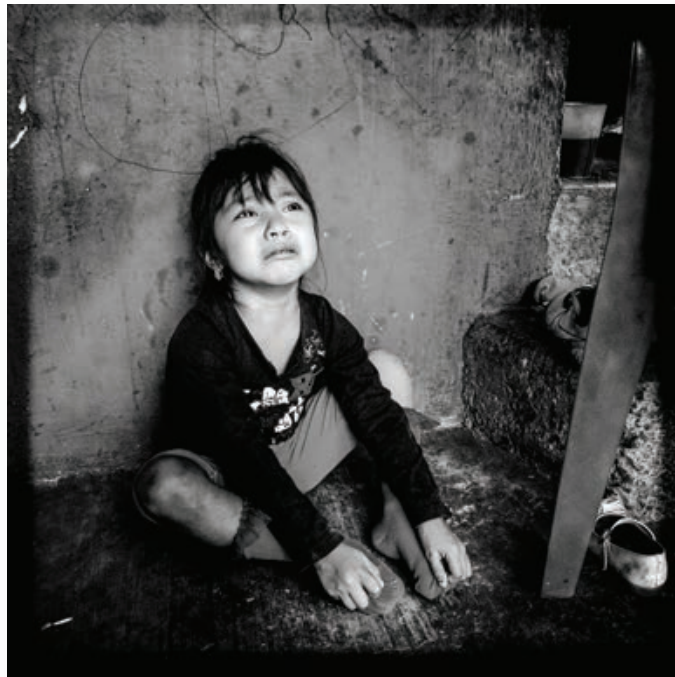
Huehuetonoc, Guerrero, Mexico, December 2015: Don Gerardo and his horse El Guero. He asked me if he could bring his horse to be photographed with him. "I want my grandson to know what a good friend I had."

ADRIANA ZEHBAUSKAS

On photography, cell phones and family portraits



Huehuetonoc, Guerrero, Mexico. April 2016
Gloria and her grandchildren, Gabriel and Lisanet.



Allison, Adán's daughter, cries often and calls for her father in her sleep, says her mom Erica. Adán Abraján de La Cruz went missing exactly seven months before this photograph was taken, after his student group was ambushed by the police in Iguala, Guerrero. The families are still in the dark and many questions remain unanswered.



Huehuetonoc, Guerrero, Mexico, December 2015: A portrait of the girls Elsi Meredith, Alma Aleli y Daila Gisela. I set up camp in front of the main church, with the little WiFi direct printer. It was moving to see all the people coming over and asking to have their pictures taken. Rubi, the mom, said it was the first picture they ever had.



Ayotzinapa, Guerrero, Mexico, Jan. 22, 2015
Jakilina Virguen Balthazar, grandmother of Jorge Luis and Dorian Gonzalez Parral, both among the 43 missing, in her home in Xalpatlahuac, hometown of four of the missing students and one survivor.

by *Adriana Zehbrauskas*

ADÁN ABRAJÁN de la Cruz was 24 years old the night he disappeared. A first-year student at the Ayotzinapa Teacher's Rural School in the impoverished Mexican state of Guerrero, he went missing along with 42 other students when the buses they were traveling in were attacked by a drug cartel in Iguala which handed them over to local police, who, working in complicity with city officials, later disappeared them.

I started covering this story from day one, on assignment for various media outlets, and at that point, although I knew it was a big story, probably the biggest in Mexico in recent years, I did not know that it would consume more than two years of my life.

While on assignment working with the families of the missing students, I was doing regular reportage pictures with my reflex camera, but also relying heavily on cell phone images for my clients' and my own Instagram feed. I would post images as the story developed, portraits of family members, small details of their lives, their homes, fleeting moments of joy, more lasting moments of pain.

Instagram was a space where I had the freedom to edit and publish my images, and although always following the same ethical guidelines of my assignment work, it allowed me to be more personal. It also gave a direct line to an audience that was as global and varied as it could be. I was very impressed with the response and interest I got. People cared about the story, about the people of Guerrero.

I followed the family of Adán

Abraján de la Cruz for six months. He had left behind a wife, two children, two sisters, two parents and two grandparents. I wanted them to tell their own story, so I started a small multimedia project, using interviews, small video clips and still images, for which I asked for personal photos and footage of their missing loved one. And I kept hearing: "I don't have any, I had it my phone, but I lost it," or, "I replaced the phone and didn't save the photos."

After hearing this so many times, from Adán's family and others, one thing became clear to me: not only had their relatives been stolen from their future, but a memory of who they were also was doomed to disappear. Apart from a few mugshots and blurry, very low-res cell phone images, very few family members had pictures of their disappeared loved ones.

ADRIANA ZEBRAUSKAS

When I finished the story, I went back and handed them a stack of photographs I had taken during those six months but their reaction to the portrait I took of them after the first communion of Adán's son, Angel, was what made me stop and think.

My idea was to photograph families living in communities surrounded by violence and the real threat of forced disappearances. But I also realized that nobody had family pictures anymore, so the "Family Matters" project would be a series of posed family portraits, photographed with the same tool responsible for the lack of printed images in the first place—the cell phone. I would then print them on the spot, using a small printer connected by wireless to my iPhone, and hand them the portraits.

It struck me as a great paradox of the times we're living in: there

have never been so many images produced, photography has never been so popular, we all have cell phones, we're all photographers and, yet, fewer and fewer images are being printed. These people were disappearing twice, from life itself and from the memory of their family and friends. Would this be a generation that would only have pictures in a cloud somewhere? Are these children growing up without a family album where later in life they can see themselves and their families and show it to their own children? Will children remember what their parents looked like? Who are we without our memories?

More than 30,000 people remain missing or disappeared in Mexico, but the real number is much higher; many cases go unreported for fear of retaliation or because of distrust in the local and federal authorities.

The photographs were made in Huehuetonoc, a little village in the mountains of Guerrero, where the population, from an indigenous group called Amuzgo, created a self-defense group and were able to protect their community from the neighboring cartels and their poppy fields.

The story of the family told by posed portraits is one of change over time; family groups look different at different times, thus also telling a story about where and how we live.

A person photographed has achieved a moment of redemption, saved from the fate of those forever forgotten. ●

Adriana Zehbrauskas, a documentary photographer, has worked with The New York Times, BuzzFeed and The New Yorker, among other publications.



NATALIA KOLESNIKOVA / AFP/GETTY IMAGES

IN RUSSIA THERE IS NO WAY TO 'STAY SAFE'

By Anna Nemtsova

MOSCOW—ON A sunny morning in July 2009, I got a phone call from a friend in Grozny, the capital of Chechnya: “They abducted Natasha right from the courtyard of her house.” Shortly after that, we

learned that our friend and colleague, Natalya Estemirova, or Natasha as we all called her, had been murdered. I jumped on a plane and flew to Grozny.

Natasha’s neighbors told us that several men, whose names we still do not know, grabbed the 51-year-old human rights defender and journalist and dragged her into their Lada car. She managed to scream: “I’m

being kidnapped!” The Lada drove away from Chechnya to Ingushetia, a neighboring Russian republic in the North Caucasus. Natasha’s battered corpse was dumped by the side of the road. Two bullets destroyed half of the top of her head, the others hit her chest.

Looking at her body, beautiful and seemingly so young there in funeral repose on a table in her

Mourners gather around the coffin of Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya during the leave-taking ceremony before her burial in Moscow, October 10, 2006.



Top: Russian activists held portraits of slain human rights activist Natalya Estemirova in Moscow on July 15, 2010 during a rally.

Bottom: Hundreds of mourners shed tears and laid flowers at the open casket of Pavel Sheremet, a 44-year-old columnist for *Ukrainska Pravda*.

family house, I was thinking that she would have probably lived a long life if she kept her job as a schoolteacher. I quickly brushed that thought away.

Once, in 2005 when I stayed in Natasha's apartment during the Second Chechen War, she told me that she would keep reporting for as long as she witnessed injustice.

Natasha was a contributor to the Russian independent publication *Novaya Gazeta*, and she was the first to write about the "abduction epidemic" in Chechnya. She continued to document and publish her reports in *Novaya Gazeta* even after receiving undisguised death threats from Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov.

Today we continue to publish our stories about abductions and the impunity of murderers in Chechnya, especially those who target gay men and women.

I have lost too many friends to assassinations, to crossfires. They were all journalists who tried to give voice to the voiceless in Russia and Eastern Europe.

During Vladimir Putin's rule since January 2000 we've seen at least 28 reporters assassinated for telling the truth in Russia, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists; nine journalists fell victim to contract murders in Ukraine during the same period of time. We rarely find out the truth about whose bullets kill our colleagues.

The murderers would have you think hearts just mysteriously stop beating in women and men who bear witness to atrocities.

The work is dangerous no matter what. In August 2008 I covered the Russian-Georgian war for *Newsweek* and also tried to help evacuate the bodies of our colleagues Alexander Klimchuk and Giga Chikhladze, killed in a crossfire on the first day of the war. They were freelance reporters who did their job trying to cover both sides of the front line.

Six years later we saw colleagues die in Ukraine. On May 24, 2014, Andy Rocchelli and Andrei Mironov, a long-time friend of mine, were killed while covering a firefight in Andreyevka village, known for almost daily combat between Kiev's troops and pro-Russian rebel forces.

But while it is tragic to lose friends to bullets in war zones, it is even more painful to see them hunted down and killed by assassins. Journalists know too well that once the order comes for a hit, it does not matter whether their journalistic assignment is in Chechnya, in Moscow, or in Kiev. Even bodyguards won't save you, they say, and yet they continue to work.

It is our duty to carry on investigating every one of these assassinations. We look at the aftermath—the crime scene, the grief of the family—we cry, we hurry to work harder.

In 2004, Anna Politkovskaya was poisoned on her way to Beslan to cover the scene of a terrible massacre made worse by a botched security operation. The attempt on her life did not slow Anna down. Then, on Oct. 7, 2006, which happened to be Putin's birthday, her body was found in the elevator of her apartment building with two bullets in her chest, one in her shoulder, and one in the back of her head. She was 48 years old.

One more of my dear friends, Pavel Sheremet was assassinated near Kiev's opera house in July 2016. Somebody set off a bomb in his car. Why did anybody want to murder 44-year-old big-hearted Sheremet? He was not just a reporter, he was a walking journalistic institution. Sheremet founded a school for investigative reporters in Kiev. At his funeral his colleagues from the newspaper *Ukrainskaya Pravda* told me they were heartbroken, as if they had lost their father.

Whoever ordered the murder of Sheremet managed to hurt the entire community of journalists

working in Ukraine. But they did not manage to stop independent reporters from publishing true stories about state corruption, Russia's aggressive violence in Ukraine, state officials working in tandem with the local criminal world, the rise of far-right radical groups, or repeated human rights violations.

Reporters and photographers often are told by their editors, or tell each other, "Stay safe." But we all know that's not going to happen. And it cannot happen. If you "stay safe" you are not going to be doing your job. In Russia, and in many other countries, telling the truth gets more dangerous by the day.

Last summer we had a terrible tragedy. Three of our brave friends and colleagues, Orkhan Dzhe-mal, Alexander Rastarguyev and Kirill Rodchenko were murdered in the Central African Republic. They were eager to report one of the most important stories about the way the Putin government uses mercenaries overseas. The day before they were killed, our colleagues tried to film Russian contract soldiers at a military base.

After their murder, the Russian government tried to convince the public that the reporters were victims of an ordinary robbery, but

none of us believe that.

The community of independent journalists is convinced that our friends were set up in Africa. Dzhemal, a senior reporter and his colleagues, talented filmmakers, traveled to the CAR to focus on the role played there by Yevgeniy Prigozhin, also known as "Putin's Chef," whose name also appears in one of the Mueller probe indictments for election interference in the United States. Prigozhin is famous for threatening journalists in Russia.

Novaya Gazeta, a newspaper that has lost five of its writers to assassins, continues to investigate and reveal crimes and human rights violations by Russian authorities. We say goodbye to our colleagues but we never see their workplace empty for too long. That is what the masterminds behind the contract murders do not get—violence does not stop journalists from producing stories that give voice to humanity. ●

Anna Nemtsova reports from Moscow for The Daily Beast and Newsweek. In 2015 she received the prestigious Courage in Journalism Award from the International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF).

Russian human rights activists attended a rally in honor of slain Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya in Moscow on October 7, 2009 on the third anniversary of her death at the hands of an unknown gunman.



CLOCKWISE: OKANA ONIPKO / AFP/GETTY IMAGES; SERGEI SUPINSKY / AFP / GETTY IMAGES; DMITRY KOSTYUKOV/APP / GETTY IMAGES

A Change in Focus

Terrorism, war and famine are not the only stories worth covering in Africa and the developing world.

By Amy Yee

AT A prison in Thiès, Senegal, a group of women in fine dresses cut from the same colorful fabric enact a scene before an audience. One of them breaks down sobbing and wailing; another woman comforts her. These women are not actors, but female inmates of the prison depicting why many of them are in jail: infanticide and abortion, which is effectively illegal in Senegal.

It was International Women's Day and the women were sharing their stories in front of dignitaries, diplomats and activists. Later, I spoke with a soft-spoken inmate. She was 40 years old and was locked up after the death of her seventh child. "Mariama," as I will call her to protect her privacy, denied killing her baby and said he died at birth. Yet she was serving a seven-year prison term for infanticide after awaiting trial for three years. Mariama said coping with family and children she left behind was one of the hardest things for her. "They don't understand what you're going through," she told me quietly.

When I interviewed Mariama, I didn't want to just write about the unspeakable tragedy of a mother killing her child in a poor country. "What could prevent such a desperate act?" I asked a program officer with Tostan, an NGO that works at that jail and with women prisoners. Her answer was simple: family planning.

In Senegal, as in other devel-

oping countries, some poor, rural women do not know about birth control and those who do often lack access to it. The program officer recalled one female prisoner who broke down in tears when she learned about contraceptives. If she had had access to them, "I wouldn't have had to kill my baby," she cried.

It is tragic that women have to resort to infanticide and are jailed for abortion in Senegal, whose cosmopolitan capital Dakar gives the impression of a relatively developed nation. In fact, nearly half the country lives below the poverty line, which can lead to desperate measures. [<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/senegal/overview>]

But Senegal has been making progress in expanding women's access to family planning through education, outreach in rural areas, better-equipped clinics and more health workers. West Africa claims some of the world's highest birth rates, but through family planning Senegal brought its rate down from 6.4 children per woman in 2011 to 4.9 in 2014.

Advocacy groups in Senegal have been raising awareness with policy makers and judges who mete out harsh sentences without understanding the desperate circumstances—rape, incest, extreme poverty—that women who have abortions face. Some of that progress is being hampered by a U.S. policy to cut funding for women's reproductive health.

My article that featured Mariama was not about terrorism, war, deadly epidemics, famine or disaster—topics that dominate head-

lines from Africa and developing countries. Of course, those issues and events are hugely important and the world must know about them. But the world should also know about other vital stories that aren't about bleak living conditions and violence.

The story of Senegal's progress in giving women access to reproductive rights and better health care is critical for bringing its birth rate to sustainable levels, and in sub-Saharan Africa as a whole for avoiding crises of overpopulation, job scarcity, food and water insecurity and more. Describing the desperate measures taken by women in the Senegal prison was just the start. Writing about what can be done to prevent a terrible problem was just as important. However, in an era when news churns at a head-spinning pace, this nuanced story doesn't check the "easy-to-understand" box. I pitched this story many times to multiple outlets; it took a year to find a good home for it in The Lancet.

The articles I've written from 11 countries in Africa over the past two years are not about terrorism, armed conflict and disaster. There are many excellent journalists doing this important reporting. I focus on less covered but no less important stories that should be heard. Yes, editors are busy (as are reporters and freelance journalists on the ground in risky environments), but they should be open to stories that don't fit the mold of conflict and disaster, and that don't hew to archetypes and stereotypes.

Another boon to journalism would be more media outlets, pages,

or web 'verticals' that spotlight these stories. Instead, media outlets are being forced to shutter pages devoted to international news, environment, education, culture and other important topics. Many of the pages or publications that I used to write for are gone. And sadly, in these tumultuous times, an alarming number of media outlets are shutting down entirely or cutting already-scarce jobs.

Developing countries face a litany of urgent problems, from climate change, deadly diseases, environmental destruction, armed conflict and violence against the vulnerable. These problems usually seem entrenched and hopeless, so I am intrigued when I find promising initiatives that tackle or mitigate them. I go out of my way to write these stories.

From eastern Congo, one of the worst conflict zones in the world, I wrote a long feature analysing efforts to harness small hydropower to create electricity, which will hopefully create jobs and a better chance at stability. This was a story for the

Sunday Business section of The New York Times, but still very much about people suffering from lack of jobs, deep poverty, political instability and poor governance. Another story, also for the paper's business section, analysed the enormous potential that renewable geothermal energy could have in Kenya and the region—and the very real obstacles to realizing its potential.

Of course, the obstacles to alleviating social problems are enormous and many efforts fail. There should be more initiatives and more progress on many fronts. I know firsthand that newspapers and magazines are strained and there aren't enough pages or resources for international news. But promising stories from developing countries about business, science, technology, public health, arts and culture are fascinating to read and have real impact.

Children don't have to die of careless drowning in Bangladesh. People in Rwanda don't have to decimate forests for cooking fuel; there are alternatives. A small-time

poacher in Kenya would readily give up that work for a safer, regular salaried job. A poor woman in Senegal doesn't have to kill a baby she cannot support if she can plan her pregnancies.

Those are some of the initiatives I've been honored to write about. Under ideal circumstances, spotlighting what can be done to remedy myriad problems could alleviate or even prevent the tragedies that create headlines. It's not easy to get editors to understand and give attention and diminishing space to these nuanced stories, but they must be told. ●

Amy Yee is an award-winning journalist who writes for The New York Times, The Economist and NPR. She is a former staffer for The Financial Times based in New York and India, where she lived for seven years. Amy is a three-time winner of the United Nations Correspondents Association award and four-time winner of the South Asian Journalists Association award. Her work is at Amyyewrites.com

Yee views a Christian religious service at the Church of St. George's, a rock-hewn monolith in Lalibela, Ethiopia. She struggles to garner interest among editors in stories that are not about bleak living conditions and violence.



COURTESY OF AMY YEE

When Traditional Reporting Isn't Enough

'Solutions journalism' highlights viable remedies for the social problems that afflict the developing world.

By Jacob Kushner

FOR MANY news consumers the name Somalia has become synonymous with statelessness, violence, intractability. Each year Al-Shabab kills hundreds of civilians and terrorizes many more in Mogadishu and beyond. Yet for all the attention on Somalia's many problems, news audiences might be surprised to learn that when it comes to ending impunity for sexual violence, some regions of Somalia have achieved remarkable progress. In Hargeisa, Somaliland—the self-declared state in northwest Somalia—a hospital was launched to give women immediate medical attention by sensitized doctors. Victims also get support from trained psychologists and social workers; an in-house police office at which to report their case in private, sometimes to female officers; and a public prosecutor with whom they can discuss hopes for justice that transcends the traditional, patriarchal clan system.

This model—which a British human rights organization adapted

from a successful program in Manchester—is increasing prosecutions for sex crimes that once went almost entirely unpunished. In Mogadishu in 2013, the United Nations counted 1,700 cases of rape, with only two convictions. That same year in Somaliland, of 326 reported cases of sexual violence, 171 were prosecuted and 54 resulted in convictions, all thanks to this one hospital and its affiliates. Learning from that success, Somali and international advocates are attempting to launch a similar program at a major Mogadishu hospital.

In an article for Participant Media, I explained how the program's creators managed to overcome initial resistance by some Somali authorities and doctors. I also explained the model's limitations and the challenges of trying to replicate it in far more populous Mogadishu. This style of reporting has come to be known as “solutions journalism,” and it's built around understanding not just what's failing, but also what is working—and why. Too often we report singularly on problems without taking the time to explain when viable solutions to them ex-

ist. If health and law enforcement professionals have found a way to bring rape perpetrators to justice and help victims recover, it deserves a mention in our stories.

Solutions journalism doesn't argue against covering abuses of power, conflict or corruption. It merely asserts that unless we also shed light on potential solutions to those problems, we haven't quite finished the job. The Solutions Journalism Network, a non-profit co-founded by veteran reporter and editor Tina Rosenberg, describes it as “rigorous reporting on responses to social problems.”

I say all this as someone who has spent most of the last decade exposing problems: corruption in governance, violence against immigrants and other minorities, the failures of foreign aid. After Haiti's 2010 earthquake, I spent two years tracking some of the billions of dollars the U.S. government and American charities pledged to help Haiti recover, much of which was spent ineffectively by U.S. agencies and contractors and little of which ever went through Haitian hands. Some were importing soap from abroad at great cost—and handing it out for free at the expense of Haitian soap manufacturers who struggled to compete. So I wrote about a new, public database of Haitian suppliers that aid agencies could use to quickly find Haitian companies that could procure the soap and other supplies locally and thus reinvigorate rather than undermine Haiti's local economy. After my article appeared, I noticed that other outlets also began to question why so little aid to Haiti actually went through Haitian hands.

Solutions journalism also offers a refreshing new approach to combating international news fatigue. After the 2016 election, several editors told me they planned to give less play to foreign news. Responses like the following email, which I received two months after President Donald Trump took office, became common:

“Hi Jacob—I've got some bad news, I'm afraid: We've decided to

kill your Congo article. With Trump dominating the news right now, it's really hard to find space in the magazine for other topics.”

International reporters today are frustrated that they can't get Americans to care about the rest of the world. Part of the reason may be that coverage of places like Haiti or East Africa is either shallow or relentlessly negative, often portraying people as passive victims. Solutions stories restore agency to the people we cover because they often show people solving their own problems. Solutions stories tend to be surprising and counterintuitive. And they are by no means some fluffy alternative to hard-hitting reporting. To the contrary, they seek to replace a type of lackluster international reporting that paints any half-baked idea as a magic cure to poverty or disease. Solutions journalism leads us to critical questions about the status quo: why, for instance, do international charities continue to spend so much money on disaster relief when scientific evidence suggests it's far more cost-effective to save or improve lives through preventative interventions such as distributing anti-malarial mosquito nets—or even just handing out cash?

A few years ago, Ryan Lenora Brown reported for the Christian Science Monitor how unconditional cash transfers were not only giving

low-income Africans in Lesotho control over their own lives, but were proving more effective than other types of aid. In true solutions journalism fashion, she also examined cash transfers' limitations—namely, that most research on cash transfers has focused on short-term benefits. And she painted a picture of where cash transfers were heading: toward government companion programs that might make cash transfers a viable long-term solution to several facets of poverty.

Another solutions journalism story: Across the globe, 2.4 billion people lack proper sanitation, which contributes to thousands of deaths each year, according to the World Health Organization. But rather than reporting on the problem as intractable, last year NPR's Planet Money told the story of how scientists managed to break up Dakar, Senegal's so-called “poop cartels” that kept the price of waste removal too high for many Dakar residents to afford.

Solutions journalism demands that we take a critical look at what's truly working, and why. A new super-medicine? Let's explain how scientists discovered it and why they think it might work where others have not. A new push to hand out computer tablets to African students? Is there any evidence to suggest that traditional paper text-

books don't work just as well?

Too often, international reporting elevates good intentions or catchy ideas without investigating whether or not there's evidence to suggest they actually work. It's a question we need to ask. We know that after a disaster, many people feel the urge to donate, and we often encourage them to do so in our reporting. But research shows that post-disaster aid is one of the least effective ways to save a life. If we don't report on the many, more cost-effective ways to do good, doesn't that make us part of the problem?

Incorporating solutions angles into our reporting might even drive more traffic to international stories: Researchers who examined thousands of New York Times articles found that news framed positively is far more likely to go viral than negatively framed stories. When done right, solutions reporting offers a refreshing way for the public to reengage in international news at a time when many news outlets are only looking inward. ●

Jacob Kushner is an international freelance journalist and a member of the Solutions Journalism Network. He began covering East Africa for The Associated Press in 2013 as an Overseas Press Club N.S. Bienstock Memorial Fellow based in Nairobi.

Below left: Kushner interviews two victims of discrimination in Nairobi: Cynthia, a lesbian who fled Burundi, and Sulait, a gay man from Uganda. Both have resettled abroad.

Below: Somalian Mahamood has made a living “circumsizing” young girls for 15 years. The practice is gradually declining under international pressure.



NICHOLE SOBECKI / AFP / GETTY IMAGES



ANNUAL AWARDS 2018

OVERSEAS PRESS CLUB OF AMERICA



EDEL RODRIGUEZ

By Scott Kraft
OPC AWARDS CHAIR

THE 2018 Overseas Press Club awards were selected by juries composed of many of the leading lights of international journalism, among them past winners of OPC awards, Pulitzer Prizes, Emmys, National Magazine Awards and National Book Awards. The process began in the fall, when we recruited nearly two dozen head judges who, in turn, recruited a handful of thoughtful and fair-minded current and former journalists to fill out their judging panels.

In all, 87 judges answered the call

this year, volunteering hours and days to sift through more than 500 entries, a near-record total for the OPC, in 21 categories. The journalism we are honoring represents remarkable work—from wire services, newspapers, magazines, online publications, television, podcasts and radio.

The entries were of such exceptional quality that the judging panels found the decision-making difficult. The judges invariably remarked on the high quality of the work they read, viewed and heard. It was a reminder to all of us that international reporting is as vibrant today as it has ever been—and that gifted and often courageous storytelling still has the ability to surprise, to provoke, to move and to in-

spire our audiences, wherever they find us.

“It was an honor and a great experience,” said James B. Steele, the two-time Pulitzer winner and former OPC winner who headed up the investigative jury. “I saw a lot of great journalism I might otherwise have missed.”

To all the judges, please accept our heartfelt thanks for helping us identify the best of the best this year.

And to the winners and citation award recipients, we say congratulations for these richly deserved honors. ●

Scott Kraft, a former correspondent in Africa and Europe, is managing editor of the Los Angeles Times. He is also third vice president of the OPC.

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OVERSEAS PRESS CLUB OF AMERICA ANNUAL AWARD WINNERS 2018

1

THE HAL BOYLE AWARD

Best newspaper, news service or digital reporting from abroad

Sudarsan Raghavan
The Washington Post
“Yemen’s War and Humanitarian Crisis”



In an era where great reporting is often associated with mobilizing massive teams and multi-media packages, Sudarsan Raghavan’s Yemen package reminded us that sometimes all it takes to deliver outstanding work is

one talented reporter with in-depth knowledge of the subject and the courage to go digging in the field. The breadth and scope of the stories—from inside a hospital to interviews with Houthi commanders and U.S. and regional allies funding and weaponizing the war—illustrated a complex and important conflict. Classic intrepid solo reporting matched with beautiful writing, human faces and big picture analysis.

Citation for Excellence: Maggie Michael, Maad al-Zikry and Nariman El-Mofty
The Associated Press, with support from the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting
“Yemen’s Dirty War”

Sponsor: Norman Pearlstine in memory of Jerry Flint

Judges: Farnaz Fassihi (head), *The Wall Street Journal*; Bobby Ghosh, *Bloomberg*; Ellen Knickmeyer, *The Associated Press*; Jesse Pesta, *The New York Times*; Shibani Mahatni, *The Washington Post*

2

THE BOB CONSIDINE AWARD

Best newspaper, news service or digital interpretation of international affairs

Wa Lone, Kyaw Soe Oo and colleagues
Reuters
“Myanmar Burning”



The courageous reporting by two Reuters reporters who were arrested while investigating a massacre in the Myanmar village of Inn Din, and the fierce commitment of their news organization to complete their journalistic mission, led to an outstanding series of articles exposing and explaining the government’s atrocities against the Rohingya. Wa Lone, Kyaw Soe Oo and their colleagues discovered a mass grave, obtained photographs of the victims,

interviewed family members and identified some of the perpetrators of the slaughter. They used the incident to open a window on the larger forces that enabled the massacre, including the infantry divisions that spearheaded the attacks, the use of social media to incite hatred, and government leaders who turned a blind eye. Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo remain in prison. This award for “Myanmar Burning” is a tribute to their spirit.

Citation: Tamer El-Ghobashy, Louisa Loveluck, Liz Sly and Alice Martins
The Washington Post
“Syria: Reflections From a Shattered Land”

Sponsor: William J. Holstein and Rita Sevell

Judges: Robert Friedman (head), *Bloomberg*; Liam Stack, *The New York Times*; Mary Rajkumar, *The Associated Press*; Laurie Hays, *Edelman*

3

THE ROBERT CAPA GOLD MEDAL AWARD

Best photographic reporting from abroad requiring exceptional courage and enterprise published in any medium

Carolyn Van Houten
The Washington Post
“The road to Asylum: Inside the migrant caravans”



Through a year of making monthly visits to document the stories of people at different stages of their trek north through Central America, Carolyn Van Houten brought a deep level of humanity and empathy to a story that saturated the news media. Courage in storytelling is not only defined by proximity to violence and danger, but also by having the guts to go where others are not, and to look beneath the surface to understand the true impact of these crises. Van Houten’s work demonstrates this, but more than that, she embodies this ethos as a storyteller and a person. This award is not just for her talent as a photographer, but for her compassion and courage in storytelling.

Citation: Khalil Hamra
The Associated Press
“Conflict in Gaza”

Sponsor: Getty Images

Judges for the three photography awards: Daniella Zalcman (head), *independent*; Mallory Benedict, *National Geographic*; Veronika Chatelain, *Open Society Foundations*; Jehan Jillani, *The Guardian*; Teru Kuwayama, *independent*

4

THE OLIVIER REBBOT AWARD

Best photographic news reporting from abroad published in any medium

Nariman El-Mofty
The Associated Press, with support from the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting
“Yemen: On the Edge”



The jury saw several strong portfolios from Yemen—a country that, until last year, had been severely neglected by the mainstream media. Nariman El-Mofty’s work stood out. We were moved by her clear commitment to the subject, but also by her thoughtful and surprising use of light, color and framing to capture a conflict zone that has almost always been depicted through a darker lens. The variety of scenes that El-Mofty documented—from malnourished children to crumbling infrastructure to snippets of daily life—convey the complexity of a country and a conflict that the world still struggles to understand.

Citation: Spencer Platt
Getty Images
“Looking for Home”

Sponsor: The Coca-Cola Company

THE ROBERT CAPA GOLD MEDAL AWARD

CAROLYN VAN HOUTEN

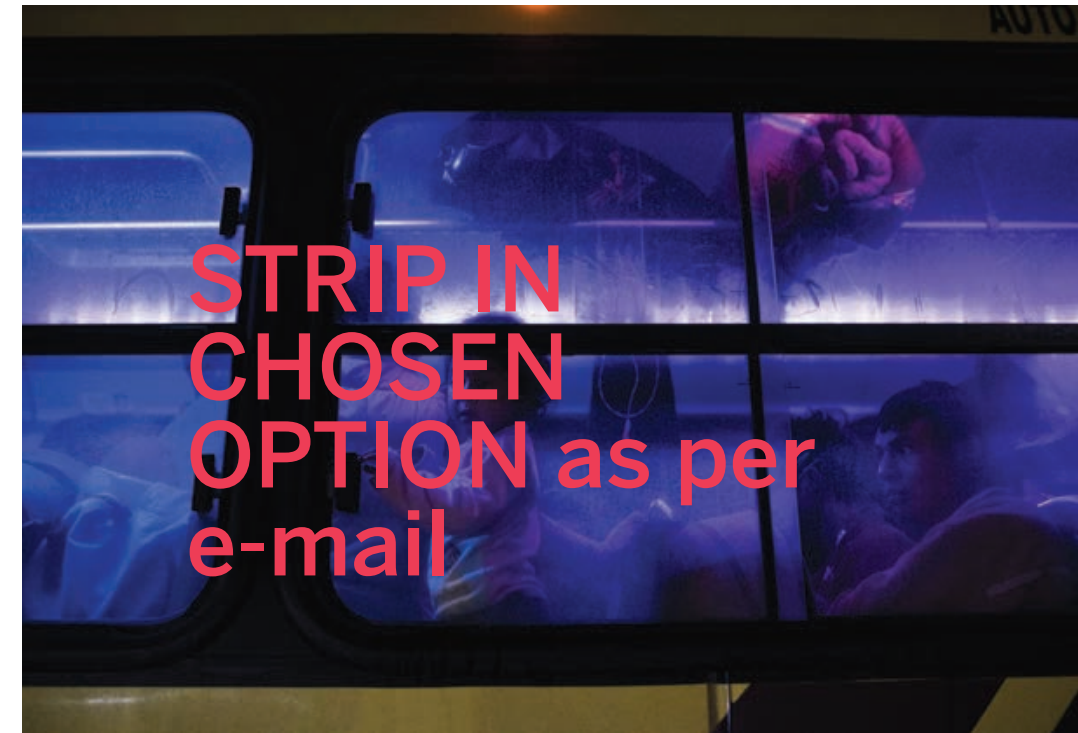
The Washington Post
“Caravans”



Above: In November, heavy rains flooded the tent city Central American migrants erected in a Tijuana, Mexico, stadium.

Above right, migrants are bused to a new shelter in a new event space.

Right: Migrants heading north walk and ride along a road in Santiago Niltepec in October.



CAROLYN VAN HOUTEN

OVERSEAS PRESS CLUB OF AMERICA

ANNUAL AWARD WINNERS 2018

5

THE FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD

Best feature photography on an international theme published in any medium

Shiho Fukada

Bloomberg Businessweek, with support from the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting
“For Many of Japan’s Elderly Women, Prison Is a Haven”



Shiho Fukada’s quiet, intimate glimpse into the lives of elderly female Japanese prisoners is both striking and surprising. It presents a sweet, empathetic portrait of a group of women who had to be photographed under challenging

circumstances to protect their identities. These photos are a humanizing point of entry into any number of broader conversations: about aging, about loneliness, about society’s role in caring for its elderly and the challenges we will increasingly face with growing elder populations. We don’t know these women, but through Shiho’s photos we understand them and their uncertain future.

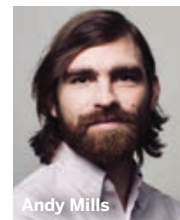
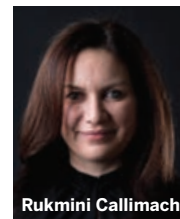
Citation: Kadir van Lohuizen and Yuri Kozyrev
The Washington Post, with support from Fondation Carmignac
“Arctic: New Frontier”

6

THE LOWELL THOMAS AWARD

Best radio, audio or podcast coverage of international affairs

Rukmini Callimachi, Andy Mills, Larissa Anderson and Wendy Dorr
The New York Times
“Caliphate”



Impressive in scope, depth, and rigor, Caliphate uses an effective mix of access, story arc and analysis to tell a nuanced and complex story about ISIS: how it recruits, how it functions, how and why it could draw a young middle-class Canadian guy to travel to Syria to join the effort to create an Islamic Caliphate, and what impact it continues to have, including in the hearts and minds of those who return home. This podcast series also demystifies the reporting process, transparently showing how reporter Rukmini Callimachi and producer Andy Mills question how they know what they know, who and what they can trust, what more they need to learn and question, and what can still surprise them. This transparency was not only engaging, it earned the listener’s trust.

Citation: Amy Martin
“Threshold,” with support from the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting

“‘Threshold’ Season Two: Cold Comfort”

Sponsor: Deborah Amos

Judges: Mary Kay Magistad (head), *UC Berkeley*; George Lewinski, *former Marketplace*; Marsha Cooke, *VICE News*; Laura Lynch, *CBC*; Jason Motlagh, *freelance*

7

THE DAVID KAPLAN AWARD

Best TV or video spot news reporting from abroad

VICE News Tonight on HBO
“The Killing Rooms of Mosul”



The VICE team brought us to a place nobody else went and found a story we had not heard. The first international news crew to film inside an apparent Iraqi execution room in the Old City of West Mosul, VICE News Tonight on HBO presented viewers with horrific video evidence of an atrocity that raised serious questions about how the battle for Mosul was fought and who should be held accountable for the killings. Despite intimidation from Iraqi military intelligence officers and stonewalling by the top Iraqi military commander on camera, Vice’s commitment and resourcefulness in getting the story led to even more international coverage and to international human rights observers obtaining access to the site themselves.

Citation: Nic Robertson, Nima Elbagir, Nick Paton Walsh, Waffa Munayyer and Salma Abdelaziz
CNN
“The War in Yemen”

Sponsor: ABC News

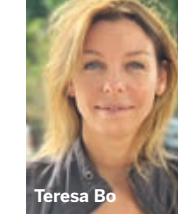
Judges: Marcy McGinnis (head), *Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science*; Len Apcar, *Louisiana State University*; Karen Curry, *Drexel University*; Eason Jordan, *Oryx Strategies*; Terry McCarthy, *American Academy, Berlin*

8

THE EDWARD R. MURROW AWARD

Best TV, video or documentary interpretation of international affairs with a run time up to 30 minutes

Kavitha Chekuru, Adrienne Haspel, Laila Al-Arian and Teresa Bo
Fault Lines, Al Jazeera English
“No Shelter: Family Separation at the Border”



Al Jazeera offers a heartbreaking look into lives that have been ripped apart by U.S. immigration policies. With meticulous reporting and careful treatment, the documentary tracks every step of the process, detailing the confusion, cruelty and pain, without slipping into a tone of outrage or blame. Instead, viewers are drawn into the lives of real people faced with impossible choices as they try to flee violence. The three characters linger in viewers’ minds long after the documentary has ended.

Citation: VICE News Tonight on HBO
“Rebuilding Mosul”

Sponsor: CBS News

Judges: Vivienne Walt (head), *TIME*; Jim Bittermann, *CNN*; Beth Loyd, *Facebook*; Michael Moss, *author*; Elissa Rubin, *PBS NewsHour (freelance)*

THE OLIVIER REBBOT AWARD

NARIMAN EL-MOFTY

The Associated Press
"Yemen: On the Edge"

Scenes from
a brutal war:
At left, political activist
Monir al-Sharqi under
treatment at Marib General
Hospital after he says he
was kidnapped, tortured
and burned with acid by
Houthi rebels.

Bottom left:
This baby died of
starvation shortly
after this photo
was taken.

Bottom right:
a car accident
victim at Marib.



OVERSEAS PRESS CLUB OF AMERICA

ANNUAL AWARD WINNERS 2018

9

THE PETER JENNINGS AWARD

Best TV, video or documentary about international affairs with a run time over 30 minutes

Karen Edwards and Gemma Atwal
HBO
“Stolen Daughters: Kidnapped by Boko Haram”



Four years in the making, this unique film tells the exclusive story of two groups of Nigerian girls who are trying to recover from their kidnapping and years of captivity by Boko Haram. Years after the #BringBackOurGirls campaign, the filmmakers share the young women's stories with dignity and humanity, giving voice to these previously silent survivors.

Sponsor: The Jennings Family

Judges: Abi Wright (head), *Columbia University*;
Adriane Quinlan, *VICE News*;
Jonathan Jones, *freelance*;
Sara Just, *PBS NewsHour*

10

THE ED CUNNINGHAM AWARD

Best magazine-style, long-form narrative feature in print or digital on an international story

Anand Gopal
The New Yorker
“Syria’s Last Bastion of Freedom”



“Tell the story of your village,” the Italian novelist Andrea Camilleri once said. “If you tell it well, you will have told the story of the world.” Anand Gopal is not from the war-torn Syrian village of Saraquib, but he immersed himself in

the life and soul of the place during six years of brave and brilliant reporting. The result was a masterpiece. Gopal distilled the scope of the savagery and complexity of the Syrian war into a compelling, coherent narrative. He painted an unforgettable portrait of citizens who clung to their ideals amid death and devastation. Gopal’s elegant writing brought alive characters such as the accountant Osama al-Hosseini, who withstood peril and suffering to lead the first election in Saraquib. This tragic yet heroic saga told an important story about a place and its people—and a larger story about humanity at its best and worst.

Sponsor: Michael S. Serrill

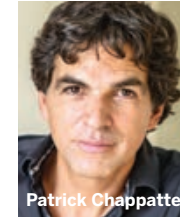
Judges: Sebastian Rotella (head), *ProPublica*;
Richard Boudreaux, *The Wall Street Journal*;
Chris Kraul, *Los Angeles Times*;
Maria Luisa Rossel, *Uno Noticias*

11

THE BEST CARTOON AWARD

Best print, digital or graphic journalism on international affairs

Patrick Chappatte
The New York Times



Patrick Chappatte’s cartoons for *The New York Times* were a model of the form. One, in particular, stood out: a scene inside a Saudi Arabian classroom that highlighted the changing face of that country and the dangers inherent in one particular profession—journalism. Like so much of Chappatte’s work, it economically and elegantly conveys the idea in a dynamic way—concisely and with nuance, illustrating the kinds of freedom that democracy needs and autocracy fears. It manages that feat with humor—no easy task, considering the seriousness of the topic and the gruesomeness of the event that inspired it. It is, simply, a remarkable accomplishment.

Sponsor: Daimler

Judges: Bob Mankoff (head), *Esquire*;
Drew Dernavich, *The New Yorker*;
Matt Diffie, *The New Yorker*;
Paul Noth, *The New Yorker*;
Ben Schwartz, *The New Yorker*;
Signe Wilkinson, *Philadelphia Daily News*

12

THE MALCOLM FORBES AND MORTON FRANK AWARD

Best international business news reporting in any medium

Walt Bogdanich, Michael Forsythe
and NYT staff
The New York Times
“The Enablers”



It’s no secret that authoritarian regimes such as China, Russia and Saudi Arabia are gaining influence around the globe. The surprise is who is helping them: American consulting firms, British public relations shops and Western political operatives all looking to make a buck. With its intrepid series “The Enablers,” *The New York Times* exposed how the brightest minds in the West are linked to some of the darkest deeds of strongmen

and plutocrats. In exchange for multi-million dollar paydays, these fee-seekers have helped Saudi Arabia jail dissidents at home and starve civilians in Yemen. They have strengthened China’s military, helped a Russian oligarch evade U.S. sanctions and assisted South Africa’s leaders in gutting the tax agency investigating them for tax evasion—just a few examples uncovered over months of reporting that was powerful, sobering and impressive in its sweep.

Citation: Cam Simpson, Gavin Finch and Kit Chellel
Bloomberg
“The Brexit Short”

Sponsor: Forbes Magazine

Judges: Kim Murphy (head) *The New York Times*; Marla Dickerson, *Reuters*;
Gordon Fairclough, *The Wall Street Journal*;
Peter Waldman, *Bloomberg Businessweek*

Judge Kim Murphy recused herself from the final selection.

THE FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD

SHIHO FUKADA

Bloomberg Businessweek

“For Many of Japan’s Elderly Women, Prison Is a Haven”

An increasing number of older Japanese women, most of them poor, are being imprisoned for theft and other crimes. The women’s prisons provide walkers for the lame and therapy for women suffering from dementia. Woman at left is 89, and was first locked up for theft at 84.



SHIHO FUKADA

OVERSEAS PRESS CLUB OF AMERICA

ANNUAL AWARD WINNERS 2018

13

THE CORNELIUS RYAN AWARD

Best non-fiction book on international affairs

Rania Abouzeid
W. W. Norton & Company
“No Turning Back: Life, Loss and Hope in Wartime Syria”



“No Turning Back” is an extraordinary feat of reporting—a searing account of the lives of Syrians from all sides caught up in a catastrophic war. A fluent Arabic speaker, Abouzeid draws on her years of often dangerous reporting inside the conflict zone and the deep ties she has built up with people of all political and religious persuasions. This allows her to describe and explain in detail Syria’s tragic descent from the optimism of the first peaceful democratic uprisings in 2011 to the sectarian slaughter of civilians and brutal and misguided foreign interventions. Abouzeid spares nothing in describing the appalling torture and endless mass killings of civilians by the Assad regime. But her use of personal narratives and her fluid writing never let us lose track of the humanity of the Syrians suffering on all sides.

Citation: Barbie Nadeau
Oneworld Publications
“Roadmap to Hell: Sex, Drugs and Guns on the Mafia Coast”

Sponsor: Friends of Richard Threlkeld

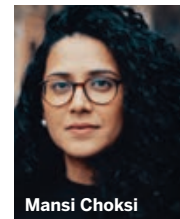
Judges: Dan Hertzberg (head), *freelance*;
John Bussey, *The Wall Street Journal*;
Neil Hickey, *Columbia Journalism Review*;
Jennifer Siebens, *freelance*

14

THE MADELINE DANE ROSS AWARD

Best international reporting in print or digital showing a concern for the human condition

Mansi Choksi
Harper’s Magazine
“The Newlyweds”



This superbly written piece breathes new life into the timeless story of thwarted romance, taking readers into a daring young couple’s elopement in rural India and the myriad obstacles against them. The saga unfolds with a novel’s pacing and deep character development as the newlyweds fight through caste, custom, violence and exploitation in their quest for the most universal of human yearnings: love.

Citation: Finlay Young and Kathleen Flynn
ProPublica and TIME
“Unprotected”

Sponsor: Linda Fasulo

Judges: Hannah Allam (head), *BuzzFeed*;
Eugenia Harvey, *WNET*;
Tim Johnson, *McClatchy*;
Graciela Mochkofsky, *CUNY*;
Prashant Rao, *The Atlantic*

15

THE DAVID A. ANDELMAN AND PAMELA TITLE AWARD

Best international reporting in the broadcast media showing a concern for the human condition

VICE News Tonight on HBO
“Year of the Dog: Inside the World’s Largest Human Migration”



Through an intimate portrait of one family, we experience the impact on 287 million Chinese migrant workers who live apart from their families. In a country known for restrictions on the media, VICE follows a couple working in a coastal city during their 40-hour journey home to their rural village for the Lunar New Year. We are with them as they sleep upright in a packed train car and during their reunion with their excited young son and sullen 15-year-old daughter, who refuses to embrace them after a year of separation. Through words (translated) and a camera (that is often close up and sometimes undercover), we recognize the tradeoffs forced on families by economic hardships—the regret of hardworking young parents missing their children, the weariness of a grandfather doing his best to raise them, and uncomfortable silences as the family pinches dough for dumplings for a once-a-year holiday meal. While many of us knew about this massive migration, we only came to understand it through this cinematic depiction of one family living a universal story.

Citation: Adam Ellick, Taylor Adams, Kristin Bye and Leah Varjacques

The New York Times
“‘It’s an Act of Murder’: How Europe Outsources Suffering as Migrants Drown”

Sponsor: David A. Andelman and Pamela Title

Judges: Geraldine Baum (head), *CUNY Graduate School of Journalism*; Ann Cooper, *Columbia University*; Soraya Nelson, *NPR*; Carlos Rajo, *NY1 Noticias*; Suzanne Spector, *The New York Times*

Judge Suzanne Spector recused herself from the citation selection.

16

THE JOE AND LAURIE DINE AWARD

Best international reporting in any medium dealing with human rights

Jeffrey E. Stern
The New York Times Magazine, with support from the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting
“From Arizona to Yemen: The Journey of an American Bomb”



In-depth reporting across continents traced the creation of a precision missile made by Raytheon in Tucson, Arizona, which was bought by the Saudi government and ultimately dropped on some innocent villagers in Yemen who had been outside celebrating a plan to dig a new well near their homes. Jeffrey Stern traced the missile from beginning to end: interviewing Raytheon workers, Human Rights Watch staff, explaining just how the Department of Defense helps U.S. corporations export deadly weapons and describing the business-as-usual tone of Raytheon CEO Thomas Kennedy on an earnings call with financial analysts. Stern returns to the Yemeni village where lives, bones and dreams were shattered. The forensic, thorough, diligent reporting of Stern brought home the human toll of all those actions and gave voice to people who are little-heard. With a calm sense of moral outrage, Stern shows us how the U.S. government and businesses have blood on their hands.

Citation: Associated Press Staff
“China Clamps Down”

Sponsor: Philip Dine

Judges: Anya Schiffrin (head), *Columbia University*; Alison Bethel-McKenzie, *Caribbean Consortium of Investigative Journalists*; Rebecca Chao, *The WorldPost*; Mai Lynn Miller Nguyen, *Open Society Foundations*; Matt Schiavenza, *Asia Society*; Josephine Schmidt, *IRIN News*

OVERSEAS PRESS CLUB OF AMERICA ANNUAL AWARD WINNERS 2018

17

THE WHITMAN BASSOW AWARD

Best reporting in any medium on international environmental issues

Abrahm Lustgarten
ProPublica and The New York Times Magazine
“Fuel to the Fire”



A profoundly reported work on multiple levels, “Fuel to the Fire” dissects a man-made ecological disaster: how a U.S. biofuels policy engineered mainly to serve corporate interests combined with Indonesian political corruption to devastate Southeast Asian forests and trigger a surge in carbon emissions. Abrahm Lustgarten embraces a complex issue, attacks its many dimensions head on, lucidly enlightens the reader, and offers the public a possible roadmap for action.

Citation: Maurice Tamman, Matthew Green, Mari Saito, Sarah Slobin and Maryanne Murray
Reuters
“Ocean Shock”

Sponsor: Robert Serio

Judges: Michael Williams (head), *Reuters*; Aryn Baker, *TIME*; Stacy Feldman, *Inside Climate News*; Jennifer Forsyth, *The Wall Street Journal*

Judge Michael Williams recused himself from the citation selection.

18

THE ROBERT SPIERS BENJAMIN AWARD

Best reporting in any medium on Latin America

Caracas Bureau
Reuters
“Venezuela Coverage”



REUTERS

Venezuela is an extremely difficult country for journalists right now. News organizations across the Americas produced gutsy, deep and harrowing coverage of Venezuela’s economic and social collapse. The Reuters’ Caracas bureau excelled in telling compelling stories of the wrenching decision taken by millions of Venezuelans to leave their country in order to survive. Also impressive was the Reuters investigation chronicling a Chinese company’s collaboration with the Maduro government on new, high-tech national ID cards that enable the regime to track citizens’ receipt of government services. Finally, the deep dive on the chaos within the country’s state-run oil company provided a road map to the country’s economic collapse. How a country that holds the world’s largest reserves of oil could be suffering a drop in oil production is one of the mysteries that confound outside observers; this Reuters analysis explains why, and makes it clear that increased military involvement in running the oil giant ties the armed forces ever closer to the Maduro administration.

Citation: David Luhnnow, Samantha Pearson, Juan Forero and Jose de Cordoba
The Wall Street Journal
“Silent Slaughter”

VICE News Tonight on HBO
“Walking to America”

Sponsor: Paula Dwyer

Judges: Bill Booth (head), *Washington Post*; Dudley Althaus, *freelance*; Lizette Alvarez, *The New York Times*; Gregory Katz, *The Associated Press*; Geri Smith, *Inter-American Development Bank*

19

THE KIM WALL AWARD

Best story or series of stories on international affairs using creative and dynamic storytelling techniques

David M. Halbfinger, Yousur Al-Hlou, John Woo, Malachy Browne and Iyad Abuheweila
The New York Times
“The Death and Life of a Gaza Medic”



When 20-year-old medic Rouzan al-Najjar was killed by an Israeli bullet in Gaza last June, she instantly became a symbol of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In this 5-month interactive investigation, the New York Times not only captured the complex life and death of a charismatic young woman from Gaza, but also revealed how the shot that killed her was potentially a war crime. Collecting and analyzing more than 1,000 images from the site of the killing, Times reporters partnered with the British research agency Forensic Architecture to create a 3D reconstruction of the fatal shot from six angles. Reporters made multiple trips to Gaza, visited Israeli sniper positions, analyzed ballistic evidence, and interviewed legal experts, government officials, eyewitnesses, and those who knew al-Najjar best. The resulting evidence challenged the Israel Defense Forces’ claim about the shot that killed al-Najjar, and prompted a criminal investigation. Judge Mansi Choksi, a friend and reporting partner of Kim Wall, said it was exactly “the kind of ambitious story Kim would have liked to do,” particularly because it “challenged gendered clichés about empowerment and victimization.”

Citation: Michelle Mizner, Katie Worth, Carla Borrás, Raney Aronson and Andrew Metz
FRONTLINE and GroundTruth
“The Last Generation”

Sponsor: Molly Bingham

Judges: Azmat Khan (head), *New America*; Lama Al-Arian, *NPR*; Mansi Choksi, *freelance*; Suki Kim, *freelance*; Wesley Lowery, *The Washington Post*; Melissa Segura, *BuzzFeed*



SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER ABROAD AND AT HOME

At the famous Round Table of the Algonquin Hotel in New York City, where the Overseas Press Club of America was created 80 years ago this month, the founding members (seven men, two women) were foreign correspondents who spoke truth to power and, perhaps more importantly, spoke truth about power. The year was 1939. The names that dominated their headlines were Mussolini, Stalin, and Hitler. In the war years that followed, many OPC members became famous as voices of reason and fact in the face of propaganda and deception. And some, like Edward R. Murrow, returned to the United States afterward to find core values compromised by hysterical ideologues. The venue had changed, the mission had not. OPC dinners were the moment when the purpose and the achievements of foreign correspondents were recognized by their peers, often with standing ovations. The tradition continues to this day.

— Christopher Dickey



OVERSEAS PRESS CLUB OF AMERICA ANNUAL AWARD WINNERS 2018

20 THE ROY ROWAN AWARD

Best investigative reporting in any medium on an international story

International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, NBC News Investigative Unit, The Associated Press and media partners
"Implant Files"



For sheer breadth, depth of research and astonishing findings, Implant Files is in a class by itself. Reported by 350 journalists around the globe, the investigation by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), the Associated Press and NBC News Investigative Unit exposed deadly flaws in the global regulation of medical that have left thousands disfigured, disabled or dead. By mining buried U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) records, reporters reached the shocking conclusion that during the last decade alone defective implants have caused 83,000 deaths and 1.7 million injuries around the world. The investigation also showed how regulators are

bowing to industry pressure to rush products to market and then covering up reports of injuries and deaths when those devices fail. Anecdotal stories have long surfaced about medical devices gone wrong. But the ICIJ-led probe showed that the failures are a systemic problem that authorities have refused to confront. The series sparked immediate pledges for reform from health authorities in North America and Europe.

Citation: Maggie Michael, Maad al-Zikry and Nariman El-Mofty
The Associated Press, with support from the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting
"Yemen's Dirty War"

Sponsor: Marcus Rowan

Judges: James B. Steele (head), *independent*; Jo Becker, *The New York Times*; Maud Beelman, *The Associated Press*; Joe Stephens, *Princeton University*; David Zucchino, *author*

Judge Maud Beelman recused herself from the final selection.

21 THE FLORA LEWIS AWARD

Best commentary in any medium on international news

Trudy Rubin
The Philadelphia Inquirer
"Stress Test for Democracies: Populism, Autocrats, China and Trump"



Trudy Rubin had a splendid year, the latest in a run that deserves a lifetime achievement award. (And the *Inquirer* should get one for keeping a first-rate foreign affairs columnist

on the staff when so many dailies have retrenched.) Rubin writes in clear, plain English informed by a career of travel, deep curiosity and calm analysis. In 2018 she was an excellent guide to the rising tide of populism and the lurches of the America-first president. As one juror put it, "Anyone who reads her regularly cannot help but have a clear and thoughtful understanding of the wider world."

Sponsor: Marc Lemcke

Judges: Bill Keller (head), *The Marshall Project*; John Daniszewski, *The Associated Press*; Scott MacLeod, *American University in Cairo*; Eleanor Randolph, *author*; David Shipley, *Bloomberg*

THE BEST CARTOON AWARD

PATRICK CHAPPATTE

The New York Times



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Creating a culture of safety for freelancers



Top:
Participants
learning first
aid techniques
at a hostile
environment
safety training
in Thailand,
June 2017.

Bottom:
A trainer
in Athens
demonstrates
how to approach
an injury in the
stomach,
June 2018.

By Elisabet Cantenys

BACK IN September 2014, a group of editors met in New York and Chicago to grapple with the horrifying murders of James Foley and Steven Sotloff in Syria and to devise ways of promoting freelance journalists' safety. No one could have ever imagined their talks would catch fire. During the following months, they drafted together with the Overseas Press Club and other journalism organizations the Freelance Journalist Safety Principles, a document that outlines a set of safety standards for news organizations and freelancers alike. Soon

this informal movement crystallized into the ACOS Alliance.

ACOS stands for A Culture Of Safety. We bring together news organizations, freelance journalist associations and press freedom NGOs to champion safe and responsible journalistic practices, and ultimately embed a culture of safety in our community. Fueled by the urgency of our mission, we have become a unique strategic coalition. Our Principles have been signed by more than 100 global news wire services, U.S. TV news networks and major U.S. and European non-profit journalism organizations.

Early on, we realized it wasn't enough for us to just collect signatories for our Principles. We needed to undertake concrete and practical initiatives, and engage news organizations and editors in our discussions and activities. That's what's been keeping us so busy. Over the past two years, we have been involved in 27 safety training sessions through which we have created new partnerships between NGOs and news outlets and have produced cost-effective safety training alternatives. More than 350 local reporters and international freelance journalists have directly benefited from our training activities, not only in the U.S. and Europe but also in Colombia, Mexico, Lebanon, Turkey, Thailand, Philippines, Uganda and Kenya.

Because we believe editors are instrumental in working with the best-trained freelancers and making assignments as safe as possible, we have also organized editor's safety workshops and 90 assigning editors have directly benefited from these, mostly in the U.S. but also in France, Colombia, Mexico, Brazil and the Philippines.

Providing insurance for free-

lancers has kept us preoccupied since Day One. The ACOS Alliance, working with our fiscal sponsor, the Overseas Press Club Foundation, is keen to facilitate access to affordable insurance for freelancers and local journalists, regardless of their nationality or location. Ground-breaking insurance options should soon be available to all, including fixers, stringers, drivers and translators.

We are also developing practical resources: guidelines for news organizations to create and improve their own safety protocols, freelance contract templates that emphasize safety, best practice recommendations for journalism grant-makers, and an industry standard for safety training.

As an alliance, our drive and stamina is fueled by our community. Our December coordination meetings in New York have become a must-go-to event. These day-long gatherings result in productive discussions, collaborative initiatives and the exchange of valuable information. We are using our power to convene to build trust and forge a shared sense of purpose.

Although we are proud of our achievements, we are humbled by the challenges ahead of us. Freelance and local journalists are more needed than ever, and yet remain vulnerable. Safety training continues to be inaccessible to many journalists worldwide. Much work remains.

We have been funded by the Open Society Foundations and the MacArthur Foundation and are deeply grateful to them. And we are grateful to all of you attending the OPC Awards Dinner. Together, we are making good things happen. ●

Elisabet Cantenys is the executive director of ACOS.

NICK PALEOLOGOS: GEORGE NICKELS

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In October and November, Spencer Platt of Getty Images joined up with the so-called caravan making its way from Central America across Mexico to the U.S. border. His dramatic photos won a Citation for excellence in the Olivier Rebbot Award. As fatigue from the heat, distance and poor

sanitary conditions set in, the numbers of people participating in the march slowly dwindled. Still, thousands made their way to the border, only to be greeted by 5,000 U.S. troops dispatched by President Donald Trump to keep them in Mexico.