



# Overseas Press Club of America

## BULLETIN

### Annual Awards Dinner Honors Courageous Journalism

#### EVENT RECAP

BY GABRIELLE PALUCH

**F**OREIGN CORRESPONDENTS, members of the Overseas Press Club and corporate sponsors gathered on April 18 at Cipriani 25 Broadway in Manhattan for the annual gala to celebrate award winners and honor journalists who faced great personal peril in the field over the last year.

“While this is journalism we admire, even more important, it is work we need,” said keynote speaker Martin Baron, executive editor of The Washington Post, who highlighted the achievements of journalists who uncovered crimes and disasters around the world this year, even as the press was vilified back home. “If our government proudly exports language that vilifies an independent press, we endanger them – and break faith with what we as a nation have long stood for. If we import that language from authoritarian regimes, we threaten what has kept us free.”

Washington Post columnist and associate editor David Ignatius lit a candle to honor the 53 journalists killed in 2018, including his friend and former colleague Jamal Khashoggi, who was slain at the Saudi Arabian consulate in Istanbul while working on a story.

“Jamal knew when he walked into the Saudi consulate in Istanbul that he was a marked man,” Ignatius



Martin Baron, keynote speaker.

said. “The wonderful thing about Jamal was that he kept going. He walked into that consulate, he continued to write his columns, he continued to do his work. And the simple truth about him is that he loved being a journalist.”

OPC President Pancho Bernasconi bestowed the President’s Award on Maggie Steber, whose arresting, intimate photography work documenting face transplant recipients for National Geographic demonstrated her “preternatural ability to get into a story subject’s life in a way that most cannot.”

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Visit the  
OPC website at  
[opcofamerica.org](http://opcofamerica.org) to  
see photos and video  
clips from the Annual  
Awards Dinner.

### Jason Rezaian Says White House Lacks Clear Iran Policy

#### EVENT RECAP

BY CHAD BOUCHARD

**J**ASON REZAIAN, a Washington Post reporter who spent almost two years in Tehran’s Evin prison, told attendees at an OPC book night that US-Iran relations are “in a bad spot,” and that there is an increasing likelihood

something disastrous – but avoidable – could ignite between the two countries.

“If you look at the Trump administration, there is not a singular policy on Iran,” he said. “I think if you were to take a three-man poll of President Trump, his national security advisor, and his Secretary of State, each one would have a

very different idea of what they think our Iran policy *should* be – and what it *is*. That scares the crap out of me.”

Moderating the chat was Farnaz Fassihi, senior writer at The Wall Street Journal. She is an Iranian-American journalist who grew up in Tehran and Portland.  
*Continued on Page 8*



Jason Rezaian, left,  
and Farnaz Fassihi



OPC Annual Awards Dinner



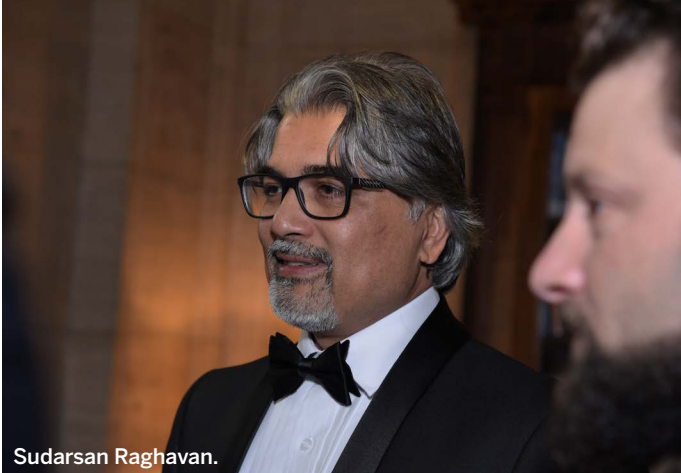
PHOTOS: STEVE MOORE



Lester Holt, Awards presenter.



Sarah Lubman, chair of the dinner committee.



Sudarsan Raghavan.



Left to right: Minky Worden, Gordon Crovitz and Melissa Ng.



Michael Serrill, left, and Trudy Rubin.



David Ignatius.



Pancho Bernasconi, left, and OPC Executive Director Patricia Kranz.



David Ignatius lights the Candle of Remembrance.



David Andelman, left, and Han Tjan.



David Rohde.



**'Awards Dinner'**  
*Continued From Page 1*

"I feel very deeply all my pictures belong to the people in them; they don't belong to me," Steber said.

Awards presenter Lester Holt, anchor for NBC Nightly News and Dateline NBC, presented the awards. Three awards were given for coverage of the war in Yemen, including a New York Times Magazine piece chronicling the journey of a precision missile from creation in Tucson, Arizona, to its deployment in Yemen on a group of villagers planning to dig a well. Additional regions and conflicts represented included the aftermath of the war in Syria, atrocities committed against the Rohingya in Myanmar, Venezuela, and Gaza. The New York Times hauled in six awards, while two-time award winners included VICE News Tonight on HBO, The Washington Post, The Associated Press and Reuters. The Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting supported three of the winning awards.

The prestigious Hal Boyle Award for best newspaper or news service reporting from abroad was won by Sudarsan Raghavan for his Yemen coverage in The Washington Post. "In an era where great reporting is often associated with mobilizing massive teams," the judges said, "sometimes all it takes to deliver outstanding work is one talented reporter with in-depth knowledge of the subject and courage to go digging in the field."

Reuters journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo were honored with the Bob Considine Award for their investigation into a massacre in the Myanmar village of Inn Din, the work for which they were jailed. "Their journalistic mission led to an outstanding series of articles exposing and explaining the atrocities against the Rohingya," the judges wrote. Unable to attend in person, their colleague Simon Lewis expressed gratitude

on their behalf. "They are both fathers to young daughters, from whom they have been separated for too long," he said, "we miss them both dearly."

The Cornelius Ryan Award for the best non-fiction book on international affairs went to Rania Abouzeid for her searing account of the lives of Syrians from all sides caught up in a catastrophic war, "No Turning Back," published by W.W. Norton & Company. In her acceptance speech, Abouzeid explained that what motivated her to write the book was the U.N.'s announcement that they had decided to stop counting the dead in Syria's war. "Nobody is voiceless," she said, "we just need to listen."

For their in-depth podcast series, "Caliphate," journalists at The New York Times received the Lowell Thomas Award. "We had a vision of explaining the radicalization process step by step," awardee Rukmini Callimachi said, as she explained what processes were behind the creation of the podcast, including a shocking confession from a source, who admitted to having killed someone at the direction of ISIS. Over months of reporting, Callimachi and her colleagues were able to reveal in detail how ISIS recruits and functions, frequently encountering such difficult admissions. "We thank our editors for giving us the time to make this uncomfortable podcast."

Patrick Chappatte, cartoonist for The New York Times, won the award for best cartoon on international affairs. Among the slides he displayed was a work judges singled out for il-



Maggie Steber, left, receives the President's Award from Pancho Bernasconi.

lustrating the kinds of freedom that democracy needs and autocracy fears: A scene inside a Saudi Arabian classroom "that highlighted the changing face of that country and the dangers inherent in one particular profession -journalism."

All three awards in photography went to women. Carolyn Van Houten of The Washington Post won the Robert Capa Gold Medal Award for her months of documenting migrant caravans during their journeys through Central America. Nariman El-Mofty won the Olivier Rebbot Award for her photos of Yemenis affected by war. And for her quiet, intimate glimpse into the lives of elderly women living in Japanese prisons, Shiho Fukada won the award for feature photography for work published in Bloomberg Businessweek. Fukada spoke about what her work said about the role of women in Japanese society. "They said going to prison was the first time they felt they had been paid attention to," she said. "Just because they had a family didn't mean these women had a home." ❖

## China Watchers to Examine Tiananmen After 30 Years

### EVENT PREVIEW: MAY 9

**R**ESERVATIONS ARE already filled to capacity for a day-long event on May 9, titled Tiananmen Square Thirty Years Later: Is the Past a Portent of an Even More Authoritarian Future? Stay tuned for videos on the OPC's YouTube channel and watch the website for written

recaps of five panels covering a range of angles to observe the 30th anniversary of the deadly Tiananmen Square crackdown in 1989. The event will be streamed live, and members can follow the discussion on Twitter via #OPC1989 and #Tiananmen30.

At press time, organizers were busy preparing for a day of panels with survivors of the event, correspondents who covered it, and a

host of experts to discuss what lessons and portents analysts might glean from the past about China's present and future direction.

Moderators will be Rebecca Blumenstein, deputy managing editor of The New York Times; William J. Holstein, former China correspondent and past president of the OPC; Susan Jakes of ChinaFile at The Asia Society, who spent 10 years in Beijing for

TIME; Minky Worden, an executive with Human Rights Watch; and Sheryl WuDunn, former New York Times Beijing correspondent and winner of multiple awards. The event is co-sponsored by the U.S.-Asia Law Institute at New York University, the Center for U.S.-China Relations at the Asia Society/ChinaFile, and the Weatherhead East Asian Institute at Columbia University.



Bronwyn Starr, left, and Brian Byrd.



Left to right: Mike Chase, Patrick Chappatte, and Leah Spiro.



Left to right: Maggie Steber, Pancho Bernasconi and Nina Berman.



Doug Jehl, left, and Paula Dwyer.



Left to right: Jon Sawyer, Patricia Kranz, Kem Sawyer.



Left to right: Laura King, Betsy Kraft, Scott Kraft and Tracy Wilkinson.





## 2018 AWARDS AND WINNERS

### THE HAL BOYLE AWARD

Best newspaper, news service or digital reporting from abroad

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

#### 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”

### THE BOB CONSIDINE AWARD

Best newspaper, news service or digital interpretation of international affairs

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

#### CITATION

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

### 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”

#### CITATION

Khalil Hamra  
The Associated Press  
“Conflict in Gaza”

### THE OLIVIER REBBOT AWARD

Best photographic news reporting from abroad in any medium

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

#### CITATION

Spencer Platt  
Getty Images  
“Looking for Home”

### 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”

#### CITATION

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

### 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”

#### CITATION

Amy Martin  
“Threshold,” with support from the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting  
“‘Threshold’ Season Two: Cold Comfort”

### THE DAVID KAPLAN AWARD

Best TV or video spot news reporting from abroad

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

#### CITATION

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

### 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”

#### CITATION

VICE News Tonight on HBO  
“Rebuilding Mosul”

### 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”

### 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”

### THE BEST CARTOON AWARD

Best print, digital or graphic journalism on international affairs

**Patrick Chappatte**  
**The New York Times**

### THE MALCOLM FORBES AND MORTON FRANK AWARD

Best international business news reporting in any medium

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

#### CITATION

Cam Simpson, Gavin Finch and Kit Chellell  
Bloomberg  
“The Brexit Short”

### 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**

#### CITATION

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

### 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”

#### CITATION

Finlay Young, Kathleen Flynn  
ProPublica and TIME  
“Unprotected”

### 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”

#### CITATION

Adam Ellick, Taylor Adams, Kristin Bye, Leah Varjacques  
The New York Times  
“‘It’s an Act of Murder’: How Europe Out-sources Suffering as Migrants Drown”

### 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”

#### CITATION

Associated Press Staff  
The Associated Press  
“China Clamps Down”

### 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”

#### CITATION

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

### THE ROBERT SPIERS BENJAMIN AWARD

Best reporting in any medium on Latin America

**Caracas Bureau**  
**Reuters**  
“Venezuela Coverage”

#### CITATION

David Luhnnow, Samantha Pearson, Juan The Wall Street Journal  
“Silent Slaughter”  
and  
VICE News Tonight on HBO  
“Walking to America”

### THE KIM WALL AWARD

Best story or series of stories on international affairs using digital 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”

#### CITATION

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

### 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”

#### CITATION

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

### 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” ❖



# OPC Supports World Press Freedom Day

BY BILL COLLINS  
AND ALLAN DODDS FRANK

AROUND THE world, journalists work in a constant climate of fear and intimidation and their safety seems to be declining. Authoritarian governments are making more overt threats against journalists, demeaning the profession as “fake news” and exerting greater control over the media through physical and electronic surveillance. Those hostile moves have led to unprecedented levels of violence against reporters throughout the world. A majority of the world’s population does not even have access to an unfettered free press.

This is the global state of journalism as we observe 2019 World Press Freedom Day.

The annual May 3 event at the United Nations was founded by UNESCO to honor the sacred principles of freedom of the press and the journalists who uphold press freedom with their work every day.

It’s also a time to evaluate the state of press freedom globally and stand up for the brave media under attack.

Press freedom is an essential component of every functioning democracy. And we must stand up and defend journalists and access to the information they provide.

While UNESCO recognizes freedom of expression and freedom of the press as a basic human right, the fact is that a mere 13% of the world’s population has access to a free press, according to Freedom House.

In a data driven world, the metrics used to measure the ongoing state of global press freedom are decidedly negative:

- 54 journalists were killed in 2018, an increase over the two previous years, according

to the Committee to Protect Journalists.

- 251 journalists were imprisoned in 2018 for doing their jobThe 2019 World Press Freedom Index from

- Reporters Without Borders categorizes the media climate in more than three-fourths of the 180 countries studied as “problematic,” “difficult” or “very serious.”

- In Turkey alone, the regime of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has 191 journalists in jail, 167 exiled and sought for arrest and 34 journalists from other countries targeted, according to the Stockholm Center for Freedom’s ad in the New York Times supporting World Press Freedom Day.

- Freedom House reports that 68 countries suffered an overall decline in overall freedom (political rights, civil liberties) during 2018 while 50 countries improved.

This marks an alarming 13th consecutive year that the global average freedom score has declined.

But the intimidation and threats against journalists are not limited to foreign countries. Reporters are facing increasing pressure from authorities in the United States.

The U.S. Department of Justice, for example, is considering guideline revisions to make it easier for authorities to access journalists’ records.

And the increased pressure comes as the number of newsroom employees working for U.S. media organizations, especially on the local level, has declined 45% during the last 15 years.

In the United States, the attacks on the news media are also alarming with several incidents of death threats and mail bombs perpetrated by the followers of Donald Trump who subscribe

to his “fake news” diatribes.

Other issues – notably access to government records – are serious problems inside the United States. Led by the Deadline Club – the New York City chapter of the national Society of Professional Journalists – a joint effort to strengthen freedom of information laws is being organized. The Freedom of the Press Committees of The Overseas Press Club of America, the Society of Silurians Press Club, the New York Press Club, the Deadline Club and other local professional journalism organizations and local journalism schools are expected to participate.

Every citizen of the world deserves access to unfettered information provided by a free press. That fundamental right to the truth can best be assured when countries support a media environment where reporters can cover politics robustly, where media safety is guaranteed, and where journalists can do their job free of government intrusion. The OPC is forever committed to protecting and promoting journalists and the highest standards of the profession across the globe.

*Bill Collins is a former OPC Governor who works as a communications consultant. He formerly worked as communications director at Ford Motor Company based in New York. He is head of the OPC’s Freedom of the Press Committee.*

*Allan Dodds Frank is Past President of the OPC, from 2008 to 2010, and was president of the Silurians from 2013 to 2015. His work has won Emmy and Loeb Awards, with a career that includes The Daily Beast, ABC News, CNN and Bloomberg.* ❖

this was the first time I had the opportunity to make a choice for myself in a year and a half. And as much as I had longed for that moment, it wasn’t that easy.”

Fassihi asked about the possibility of prisoner exchanges with Iran. He said the country had recently signaled, in unusually strong terms, that that it would be open to prisoner exchanges.

“I worry that [the Trump] administration has been pretty successful bringing American citizens home from a variety of countries that we have tough relations with,” Rezaian said. “North Korea, Venezuela, Turkey – I wonder if it’s not politically expedient for this administration to have Americans languishing in Iranian prisons.”

Rezaian has released a new book about his ordeal, titled *Prisoner: My 544 Days in an Iranian Prison–Solitary Confinement, a Sham Trial, High-Stakes Diplomacy, and the Extraordinary Efforts It Took to Get Me Out.* ❖

# PEOPLE

By Chad Bouchard and Farwa Zaidi

## OPC SCHOLARS

2017 Fritz Beebe winner **Yi-Ling Liu** was named winner of the Matthew Power Literary Reporting Award. Based in Beijing, Liu covers the effects of technology on Chinese. She has written for The Economist, The Guardian, the New Yorker online, Foreign Policy Magazine, Guernica Magazine, Off Assignment and the Los Angeles Review of Books. Liu previously reported for the Associated Press in Hong Kong on an OPC Foundation Fellow

**Suman Naishadham**, the 2018 H.L. Stevenson winner, who had an OPC Foundation fellowship at the Reuters bureau in Mexico City, will be returning to the Mexico capital, this time in the internship program for The Wall Street Journal. She is graduating from the master’s program in journalism at the University of Missouri in May.

**Yifan Yu**, Jerry Flint winner in 2018, has left New York City for the West Coast where she will now cover tech for the Nikkei Asian Review.

**Theodore Anderson**, winner of the 2015 Walter and Betsy Cronkite Scholarship, is now the digital editor of the San Francisco Business Times. Anderson had an OPC Foundation fellowship in the AP bureau in Bangkok.

Two OPC Foundation scholars were among the winners announced by the Military Reporters and Editors association, the preeminent organization for U.S. media professionals specializing in national security. The competition for defense journalism produced in 2018 was judged by faculty at Northwestern University’s Medill School of Journalism. **Sophia Jones**, Reuters winner in 2012, won the award for Print Overseas, Large Market division for the Fuller Project, which was produced in partnership with The New York Times Magazine. She wrote about the complicated role the U.S. played in recruiting and training Afghan women in the armed forces. The Emanuel R. Freedman winner in 2004, **Garance Burke**, won for Print



Liu



Anderson

Domestic, Large Market. She and a colleague from The Associated Press broke the news that more than 500 immigrant recruits and reservists in the U.S. armed forces had been discharged through July 2018, many for questionable reasons. The winners will be formally recognized at MRE’s annual conference scheduled for Oct. 25 at the Navy League of the United States headquarters in Arlington, Virginia.

**Garance Burke** was also part of the AP team that was named a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in National Reporting. The staff was recognized for its authoritative coverage of the Trump administration’s migrant family separation policy that exposed a federal government overwhelmed by the logistics of caring for and tracking thousands of immigrant children..

## AWARDS

Many OPC award winners and others with OPC ties were honored with Pulitzer Prizes this year. A Pulitzer Prize in International Reporting went to the “staff of Reuters, with notable contributions from **Wa Lone** and **Kyaw Soe Oo**,” who won the OPC’s Bob Considine Award for their reporting from Myanmar. Winners of the Hal Boyle Citation for Excellence this year, **Maggie Michael**, **Maad al-Zikry** and **Nariman El-Mofty** of The Associated Press, also won a Pulitzer Prize in International Reporting. 2016 Hal Boyle Award winner **Hannah Dreier** of ProPublica won this year’s Pulitzer Prize in Feature Writing for her series on Salvadoran immigrants on New York’s Long Island in the wake of a botched federal crackdown

on the international criminal gang MS-13. Former OPC Governor **Rukmini Callimachi** of The New York Times was a finalist in the International Reporting category for the “Caliphate” podcast. Other winners received honors for international reporting, including The Breaking News Photography category

that went to Reuters photo staff for photos of migrants en route from Central and South America to the U.S. And **Lorenzo Tugnoli** of The Washington Post won the Feature Photography category for covering famine in Yemen. **Maggie Steber**, this year’s OPC President’s Award recipient, was one of the finalists in that category along with Lynn Johnson of National Geographic for reporting on the youngest face transplant recipient in the U.S.

Former OPC Governor **Martin Smith** was honored with a Peabody award for his work on “Separated: Children at the Border,” a Frontline documentary. The award is Frontline’s second Peabody of 2019 in the news category. In the film, Smith investigates the origins and impacts of the Trump administration’s “zero tolerance” immigration policy. He traced what happened to children who were separated from their parents at the US-Mexico border, and examined the immigration policies of both the Trump and Obama administrations. He found that separations were happening to families who’d crossed the border months before “zero tolerance” was actually announced.

Former OPC Governor **Rukmini Callimachi**, who has won three OPC awards including this year’s Lowell Thomas Award for the podcast she hosts called “Caliphate,” also garnered a Peabody award in the radio/podcast category in April for the same program. “Caliphate” is

*Continued on Page 10*

# WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**Peter Copeland**  
Author  
Washington, DC  
Active Non-Resident

**Stephanie Fillion**  
Freelance  
Quebec, Canada  
Active Overseas  
(29 and under)

**Kern Hendricks**  
Freelance Photojournalist  
Kabul  
Active Overseas  
(30-34)

**David Larabell**  
Literary Agent,  
Creative Artists Agency  
New York  
Associate Resident

**Hikmat Noori**  
Freelance  
Kabul  
Active Overseas  
(30-34)

**Rachel Parsons**  
University of Southern  
California  
Los Angeles  
Student

**Joasia E. Popowicz**  
Columbia University  
Graduate School  
of Journalism  
New York  
Student

**Dexter (Tiff) Roberts**  
Writer & Speaker on China  
Missoula, MT  
Active Non-Resident

**Cosima Schreiber**  
Columbia University  
Graduate School  
of Journalism  
New York City  
Student

**Joseph Snell**  
Northwestern University  
Fort Worth, TX  
Student

**Brianne Talocka**  
Reporter  
Regional News Network  
/FIOS 1 News  
Rye Brook, NY  
Active Resident  
(29 and under)

**Rachel Waldholz**  
Freelance  
Berlin  
Active Overseas  
(30-34)



*Continued From Page 9*

the first narrative podcast series from The New York Times, and this marks the first Peabody awarded to a Times podcast. The Peabody Awards highlight work that demonstrates how the media can defend public interest, encourage empathy, and expand its audience's understanding of the world around them. Callamichi was also named a Pulitzer Prize finalist this year for "Caliphate" and "The ISIS Files."

Former OPC award winner **Hannah Dreier** recently won the WBUR Daniel Schorr Journalism Prize. Drier is an immigration reporter at ProPublica. Her winning segment was an hour-long investigative report titled "The Runaways." Dreier investigated the Suffolk County Police Department in New York and their failure to look into the murders of immigrant teenagers. Days after her story aired, the Suffolk County Legislature forced the police department to conduct an internal investigation. Dreier won the OPC's 2016 Hal Boyle Award for her story "Venezuela Undone" for The Associated Press.

OPC Governor **Alix Freedman** of Reuters in April served as a judge for the 2019 Hillman Foundation Prizes for Journalism. The Hillman Foundation every year honors journalists for outstanding "service of the common good." This year's winners featured writers from Reuters, The Miami Herald, and MSNBC. Freedman was a judge along with author Ta'Neahsi Coates, Jelani Cobb and Hendrik Hertzberg of The New Yorker, The American Prospect's Harold Myerson, and The Nation's Katrina Vanden Heuvel. The Hillman Foundation has been awarding journalists for their work since 1950.

The Anthony Shadid Award for Journalism Ethics recently announced their 2019 winners, who included two past OPC award winners. **Hannah Dreier**, who won the 2016 Hal Boyle Award, received the award for her story in ProPublica titled "A Betrayal." The story follows a teenager and MS-13 gang member who became a government informant and was betrayed by federal agents. The Associated Press also won for their reporting on Yemen throughout 2018. The team, comprised of reporters **Maggie Michael**, **Nariman El-Mofty**, and **Maad al-Zirky**, also won the Hal Boyle Citation for Excellence this year for "Yemen's

Dirty War." Additionally, El-Mofty won the OPC's Olivier Rebbot award this year for a series of photographs titled "Yemen: On the Edge."

#### UPDATES

OPC President **Pancho Bernasconi** and Executive Director **Patricia Kranz** met with visitors from Press Club Polska in late April for lunch and conversation. **Jaroslav Wlodarczyk**, secretary general of the International Association of Press Clubs, and **Magdalena and Maksymilian Rigamonti** traveled to the United States to collect the prize for Photography Book of the Year in the Pictures of The Year International (POY) competition for the Rigomonti's book *Echo*, which was published by the Press Club Polska.

**Bill Keller**, head judge of the OPC's Best Commentary Award this year, is stepping down from his role as editor-in-chief of The Marshall Project, a nonprofit news organization that focuses on criminal justice issues. Keller will be replaced by Susan Chira, a former reporter and editor for The New York Times. Bill Keller had previously worked for the Times for thirty years, including eight as the paper's executive editor. He joined The Marshall Project when it was founded in 2014. Since then, it has won multiple awards, including a Pulitzer Prize.



Left to right: Pancho Bernasconi, Jaroslav Wlodarczyk, Magdalena Rigamonti, Patricia Kranz, and Maksymilian Rigamonti visit at Club Quarters.

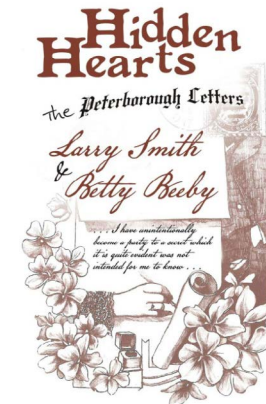
Keller will now become a board member of the organization while teaching at Princeton University and Sing Sing Correctional Facility in Ossining, NY.

**David Ariosto**, an OPC Governor and executive producer at GZero Media, told MSNBC host Ali Velshi on April 30 that there is little more the U.S. can do to increase support for opposition against Nicolás Maduro Moros in Venezuela, short of boots on the ground, because so many sanctions and other measures are already in place. He said those strategies include indirect pressure on the regime's allies. "When you see the Trump administration ratchet up pressure against Cuba, it's partly to pressure Venezuela," he said. He added that most Americans would not support sending U.S. ground troops for support. Separately, Ariosto spoke to an audience at the New York Public Library on April 24 about his newest book *This is Cuba*, which was published late last year. In the book, Ariosto examined sweeping changes in the country over the last decade. Ariosto sat with photographer and photo editor Cynthia Carris Alonso to discuss the book.

OPC Past President **Larry Smith** has co-written a book titled *Hidden Hearts – The Peterborough Letters* with author Betty Beeby. The book is a window into the early

20th Century. It is the story of a woman and the son she bore out of wedlock who seeks her out when he is in his twenties. By then, she is an independent small-town dressmaker and the shock of finding her son shatters her peace. Bill Holstein, past president of the OPC, writes that "Smith is a master story teller in the classic American tradition. In this book, he uses letters more than a century old to patiently build a psychological drama...It becomes riveting."

**Vivienne Walt**, TIME magazine's Paris correspondent and a Governor for the OPC, landed another cover story for the magazine's issue in Europe for the week of April 22. The article, titled "How Nationalists Are Joining Together to Tear Europe Apart," examines how many leaders are using white supremacist rhetoric and touting anti-immigrant policies, a campaign spearheaded by ex-White House chief strategist Steve Bannon. Walt tracks his travels to Europe where he met with multiple leaders, encouraging them to embrace the strategies used by President Trump during the 2016 presidential campaign. Earlier in April, Walt talked to NPR host Ailsa Chang about the fire that ravaged the Notre Dame cathedral on April 15. In her interview, she described witnessing the fire from her own balcony. Walt had reported on the cathedral for TIME and told NPR that church officials had shown her conditions of the roof at the time. According to her, the gargoyles on the roof had been falling off and were being fixed with PVC pipes. Walt believes that disrepair, along with inadequate funding for the cathedral, contributed to the fire. Walt lives in Paris and has reported for TIME since 2003.



OPC member **John Moore** in April was awarded the World Press Photo of the Year for a photo taken at the US-Mexico border last June. The picture, titled "Crying Girl on the Border," went viral after it was posted, and was also used on a cover of TIME magazine. The photo is of a young girl named Yanela who had just arrived in the U.S. with a group of a dozen

refugees from Central America. Moore has spent a decade focusing on immigration in his photography. He photographed along the US-Mexico border and captured rare images of ICE raids and mass deportation. He published them in a book titled *Undocumented*.

**Minky Worden**, an OPC Governor who serves as director of global initiatives at Human Rights Watch, was recently in the news for her remarks on the crisis in Asian football. Asia's football chief and FIFA's second-in-command, Sheikh Salman bin Ebrahim al Khalifa, was elected to a second term in early April. He was criticized last year for silence over the imprisonment of soccer player Hakeem al-Arabi, who was detained in Thailand. Worden accused Sheikh Salman of failing to protect human rights. In commentary released after his election, she wrote "Sheikh Salman should commit to uphold and to carry out FIFA's 2017 Human Rights Policy, including in his home country." His new term lasts until 2023.

OPC award winner **Matt Kaminski** was recently named the new editor-in-chief of Politico. Kaminski won the OPC's 2014 Commentary Award. He most recently served as global editor of Politico. He'll be replacing John Harris, who was not only editor-in-chief, but founded the publication in 2007. Harris will stay aboard to serve as chairman of the editorial oversight committee, as well as editor-in-chief of Politico Europe. He will also be writing a column about the 2020 election. Kaminski joined Politico in 2014, after working for The Wall Street Journal for a decade. It was there that Kaminski wrote "On Ukraine," which garnered the OPC award.

#### PEOPLE REMEMBERED

Veteran correspondent **Peter Gall** passed away March 9 in Edina, Minnesota, after a 14-year battle with Parkinson's disease at age 82. He began his career in journalism with a brief stint as a reporter for the Pasadena Independent and Star-News. Gall then enlisted in the U.S. Army, where he attended language school and became fluent in Russian. Later he worked for 18 years at McGraw-Hill, Inc., starting out as a correspondent for Business Week, covering environment, labor, and the White House, and for three years was the bureau chief in Moscow. He later became director of McGraw-Hill World News, a multi-media business news network based in New York City. Gall is survived by his wife of 57 years, Pali Gall, his brother Pirie Gall, his three children and six grandchildren.

**Bernard Krisher**, publisher of The Cambodia Daily and former Newsweek Tokyo bureau chief, died of heart failure on March 5 at a hospital in Tokyo. He was 87. Krisher began his career as a foreign correspondent in Japan. He wrote for Newsweek, Fortune, and Wired. He was founder of The Cambodia Daily, the country's first English-language newspaper. He supported the OPC Foundation and accepted several scholars as fellows. The government's closure of the print edition in September 2017 drew condemnation from press freedom groups. He dedicated his last three decades to humanitarian work in Cambodia as chairman of World Assistance for Cambodia. Krisher is survived by his wife, his two children and two grandchildren. ❖



# PRESS FREEDOM UPDATE...

By Farwa Zaidi

A Myanmar court on April 23 rejected the final appeals of Reuters reporters **Wa Lone** and **Kyaw Soe Oo**, who have been imprisoned since December 2017. Last September, the two journalists were sentenced to seven years behind bars. At the time of their arrests, the two reporters were investigating the massacre of ten Rohingya Muslims. According to their report, the massacre was carried out by Myanmar troops and Buddhist villagers. By the time it was published, in February 2018, Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo were in jail for their investigation. Seven soldiers connected to the violence were subsequently arrested. During the sentencing of the journalists, a judge claimed that the confidential files found on them would have been valuable to “enemies of the state and terrorist organizations.” Numerous appeals on their part have been rejected. According to CNN, they are now hoping for a presidential pardon. Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo received the OPC’s Bob Considine this year, along with Reuters staff, for their work in Myanmar.

Reporters Without Borders on April 18 released their **2019 World Freedom Index** in collaboration with The Washington Post. The index evaluates the level of freedom available to media in 180 countries. It was released during a live event, which also featured discussions about global press freedom with a group of award-winning journalists. The conversations were moderated by Dana Priest and Mary Jordan of the Post, and featured journalists such as Jonathan Karl, Fitsum Arega, and Karin Olofsdotter. As a result of increased tensions toward journalists in the US, not just from the president, the United States has fallen three places in this year’s index. The U.S. media climate is now described by the RSF as “problematic.”

The New Irish Republican Army claimed responsibility for the shooting death of journalist **Lyra McKee** on April 18. McKee was hit by a bullet fired at the police during a riot in the predominantly Roman Catholic and nationalist Creggan area of Londonderry. McKee is the first journalist to be killed on the job in the United Kingdom since 2001. Her death is a reminder of the so-called Troubles of 1968 to 1998, when more than 35,000 people were killed during violence between Catholic republican gunmen and police. McKee’s death was a direct result of the riots that

broke out in Londonderry on April 18. The riots had broken out after officers entered the Creggan area to search for arms and explosives. The New IRA in their statement accepting responsibility apologized to McKee’s partner, family, and friends. McKee was one of Forbes’ 30 Under 30 in 2016, named one of the most influential and rising European media workers.

The Washington Post on April 17 launched a **Press Freedom Partnership Newsletter**, a monthly newsletter offering readers a view of the latest issues affecting press freedom worldwide. The newsletter will include a curated selection of content from the Press Freedom Partnership including details of the most pressing cases of journalists under attack, commentary and analysis from Post writers, and updates on initiatives and events from the paper’s press freedom partners. The first edition of the newsletter was delivered on May 1. Some of the organizations involved are CPJ, Reporters Without Borders, International Women’s Media Foundation, One Free Press Coalition, and Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press.

For the six-month anniversary of Jamal Khashoggi’s murder, Washington Post publisher and CEO **Fred Ryan** penned a stern op-ed in his honor. Ryan examined what has been done in response to Khashoggi’s death and what still needs to be addressed. He wrote that “each day that Trump allows the Saudis to avoid accountability, the more tyrants around the world come to believe that they, too, can kill with impunity.” He wrote that while the U.S. government has been lacking in its response to Khashoggi’s murder, there has been some progress on other fronts. In March, 36 countries banded together at the UN Human Rights Council to condemn Khashoggi’s death in the strongest possible terms. They called for the Saudi government to cooperate with an ongoing UN inquiry. Multiple countries have suspended political visits to Saudi Arabia, curtailed arms sales, and withheld other gestures of support for the regime.

Romanian journalist **Emilia Sercan** was he target of numerous death threats on April 15. Sercan is an investigative journalist for the independent Romanian news site PressOne. She received the threats via text messages from an anonymous source.

The messages included explicit threats and a demand for Sercan to stop her reporting. She immediately filed a report with the police, and interior minister Carmen Dan announced in a Facebook post shortly after that an investigation had been opened. Sercan has reported on alleged plagiarism by a former education minister and by graduates of the country’s national security and intelligence academies. Her reports prompted ten resignations and stripped at least sixteen people of their degrees.

Bahraini journalist **Ibrahim al-Sheikh** has been detained by authorities. On April 14, the public prosecutor’s office wrote in an Instagram post that they had detained an unnamed journalist on charges of spreading false news and rumors. They alleged that the journalist had “cast doubt on the capabilities of the defense forces and the coalition.” The post came a few days after the Bahraini Council of Representatives’ Parliamentary Committee for Foreign Affairs released a statement condemning al-Sheikh’s column criticizing the military campaign. The council called on the public prosecutor to punish al-Sheikh. On April 15, the Bahrain Mirror published an article stating that al-Sheikh had been arrested. Bahraini authorities including the public prosecutor would not respond to questions regarding whether al-Sheikh is the detainee they are holding. According to CPJ’s latest prison census, at least six journalists are currently detained.

The **ACOS Alliance** on April 2 launched a “News Organizations Safety Self-Assessment,” a resource designed to help news organizations review and improve their current safety practices and protocols. The resource is a brief set of questions and guideline notes that should prompt important conversations regarding the best safety practices and how to encourage practical and effective ways to implement such practices. The Self-Assessment supports news organizations to better understand their own strengths and weaknesses in relation to all the individuals working for them who are exposed to danger-including freelancers. The resource pays special attention to gender issues, mental health care, digital security needs, and working with local journalists and freelancers. It includes links to relevant articles, reports, and guides. The assessment is a collaboration between the ACOS Alliance, Committee to Protect

Journalists, Free Press Unlimited, and many more reporting organizations.

Saudi Arabia, one of the world’s biggest violators of press freedom, detained three more journalists during the month of April. According to CPJ, at least sixteen journalists, excluding these three, have been detained in the country since December 2018. On April 4 or 5, Saudi authorities arrested blogger **Naif al-Hindas**. On April 9th, bloggers and columnists **Ali al-Saffar** and **Redha al-Boori** were also arrested. The reasons for their arrests have not been made public. Al-Saffar and Al-Boori have not published anything in the past several years, and Al-Hindas’ blog has been unused since 2018. Al-Saffar and Al-Boori are connected to another journalist who was also arrested this month. However, they have not posted on their own since 2015. The past month has seen a large wave of journalists being detained by Saudi authorities, with little to no information given to the public about the reason for their arrests or their whereabouts.

Two Pakistani Shia journalists were abducted just days apart in Karachi in early April. The first victim was **Matloob Hussain Moosavi**, a journalist for Daily Jang. He was abducted from his home on March 30 by a group of masked men in civilian garb. They came in unmarked vehicles accompanied by three police cars. Moosavi’s family has not heard from him since then. His brother believes that his reporting could be a reason for his abduction since Moosavi “annoyed” many people with his posts on social media. The second victim was **Syed Ali Mubashir Naqvi**, a cameraman for Aab Takk News TV. He was abducted in a similar manner from the TV Channel’s parking lot. Both Moosavi and Naqvi are members of Pakistan’s Shia minority, making their twin disappearances all the more disturbing. CPJ believes that the Pakistani establishment might be attempting to mirror Riyadh’s constant anti-Shia rhetoric.

**Soltan Achilova**, one of the few journalists in Turkmenistan to work openly for an independent media outlet, has been banned by authorities from leaving the country. On March 21, Achilova was about to take a flight to Tbilisi, Georgia, to attend an international conference when officials stopped her at the airport and told her she was

forbidden to leave the country. Turkmen government officials often impose travel bans on dissidents. They were widely known to have had Achilova in their sights for years. She has been the victim of two dozen physical assaults over the course of the last two years. In November 2016, she was assaulted three times over the span of just a few days. Turkmenistan is one of the world’s biggest harassers of free press. Prague-based Radio Azatlyk is one of the few sources of independent news in the Turkmen language.

**Wei Zhili**, a labor rights website editor in China, was arrested on March 20. Another labor rights editor, **Ke Chengbing**, went missing on March 20 as well, and is believed to be in police custody. Chengbing, is Zhili’s coworker at ILabour.net. The editor-in-chief, Yang Zhengjun, was arrested in January and charged with “picking quarrels and provoking trouble.” Zhili’s wife, prominent feminist writer Zheng Churan, said she believes that Zhili and his coworkers were arrested because of their reporting on labor rights issues and on the prevalence of black lung disease among Chinese workers. Churan wrote on Facebook that Zhili was arrested at his parents’ home by officers who told his parents that he’d been brainwashed. An officer from the branch who arrested Zhili told CPJ over the phone that he had no information on Zhili’s arrest. China is currently the world’s second largest jailer of journalists, after Turkey.

Mexican journalist **Hiram Moreno** survived a gun attack in the city of Oaxaca on March 20. Moreno is the editor of news website Evidencias. An unidentified assailant shot at Moreno while he was leaving a convenience store around 4:00 p.m. He fled on a motorcycle while Moreno managed to call for help. He was rushed to a nearby hospital and treated for his injuries. Since 2013, Moreno has been enrolled in a federal protection program. The head of the Federal Mechanism for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists, Aaron Mastache, declined to provide any further information on the nature of the protective measures. Moreno is the founder and editor of Evidencias, which covers general news, crime, and security in the region. He also often reports for the site and had recently covered allegations that members of the State Investigation Agency

tortured three detained teenage boys. One of the boys later died.

Honduran journalist **Leonardo Gabriel Hernandez** was killed near his home on March 17. According to news reports, an unidentified attacker shot and killed Hernandez in his city of Nacaome. Hernandez was the host of a program on the local, privately owned Valle television channel called “El Pueblo Habla.” He used his program as a platform to discuss social issues and local politics. He was often critical of government officials, including the mayor of Nacaome and regional members of Congress. In the past, Hernandez had received threats related to his work. A report by CPJ in 2014 found that organized crime and corruption in Honduras have produced an overwhelming rate of unsolved cases of violence against journalists.

The CPJ on March 13 released a book and digital campaign titled **The Last Column**, highlighting the human cost of reporting the news. The book was published with support from News Corp, the Dow Jones Foundation, and HarperCollins Publishers. It features the final works of twenty-four different journalists killed while doing their jobs. Some journalists featured are Jamal Khashoggi, Daniel Pearl, and Marie Colvin. The introduction was written by CNN’s chief international correspondent, Clarissa Ward, who won the OPC’s 2016 David Kaplan Award for coverage of Syria. This is a global initiative, which includes the publication of the book, a mini-documentary, live events, and educational content.

Zambia’s Independent Broadcasting Authority suspended **Prime TV’s** license for 30 days for alleged unprofessionalism. According to the government agency, the TV network features “unbalanced coverage, opinionated news, material likely to incite violence and use of derogatory language” particularly in their coverage of recent by-elections in Shesheke district. The ruling came after a complaint about the network by the ruling Patriotic Front Party. On March 5, Prime TV filed an appeal with Information and Broadcasting Minister, Dora Siliya. The network’s offices were raided by police in November, after airing footage that was allegedly defamatory to the president. ❖



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### TIANANMEN SQUARE THIRTY YEARS LATER

12:03 p.m.  
to 7:00 p.m.  
May 9

## NEW BOOKS

By Farwa Zaidi

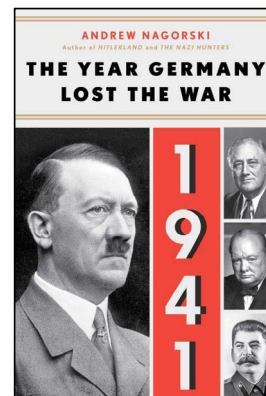
### WW II

**OPC MEMBER** Andrew Nagorski, an award-winning journalist who worked for more than three decades for Newsweek, has taken another deep dive into World War II, this time with a close look at the early days of Hitler's campaign and its galvanizing affect on allies. *1941: The Year Germany Lost the War* [Simon & Schuster, June 2019], is Nagorski's fourth book about different aspects of the war. He chronicles how Hitler's tactical mistakes and policies of terror forged a new and powerful alliance among Churchill, FDR, and Stalin. By the start of 1941, Hitler had already cast his shadow over most of Europe. Poland and France had quickly fallen. Britain remained removed from the conflict, though German bombers were attacking its cities and German U-boats harassed its ships. Stalin was still observing the terms of the Nazi-Soviet pact. Roosevelt vowed to stay out of the war. Hitler was confident that victory was within reach.

Nagorski wrote that Hitler's plan to invade the Soviet Union was not kept secret, due to Soviet spies and Nazi leaks. Allied forces tried to warn Stalin several times, but were dismissed as capitalist propaganda. Nonetheless, Hitler risked several attacks and lost due to disastrous military blunders. His rush to declare war on the United States after the attack on Pearl Harbor helped to secure U.S. involvement. Britain emerged with two powerful allies, and Germany was doomed to defeat.

Nagorski's book is a portrait of hubris and megalomania pitted against the emerging opposition. His chronicle sets the stage for how events led to the Holocaust, and foreshadows the postwar division of Europe, which ultimately led to the Cold War.

During his long tenure at Newsweek, Andrew Nagorski spent three years as Berlin bureau chief. This role allowed him to examine the country's efforts to overcome division, their immigration debate, and German-Jewish relations. His experiences in Germany, and later in Warsaw, helped him to write his multiple books on World War II. Nagorski was also a bureau chief in Hong Kong, Rome, Bonn, Moscow, and Berlin. He has been a member of the OPC since 2001. ❖



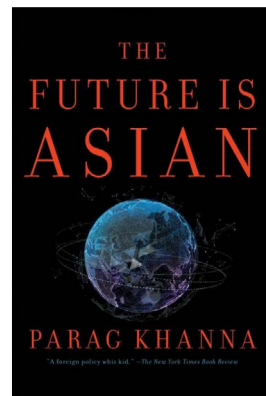
### ASIA

**PARAG KHANNA**, a leading strategist on geopolitics and economics based in Singapore, outlines what he sees as a steep global shift in power toward Asia in his newest book, *The Future is Asian* [Simon & Schuster, February 2019]. He wrote that in the 19th century, the world was Europeanized. In the 20th century, it was Americanized, and now, in the 21st century, it is being Asianized.

Khanna challenges the notion that China is the sole power and influence in Asia, arguing that a broader, interconnected Asian system spans from Saudi Arabia to Japan, Russia to Australia, and Turkey to Indonesia. Five billion people across the region are linked through trade, finance, infrastructure, and diplomatic networks that represent 40 percent of global GDP.

He points out the many ways that Western powers have misinterpreted, underestimated and misdiagnosed Asia. Westerners analysts have mistakenly forecast imminent world wars and debt-driven collapses around the region. Yet Asia is experiencing a new wave of growth sparked in part by countries such as India and the Philippines. Khanna wrote that some nationalist leaders have set aside territorial disputes in favor of integration and infrastructure investments that will have a lasting effect on the next generation of digital innovation. From investment portfolios and trade wars to Hollywood's East-facing movies, he demonstrates that Asianization has taken hold of the global zeitgeist.

Khanna is the founder and managing partner of FutureMap, a data- and scenario-based strategic advisory firm. Khanna is a regular commentator on international affairs and is currently a CNN Global Contributor. His articles have appeared in a variety of publications, including The Wall Street Journal, Financial Times, The Washington Post, New York Times Magazine, TIME, and more. The Wall Street Journal said Khanna's book offers a "valuable and thoroughly researched analysis of one course that the region may take." ❖



COURTESY OF KRITHIKA VARAGUR



Krithika Varagur

## Meet the OPC Members: Q&A With Krithika Varagur

**KRITHIKA VARAGUR** is an American freelance journalist based in London. She spent more than two years working in Indonesia, filing a range of stories for print and online media on topics including fundamentalism and extremism, politics, an investigation into Ivanka Trump's clothing factory in West Java, violence against gay Indonesians in Aceh, reunions of East Timor's stolen children, and immigrants who were deported from her hometown in New Jersey to Indonesia. Her work has appeared in The Guardian, The Atlantic, The New York Times, The New York Review of Books, The Financial Times, and many more. Varagur won this year's OPC Foundation's Sally Jacobsen Fellowship, and a fellowship with the Associated Press in New Delhi. She won awards in two categories of the 2018 Religion News Association awards. Varagur is also a Fulbright scholar and has worked as a writer and editor at the Huffington Post in New York, and a contributing writer to Vogue India. She is currently writing her first book, for Columbia Global Reports, about Gulf religious investments.

**Hometown:** Edison, NJ.

**Education:** Harvard University (A.B. English, 2015).

**Languages you speak:** Tamil, Bahasa Indonesia, Spanish.

**First job in journalism:** I interned at Vogue India when I was 18, in 2012.

**Countries reported from:** Indonesia, Malaysia, India, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Singapore, Bosnia, Kosovo, Nigeria, Kenya, Mexico

**When and why did you join the OPC:** I joined the OPC when I moved to Indonesia in 2016 because I thought the press card might be useful for a freelancer. And it was!

**What draws you to reporting on religion?** I'm interested in politics and human rights, primarily in Southeast and South Asia, and it's impossible to get a sense of what's going on without accounting for religion. I lived in Indonesia, which is the world's largest Muslim-majority country, for two years, and I wanted to report from there because it's a huge, successful, multicultural democracy, but it's not secular, and in fact never has been. I'm also interested in fundamentalisms (having written about Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist variants to date) and extremism, so understanding religious dynamics is hugely important. Faith-based networks and links are also really cool. In the course of my book research I've been working in Nigeria and Kosovo, in addition to Indonesia, and am amazed at how religious texts, rituals, and ideas link those disparate places. And since I'm writing about Saudi religious investments and soft power, it is also a story about geopolitics and foreign policy. Really, I can't imagine working as a journalist today without accounting for religion. It is endlessly interesting. (And not just for foreign correspondents; I've riffed on the Indonesia tagline that I'm from the "world's largest Christian-majority nation," the U.S.!)

**Major challenge as a journalist:** As a freelance journalist, figuring out how to budget your time chasing stories — features vs. breaking news, long vs. short

stories, pitches vs. assignments and so on — is always tough. Having a beat or focus area helps a little with this, but I certainly haven't fully figured it out. Another challenge, of course, is getting paid, both on time and enough. I've been lucky to have made it work over the last few years but strongly endorse a culture of transparency around finances in our industry.

**Best journalism advice received:** Don't talk too much and lean into silences in interviews.

**Worst experience as a journalist:** Reporting on human rights issues in the structurally and temporally limited capacity of a journalist is always tough. For instance, I met many abused female migrant workers in Lombok, Indonesia in 2017 and felt really conflicted about making them repeat their traumatic experiences in the Gulf, even after obtaining their informed consent. But I think it's important to sit with those uncomfortable feelings. I don't expect it will get any easier.

**Journalism heroes:** Jane Mayer, Lawrence Wright, Pankaj Mishra.

**Advice for journalists who want to work overseas:** Learn the language (or one of them) as well as you can.

**Favorite quote:** A recent addition: "Turn every page" from Robert Caro.

**Place you're most eager to visit:** the Silk Road cities of Uzbekistan.

**Most over-the-top assignment:** For my first Financial Times assignment, I took two planes, a cargo ship, and a fishing boat to visit the Indonesian spice island, Pulau Run, that had been traded for Manhattan 350 years ago.

**Most common mistake you've seen:** Having preconceived notions about the "frame" into which a story fits — it's always apparent in the final product.

**Country you most want to return to:** Timor-Leste

**Twitter handle:** @krithikavaragur. ❖

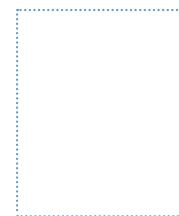
Want to add to the OPC's collection of Q&As with members? Please contact [patricia@opcofamerica.org](mailto:patricia@opcofamerica.org).





40 West 45 Street  
New York, NY 10036  
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Phone 212.626.9220  
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