



Overseas Press Club  
*of America*

## Bulletin Weekly: April 16, 2020

### Greetings!

We hope you enjoy this weekly digital newsletter to round up our coverage of club and member news.

This issue of the Bulletin Weekly includes:

- Updates on OPC member coverage of COVID-19, including Chriss Swaney's [anecdote](#) about working during the pandemic
- A reminder about our upcoming discussion on Zoom with Dexter "Tiff" Roberts, titled "[Covid-19 and China's Future](#)"
- [Resources](#) and webinars for journalists covering COVID-19
- A Q&A with OPC member [Ivan Flores](#)
- How to help the OPC Foundation using [Amazon Smile](#)
- Recent [People](#) items
- [Press Freedom Updates](#)

Scroll down for more content, summaries and links to items online.

## COVID-19 Stories

OPC member **Ted Anthony** provided text for a haunting Associated Press [slide show and essay](#) covering New York City's abandoned streets. AP photographer Wong Maye-E rode a motorcycle around the city, with photo editor Enric Marti driving, to capture images across the city in 12 separate trips. Anthony wrote "In

its best days, in its highest moments, New York City is dizzying. Times Square glows. Penn Station pulses. Wall Street teems with the ambitious. The highways are jammed with trucks and taxis and Ubers and Lyfts, transporting the life of the city — its people, its goods — to and fro. Underneath it all, from Manhattan to the boroughs and back, industrial-strength subways carry industrial-strength people of all shapes and hues from home to work and back again. Then there are the worst days, the hardest moments. These days. Today, New York City is dizzying in a different way.”

The Associated Press has [published](#) a slide show of 32 images depicting how COVID-19 is threatening Egypt’s economy from photographer **Nariman El-Mofty**, who won this year’s Citation for Excellence in the Robert Capa Gold Medal Award category, and won the 2018 Olivier Rebbot Award. The photos show Cairo’s empty streets and people coping with social isolation.

OPC member **David M. Halbfinger** and his New York Times colleague Mohammed Najib [filed a piece](#) on April 9 about how workers returning to the West Bank from Israel have been a vector for COVID-19, and how that had inflamed longstanding tensions. As many as 8,000 workers returned through checkpoints over a one-week period, and neither side said they would be able to test for the virus, he wrote, and “some workers avoid the checkpoints altogether, slipping easily through gaps in the separation barrier between the West Bank and Israel.”



*Answering last week's call for COVID-19 anecdotes from the field, OPC member Chriss Swaney sent the following story to share with members:*

While trying to complete a story about how the pandemic has created a cache of mental health issues for workers, my old winged-back chair collapsed under me. I got stuck as the chair springs latched onto my pants. I struggled for a few minutes and then collapsed hopelessly back into the bottomless chair.

Luckily, my miniature schnauzer pup ASTA was astutely watching me with great interest as I fumbled to free myself. I reached for his leash and threw it at him, and he grabbed hold of the leash end and pulled me up high enough so I could wriggle free from the collapsed chair.



Ended up moving furniture around that day, but I ultimately did finish the story.

Thank heavens for “man’s best friend.” I now call my pup “hero hound.”

Stay safe everyone.

Swaney is a freelance writer for Reuters, Pittsburgh Engineer, U.S. News & World Report, Print Newspaper, Workers Compensation.com, Forward Magazine and Antique Trader Magazine. She has been a member of the OPC since 1997. You can read a Q&A from the [December 2014 Bulletin here](#) .

**Please send us your personal anecdotes, photos, and links to published pieces related to COVID-19 to [info@opcofamerica.org](mailto:info@opcofamerica.org) , and we will publish them on our website and share with members. You can also share those stories directly with members on our [OPC Connect](#) group on Facebook, or tweet us [@opcofamerica](#) .**

[Read on the OPC Website](#)

## Event Reminder

### April 23: Covid-19 and China's Future

**Place:** The Zoom video conferencing app

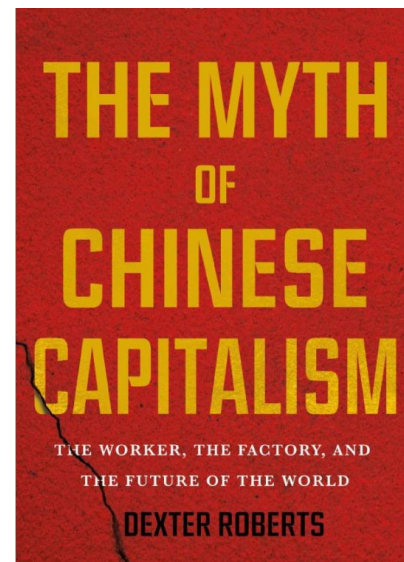
**Time:** 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

China, the country hit earliest by the virus, shows real signs of recovery. Will it be a lone bright spot as other major economies struggle and will China once again be a key driver of global growth? And can it use the crisis to push its global soft power?

**Dexter "Tiff" Roberts** will discuss his new book *The Myth of Chinese Capitalism* , and why it argues that China's future is deeply uncertain.

OPC Past President **William J. Holstein** will moderate.

Join the Zoom session via the link below. There will be time for discussion and Q&A among participants at the end of the session.



[Join the Zoom Session](#)

## Resources for Covering COVID-19

- The Google News Initiative has launched a [Journalism Emergency Relief Fund](#) to deliver aid to small, medium and local news publishers globally. The funding is open to news organizations producing original news for local communities during the crisis, and will range from the low thousands of dollars for small hyper-local newsrooms to low tens of thousands for larger

newsrooms, with variations per region.

- Reporters Without Borders is hosting a free webinar on strategies reporters can use to deal with trauma from covering COVID-19 on Saturday, April 18 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Eastern Time. [RSVP here](#).
- The group A Culture of Safety (ACOS) has [assembled](#) a substantial list of COVID-19 resources for journalists, including links to practical safety advice, funding opportunities, hardship and emergency funds, and reporting resources such as guides for fact checking.
- The International Center for Journalists (ICFJ) has [launched](#) a page for COVID-19 resources for journalists. It includes a page of ICFJ research on the impacts of the pandemic on journalism, recommendations on combatting disinformation, webinars with health professionals, and a ways to connect with other journalists covering the crisis. You can also watch a recent ICFJ "Media Freedom threats and Covid19" with David Kaye and Courtney Radsch [here](#).
- Rory Peck Trust also has a [resource page](#) for pandemic coverage. It includes safety guidelines, funding sources, job opportunities and online training videos.
- Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE) on Wednesday, April 22 at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Time will host a [free webinar](#) with panelists who will discuss how to investigate higher education amid COVID-19. The webinar will also be recorded and posted on the IRE website for those who cannot attend live. This is part of a series of free webinars available in archives on the site.
- The Freelance Audio Fund is [providing](#) emergency relief to the professional audio community impacted by COVID-19.

The OPC has added these links to a special COVID-19 section on the member-only [Resources](#) page available to members who have logged in. Watch that page as we share more. Click the button below to go directly, or find it in your Member Dashboard under "Resources."

[OPC Resources Page](#)

## Help the OPC Foundation with Amazon Smile

by Jane Reilly

Every time you shop on Amazon, you can support the Overseas Press Club Foundation.

As long as you have named the OPC



Foundation as your charity of choice, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5 percent of the purchase price of eligible products to the OPC Foundation. The shopping experience is the same. The only difference is the website you use ( [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) ).

Here's how you sign up.

- 1) Go to [Smile.Amazon.com](https://Smile.Amazon.com) and sign in with your Amazon credentials
- 2) Under Your Account, navigate to Change your Amazon Smile charity (bottom right column).
- 3) When prompted, enter Overseas Press Club Foundation, then Search and Select. Bookmark [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and use that website address for all your purchases in the future. Those pennies add up faster than Amazon boxes. Shop guilt-free and support the next generation of international journalists. Contact [foundation@opcofamerica.org](mailto:foundation@opcofamerica.org) with questions.

Amazon Smile

## People

by Chad Bouchard

### SCHOLARS

**Alissa Greenberg**, the David R. Schweisberg winner in 2016, is joining the PBS science documentary show NOVA as digital editor and staff writer. She will also continue to cover California stories on a freelance basis.



### UPDATES

OPC member **Sudarsan Raghavan** [filed a piece](#) for The Washington Post on April 13 covering Libya's intensifying war, with hospitals being targeted in Tripoli amid rising coronavirus infections that "is threatening an already shattered health system." He wrote that the uptick in violence, which is at its worst since the 2011 Arab Spring, is being fueled in part by outside powers that supply weapons and mercenaries despite a U.N. arms embargo.



## Meet the OPC Members: Q&A with Ivan Flores

**Ivan Flores** is an American multimedia journalist based in Afghanistan covering conflict, political and cultural issues. He has filed for a range of media organizations, including The New York Times, Foreign Policy, CBS Radio, CBC, The Guardian, The National, Al Jazeera, NPR, La Repubblica, VOX Media, and others. He has also created content for UNESCO and UH-Habitat. Flores has also attended the Eddie Adams Workshop, Barnstorm XXX, The New York Times Institute, and RISC training programs.



[Read More](#)

## Press Freedom Update



The **Committee to Protect Journalists** has released a report outlining details of The Trump administration's campaign to "destroy the credibility of the press, dangerously undermining truth and consensus even as the COVID-19 pandemic threatens to kill tens of thousands of Americans." The report calls the administration's methods of undermining press freedom and media credibility have been "dangerously effective." The CPJ has formally requested a meeting with President Trump to discuss its concerns.

Many governments around the world are taking advantage of the COVID-19 crisis to crack down on press freedom and criticism. **Reporters Without Borders** (RWB) sent a letter to the United Nations on April 13 [calling](#) for that body's special rapporteurs on health and freedom of expression to condemn governments that have used the pandemic to crack down on press freedom. The letter includes cases of censorship, arbitrary detention, harassment or violence against journalists, as well as legislative moves against press freedom, in a total of 38 countries. The list is not exhaustive, but includes verbal attacks in the press by Brazil and U.S. governments, reporters arrested in Algeria, Jordan and Zimbabwe, and new anti-press policies in Hungary, Cambodia and China. RWB has developed a tool, called [Tracker-19](#), to help investigate the pandemic's consequences for journalism and recommend ways to defend it.

Chinese authorities have detained documentary filmmaker **Chen Jiaping** since March 5, when he was arrested and charged with subversion of state power.

According to an open letter written by his wife and shared on Facebook on April 12, Chen is under “residential surveillance at a designated location.” Chen recently shot a documentary about Xu Zhiyong, a Chinese activist and scholar who was detained in February after calling on Xi Jinping to resign amid the coronavirus crisis. “Detaining Chen Jiaping for filming a documentary on a subject the Chinese government doesn’t like is absurd,” said Carlos Martinez de la Serna, the Committee to Protect Journalists’ program director in New York.

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov [threatened](#) journalist **Elena Milashina** after she reported in the independent newspaper Novaya Gazeta that quarantined Chechens had stopped reporting coronavirus symptoms for fear of being labeled “terrorists.” In a speech on April 13, Kadyrov blasted Russian authorities for failing to silence her and indicated that Chechen police would take matters into their own hands, “if [security services] want us to commit a crime and become criminals, then say so. Someone will take the burden of responsibility and will be punished under the law.” Milashina is a former correspondent for the CPJ, which [called](#) for Russia to condemn the threat and protect her safety.

Liberian police have [attacked or threatened](#) at least four journalists for coverage of COVID-19 since March 19, according to a CPJ report. On several occasions in late March, police summoned **Charles Bioma Yates**, a publisher of the privately owned Integrity Watch Newspaper and a talk-show host on local broadcaster Super FM, over a Facebook post alleging corruption and unequal application of quarantine rules for people coming to Liberia from abroad. Police also called **Joel Cholo Brooks**, the publisher of the independent news website GNN Liberia, demanding on March 20 that he reveal a source in a story about Liberia’s enforcement of social restrictions.

**Indonesia** has [ordered](#) police to crack down on “coronavirus-related hoaxes” and “hostile information about the president and government,” a directive rolled out on April 4 that Reporters Without Borders calls an effort to suppress criticism of the government. “In this directive, the Indonesia police are taking advantage of the need to combat disinformation linked to the COVID-19 pandemic in order to rein in journalists who might want to publish information critical of President Joko Widodo or his government,” said Daniel Bastard, the head of the Asia-Pacific desk at RWB.



Read more Press Freedom news coverage, including this week’s Press Freedom Update, on the OPC website via the link below.

[Press Freedom News](#)

