



Overseas Press Club
of America

Weekly Bulletin: April 23, 2020

Greetings!

We hope you enjoy this installment of our new weekly digital newsletter format.

This issue of the Weekly Bulletin includes:

- A reminder about tonight's discussion with Dexter "Tiff" Roberts, titled ["COVID-19 and China's Future"](#)
- OPC [microgrants for freelance journalists](#)
- Updates on OPC member coverage of COVID-19
- [Resources](#) and webinars for journalists covering COVID-19
- A post from OPC Past President William J. Holstein and a colleague about the merits of the Japanese [art of bowing](#)
- Recent [People](#) items
- [Press Freedom Updates](#)
- [Special OPC press ID offer](#)

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

Event Reminder - RSVP for Tonight!

April 23: Covid-19 and China's Future

Place: The Zoom video conferencing app

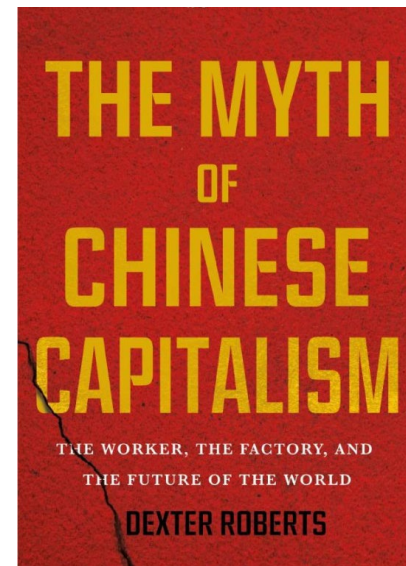
Time: 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time

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.

Please RSVP via the button below, and we will email you the link to join the Zoom session. There will be time for questions from participants at the end of the program.



[RSVP Now](#)

OPC Offers COVID-19 Freelance Journalism Microgrants

The OPC has heard from freelance journalists on every continent who are trying to work amid the novel coronavirus outbreak and accompanying lockdowns.

We surveyed 430 active OPC members and received responses from 32 freelancers. We found that half of those who responded have lost between 75% and 100% of their normal freelance income during the COVID-19 pandemic. Nearly all are unable to travel outside of their homes. Roughly one-third have no medical insurance. Many are currently unable to cover basic living costs, such as rent and food.

In order to help our freelance members, the Overseas Press Club is offering \$750 microgrants for freelance journalism, regardless of medium or coverage area. The term "microgrant" has been used a lot recently. We are describing it as one-time assistance to pursue your freelance journalism.

The deadline for applications is Wednesday, May 6, at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. We anticipate awarding 25 microgrants and letting grantees know by Sunday, May 17, by email.

Click the button below to read more and apply.

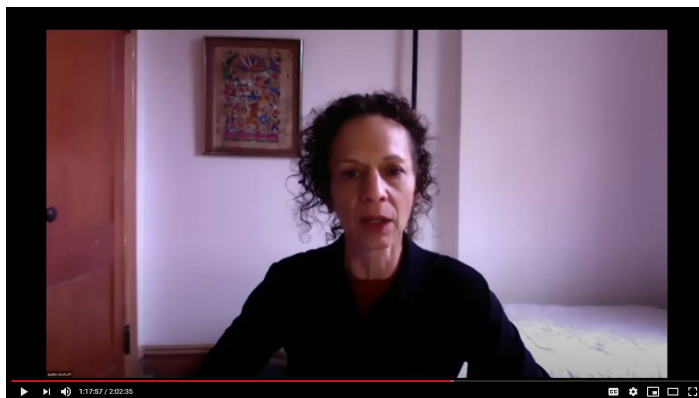
[Apply](#)

COVID-19 Coverage from OPC Members

2020 Flora Lewis Fellowship winner **Meg Bernhard** and freelance photographer **Anna Surinyach** have been [reporting](#) from Barcelona on Instagram for the Virginia Quarterly Review about how the pandemic and lockdown are affecting the city's economically vulnerable.

OPC member **Aryana Michelle Noroozi** published a story on April 13 on the COVID-19 outbreak in Iran and the country's restricted reopening. The piece, "[What I'm Hearing About the Virus in Iran](#)," was selected by the Medium curators to be featured on the outlet's World page and newsletter. Noroozi also published a story about the working conditions of home health care workers in New York City who lacked proper protective equipment. She wrote the piece, "[An Undocumented Home Healthcare Worker Fears for Her Patient and Herself](#)" through the lens of an undocumented worker.

OPC member **Judith Matloff** of the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma [participated](#) in a webinar on Monday to discuss "Covering the Pandemic: Photographers on the Front Lines." She gave tips on how to recognize and deal with trauma that may arise from the stresses of COVID-19 coverage. "Without



a doubt, we're all under incredible emotional stress at the moment," she said. "The important thing is to look at how we can build up our own self defenses and our own social networks, so that we can cope better with this extraordinary situation that we're all undergoing." Matloff urged journalists in the field to maintain a "buddy system," to check in and maintain contact, and said that editors should remind photojournalists how important their work is for society as they document this moment in history. The event was co-sponsored by the Earth Institute at Columbia University and Magnum Photos. Other panelists included Alex Majoli, Magnum Photographer, based in Italy and covering the pandemic for Vanity Fair; Thomas Dworzak, Magnum Photographer, based in Paris; Enri Canaj, Magnum Photographer, based in Greece; Newsha Tavakolian, Magnum Photographer, based in Iran; and Bryan Woolston, NPPA, photographer for Reuters, AP and Getty Images.

OPC member and Getty photojournalist **John Moore** has been covering coronavirus from the front lines with first responders in New York, and many of his photos were [featured](#) in a Los Angeles Times slide show on April 10. His photos depict medics at work intubating patients during emergency calls, shuttling them

into ambulances, illustrating exhausted faces of workers carrying out the grind of decontamination and care. OPC President Pancho Bernasconi of Getty Images touted Moore's work along with others in his Twitter feed. He shared [one image](#) of patients lying in an emergency vehicle, and [another image](#) depicting nurses in New York reacting to a caravan thanking medical workers.

Please send us your personal anecdotes, photos, and links to published pieces related to COVID-19 to 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](#).

New Resources for Covering COVID-19

The International Center for Journalists (ICFJ) in March launched a networking initiative on Facebook, called the Global Health Crisis Reporting Forum, to help journalists provide accurate, life-saving information on the COVID-19 pandemic. The forum, which is open only to journalists, connects reporters with health professionals and other experts through a webinar series. [Click here](#) to open the forum page and click "Join Group" to request membership. Some 2,500 journalists from 100 countries have joined. In conjunction with the International Journalists' Network (IJNet.org), the forum also provides resources on covering COVID-19 and fosters cross-border collaborations via a Facebook group. The ICFJ has also posted a page with [resources for covering the coronavirus](#), and has a Health Forum Newsletter that you can sign up for [via this link](#).

Coming up tomorrow (April 24), the ICFJ is hosting a webinar on physical, digital and psychological safety while reporting on the pandemic. It will feature an Egyptian safety expert and the DART Center's Asia Pacific director Cait McMahon. [Register here](#).

The ACOS alliance has posted a tool kit to help freelance journalists negotiate terms to keep them safe while reporting on the pandemic or any risky environments. The article, titled "[The Model Contract Project](#)," published on the Medium website and written by Andréa Schmidt and Anna Therese Day, includes key issues such as paying for flexible flights under uncertain travel restrictions, getting advances for safety-related costs, and insurance.

The Global Investigative Journalism Network (GIJN) has posted a list of [new sources of funding](#) for coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic. The list includes emergency funds from the National Geographic Society, a Coronavirus News Collaboration Challenge from the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting, the Internews Information Saves Lives Rapid Response Fund, the Africa-China Reporting Project, the IWMF's Journalism Relief Fund, and dozens of others.

More Resources

- The group A Culture of Safety (ACOS) [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.

- ICFJ [launched](#) a page for COVID-19 resources for journalists.
- Rory Peck Trust has a [resource page](#) for pandemic coverage. It includes safety guidelines, funding sources, job opportunities and online training videos.
- 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."

If you have any issues accessing the resources page, please contact Chad Bouchard at chad@opcofamerica.org for credentials.

[OPC Resources Page](#)

Photo, above right: Emperor Akihito greets imperial family members (right to left) Crown Prince Naruhito, Crown Princess Masako, Prince Akishino, Princess Kiko and Princess Saya. Photo credit to Junko Kimura/Getty Images

OPC Member Commentary: Should Americans Learn How to Bow?

*OPC Past President **William J. Holstein** and his longtime friend and colleague, **Toshio Aritake**, wrote a blog post from self-quarantine on the tradition of bowing in Japan, and its possible use as a replacement for handshakes in a world threatened by current and future pandemics.*



Americans have heard suggestions that they should engage in elbow bumps and fist bumps, but those acts involve physical proximity and contact, however slight. The goal, it seems obvious, should be to avoid any contact while communicating warmth, respect and all the other positive signals that a firm handshake with full eye contact does. Air high-fives, while not physical, have a faintly ridiculous quality.

In the Muslim world, men place their right hand on their left chest when they say, salaam alaikum. (Peace be upon you.) Hindus in India place their hands together in front of their chests in a kind of church spire when they say namaste, which means “I bow to you” in Sanskrit.

But among all the world’s forms of greeting, perhaps the most worthy of study at the moment is the Japanese art of bowing called ojigi. The way the Japanese bow to each other can communicate a tremendous range of feelings. If I perceive that you have higher status than me, I bow more deeply to you than you bow to me. If I am particularly impressed to be in your presence, I would bow more slowly and hold the bow longer. The speed at which a bow is made, and how long it is held, communicate sincerity.

[Read More](#)

People

by Chad Bouchard

SCHOLARS

Kantaro Komiya, the OPC Foundation’s 2020 Stan Swinton Fellowship winner, was part of a team that [was a finalist](#) in the Society of Professional Journalists award in the category of Online In-Depth Reporting. The DePauw Solutions Journalism’s project, “[Learning the Limits](#),” explored a campus drinking crisis which saw 19 DePauw students hospitalized for alcohol poisoning last year.

2018 Fritz Beebe Fellowship winner **Yi-Ling Liu** [filed](#) a longform story for Harper’s Magazine chronicling the development and the culture of the Hong Kong protest movement, as well as a look at its future in light of China’s ongoing crackdown against opposition. She outlines creative ways that the movement uses language and non-violent tactics to communicate and evade arrest. “At its most beautiful, the dream of democracy has given rise to unprecedented scenes of solidarity,” she wrote. “At its most terrifying, the dream, fueled by nihilism, xenophobia, and hatred, has seemed like a nightmare.”



UPDATES

2019 Sally Jacobsen Fellowship winner and OPC member **Krithika Varagur** will kick off a series of online events [starting this evening](#) from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. with moderator Scott Shane, a longtime national security reporter for The New York Times. She launched her book, *The Call: Inside the Global Saudi Religious Project*, on Tuesday this week. Tonight’s event is hosted by The Ballot, a watchdog media group covering global elections that Varagur contributes to. Her book delves into Saudi Arabia’s far-reaching campaign of influence across the Muslim world. Below are more upcoming dates on Varagur’ virtual book tour.

- Tuesday, April 28 - [Chicago Council on Global Affairs](#) (Zoom) - 2:00 PM EST - A

lecture and discussion moderated by former diplomat Cécile Shea

- Thursday, April 30 - [NY Southeast Asia Network](#) (Zoom) - 5:00 PM EST - A book talk with NYU professor and New York Review of Books writer Margaret Scott
- Tuesday, May 19 - [London Middle East Institute](#) (Zoom) - Book launch with Dr. Adam Hanieh, political scientist at SOAS University of London
- Thursday, May 21 - [Politics and Prose](#) (Most likely Zoom) - 7:00 PM EST - Reading in conversation with James Palmer, senior editor at Foreign Policy
- Thursday, May 28 - [A Writer's Desk with Simon Worrall](#) (Facebook live) - 12:00 PM EST - book talk and author interview

Photos from OPC member and 2018 Robert Capa Gold Medal Award winner **Carolyn Van Houten**, a staff photojournalist at The Washington Post, were [featured](#) in a story on April 17 about breaches in the U.S.-Mexico border near San Diego. Reporter Nick Miroff found there were 18 breaches or attempted breaches over a one-month period between Sept. 27 and Oct. 27 last year. Van Houten's photos depicted sections of President Trump's border wall and a person climbing over the top. The OPC featured her work last fall during a panel at Columbia University along with freelance photographer Jika Gonzalez and moderator Nina Berman.



MEDIA NEWS

National Public Radio [plans to cut](#) executive pay to stave off the economic hit expected from COVID-19. CEO John Lansing on April 17 told staff that NPR corporate sponsorship would fall short by \$12 million to \$15 million compared to expected levels. "We do not have any position eliminations on the table now," Lansing said in the email, according to The New York Times.

Condé Nast CEO Roger Lynch [told](#) staffers in an email Monday that the international media company plans to temporarily reduce pay and consider layoffs in light of the pandemic's impact on business. Lynch would take a 50 percent reduction in salary along with members of Condé Nast's board, while staffers who earn more than \$100,000 would have salary reductions of 10 to 20 percent from May 1 until the end of September.

Press Freedom Update

by Chad Bouchard and Emily Brown

Reporters Without Borders (RWB) [released](#) its **2020 Press Freedom Index** on April 20, with special attention paid to links between the coronavirus epidemic and ranking in the Index. Researchers placed North Korea in last place at 180th, with silence from official media on the state of outbreaks, and foreign correspondents barred from investigating Pyongyang's efforts to protect citizens. China received low marks at 177th place for facilitating the spread of the disease with censorship and pressure against whistleblowers. Iran, Egypt and Iraq are lowest among countries in the Middle East and North Africa, Brazil declined in ranking with attacks on media in the face of the virus, Hungary has dropped 16 places since

2018 with direct government control over media, and Belarus at a low ebb on the list for using the epidemic as an excuse to tighten its crackdown on press freedom. The United States ranks at number 45 on the 2020 index, rising from 48 in 2019 despite a continued campaign of “arrests, physical assaults, public denigration and the harassment of journalists.”

Turkish leftist opposition newspaper **Kocaeli Ses** was the target of a [shooting attack](#) on the morning of April 20, when unidentified attackers opened fire on the office in Kocaeli. The building was empty and nobody was injured, but the front window of the office was shattered in the attack. “Turkish police should do everything within their power to identify the shooters and bring them to justice. Authorities should also ensure that the newspaper’s staff can work safely and without fear,” said Gulnoza Said, the Europe and Central Asia program coordinator for the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ).

Masrat Zahra and **Peerzada Ashiq**, journalists in Kashmir, have been [facing](#) harassment and intimidation from local authorities for their reporting. On April 19, Ashiq was interrogated by police after publishing a story about tensions between Kashmiris and the police. Zahra, a freelance photojournalist, was issued a summons on April 20 related to her social media reporting. “Masrat Zahra and Peerzada Ashiq should be free to report on events in Jammu and Kashmir without facing harassment and intimidation from local authorities,” said Aliya Iftikhar, the CPJ’s senior Asia researcher. “Police should drop their investigations into both journalists, and India should reform its laws to make such capricious actions by police impossible.”

Natig Isbatov, an Azerbaijani freelance reporter, was [arrested](#) on April 9 after filming a protest outside of an employment office in Baku. Isbatov was sentenced to 30 days of detention for “violating the lockdown” and “resisting the police.” “The misuse of lockdown measures to target reporters is the latest escalation in the persecution of independent journalism in Azerbaijan,” said Jeanne Cavelier, the head of RWB’s Eastern Europe and Central Asia desk. “The authorities are not keeping their promises to protect journalists. We firmly condemn Natig Isbatov’s detention and demand his immediate release.”



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

[Press Freedom News](#)

Reminder: OPC Special Press ID

The OPC is offering members a special deal on the large OPC press ID cards as one of the measures the club

is taking to help journalists cover breaking news amidst the danger and disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In normal times, the cards are valid for only 12 months to correspond with the OPC's dues schedule that runs from Oct. 1 through Sept. 30. But we are offering an extra 6 months to anyone who orders a large ID card in April. The cards will not expire until Sept. 30, 2021.

To order a card, email a high-resolution color headshot to patricia@opcofamerica.org and pay the \$40 charge [on this link](#).

Read More

