



Overseas Press Club
of America

Weekly Bulletin: July 16

Greetings!

We hope you enjoy this week's digital newsletter, which includes:

- A reminder about the OPC's [appeal for donations](#) to support the COVID Emergency Grant Fund.
- A thank you to those who attended the OPC's Workshop on Covering Civil Unrest.
- [Resources](#) and webinars for journalists covering COVID-19 and protests in the U.S.
- [People Column](#).
- [Press Freedom Update](#).

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



OPC Appeals for Help for the COVID Emergency Grant Fund



Many OPC members have answered the call for donations to support the COVID Emergency Grant Fund. Thank you for chipping in during our campaign to launch another round of grants for critical financial support to freelance journalists reeling from the health and financial effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. And thank you to those who have amplified the appeal on social media channels.

The fundraising campaign will continue a little while longer, and any additional support would be most appreciated.

Each contribution will go toward direct help for freelance writers, photographers, and film and video reporters, just as the OPC did in May for 27 recipients of \$750 grants.

As OPC President Pancho Bernasconi wrote in his recent appeal, "a way of life is at stake. The very concept of being a freelancer abroad could be in the process of being destroyed. That strikes at the heart of what the OPC stands for and what we care about."

[Donate Now](#)

Whether or not you donate, please share news of the OPC's fundraising appeal on your social networks.

On Twitter: <https://twitter.com/opcofamerica/status/1282736540024737796>

On Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/opcofamerica/posts/3210147415704979>

For alternative donation options, please reply to this Weekly Bulletin email with your preferred method of payment.

OPC Concludes Free Safety Workshops

The OPC wishes to thank those who attended the OPC's two free online GJS safety workshops for covering civil unrest on June 23 and July 14. More than two dozen people attended the two-hour sessions, which the OPC provided for free to OPC members and others to help during challenging times. The program from GJS, formerly known as Global Journalist Security, covered a range of best practices and safety measures, including situational awareness, "tactical" breathing, crowd dynamics, police operations, line of sight, safe navigation and teamwork, riot dispersal equipment, personal protective gear, concealment versus cover, and active shooter response.



You can find out more about [GJS safety training options here](#) .



COVID-19 Coverage from OPC Members

Kimon de Greef , winner of the OPC Foundation's David R. Schweisberg Memorial Scholarship this year, filed a piece for The New York Times covering how COVID-19 has [upended burial traditions](#) in his native country of South Africa. He wrote that travel restrictions have disrupted a crucial cultural practice for many Black residents in Cape Town, in which families return the bodies of loved ones hundreds of miles to homes in the Eastern Cape province. South Africa imposed one of the world's most severe lockdowns in March. "For some poorer families, the rules are forcing a choice between breaking tradition and breaking the law," De Greef wrote.

OPC member **Keith Bradsher** , Shanghai bureau chief for The New York Times, has been covering pandemic news from China. On July 5, he filed a piece, "[China Dominates Medical Supplies, in This Outbreak and the Next](#) ," exploring the country's development of a low-cost industry for front-line weapons to stave off outbreaks, including masks, testing kits and other gear. Bradsher wrote that early investments have laid the groundwork for domination of the market for protective and medical supplies for years to come, adding that "China's grip on the market is a testament to its drive to dominate important cogs in the global industrial machine." Bradsher also filed a piece [on July 13](#) on China's sanctions against three U.S. lawmakers; Senators Marco Rubio and Ted Cruz, and Representative Chris Smith, as well as Sam Brownback, President Trump's ambassador at large for international religious freedom.

OPC Governor **Derek Kravitz** , investigative journalist and adjunct professor at

Columbia University's Brown Institute for Media Innovation, has announced the release of a sweeping data project, [Documenting COVID-19](#), that has compiled a shareable document repository through hundreds of freedom of information requests with 7 record sets comprising more than 400,000 pages. News organizations have already made use of the resource, including a New York Times investigation into safety issues at meatpacking plants, a Washington Post story on dubious technology and reopening plans in Georgia, and local media outlets disclosing hotspots that hadn't been reported elsewhere. The project is funded by the Brown Institute and partners including the Stabile Center for Investigative Journalism along with FRONTLINE PBS, National Geographic and the Fund for Investigative Journalism.

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 and Protests

OPC MEMBER RESOURCE

The **OPC** has invited freelance members to send a short pitch document, detailing their locations, specialty areas, and contact information. They have been collected in a Dropbox folder. We hope that editors will find this a useful tool when they need to find a journalist quickly in an overseas or U.S. locale. If you would like to gain access to this folder, please email patricia@opcofamerica.org. Read more about this networking tool on the [OPC website here](#).

TRAINING AND GUIDELINES

The nonprofit journalism organization **100Reporters** launched a project that tracks government moves around the world that exploit the COVID-19 crisis to expand surveillance, enable corruption, and weaken transparency and government accountability. UnderCovid aggregates news about those issues from a broad range of media sources with an interactive world map, to highlight "encroachments that exploit the fear of coronavirus to redraw the balance of power between government and citizen," and also produces original reporting "to map, expose and analyze moves to lock down civil liberties and government accountability, under cover of crisis." [Read more here](#).

The **Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA)** is hosting a free webinar on practicing inclusive journalism on [Tuesday, July 21 at 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time](#). The 90-minute webinar will cover how journalists can challenge their own implicit bias, disassociating violence from protest, news relationships with law enforcement, problematic word choices to avoid, and fostering difficult conversations about race and inclusion in newsrooms. [Register here](#).

GRANTS

The **Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting** and **Diversity Photo** have [extended the deadline](#) for applications for the Eyewitness Photojournalism Grant to July 31. The series of \$2,500 visual reporting grants for freelance photojournalists are aimed at supporting underreported stories told by journalists historically underrepresented in the American press. Due to limitations of the pandemic, the program will prioritize stories told locally in the United States, with minimal travel required. [Apply here via Submittable](#) .

More Resources

- The **Columbia University's Brown Institute for Media Innovation** has compiled a large repository of documents on COVID-19 via FOIA requests. [Explore the database here](#).
- **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
- A **retreat center in California** is providing artist residency for writers, photographers and artists needing some time without distractions to work on a project. [The Evered House](#) is located in Flamingo Heights, near the Joshua Tree National Park. The house and program were founded by writer and director Charles Evered, who served as a Lieutenant in the US Navy Reserve. Residents stay at no costs to themselves. The organization offers small honorariums to help cover travel and food expenses during their stay.

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](#)

People by Chad Bouchard

SCHOLARS

2014 H.L. Stevenson fellow **Caelainn Hogan** has published her first book, [Republic of Shame](#) , which exposes a network of institutions for the concealment,

punishment, and exploitation of “fallen women” who became pregnant out of wedlock. The system, run by the Catholic Church and the Irish government, operated until the late 90s. “I never understood how surreal and cruel this system was, or how many people's lives are still being impacted, until I wrote this book,” she said. Penguin Random House published the book on July 16. Hogan is a freelance journalist in Ireland whose work has been featured in *The New Yorker*, *Harper's*, *Al Jazeera English*, *VICE*, *The Guardian* and *The Irish Times*. She was an OPC Foundation fellow for *The Associated Press* in Lagos in 2014.

UPDATES

OPC member **Rukmini Callimachi** will explore the story of Breonna Taylor, the 27-year-old Black woman who was killed by police officers on March 13 while she slept in her home in Louisville, Kentucky, in a *New York Times* documentary series. The Times launched a new hour-long series, [The New York Times Presents](#), which will replace the 30-minute program *The Weekly* on FX. Callimachi will serve as reporter on the Taylor episode, with director Yoruba Richen of *The New Black* directing the program. The program will include an investigation into Taylor's death.

OPC Past President **Allan Dodds Frank** received a warm shout-out from one of his former mentees, Jason Zweig, now a Saturday columnist for *The Wall Street Journal*. “My first mentor was the great Forbes reporter Allan Dodds Frank, who taught me to ignore nothing and pursue everything,” he said in a Q&A for the email newsletter *Journalist Voices* by Sarah Chacko, who is an audience engagement reporter for the *Journal*. “You never know which detail will turn out to make or break a story,” Zweig added. Zweig writes the *Journal's* weekly column “The Intelligent Investor,” and is author of *Your Money and Your Brain*, on the neuroscience of investing.

OPC member **Keith Richburg**, a professor and director of the Journalism and Media Studies Centre at the University of Hong Kong, spoke about press freedom concerns on a [panel of media and law experts](#) at the Hong Kong's Foreign Correspondents' Club last week. The panel discussed uncertainty in Beijing's new national security law and its potential to force media to self-censor reports. “If it operates the way it is in the mainland, I see potential visa restrictions on journalists. The second thing is that we might get called in for tea,” a euphemism for detention, the *Asia Times* reported Richburg saying. Richburg has also talked to journalists covering unrest in Hong Kong, and was quoted in a July 1 *New York Times* piece by Vivian Wang and Alexandra Stevenson, “[In Hong Kong, Arrests and Fear Mark First Day of New Security Law](#),” saying staff members at his center wondered aloud “where the red line would be and whether certain topics would be off limits.”

OPC member **Sewell Chan**, editorial page editor for the *Los Angeles Times*, will participate in a panel for the National Press Club Journalism Institute to help journalists hone their point of view and ensure that editors hear it on July 29 from 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Eastern Time. “[Being Heard: How to Use Your Voice so People Listen](#),” will include remarks from Chan as well as L.A. *Times* columnist Erika Smith, *New York Times* reporter Nikole Hannah-Jones and *New York Times Magazine* editor-in-chief Jake Silverstein. [You can register here](#).

A new book has been [released](#) about the life of **Kim Wall** , an OPC member who was murdered in 2017 by a Danish inventor while she was profiling him for a story. Kim's parents, Ingrid and Joachim, wrote the book, [A Silenced Voice: The Life of Journalist Kim Wall](#) , to help humanize their daughter and counteract what they saw as a disproportionate focus on her death in media coverage. The book was published by Amazon Crossing on July 7. The OPC renamed its digital reporting award in Wall's honor after her death in 2017, and Ingrid and Joachim attended the Annual Dinner to [light a candle of remembrance](#) during a ceremony to honor journalists killed or persecuted during the course of their work.

Barbara Demick , winner of the 2005 Joe and Laurie Dine Award who has served as OPC awards judge over the last several years, is set to [publish](#) a new book profiling a Tibetan town that was a longtime base for resistance against China. Random House is slated to publish *Eat the Buddha: Life and Death in a Tibetan Town* on July 28. Demick, who became Beijing bureau chief for the Los Angeles Times in 2007, traces the history of Ngaba and its violent first encounter with the Red Army in the 1930s, when soldiers plundered monasteries and set the stage for decades of abuse to come. The book takes its title from this era, when starving soldiers survived by eating skins of sacred drums and offerings to Buddha in temples. This is Demick's third book, including *Logavina Street* , a book focused on a neighborhood in Sarajevo during the Bosnian War, and *Nothing to Envy* , which reports on life inside the North Korean port city of Chongjin.

OPC member **Mohamed Brahim**, humanities professor in Boston at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, [participated](#) in an online panel hosted by Morocco World News on June 10 to discuss the Black Lives Matter movement in the U.S. Brahim told attendees that civil unrest in the U.S. has implications for many parts of the world. "What's happening in America should serve as an impetus for other countries to take a look at themselves in the mirror and try to do an honest assessment of how they are treating their own minorities," he said. Brahim added that the movement applies to the way Sub-Saharan Africans are described and treated in countries like Morocco, where mockery and harmful stereotyping in entertainment are normalized. Also speaking on the panel were Greg Hill, human and world geography teacher in Texas, and Bill Day, a lawyer focused on discrimination and civil rights.

2017 David A.andelman and Pamela Title Award winner **Aurora Almendral** [reported](#) on Thailand's handling of the pandemic for National Public Radio (NPR) in June, writing about how the success of a severe lockdown made the country's death rates among the lowest in the world, but at a mental health cost with potentially deadly consequences. She wrote that the WHO puts Thailand's suicide rate as the highest in Southeast Asia, and cited a report published end of April that found that "of the more than 80 suicide attempts they reviewed in April, 44 were related to hardships caused by the economic lockdown." Almendral shared her 2017 OPC award with Ed Ou for their piece for NBC, "The Kill List: The Brutal Drug War in the Philippines"

MEDIA NEWS

Voice of America (VOA) is [on the brink of losing](#) many of its international journalists after President Trump appointed a new boss for the U.S government-funded international broadcaster. Michael Pack, a conservative filmmaker who previously collaborated with Breitbart co-founder Stephen Bannon, was confirmed as head of the Agency for Global Media that oversees VOA in June. NPR reported on July 9 that three people with current or past ties to the agency said Pack has signaled he would not approve visa extensions for dozens of foreign nationals working as VOA journalists. The decision could affect as many as 62 contractors and 14 full-time employees. Many would be forced to return to home countries with authoritarian governments. On Tuesday, July 21, the Society of Professional Journalists will host a talk with Sanford J. Ungar, who served as VOA director from 1999 to 2001. [RSVP here](#) .

PEOPLE REMEMBERED

Li Zhensheng, a photojournalist known for his coverage of China's Cultural Revolution, died from a brain hemorrhage in June in New York at the age of 79. Li won the OPC's Olivier Rebbot Award in 2003 for his book [Red-Color News Soldier](#), which contained rare photos from the Cultural Revolution spanning 1966 to 1976, when he worked as newspaper photographer for the state. He secreted away an estimated 30,000 negatives despite orders to destroy images that contradict official propaganda. OPC member **Robert Pledge**, the co-founder of the New York photographic agency Contact Press Images who served as Li's longtime editor and shared the 2003 OPC award with him, told The Washington Post that Li was a crucial witness to one of the bloodiest chapters in China's history. "Almost every major event that shaped our modern world had 10, 15 well-known photographers who documented it," Pledge said. "In this massive event in China there was only Li, one individual who cut himself into two to witness the dark side of the whole."

The Poynter Institute has been compiling a list of journalists from around the world who have died from coronavirus, with excerpts and links to their published obituaries. The list, titled "[The Journalists and Colleagues We've Lost to the Coronavirus](#)," is posted in chronological order going back to early March and is frequently updated.

Press Freedom Update

by Bill Collins, OPC Press Freedom Chair

The early innings have been a struggle for Hong Kong as it continues to deal with the press freedom fallout from China's new security law that became official on June 30.

Only a few weeks into the new era, The New York Times is relocating a portion of its Hong Kong staff. Immigration officials there have denied the work permit application of New York Times reporter Chris Buckley. And China requested a meeting with the U.S. ambassador in Beijing to register an accusation that Washington is interfering over Hong Kong:

- *The New York Times* will relocate its digital team from its Hong Kong bureau to Seoul. The transfer will be implemented over the next year. This represents about one-third of its Hong Kong-based staff. Correspondents and other staff supporting print production for the paper's Asian and European editions will remain in the Asian financial hub. "China's sweeping new security law in Hong Kong has created a lot of uncertainty about what the new rules will mean to our operation and our journalism," said the paper, according to news reports. "We feel it is prudent to make contingency plans and to diversity our editing staff around the region. With the city facing a new era under tightened Chinese rule, Times editors determined they needed an additional base of operations in the region."
- In a related development, Hong Kong authorities have denied the visa application of *New York Times* reporter Tim Buckley, who was forced to leave China in May after officials there did not renew his journalist visa. No reason was given by Hong Kong. Buckley's recent coverage in China included the coronavirus and human rights abuses against the Muslim population in Xinjiang.
- Beijing is accusing the U.S. of attempting to contain China's development by sanctioning officials who undermine Hong Kong's local autonomy. Zheng Zeguang, the Chinese vice foreign minister, told U.S. ambassador Terry Branstad that American threats of sanctions and cancellation of Hong Kong's special trading privileges are not about standing up for freedom and democracy. Instead, it represents another U.S. effort to contain China's development. "I want to warn the U.S. sternly that any bullying and unfairness imposed on China by the U.S. will meet resolute counterattack from China. And the U.S. attempt to obstruct China's development is doomed to failure," said Zheng.
- President Trump has signed the Hong Kong Autonomy Act into law, in addition to an executive order that reaffirms a previous decision by the U.S. president to eliminate preferential treatment given to Hong Kong. Both the U.S. and Great Britain have deep concerns over the implications of China's new national security law in Hong Kong, especially as it relates to long held freedoms of speech, press and protest.

Read in OPC Press Freedom

