



Overseas Press Club
of America

Weekly Bulletin: May 28, 2020

Greetings!

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

- A recap of the OPC's Zoom [panel with Hal Boyle Award winners](#).
- A look ahead at next week's Zoom [discussion on June 3 with Bob Considine Award winners](#), plus two more upcoming OPC Awards interviews.
- An update from OPC Past President Deidre Depke on the OPC's [emergency COVID-19 grants for freelancers](#).
- Updates on OPC member coverage of COVID-19.
- [Resources](#) and webinars for journalists covering COVID-19.
- [People Column](#).
- [Press Freedom Updates](#).

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

OPC Launches Interview Series With Hal Boyle Award Winners



by Chad Bouchard

As the United States and European Union close their doors to migrants and tighten immigration policies, money that Western countries donate to “outsource” handling of the crisis has benefited militant groups in Libya, organized crime syndicates in Mexico, and tribal leaders in Yemen. That trend was the focus of the winning entry for this year’s Hal Boyle Award, titled “Outsourcing Migrants,” an investigative series from The Associated Press.

On May 27, the OPC hosted a Q&A session with this year’s Hal Boyle Award winners, kicking off a series of online discussions with OPC Award Winners via Zoom.

Panelists included three of the eight journalists who worked on the series: Lori Hinnant, Tim Sullivan and Julie Watson.

OPC Governor Farnaz Fassihi, head judge of the Hal Boyle Award for best newspaper, news service or digital reporting from abroad, moderated the discussion.

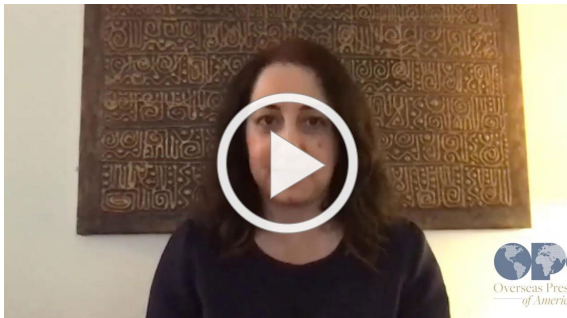
Fassihi said the series incorporated investigative work from a team of print, video and digital journalists, whose work “brought into focus how Western policies in Washington, in the European Union, contributed to this migrant crisis.” The series included reporting from Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa, but she added that despite the sweeping scope of reporting in the series, each article managed to remain centered on human stories.

[Read the Full Story](#)

Photo above, clockwise from upper left: Farnaz Fassihi, Lori Hinnant, Tim Sullivan and Julie Watson.



Click the windows below to watch clips from the program, [or click here](#) to open a playlist on the OPC YouTube channel.



Segments from the “Outsourcing Migrant” series can be viewed on the links below:

1. [Migrants Endure Rape and Torture on Route Through Yemen](#)
2. [Video: Torture Awaits African Migrants Traveling in Yemen](#)
3. [Making Misery Pay: Libya Militias Take EU Funds for Migrants](#)
4. [Video: EU Funds for Libya Migrants Enrich Abusers Instead](#)
5. [‘Everybody Cries Here’: Hope and Despair in Mexican Shelter](#)
6. [Migrants Stuck in Lawless Limbo Within Sight of America](#)
7. [Denied Asylum, Migrants Return to Place They Fear Most: Home](#)
8. [Volunteers Step in to Keep Asylum Seekers Healthy on Border](#)



Upcoming Events via Zoom

Time: 1:00 p.m. Eastern Time on
June 3

Place: Via Zoom

Join the OPC in an online discussion
via Zoom with this year's Bob



Considine Award winners.

Isabel Coles and **Rena Effendi** of The Wall Street Journal will discuss their winning work, "Children of No Nation," a series that follows seven siblings among thousands of children whose parents fled their own countries to join Islamic State in Syria. Left trapped in squalid refugee camps without parents or nationality, the children were "unwanted in the West and endangered in Syria."

RSVPs are required. Links to the Zoom webinar will be emailed to registrants two hours before the program begins.

The moderator will be **Peter Spiegel**, US managing editor of the Financial Times and the head judge for the Bob Considine Award for "best newspaper, news service or digital interpretation of international affairs."

[RSVP Now](#)

You can read stories from the winning series below:

1. [He Lost a Daughter to Islamic State. Can He Save His Grandchildren?](#)
2. [Swede Brings His Orphaned Grandchildren Home From ISIS Trauma](#)
3. [He Rescued His Grandchildren From Syria. Then He Lost Them Again.](#)

Photo, above right: Isabel Coles, left, and Rena Effendi



Dates and times for two more award programs on Zoom are as follows (all times in Eastern Time):

June 10 at 12:00 p.m.: Winners of the OPC's three photography awards, interviewed by freelance photographer **Daniella Zalcman**.

- The Robert Capa Gold Medal Award for best photographic reporting from abroad requiring exceptional courage and enterprise. Winner: **Dieu Nalio Chery** of The Associated Press for "Haiti: Nation on the Brink."
- The Olivier Rebbot Award for best photographic news reporting from abroad in any medium. Winner: **Moises Saman** of National Geographic for "El Salvador: A Country in Crisis."

- The Best Feature Photography award for best feature photography on an international theme published in any medium. Winner: **Rena Effendi** of the Wall Street Journal for “He lost a daughter to the Islamic State. Can he save his grandchildren?”

June 19 at 6:00 p.m.: The Lowell Thomas Award for best radio, audio, or podcast coverage of international affairs.

- Winners participating in the call include: **Gregory Warner**, **Karen Duffin** and **Sebastian Meyer** of NPR’s Rough Translation podcast for “The Search: Parts 1 and 2.” **Ann Cooper**, Professor Emerita of the Columbia Journalism School, is the interviewer.

OPC Makes Emergency Grants to Freelancers Coping With Pandemic

by OPC Past President Deidre Depke

When the COVID-19 pandemic forced nations across the globe to close their borders, documentary filmmaker Hassan Oswald found himself trapped in Duhok, Iraq. Oswald had been in country finishing up a feature-length documentary about a Yazidi family searching for missing loved ones. “My trip was only meant to be three weeks,” Oswald told the Overseas Press Club. “I’ve been here for two months, and the money I had so meticulously budgeted is nearly finished.”



The pandemic created a different kind of financial hardship for New York native Deborah Steinborn, a freelance reporter living in Hamburg, Germany. She said the volume of her assignments dropped precipitously. “Literally overnight, some of my regular gigs were postponed or canceled entirely as a direct result of the pandemic,” said Steinborn, the mother of two school-age children. “Pitching even to regular media clients has become challenging, to say the least. Reporting expenses aren’t being covered, freelance is not being solicited, and even when it is, the rates are far less than in the past.”

Oswald and Steinborn were two of the recipients of \$750 freelancer grants from the Overseas Press Club. Designed to offset some of the financial hardship created by COVID-19, 27 grants were awarded to freelance writers, photographers, and film and video reporters abroad and in the United States. A committee of OPC governors made the awards, working from nearly 50 applications.

“Recipients told me the grants are not just helpful financially, but that they provide

a real sense of comfort, knowing that there is an organization standing behind them,” said OPC President Pancho Bernasconi. “The club received appeals from very well-established journalists. It was a real wake-up call about how difficult it is for freelancers right now.”

Please click the button below to read the whole story on the OPC website.

The Overseas Press Club funded the grants program with donations made during the club’s annual awards dinner. The OPC is soliciting donations for another round of grants. Donations can be sent via Zelle Quickpay to patricia@opcofamerica.org or via Paypal to paypal.me/opcofamerica .

[Read More](#)

Photo, above right: Journalists in Hong Kong cover a confrontation between police and protesters. Anthony Kwan/Getty Images

COVID-19 Coverage from OPC Members

OPC Governor **Derek Kravitz** reported on fallout from closures of more than 100 meat processing centers in a [May 25 piece](#) co-bylined with Michael Corkery and David Yaffe-Bellany for The New York Times. The team wrote about the lack of transparency from meat companies, which have avoided reporting detailed case counts, hiding the full impact of contagion in their facilities or the effectiveness of new safety measures. “The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said there were nearly 5,000 meatpacking workers infected with the virus as of the end of last month,” the article reports. “But the nonprofit group Food & Environment Reporting Network estimated last week that the number has climbed to more than 17,000. There have been 66 meatpacking deaths, the group said.”

OPC member **Borzou Daragahi** filed a story for the Belfast Telegraph [on May 23](#) comparing COVID-19 to historical pandemics such as the Black Death in 1330, which he wrote “wiped out 50 years of economic progress destroying nations and building others.”

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 **Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ)** launched a [Journalist’s Toolbox](#) on May 28 with hundreds of links to reporting resources for those covering the

pandemic or any other disease outbreaks.

The **Coalition for Women in Journalism (CFWIJ)** has a [calendar of events](#) with updates on the group's panels and seminars on topics that include COVID-19. Coming up on Friday is a session in Turkish, and another on Saturday in Russian to cover challenges women face in those countries during the pandemic. Coming up on June 4 is a session in English with women journalists on lockdown in Uzbekistan.

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](#)

Welcome New Member

Peter Spiegel
US Managing Editor
Financial Times
New York
Active Resident

People by Emily Brown and Chad Bouchard

SCHOLARS

2019 Sally Jacobsen Fellowship winner **Krithika Varagur's** byline has [cropped up](#) in the cartoons section of The New Yorker with a parody she penned called "Goodnight Zoom," illustrated by Eric Macomber, that depicts several panels of life under pandemic isolation. The parody of the "Goodnight Moon" children's book by Margaret Wise Brown includes captions such as "goodnight virtual background on Zoom" with a bunny waving in front of a Golden Gate Bridge backdrop, as well as "goodnight beans," "goodnight stars, goodnight air, goodnight virus everywhere."

AWARDS

This year's winner of the OPC's Peter Jennings Award is among the 20 nominees for a [Peabody Award in the documentary category](#). **Waad Al-Kateab, Edward Watts** and the team from **FRONTLINE PBS** garnered the nomination for "For Sama," a film that captures the life of filmmaker Al-Kateab in Aleppo, Syria, envisioned as a love letter to her daughter. The film has won more than 50 awards, including Prix L'Oeil d'Or for Best Documentary at the Cannes Film Festival, the Grand Jury Award for Best Documentary at the 2019 SXSW Film Festival, and the Special Jury Prize – International Feature Documentary at Hot Docs. It also received an Academy Award nomination in the Best Feature Documentary category. The Peabody Award nominations rolled out in May, but winners have not yet been announced and the ceremony was postponed to a later date.

UPDATES

OPC Governor **Ishaan Tharoor**, columnist on the foreign desk of The Washington Post, wrote [on May 26](#) for the paper's WorldView feature about Vincent Bevins' new book, titled *The Jakarta Method: Washington's Anticommunist Crusade and the Mass Murder Program That Shaped Our World*, which examines the legacy of U.S. intervention during the Cold War, including its tolerance and support for anti-communist massacres carried out in Indonesia in 1965 and 1966, which saw perhaps as many as a million people butchered. [On May 27](#), Tharoor wrote about the implications of a scandal involving Dominic Cummings, the special adviser to British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who defied lockdowns in late March and went on a 260-mile family road trip while he and his wife were showing symptoms of coronavirus.

Press Freedom Update

by Bill Collins

The Overseas Press Club asks that people join us in supporting global advocates for press freedom, free speech, and human rights.

They continue the fight to observe the timeless principles of press freedom; underscore the urgent need for reporter's access to information during the coronavirus pandemic; push back against attacks on the media, and sound the call for journalist safety, including the hundreds of imprisoned journalists worldwide.

In this week's OPC Press Freedom Update, we look at the news involving Hong Kong, Germany and the COVID-19 outbreak:

Hong Kong Autonomy Threatened. Media in Hong Kong are deeply concerned that China's proposal to impose new national security laws could jeopardize press freedom. The proposed law would ban treason, secession, sedition and subversion. Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam defended the Chinese law on May 26 and said existing freedoms would be preserved. "We are a very free society, so for the time being, people have the freedom to say whatever they want to say," Lam said in her weekly briefing. "Hong Kong's vibrancy and core values in terms of the rule of law, the independence of the judiciary, the various rights and freedoms enjoyed by people will continue to be there." However, U.S. officials have called the proposed law the "death knell" for Hong Kong's autonomy. Human rights advocates believe their work will be threatened under the new law, in addition to punishing protesters, candidates running for office and cutting off Hong Kong from support from the international human rights community. "The potential impact of this national security legislation could be very damaging to the work that we and others are doing," said Joshua Rosenzweig of Amnesty International.

German High Court Upholds Press Freedom. Germany struck a blow for press freedom against government monitoring when its Constitutional Court overruled the surveillance of foreigners' global internet communications by the BND, the country's intelligence service. The court said the BND law is a constitutional breach as it disregards press freedom and the freedom of telecommunications guarantees in the Basic Law. The ruling established that journalists must be granted special protections against surveillance when the legislature creates a new law to regulate the BND. The case was brought by global press freedom advocate Reporters Without Borders.

UPDATE: 230 press freedom violations related to Covid-19. Governments around the world are leveraging Covid-19 to restrict the free flow of information among democratic and autocratic states. The global health crisis has enabled governments "to exercise control over the media on the pretext of preventing the spread of disinformation," said a report by the International Press Institute in Vienna. The IPI has logged 230 press freedom violations since mid-February. The violations include arrests/charges, censorship, restricting access to information, verbal/physical attacks and excessive "fake news" regulation.

UN Secretary General responds to press freedom call. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres responded to the press freedom community's call to help release 250 jailed journalists worldwide. "No democracy can function without press freedom, which is the cornerstone of trust between people and their institutions, and which is most critical at a time of crisis when citizens demand accountability," said Guterres, emphasizing that press freedom remains a key priority. A #freethepress campaign launched in late March by The Committee to Protect Journalists called for the unconditional release of the more than 250 journalists in jail. Those journalists have no control over their environment and are often denied medical treatment. "Journalism must not carry a death sentence," said the CPJ. More than 190 organizations have answered the campaign's call, in addition to the 11,337 signatures that have been collected.

U.S.-China Take Turns Retaliating Against Media. There are two major casualties while Washington and Beijing trade political punches: the public's access to fact-based information during the global coronavirus pandemic, and sidelined journalists and support their staff in both countries. Dozens of journalists have lost out in 2020 as the political battle intensifies.

The latest salvo comes from Washington and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, which announced a new policy on May 8 that it would only issue visa to Chinese national reporters working in the U.S. for 90 days with visa extensions limited to 90 days. Beijing decried this action and threatened countermeasures in response to what it calls a suppression against Chinese media. In March, the Chinese government expelled 13 U.S. journalists working at news bureaus, including The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal, after revoking their media credentials. The government also dismissed several Chinese nationals working in support roles at U.S. news bureaus in Beijing. This was in response to a move by the U.S. government earlier in March designating five Chinese media outlets as foreign missions and lowering the available number of U.S. visas for Chinese citizens working at those outlets. This forced 60 Chinese journalists to leave the U.S.



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

Press Freedom News

