



Overseas Press Club
of America

Weekly Bulletin: May 7, 2020

Greetings!

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

- A reminder about the OPC's online discussion with Krithika Varagur about "[Saudi Arabia's Global Religious Campaign](#)."
- The James W. Foley Legacy Foundation's [rollout](#) of new safety curricula for journalism educators.
- A [testimonial](#) from Lucy Sherriff on her use of the OPC Press ID.
- The OPC's [Press Freedom Day](#) observance.
- Updates on OPC member coverage of COVID-19.
- [Resources](#) and webinars for journalists covering COVID-19.
- Recent [People](#) items.
- [Press Freedom Updates](#).

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

May 14:
Saudi Arabia's Global Religious Campaign
A Book Night with Krithika Varagur

Time: 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Place: Online via Zoom

Everyone talks about “Saudi money,” but no one really knows what it means. Journalist Krithika Varagur, an OPC member and 2019 Sally Jacobsen Fellowship winner, connected the dots on Saudi Arabia’s 20th century campaign



to propagate its brand of ultraconservative Islam worldwide in her new book *The Call: Inside the Global Saudi Religious Project* .

On May 14, Varagur will share her insights about Saudi influence in the Muslim world as reported from Nigeria, Indonesia, and Kosovo. In *The Call* , she traces the campaign’s complex history and diverse effects, from a Riyadh university in Jakarta to a beleaguered Saudi movement in Nigeria.

OPC Second Vice President Christopher Dickey will moderate.

Varagur is an American journalist and National Geographic explorer who writes mainly about religion and politics in Southeast Asia. Her work has appeared in The Guardian, The Atlantic, The New York Times, The New York Review of Books, The Financial Times, and more.

[Click here to read more about Varagur’s book >>](#)

Dickey is the Paris-based world news editor for The Daily Beast. Previously he served as the Middle East bureau chief for Newsweek, and before that, for The Washington Post. His critique of “MBS: The Rise to Power of Mohammed Bin Salman,” was published recently on the cover of the New York Times Book Review.

[RSVP Now](#)

The James W. Foley Legacy Foundation Launches New Journalism Safety Curriculum

by Chad Bouchard

The James W. Foley Legacy Foundation on May 1 released new resources for journalism

educators to help aspiring journalists in undergraduate programs to prepare for and respond to dangerous situations, including updated guidelines on how to report safely during the COVID-19 pandemic.



[Read more about the Foley Foundation's resources for educators >>](#)

The foundation's education program director, Tom Durkin, developed the Journalism Safety Modules in collaboration with Marquette University's Diederich College of Communication, the alma mater of James Foley, who was captured and killed by ISIS while covering the Syrian conflict in 2014.

In an email to the OPC, he compared journalists to first responders, saying that it's as crucial for those on the ground in crisis to be versed in conducting risk assessments. "And safety goes beyond just the physical," Durkin added. "Journalists need to consider self-care and care of their sources as well as digital security."

Diane Foley, the foundation's president and founder, said of the training modules that her son James would be "deeply grateful" for others to learn from his sacrifice. She said he aspired to uncover and tell the truth despite the consequences, quoting him as saying "if I don't have the moral courage to challenge authority, to write about things that might have reprisals on my career, if I don't have moral courage, we don't have journalism."

[Read More](#)

Image above right: James Foley films Libyan fighters attacking the west side of Colonel Gaddafi's home in October 2011.
Photo: John Cantlie/Getty Images

OPC Press Badge Testimonial: Lucy Sherriff Covers US Election Rallies

by OPC member and Lucy Sherriff

I attended one of the MAGA Mayday rallies on Friday, May 2 to file a multimedia report for The Sun's US publication.

The event I covered was in Huntington Beach, CA, where there were as many as 3,000 people.

There were a number of individuals at the rally with cameras, and so the OPC press badge helped distinguish me as a verified member of the press.

Thanks to the badge, I was able to conduct interviews and reassure individuals I was a credible journalist, as well as being able to speak with police and gain vital information about the situation, not just with regards to the event, but also my own safety.

I will be covering many more events leading up to this year's presidential election and I feel confident that my OPC credentials will assist me in securing interviews, and hopefully help guarantee my safety at large events and rallies.

Click the link below to read about the OPC's special offer 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.

[OPC Offers Special Press ID](#)

OPC Highlights Urgent Threats on World Press Freedom Day

World Press Freedom Day on May 3, the annual event organized by the United Nations in 1993, kicked off a weeklong series of observances. The commemorations are taking place amid the ongoing battle against the coronavirus pandemic, which has brought some unfortunate side effects for journalism.

“The pandemic has given rise to a second pandemic of misinformation, from harmful health advice to wild conspiracy theories” says Antonio Guterres, secretary general, United Nations. “The press provides the antidote: verified, scientific-based news and analysis.”

Global advocates for press freedom, free speech and human rights are using the UN event – billed as “Journalism: Without Fear or Favor” – as a platform to promote: the timeless principles of press freedom; underscore the urgent need for reporter’s access to information during the coronavirus pandemic; push back against the constant attacks on the media, and sounds the call for journalist safety, including the hundreds of imprisoned journalists worldwide.

The Overseas Press Club is calling attention to four of the most urgent press freedom threats around the world, including government use of COVID-19 to leverage restrictions, the threat of infection to imprisoned journalist around the world, safety risks associated with covering the pandemic, and an overall global decline in democracy and press freedom. To read more, click the link below.

[Read More](#)

COVID-19 Coverage from OPC Members

OPC member **Keith Bradsher** [covered](#) the reopening of manufacturing facilities in China for The New York Times, and the country's sluggish economic reboot as insecurity leaves many reluctant to spend money. With a Beijing dateline, the piece explores dipping consumer demand. "Many lost their jobs or had their pay slashed," Bradsher wrote. "Still others were shaken by weeks of idleness and home confinement, a time when many had to depend on their savings to eat."

OPC member **Elena Becatoros** was co-author of an Associate Press piece that [covered](#) COVID-19's impact on May Day celebrations around the world. The piece, filed from Athens with bylines from Angela Charlton and Elaine Kurtenbach, included details of socially-distant observances from a host of countries including China, Bangladesh and the Philippines, as well as France, Russia, Turkey and the U.S, among many others. "Millions of workers around the world are marking international labor day trapped between hunger and fear," the piece opens. "As more countries and states reopen for business even though the pandemic is far from vanquished." Becatoros serves as the AP's southeast Europe bureau chief.

OPC member **Alissa J. Rubin** [co-wrote](#) a piece for The New York Times on May 3 investigating why the novel coronavirus appears to be more virulent in some places than others. The piece, written with reporters Hannah Beech, Anatoly Kurmanaev and Ruth Maclean, points out that "global metropolises like New York, Paris and London have been devastated, while teeming cities like Bangkok, Baghdad, New Delhi and Lagos have, so far, largely been spared." The article includes input from more than two dozen infectious disease experts from around the world who suggest four main factors: "demographics, culture, environment and the speed of government responses."

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 [ACOS Alliance](#) is offering assistance for 16 freelance journalists to access an online safety training course produced by [Silk Road](#). Starting on June 1, selected participants will have free access for 30 days to five online course modules covering different work in hostile environments: Travel and Personal Safety, Terrorism and Public Disorder, Frontline Conflict Survival, Disaster and Extreme Environments, and First Aid. The deadline to apply is Friday, May 15.

Apply

The **Investigative Reporters and Editors** (IRE) has posted new [webinars and tipsheets](#) for journalists covering the pandemic, including:

- [For students: How to best prepare for summer and beyond with or without an internship amid COVID-19](#)
- [So you manage a remote team now](#)
- [Behind the story: Covering populations vulnerable to COVID-19](#)

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 Members

Doreen Carvajal
Freelance
Paris
Active Overseas

Will Cathcart
Freelance

Kirsti Hastings McCabe
Managing Director
Finsbury
New York
Associate Resident

Brady Ng

Tblisi
Active Overseas

Georgia Gee

Columbia University
Graduate School of Journalism
New York
Student

David Peter Hansen

Columbia University
Graduate School of Journalism
New York
Student

Lila Hassan

Columbia University
Graduate School of Journalism
New York
Student

Michael Maple

Freelance
Photojournalist
Portland, OR
Active Non-Resident (Retired)

Freelance
Hong Kong
Active Overseas, Young (30-34)

Suleyman Aydogan

Turkish Cultural Center NY
Peace Islands Institute NY
New York
Associate Resident

Ed Ou

Shooter/Producer
NBC News
New York
Active Young (30-34)

Brent Stirton

Deputy Director of Photography
National Geographic Magazine
Ventura, CA
Active Resident

Gregory Viscusi

Freelance
Paris
Active Overseas

People by Emily Brown and Chad Bouchard

AWARDS

Ben Taub, the 2015 Emmanuel R. Freedman Scholarship winner, won the 2020 Pulitzer Prize for Feature Writing. Taub, who has been a staff writer at The New Yorker since 2017, was awarded the Pulitzer for “[Guantanamo’s Darkest Secret](#),” his account of a man who was tortured at the Guantanamo Bay detention facility for over a decade. The Pulitzer Board praised Taub for “blending on-the-ground reporting and lyrical prose to offer a nuanced perspective on America’s wider war on terror.”

Amelia Jane Nierenberg, the 2018 Flora Lewis Fellowship winner, was part of the Boston Globe team that was named Pulitzer Prize for Local Reporting 2020 finalists. Nierenberg was an intern at the Boston Globe when she helped work on “[The Valedictorians Project](#),” a feature that traced the paths of 113 Boston high school valedictorians. The Pulitzer Board commended the Boston Globe staff for “exposing socioeconomic inequities by surveying the city’s brightest public high school students a decade after graduation.” Nierenberg said on Facebook that “as an intern with the Boston Globe, I spent months knocking on doors...I was a small part of this team, and I am so proud of my colleagues for their honest, unflinching reporting.”

The Pulitzer Prize for International Reporting [went to](#) **staff of The New York Times** for coverage of Vladimir Putin's regime. Some of that reporting also garnered the OPC's Roy Rowan Award for investigative reporting under the title "Russia's Shadow War" for Times reporters Michael Schwartz, Dionne Searcey, David Kirkpatrick and the Visual Investigations team.

The Los Angeles Times [won](#) two Pulitzer Awards this year under the editorial management of **Scott Kraft**, OPC Third Vice President and head OPC Awards judge. Christopher Knight won the Criticism category for his critique of a proposed overhaul of the L.A. County Museum of Art. In the category of Audio Reporting, the award went to staff of This American Life with Molly O'Toole of the Los Angeles Times and Emily Green, a freelancer for VICE News.

The 2020 Pulitzer Prize for Feature Photography [went to](#) three Associated Press photojournalists for work in Jammu and Kashmir, including **Dar Yasin** of Kashmir, who was part of the team that won the OPC's 2017 Hal Boyle Award for filming the Rohingya exodus. The other AP Pulitzer winners were Mukhtar Khan, also from Kashmir, and Channi Anand from Jammu. The judges said the award was "for striking images of life in the contested territory of Kashmir as India revoked its independence, executed through a communications blackout."

Press Freedom Update

by Emily Brown and Chad Bouchard

The Overseas Press Club of America calls on law enforcement authorities in Bangladesh to free jailed photojournalist **Shafiqul Islam Kajol** and dismiss the case against him, in addition to investigating the circumstances behind his disappearance.

Kajol, 50, was arrested May 3 after disappearing for 53 days. News media reported that Kajol was arrested while attempting to cross the border from India. Kajol, the editor of Pakkhakal magazine, and 31 other journalists were charged with criminal defamation under the country's Digital Security Act on March 9, according to the Dhaka Tribune.

According to journalist colleagues, Kajol shared a story from the daily Manab Zamin on his Facebook page and added the names of other government officials, which triggered the DSA filing.

Human Rights Watch and the United Nations, which led a 2018 coalition of 56 organizations, have repeatedly spoken out against the enforced disappearances in Bangladesh believed to be led by government security forces.



For World Press Freedom Day on May 3, **Jason Rezaian** wrote an op-ed about Trump making it difficult for journalists to cover the COVID-19 pandemic. "In fact, in Trump's personal war, the media is his strongest ally, collectively amplifying his voice to such an extent that almost all others are drowned out," Rezaian,

journalist and former Tehran bureau chief for The Washington Post who was released from Iran in 2016 after more than 18 months in jail, wrote that “His real adversaries are the individual journalists who refuse to ignore his many failures as president.” Rezaian also noted that the United States is ranked #45 on Reporters Without Borders’ annual Press Freedom Index, saying that Trump’s “abuse is only getting worse amid the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, as journalists covering the Trump administration’s response to the crisis are subjected to the president’s attacks during his press briefings.” Rezaian lit the Candle of Remembrance at the OPC’s Annual Awards dinner the year he was released, and discussed his ordeal during an OPC [Book Night](#) last April.

The Washington Post released their May 2020 list of the 10 most pressing cases of journalists under attack, as identified by the One Free Press Coalition. The cases include **Azimjon Askarov**, a journalist who has been jailed in Kyrgyzstan for the past 9 years while in deteriorating health, **Mahmoud al-Jaziri**, an imprisoned journalist in Bahrain who was punished for speaking to the media about inmates’ coronavirus fears, and **Abdulkhaleq Amran, Akram al-Waleedi, Hareth Hameed and Tawfiq al-Mansouri**, four Yemeni journalists who have been sentenced to death on the charges of spreading false news after being imprisoned for nearly five years.

10 Most Urgent List for May 2020

The 10 most pressing cases of journalists under attack, as identified by the One Free Press Coalition, include:

- Azimjon Askarov (Kyrgyzstan):** Jailed journalist in deteriorating health at high risk for contracting covid-19.
- Abdulkhaleq Amran, Akram al-Waleedi, Hareth Hameed and Tawfiq al-Mansouri (Yemen):** Yemeni journalists held captive in prison; now sentenced to death.
- Mahmoud al-Jaziri (Bahrain):** Imprisoned reporter punished for telling media about inmates’ coronavirus fears.
- Solafa Magdy (Egypt):** Prison conditions heighten covid-19 risk for journalist in deteriorating health.
- Darvinson Rojas (Venezuela):** Freelance journalist and parents arrested for his reporting on covid-19.
- Truong Duy What (Vietnam):** Authorities switch charges to sentence blogger to 10 years behind bars.
- Elina Milashina (Russia):** Journalist fears for her life after leader rebuffs her coronavirus reporting.
- Mir Shakil ur Rehman (Pakistan):** To silence criticism of pandemic preparedness, government targets broadcast outlet and its CEO.
- Yayesew Shimelis (Ethiopia):** Journalist charged with “hate speech and disinformation” for covid-19 coverage.
- Jamal Khashoggi (Saudi Arabia):** Pressure persists for Kingdom to release jailed journalists—and bring justice for brazen murder.

ONE FREE PRESS COALITION

The Press Freedom Partnership is a public service initiative from The Washington Post to promote press freedom and raise awareness of the rights of journalists worldwide who are in pursuit of the truth.

The Washington Post
PRESS FREEDOM PARTNERSHIP
www.wapo.st/pressfreedom @wppressfreedom

The parents of murdered Wall Street Journal journalist **Daniel Pearl** [filed an appeal](#) on May 2 to the Pakistani Supreme Court to reverse the April 2 decision of the Sindh High Court that [overturned](#) convictions of four men in Pearl’s 2002 kidnapping and murder case. Two days after the court overturned the convictions, including that of Omar Saeed Sheikh, the mastermind of the kidnapping, police re-arrested the four men and announced they would hold them for three months.



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

[Press Freedom News](#)

