



Overseas Press Club  
*of America*

## Weekly Bulletin: Nov. 5, 2020

Greetings!

As I write this, I'm on tenterhooks awaiting the outcome of the U.S. presidential election while also marveling at the job that an army of reporters, editors, podcasters, photographers, broadcasters, graphic artists, videographers and web producers has done covering the election. Sure, we can all point to trends that were missed or misinterpreted, but mostly the media deserves praise (and a vacation) for working so hard to provide the facts and context that America's Founding Fathers said were necessary for a functioning democracy.



It's not clear that facts matter as much as they once did, and it's becoming clear that red and blue America don't seem to want to understand each other. The media collectively were better in 2020 than in 2016 at getting outside their comfort zone and into the field to check America's vital signs, yet pollsters and voters don't seem to be doing the same. We are drifting farther apart. We live in separate enclaves. We don't read or watch the same things. We pretty much loathe each other – and sometimes lie about it to pollsters, who don't appear able to discern the truth about voter intentions. My post-election resolution is to try harder to understand what motivates people who think differently from me. I believe it will make me a better reporter and editor.

Whether you're covering the home front or overseas, understanding the culture is an important part of what makes a correspondent. That's

something Jim Laurie, an OPC member and award-winning broadcast reporter, can attest to. He will be our guest speaker on Nov. 12 as he discusses his new memoir, *The Last Helicopter: Two Lives in Indochina*. The book covers his years, beginning in 1970, covering the Vietnam War and its aftermath. If you've ever reported on an overseas conflict, or hope to, won't you join us for an hour of "cocktails and conversation" on Zoom? It's an opportunity to share experiences, reflect on how media coverage of Asia has changed over 50 years, and to watch some remarkable video from the period.

In this week's Bulletin, you can [sign up](#) for the Zoom session plus [read Jim's account](#) of his experience writing a memoir during lockdown.

While I'm on the subject of covering wars and getting the culture, we will also have a [Dec. 2 program](#) with Jane Arraf, a member of the winning team for the David A. Andelman and Pamela Title Award. In *D.I.Y. Mosul*, part of NPR's "Rough Translation" podcast, Arraf and team "tell stories of grassroots civic action with uncommon sensitivity and insight into Iraqi culture – insight born of long years covering a very complicated country," the OPC judges wrote. Arraf, by the way, was just named the Baghdad bureau chief for The New York Times.

And don't forget about the [Nov. 10 Zoom program](#) with Cornelius Ryan Award winner Katherine Eban, whose book, *Bottle of Lies*, exposed fraud and regulatory fumbling behind the generic drug boom.

And as usual, this week's Bulletin updates you on the comings and goings of your fellow club members and valuable resources you might wish to avail yourself of.

Happy reading,  
Paula Dwyer  
OPC President



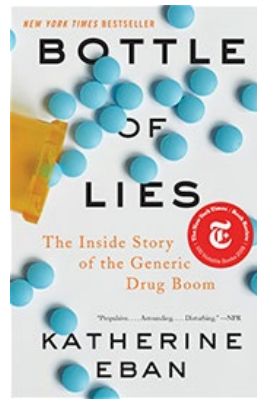
## Upcoming OPC Events

### Nov. 10: OPC Award Winners Share Their Stories The Cornelius Ryan Award

**Time:** Nov. 10 at 6:00 p.m.  
Eastern Time

Please RSVP to join an online program with **Katherine Eban**, author of *Bottle of Lies: The*

*Inside Story of the Generic Drug Boom*, which won this year's Cornelius Ryan Award for best non-fiction book on international affairs.



Moderating the panel will be **Dan Hertzberg**, freelance journalist and former senior deputy managing editor and later deputy managing editor for international news at The Wall Street Journal, who served as head judge for the Cornelius Ryan Award jury.

**RSVPs are essential. We will send Zoom links to those who register about an hour before each program. Please register early!**

Judges for the award said:

"Generic drugs are critical to the U.S. health system, making up 60 per cent of the country's drug supply—and 40 per cent of those generics are manufactured in India. In a shocking and masterful work of global investigative reporting, Katherine Eban documents the massive fraud by which Indian drug makers have evaded a fumbling U.S. FDA to sell billions of dollars in unsafe and ineffective drugs to the U.S. Eban turns it into a page turner, focusing on key figures like the courageous Indian executive turned whistleblower at the big Indian drug maker Ranbaxy and a dogged FDA inspector in India who rips aside the curtain of fraud."

[RSVP Now](#)



## Nov. 12: War, Love and Survival in the 1970s, an OPC Chat with Jim Laurie

Join the OPC for cocktails and conversation with OPC member and past award winner **Jim Laurie** to discuss his new book, *The Last Helicopter: Two Lives in Indochina*, a memoir of his early days in Indochina. The program will include an opportunity for attendees to share experiences covering the Vietnam War and other wars, to reflect on how media coverage of Asia has changed over the past fifty years, and to watch some remarkable video from the period.

OPC Past President **David Andelman** will be the



moderator.

The book, published in September, explores the war in Indochina, the communist victories five years later in Phnom Penh and Saigon and the survival story of a young woman he knew trapped behind in the killing fields of Cambodia – through the eyes of a 22 year old in 1970.

[Laurie's book is available from Amazon.com here >>](#)

*RSVPs are essential. Please register now to receive a Zoom link via email about an hour before the program.*

RSVP Now



## Dec. 2: OPC Award Winners Share Their Stories The David A. Andelman and Pamela Title Award

**Time:** 12:00 p.m. (noon) Eastern Time

**Jane Arraf**, who has covered the Middle East for three decades, will join the OPC for an online program to discuss her work for NPR's Rough Translation podcast, titled "DIY Mosul," which won this year's David A. Andelman and Pamela Title Award for best international TV, video, radio, audio or podcast reporting showing a concern for the human condition. Gregory Warner, Marianne McCune and Jess Jiang also worked on the winning story.

Arraf, who was recently named as Baghdad bureau chief for The New York Times, will be joined by moderator **Doyle McManus** of the Los Angeles Times, who served as head judge on the award jury.

[Listen to the winning podcast episode here >>](#)

RSVP Now



## Dec. 15: OPC Award Winners Share Their Stories The Whitman Bassow Award

**Time:** 12:00 p.m. (noon) Eastern Time

Join the OPC for a discussion with this year's winners of the Whitman Bassow Award, **Tom Warren** and **Katie J.M. Baker** of BuzzFeed News, who won for their series, "[WWF's Secret War](#)."

The head judge for the award, **Kim Murphy** of The New York Times, will moderate.

[RSVP Now](#)

## Memoir Writing at a Time of Pandemic

by **Jim Laurie**

It has been a very tough year. Many have died, been sickened, lost their jobs, or locked down as the world fights a global pandemic: a disruption like no other I can remember. For one old reporter, thankfully, it's been more of an inconvenience. I have been grounded. For the first time in fifty years, I have not spent at least part of the year outside the United States; not travelling in China, Vietnam, Cambodia or other parts of Asia or Europe.



Instead, seven months in isolation on a farm in Western Maine allowed me to complete a book that has been festering for many years.

And books – in this case a memoir - do indeed fester. Memoirs exorcize ghosts, unveil old feelings of regret, guilt, success, failure, opportunities taken, opportunities missed. Old memories build up and eat away at you like blisters on the mind, until they burst.

"If you're going to do a memoir," my editor told me, "you've got to be willing to truly reveal yourself. Put aside your old journalist instincts. Tell your story! You cannot cloak yourself in invisibility."

My account is that of my very first overseas encounters, at age 22, beginning in 1970 in Vietnam and Cambodia. My stories are those of war, youthful adventure, and early love for a remarkable woman.

*Jim Laurie's book, The Last Helicopter: Two Lives in Indochina is [available for purchase on Amazon here](#). See above for details of an OPC program with Laurie on Nov. 12 at 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time.*

[Read the Full Story Here](#)

## OPC Members Covering COVID-19

OPC member **Ceylan Yeginsu** wrote for The New York Times [on Oct. 30](#) about the lifting of the “no sail” order for U.S. cruise ships. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Friday last week lifted a ban on cruise operations and outlined how the industry could restart. The new rules require cruise companies to demonstrate strict health and safety protocols including extensive testing, quarantine measures and social distancing. Yeginsu wrote that the original ban on American cruises in March followed a finding that “cruise ships played a major role in the initial outbreak of the coronavirus. The ships were remarkably efficient at spreading the virus: On board the Diamond Princess cruise ship in Japan in February, each case of Covid-19 was transmitted to approximately 15 other people,” compared to transmission rates in Wuhan, China of one person transmitting to about four other people.



Deutsche Welle correspondent and OPC member **Chelsey Dulaney** talked to Cape Talk radio in South Africa from Berlin [on Oct. 30](#) about “lockdown light” restrictions that Germany imposed this week, which closed down bars, restaurants and theaters while keeping retail stores open. She said Germany has been reporting about 20,000 new infections per day, due in part to increased testing, with hospitals straining to meet demand for intensive care beds. Dulaney said the restrictions have sparked resistance, with “a bit of a fight between the federal states that decided these regulations and the parliamentary members who didn’t get a chance to vote for these.”

***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](#).***

## People by Chad Bouchard

### SCHOLARS

**Juan Arredondo**, the 2020 winner of the Harper’s Magazine Scholarship in memory I.F. Stone, has been named a Buffett Foundation Visiting Professor at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University in Phoenix.





**Eva Dou**, the winner of the 2012 S&P Global Award for Economic and Business Reporting, filed a piece for The Washington Post from Seoul [on Oct. 29](#) about Chinese citizens who received an early dose of a coronavirus vaccine because their overseas plans put them in a higher risk group. China has rolled out vaccines before they are fully tested as safe and effective, Dou wrote, a move that could backfire if harmful side effects emerge. Zhejiang province officially opened access to vaccines to high risk groups in October, and others across the country have been given early access in some cases deemed to be urgent. Health officials have announced plans to officially expand vaccinations to high-risk groups across China in December.

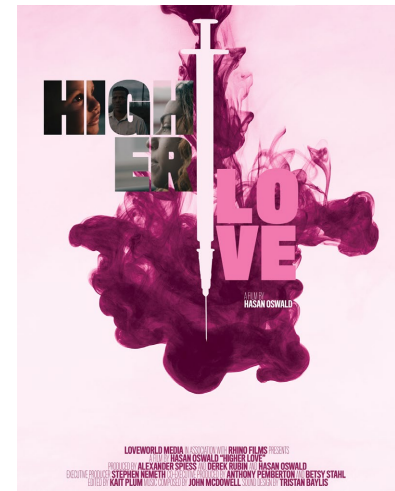


## UPDATES

**Peter Spiegel**, OPC Governor and U.S. managing editor for the Financial Times, reported on early morning results for the paper's podcast news briefing, telling host Marc Filippino in the morning [on Nov. 4](#) that results were still pending for the so-called Big Blue Wall states of the Midwest, consisting on Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin. He said because of the strange COVID-19 conditions this year, "we knew that these states were going to take longer than others to count, because they didn't have provisions in state law that allowed them to start counting ahead of time." He said despite the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that allows ballots arriving by mail in Pennsylvania to be counted up to three days after the election, President Trump "is livid, and claiming that this is a violation of election law, that ballots have to be received on [election] day," and that Trump could challenge the result in court if the state's vote tallies are within a tight margin.



An award-winning documentary directed by OPC member **Hasan Oswald** was released digitally across several platforms on Nov. 3. The film, titled Higher Love, focuses on a family battling the effects of drug addiction amid an opioid epidemic in Camden, New Jersey. In an email to the OPC, Oswald said he launched the project with no budget, "sold my blood, borrowed gear, taught myself editing and cinematography and then simply headed out to film." The film has garnered several awards, including the Grand Jury Award for best documentary feature at the Slamdance Film Festival, the Spirit Award and Best New Director award at the Brooklyn Film Festival, among several others.



Gravitas Ventures released the film on platforms including iTunes, Amazon, Apple TV, Google Play and Fandango Now. [Watch a trailer for the film here](#). Oswald recently worked in Iraq while shooting his second film, titled *The Missing*, about investigators' search for justice and families trying to reunite following the ISIS genocide of Yazidi in 2014.

**Shakti Langlois-Ortega**, a New York-based freelancer who

joined the OPC in September, posted a story on [Who.What.Why.org](#) where, as an intern, she is learning investigative reporting skills from OPC Past President **Allan Dodds Frank**. Frank called the story “a terrific round-up of a really critical and fast-moving subject: so-called militias and the threat to voting.” The piece, titled “Guns at Polls: The Right to Vote Meets the Right to Carry,” explores the proliferation of armed right-wing militias in 2020 and law enforcement concerns about voter intimidation in open-carry states. Langlois-Ortega cited troubling statistics from the FBI’s National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), which conducted 3.9 million firearms background checks nationwide in June alone, a 70 percent increase compared to the same month last year.



OPC member **Louise Boyle**, the New York-based senior climate correspondent for the U.K.’s Independent, had been covering environmental issues related to the election, most recently [on Nov. 4](#) with a story covering the official U.S. withdrawal from the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement that coincided with Election Day. Boyle wrote that President Trump had announced his intention to withdraw in June 2017, saying it was an end to “the draconian financial and economic burdens the agreement imposes on our country.” Boyle has written several election stories in recent weeks, including the candidates’ environmental platforms, fact checking statements during the presidential debates, and contributed to real-time coverage on election night.

**Madeleine Schwartz**, an OPC member and reporter for The New York Review, wrote a piece [on Oct. 30](#) entitled “Anywhere But Here” that describes a website she launched earlier this year called [The Ballot](#), which covers elections across the globe in places other than the U.S. The site has reporting from about 40 countries, she wrote, “many of which get little to no attention” in American media. Schwartz said many reporters talked about a shared global trend with the U.S., with “people seeing their democracy leached from them,” including people in Hong Kong, Iran, and Belarus.



OPC member **Roopa Gogineni**, a freelance photojournalist, photographed a series of documents and objects at the Atlanta History Center and the Georgia Archives to chronicle the centuries-long struggle for the right to vote in the state of Georgia. The images can be seen on a page of the Guardian website posted [on Nov. 1](#). Items include copies of the 15th Amendment prohibiting denial of the right to vote on the basis of “race or color, or previous condition of servitude,” a candidate slate from the 1896 “White Democratic Primary,” a pair of “citizenship guides” from the Ku Klux Klan and the NAACP, literacy tests used to suppress Black voters, and several other documents.



Several photos from OPC member **Tamir Kalifa** appeared in stories and slide shows covering early voting for The Washington Post. Kalifa’s images depict voters and organizers at a campus registration drive at Texas State University. An



[Oct. 26](#) piece covered states that did not loosen rules about voting by mail, and a slide show posted [on Oct. 25](#) included images from several contributors across the country in states where races were expected to be close.

OPC member **Amberin Zaman** wrote [on Oct. 16](#) for Al-Monitor about Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's accusations against European leaders, including France's Emmanuel Macron, who he said was pandering to anti-Muslim "fascists" to bolster his electoral changes ahead of presidential elections in 2022. He also said that anti-Muslim rhetoric was spreading across Europe "like the plague. Places of business, houses, places of worship and schools that belong to Muslims are attacked by racists and fascist groups almost every day." Zaman wrote that Marc Pierini, a former E.U. ambassador to Ankara and a fellow at Carnegie Europe, sees the brinksmanship and barbs between Turkey and its Western partners as a distraction from more systemic crises such as Turkey's mounting economic woes.



People Column November 2020

## New Resources

### RESOURCES

The U.N. and International Center for Journalists (ICFJ) published research that highlights journalism's role in combatting disinformation. In two separate reports, the researchers argue that ensuring journalism survives the COVID-19 pandemic is a mission-critical challenge for the U.N., governments and others trying to fight what they have termed the "disinfodemic." [Read more and download the reports here.](#)

The **Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)** has published a guide to Personal Protective Equipment for those covering civil unrest. The recommendations cover safety considerations, pros and cons of gear choices, a list of possible physical threats, and best practices. [Read the guide here.](#)

**PEN America** posted a tip sheet on talking to friends and family about misinformation. The PDF covers how to confront those who may unknowingly spread false information, but also believe it to be true. The tipsheet focuses on how to approach loved ones, but may be useful perspective for journalists in a similar situation with sources or colleagues. [Read more here.](#)

### GRANTS AND AWARDS

The **OPC Foundation** is calling for applications for this year's scholarship and fellowship awards. The awards will go to graduate and undergraduate students studying at American colleges and universities who aspire to become foreign correspondents. American students studying abroad are also eligible to apply.

The Foundation pays travel and living expenses for the fellowship winners to spend time in the foreign bureaus of leading news organizations. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of fellowships available at news organizations may be fewer than in previous years or the fellowship may be virtual. Students can still win a \$2,000-\$3,000 grant to pursue academic goals or funding their own overseas assignments. The deadline to apply is Dec. 1. [Read more about how to apply here.](#)

The **Journalists in Distress (JID) Network** of 18 organizations provides direct assistance to journalists and media workers. A list of the organizations and [links to their resources can be found here.](#)

## TRAINING AND PROGRAMS

**Chatham House**, **Luminate**, and the **ICFJ** collaborated on a mini-series podcast about "Future-Proofing Media Freedom." The series covers "the challenges facing public interest media in the 21st century and highlights how a range of actors are seeking to tackle them." Listen to two of the episodes via the following links: "[Misinformation Matters](#)," and "[An Increasingly Dangerous Profession?](#)"

## More Resources

- **First Draft** has been hosting a series of presentations on COVID-19 for journalists, and you can [browse the archives here.](#)
- **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

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](mailto:chad@opcofamerica.org) for credentials.

[OPC Resources Page](#)

## Press Freedom Update

by Chad Bouchard

The Washington Post published the **One Free Press Collation** list of 10 most urgent cases for the month of November. Jamal Khashoggi's murder in Saudi Arabia tops the list. Other cases include [Ahmed Hussein-Suale Divela's](#) 2019 murder in Ghana; [Dalia Marko's](#) death along with four other journalists in a deadly convoy attack in 2015 in South Sudan; [Natalia Estemirova's](#) 2009 kidnapping and murder in Russia; [Larry Que's](#) 2016 murder in the Philippines; [Nabil Hasan al-Quaety's](#) death this year in June in Yemen; as well as other cases in Guatemala, India, Mexico and Malta.

Press freedom advocates marked the **International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists** on Nov. 2 with events and statements. The day was first launched in 2011 on Nov. 23 to mark the anniversary of the 2009 Ampatuan massacre in the Philippines in which 57 people were murdered, including 32 journalists and media workers. The United Nations recognized the day officially in 2013. Free Press Unlimited [held](#) a debate on journalism in the Middle East, Reporters Without Borders [called](#) for the U.N. to appoint a special representative for the safety of journalists, and the International Press Institute (IPI) [released](#) a report indicating as many as 52 journalists have lost their lives due to their work since last October.

Several press freedom groups condemned the arrest of Radio Television Hong Kong producer **Choy Yuk-ling** by the Hong Kong police on Nov. 3. She was charged with violating Hong Kong's Road Traffic Ordinance after searching a database of government vehicles as part of an investigation into police violence against pro-democracy protesters on July 21 last year. In a statement, the IPI's Scott Griffen [called](#) Yuk-ling's arrest "a further sign that Hong Kong, under China's direction, is extending its crackdown on press freedom." Steven Butler, the Asia program coordinator for the Committee to Protect Journalists, [said](#) the move was "an absurdly disproportionate action that amounts to an assault on press freedom."



**10 Most Urgent List for November 2020**  
This month's list of the 10 most pressing cases of journalists under attack, as identified by the One Free Press Coalition, focuses on murdered journalists whose cases have not been brought to justice. They include:

1. **Jamal Khashoggi (Saudi Arabia):** High-profile murder case seeking answers from U.S. intelligence officials.
2. **Ahmed Hussein-Suale Divela (Ghana):** No movement to date in bringing 2019 murder to justice.
3. **Dalia Marko (South Sudan):** Suspects' identities remain unclear in deadly convoy attack.
4. **Natalia Estemirova (Russia):** No justice in the decade since journalist's kidnapping and murder.
5. **Larry Que (Philippines):** Journalist's wife continues seeking justice and answers for his murder.
6. **Nabil Hasan al-Quaety (Yemen):** Secessionist conflict threatens justice in journalist's murder.
7. **Daniilo López (Guatemala):** Justice stalled in trial of alleged mastermind behind journalist's murder.
8. **Shujat Bukhari (India):** Four suspects, no charges in case of murdered journalist.
9. **Norma Sarabia Garza (Mexico):** Case idling 1 1/2 years after journalist killed outside her home.
10. **Daphne Caruana Galizia (Malta):** Independent investigation needed into investigative journalist's death.

ONE FREE PRESS COALITION

The Washington Post  
**PRESS FREEDOM PARTNERSHIP**

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.  
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