



Overseas Press Club  
*of America*

## Bulletin March 11, 2021

Greetings!

Good news! Your club has selected 92 freelance journalists who will each receive \$1,000 in coming days to help them cope with financial distress from the pandemic. A very big thank you goes to the Ford Foundation, which made this third round of OPC micro-grants possible, and the grant committee of Azmat Khan, Bill Holstein and Sandra Stevenson, who quickly and smoothly systematized our grant-giving process. Thanks also to the 14 judges, including those from the Ida B. Wells Society for Investigative Reporting and Women Photograph, who picked the winners from 307 applications. The grantees, more than half of whom are female, hail from 40 countries and comprise a wide range of ethnicities and races. There may be a light at the end of the pandemic tunnel, but we know from the applicants that the level of financial trauma is severe and not about to end soon.



We've been busy planning some exciting programs for you. One I'm especially looking forward to: a virtual "cocktails and conversation" with Stephen B. Shepard, who will discuss his latest book, *Second Thoughts: On Family, Friendship, Faith and Writers*. You may know Steve from his time as editor-in-chief of BusinessWeek, or as the founding dean of the City University of New York graduate journalism school, or perhaps as the co-founder of the Knight-Bagehot Fellowships at Columbia University. I know

him as my boss of 20 years at BusinessWeek, where he was, hands-down, the best manager I ever had. So I'm honored to moderate this event on Thursday, April 1, at 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

On March 18 we will have a panel of experts discussing Taiwan's future. "Showdown Taiwan: The U.S. and China Face a Crucial Confrontation Over the Democratically Governed Island" promises to be a fascinating evening with panelists from the Institute for National Defense and Security Research in Taiwan, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and the Atlantic Council's Asia Security Initiative. It will take place at 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

More details and registration buttons for both programs are below.

Please also remember to tune in as the Overseas Press Club Foundation holds its annual OPC Foundation Scholar Awards program on April 8. The online event will celebrate the 17 journalists chosen by the foundation's judges, as well as a panel of past winners who will discuss how the foundation has helped their careers. Associated Press legend and OPC member Edie Lederer will moderate.

An informal steering committee of OPC members who are "China hands" has begun planning an event on press freedoms in China. The program will cover on-the-ground conditions, reporting while under surveillance and visa obstacles, among other topics. It occurred to me how relevant this is, even for American journalists. Witness Andrea Sahouri, the Des Moines (Iowa) Register reporter who was arrested while covering a racial justice protest last year. While she was acquitted on Wednesday of two criminal charges of failing to disperse and interfering with official acts, she faced up to 30 days in jail if she'd been found guilty for doing her job – as a reporter. Even though she'd identified herself as a journalist, she was pepper-sprayed, restrained with zip ties, arrested and prosecuted. So if you think what happens in China could never happen here, think again.

This week's Bulletin is chock full of news on what some of your fellow journalists have been up to and resources to help you do your job better.

Happy reading!  
Paula Dwyer  
OPC President



## Overseas Press Club Distributes Micro-Grants to Freelancers Around the World

The Overseas Press Club of America announced today that it has begun distributing 92 micro-grants of \$1,000 each to freelance journalists around the world. This round of financial aid, the third the club has initiated in the past year, was made possible by a generous grant from the Ford Foundation.

The club conducted widespread outreach to dozens of diverse journalism organizations and communities, such as the Ida B. Wells Society, the National Association of Black Journalists, Women Photograph, Journalists in Distress and A Culture of Safety (the ACOS alliance), in order to inform freelancers of the grants' availability. It received 307 applications from 46 countries and territories, including many of the worst-ranked on the Press Freedom Index.

“What we continue to find is that the entire ecosystem of freelancers, which major U.S. news organizations rely on, is at risk of being wiped out,” said OPC President Paula Dwyer. “The Ford Foundation’s grant has been a blessing to those we were able to help. We need to sustain those folks until the pandemic eases and they can get back to work.”

“We are proud to support the Overseas Press Club of America and freelance journalists whose livelihoods have been impacted by COVID-19 and the economic crisis,” said Juliet Mureriwa, program officer in the Office of the President of the Ford Foundation. “Journalism is central to our understanding of the world at large and supporting a robust, diverse network of international reporters is needed now more than ever.”

[Read the Full Press Release](#)



## In Case You Missed It: Dateline Magazine

If you haven't gotten a chance yet, please take a moment to flip through our digital Dateline magazine to honor last year's OPC Award winners for work they did in 2019. This issue includes links to slideshows of photography award winners' work, and links to the Zoom conversations head judges had with the winners of individual awards.



[Read Dateline Magazine](#)

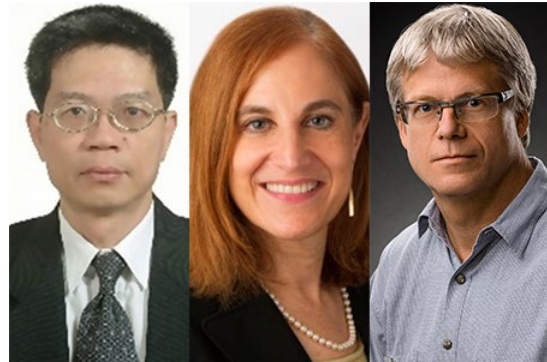
## Upcoming OPC Events

**For all of the programs below, RSVPs are essential. Register now to receive login credentials before the program.**

## March 18: Showdown Taiwan – The United States and China Face a Crucial Confrontation Over the Democratically Governed Island

**Time:** 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time, (7:00 a.m. Taiwan time on March 19)

The government of Xi Jinping is increasing military and other pressures on Taiwan in an apparent attempt to force it to submit to the mainland's control. Chinese military aircraft including bombers are regularly testing Taiwan's air defenses and Beijing's global pressure campaign has kept Taiwan out of the World Health Organization and other important international forums.



The new administration of President Joseph Biden has signaled strong support for Taiwan, but it remains to be seen how it will conduct military, diplomatic and economic exchanges with Taiwan that risk provoking strong responses from Beijing. Will it maintain a policy of "strategic ambiguity" regarding its commitment to Taiwan's defense? Does it still possess the military power to successfully defend Taiwan in view of China's strengthened military and technology sectors?

The panel will feature:

**Si-Fu Ou**, Director, Division of Chinese Politics, Military and Warfighting Concepts, Taiwan's Institute for National Defense and Security Research. (Speaking from Taiwan.)

**Bonnie Glaser**, Director of the China Power Project and a Senior Adviser for Asia at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

**Dexter "Tiff" Roberts**, who spent 23 years in Beijing for BusinessWeek magazine and is the author of *The Myth of Chinese Capitalism*. He is a Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council's Asia Security Initiative and is based at the Mansfield Center in Montana.

Moderating will be **William J. Holstein**, past OPC president who was based in Hong Kong and Beijing.

[RSVP Now](#)



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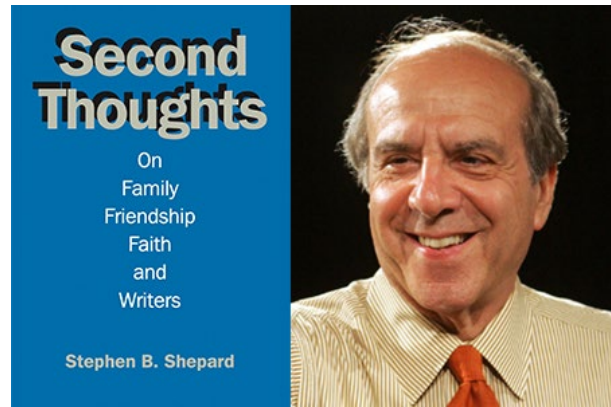
## April 1: Second Thoughts – On Family, Friendship, Faith and Writers – An OPC Chat with Stephen B.

## Shepard

**Time:** 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time

**Location:** Zoom video conferencing app.

Join the OPC for virtual cocktails and conversation with author and journalist **Stephen B. Shepard** to discuss his book, *Second Thoughts: On Family, Friendship, Faith and Writers*. Shepard was editor-in-chief



of BusinessWeek, the founding dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at the City University of New York, a senior editor at Newsweek, and co-founder of the Knight-Bagehot Fellowships at Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism.

In writing the book, Shepard said he hoped to gain new understanding about the family of his boyhood; greater meaning about today's journalism as it copes with profound change; new thoughts about the Jewishness he once rejected; renewed pleasure in re-reading fiction that matters; and deep understanding of male friendship.

In the chapter titled "The New World of Journalism," Shepard describes how he and other traditional journalists took pride in acting as "trustworthy gatekeepers," only to find themselves criticized in the digital revolution as being biased elitists. "We were dethroned, like some ancient monarch." As social media grew, roughly half of all traditional journalists lost their jobs.

Shepard believes technological change must be kept in perspective. "The new technologies, as dazzling as they seem, are but a means to an overriding end. And that end is journalism." In an era of media fragmentation, he stresses that in-depth reporting, community engagement and analysis are desperately needed. "I believe, in the smithy of my soul, that even if the medium ultimately changes – and it will – the intellectual need, the human need, for thoughtful journalism will never, ever go away."

OPC President **Paula Dwyer** will lead the discussion.

RSVP Now



## April 8: Annual OPC Foundation Scholar Awards



**Time:** 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time

**Place:** Online via Zoom

The Overseas Press Club Foundation has announced that this year's 30th Annual OPC Foundation Scholar Awards will be held online on April 8. The event will include an awards presentation to celebrate the 17 journalists chosen by the Foundation's judges and will feature a panel of past OPC Foundation winners who will discuss their own careers and how the Foundation helped them. Associated Press legend and OPC member **Edie Lederer** will moderate. Panelists will include **Portia Crowe**, a freelancer based in Paris; **Dake Kang** of The Associated Press in Beijing; and **Jacob Kushner**, a freelancer based in Nairobi. Please watch for OPC event reminders and your next Bulletin for information on how to RSVP.

[RSVP Now](#)



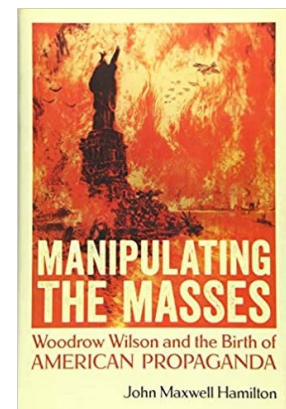
## April 16: Book Night - Manipulating the Masses: Woodrow Wilson and the Birth of American Propaganda

**Time:** 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time

**Location:** Zoom video conferencing app.

Please join us for a Book Night with author and OPC member **John Maxwell Hamilton** about his new book: *Manipulating the Masses: Woodrow Wilson and the Birth of American Propaganda*. OPC Past President **Allan Dodds Frank** will moderate the discussion.

Hamilton has produced a compelling investigation that



documents how the American government under President Woodrow Wilson a century ago laid out the foundations for the government to build a propaganda machine designed to mislead the public. Using World War I as the rationale for establishing the "Committee on Public Information" under muckraker George Creel, the Wilson Administration wrote a propaganda playbook that foreshadowed what future administrations would do to manipulate public opinion. In Hamilton's view, these perversions of the truth represent a persistent threat to democracy. His story also has startling revelations about the extent to which the press allowed itself to be bend to Wilson's war aims.

RSVP Now

## Welcome New Member

### Annelise Mecca

Freelance  
Photojournalist and Documentary Filmmaker  
New York  
Active Resident, Young (30-34)

## People by Chad Bouchard

***We appreciate all member news tips and updates! Please send us your personal anecdotes, photos, and links to published pieces to [info@opcofamerica.org](mailto:info@opcofamerica.org), and we will publish them on our People column pages on the OPC website and share with members here in the Bulletin. You can also share those stories directly with members on our [OPC Connect](#) group on Facebook, or tweet us [@opcofamerica](#).***

### SCHOLARS

**Meena Venkataramanan**, winner of an OPC Foundation award this year, has been [named](#) a member of the 2021 class of the Gates Cambridge Scholarship. She is one of 24 U.S. students to receive full funding for graduate studies at the University of Cambridge. The scholarship website says that criteria for selected students includes a demonstration of "outstanding intellectual ability," "reasons for choice of course," "a commitment to improving the lives of others," "and leadership potential."



**Jimin Kang**, also one of this year's foundation award recipients, was one of three [recipients](#) of a Sachs

Scholarship this year, one of Princeton University's highest awards. The award is given to students to pursue postgraduate education. According to the Daily Princetonian, Kang plans to pursue two master's degrees at University of Oxford's Worcester College in comparative literature and critical translation as well as environmental studies.



**Yi-Ling Liu**, the 2017 winner of the Fritz Beebe Fellowship, landed an extensive piece for Wired magazine [on March 9](#) about Chinese science fiction writer Chen Qiufan, who has risen to a level of cultural status she describes as oracular. She said he has now joined the ranks of many science fiction writers in China whose work has garnered acclaim in the tech industry in recent years.



**Kimon de Greef**, the 2020 winner of the David R. Schweisberg Scholarship, wrote about the effects of the pandemic on the underground realm of finch smuggling and competitions for a [March 10 piece](#) for Guernica magazine. He wrote about his reporting on the same story for his winning OPC Foundation essay and spoke about it during the Scholar Luncheon in 2020.



## UPDATES

Fanne Foxe, who co-wrote an autobiographical book with OPC member **Yvonne Dunleavy**, died [on Feb. 10](#) at the age of 84. Foxe, a stripper dubbed the "Argentine Firecracker," became the center of one of the biggest sex scandals of the 1970s when she jumped from a limousine owned by Arkansas Representative Wilbur D. Mills into the Tidal Basin in Washington, DC. Foxe and Dunleavy co-write a book about the affair, titled *The Stripper and the Congressman*, which has been frequently quoted in Foxe's obituaries.

OPC Governor **Derek Kravitz** is slated to speak on an online panel [on March 18](#) about the fight for open government and access to public records. The program, hosted by the News Leaders Association and the First Amendment Coalition, will cover added challenges to public access during the pandemic, and journalists' efforts to break through the barriers. Other speakers include Nancy Ancrum of the Miami Herald, Andrea Gallo of The Advocate in Baton Rouge, and First Amendment Coalition Executive Director David Snyder. Kravitz is a contributing reporter for ProPublica and works on data and FOIA projects for the Brown Institute. The panel gets underway at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Time.





The answer to a question from OPC member **Edith Lederer**, chief correspondent at the U.N. for The Associated Press, was cited widely in coverage of the arrest of AP journalist Thein Zaw in Myanmar. Lederer [on March 4](#) asked Stephane Dujarric, spokesperson for the U.N. Secretary General, for comment on the arrests of Zaw and anti-coup protesters. A video taken at the time shows Zaw photographing security forces arresting protesters before being placed in a chokehold and was arrested himself. Dujarric answered that the “video is extremely disturbing to anyone who sees it,” and said that harassment, arrests and physical attacks on journalists in Myanmar “must cease” and those who have been detained should be freed.



Meanwhile **Barbie Latza Nadeau**, OPC member and correspondent-at-large for The Daily Beast, has also been covering unrest in Myanmar and the military junta’s crackdown on free expression. She wrote [on March 10](#) that at least two Myanmar poets, Myint Myint Zin and K Za Win, had been shot and killed and dozens more poets and artists arrested for protesting the Feb. 1 coup. “The targeting of poets in Myanmar predates the recent military coup thanks to laws that control public speech,” Latza Nadeau wrote.



OPC member **Ryan Delaney**, education reporter for St. Louis Public Radio, has been covering the pandemic’s impact on students and families, including a feature [in late February](#) about how a year of online classes is starting to drag down students’ grades and “drain their love of school.” He wrote that school administrators around the country are reporting a sharp increase in the number of students failing classes, and many students have stopped logging on altogether.

**Dexter Filkins**, New Yorker writer and winner of multiple OPC awards, was a guest on Fresh Air with Terry Gross [on March 4](#) to discuss the status of the war in Afghanistan as the Biden administration grapples with how to handle the Trump deal to withdraw troops by May 1. Filkins won the 2004 Hal Boyle Award and the 2005 Ed Cunningham Award for reporting in Iraq, and the 2008 Cornelius Ryan Award for his book *The Forever War*.

People Column March 11, 2021

## New Resources

### RESOURCES

**The Coalition Against Online Violence** launched the Online Violence Response Hub on March 8 to mark International Women’s Day. The project is a resource center for women journalists to find updated information on online abuse, including resources for psychosocial trauma response and digital safety guides.

The hub is a collaboration between the International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF) with the International Center for Journalists (ICFJ). [Read more here.](#)

## TRAINING AND PROGRAMS

On March 22 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Greenwich Mean Time, the London Freelance Branch of the UK-based **National Union of Journalists (NIJ)** is hosting a webinar on "Working Safely Through the Pandemic," in collaboration with the union's health and safety committee. The program will cover potential changes ahead for those shifting to partial office hours, as well as ways for freelancers to secure support from employers and clients. [Read more here.](#)

On April 8 at 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time, the **George Polk Awards** will host a free webinar with award winners who provided notable reporting during the pandemic. Speakers will include David Culver of CNN, Helen Branswell of medical news site STAT, Ed Yong of The Atlantic, and author Laurie Garrett as moderator. [Read more and register here.](#)

On March 12 at 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time, the **Foreign Press Association (FPA)** will host a conversation with attorney Frank Romano on the legal background consequences for Israeli and Palestinian leaders in a case of alleged war crimes now wending its way through the International Criminal Court. [Read more and register here.](#)

The **FPA** has also posted an interview with Bellingcat founder Eliot Higgins on his open-source investigative journalism platform that has uncovered details of the 2018 chemical attack in Syria and the shooting down of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17. [Watch the program with FPA President and OPC member and Ian Williams here.](#)

## GRANTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The **Kurt Schork Memorial Fund** is calling for applications and nominations for its awards to honor the work of international freelance journalists and local reporters. The awards include three categories, including Local Reporter, Freelance and News Fixer. The deadline for entries in all three categories is midnight Greenwich Mean Time on May 31. [Read more and submit entries here.](#)

The **Justice for Journalists Foundation (JFJ)** is calling for applications for grants to support investigations into violent crimes against journalists, freelancers and bloggers. Each grant will fund up to \$50,000 for projects that do not require any foreign travel. Proposals can be in English or Russian. The deadline to apply is March 14. [Read more and apply here.](#)

The **Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting** is seeking applications from journalists to take part in Connected Coastlines, a nationwide climate reporting initiative in U.S. coastal states. Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis, and the center will give priority to proposals that can be completed, including publication, in 1 to 4 months. [Read more and apply here.](#)

## 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

