

Reporting in Mexico, a Dangerous Assignment: Murder and Impunity against the Press

Biographies

CESAR RENÉ BLANCO VILLALÓN, *Zeta*

Cesar René Blanco Villalón is the co-director of the weekly paper *Zeta* in Tijuana. Founded in 1980 by his late father Jesus Blancornelas, who survived an assassination attempt in 1997, *Zeta* is one of the only publications to regularly run investigations on organized crime, drug trafficking, and corruption in Mexico's northern states, where self-censorship is rampant. He has been with *Zeta* since 1986, and he was part of the first survey team for the 1988 presidential elections. Blanco Villalón worked on a photography team with Miguel Cervantes, Vladimir Téllez, and his brother Ramón Blanco during the earliest phases of photojournalism in Tijuana. Prior to joining the *Zeta* editorial board, in 2004, Blanco Villalón served as its photography editor. He assumed his current position in 2006. His publications include *Oye Como Va: Recuento del Rock Tijuanaense* (1999), *El Cártel* (2002), *Horas Extras* (2003), and *Letras de Luz: 11 fotografías Tijuanaenses* (2006). He is a member of the Tijuana Journalism Association, recipient of the State Journalism Award, and recipient of the José Inés Martínez Award for Photojournalism. Blanco Villalón and *Zeta* Co-Editor Adela Navarro Bello, honored by the CPJ with its 2007 International Press Freedom Awards, have teamed up to follow in Blancornelas' steps in defending the public's right to a free press. Blanco Villalón studied communications at the Universidad Iboamericana and photography at Southwestern College.

DOLIA ESTÉVEZ, *Poder*

Dolia Estévez is a Senior Mexico Correspondent and foreign affairs analyst in Washington, D.C. Since 2005, she has been a regular contributor for *Poder y Negocios*, a political columnist for *El Semanario* and a commentator for *Radio Nederland Internacional*. Previously she was the Washington correspondent for *El Financiero* and *Radio Monitor*. She is a co-author of the book series *Mexico en el Mundo* (Editorial Planeta, Mexico), which includes chapters on journalism, the implications of the Bush Administration's preemptive strike in Iraq, and the historical role of the U.S. in Mexico's presidential successions. She has lectured at public and private institutions in Mexico and the United States on economics, finance, and diplomacy and on the challenges of covering immigration at workshops sponsored by the International Center for Journalists. She is an accredited foreign correspondent with the Department of State, Capitol Hill and the Foreign Press Center, and is a member of Mexico's Council on Foreign Relations.

CRAIG A. KELLY, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs

Craig Kelly was the Ambassador to Chile from 2004 to 2007. He served as the Executive Assistant to Secretary of State Colin Powell from March 2001 to June 2004. Before that, he served for 2 years as the Executive Assistant to Thomas Pickering, who was then the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs. Ambassador Kelly has served in a variety of overseas posts, including Bogota, Rome and Paris. In

Washington he has served in the Western Hemisphere and European Bureaus as well as on the National Security Council. He has a Ph.D. in Romance Languages and European History from the University of California-Los Angeles, and speaks Italian, Spanish, French and Portuguese. He holds a degree from the Ecole Nationale d'Administration in Paris and attended the National War College in Washington. Kelly was a Fulbright Scholar in Italy.

LEONARDO KOURCHENKO, Televisa

Leonardo Kourchenko is the Vice President of International News for Televisa's News Division. He started his career in Televisa, Mexico's leading television network, in 1988 as the General Coordinator for the program *Este Domingo*. Over past two decades he has been Bureau Chief and Correspondent for Televisa's ECO'S News System in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and London; General Director and Anchor for *Contrapunto* talk show; Bureau Chief and Correspondent for ECO'S News System in Washington D.C.; and Vice President of culture, science, technology and show business in Mexico City. He has also been radio host for *En la Radio... con Leonardo Kourchenko*; anchor of an evening news program; and has produced and anchored special programs for major events such as the U.S. presidential elections, *The Demise of Princess Diane*, *Mother Theresa's Funeral*, the 9/11 terrorists attacks, the Iraq War and Pope John Paul's funeral in Rome. Kourchenko has interviewed numerous world leaders, including Boris Yeltsin, Francois Mitterrand, Yasser Arafat, Jose Maria Aznar, Lec Walesa, George W. Bush, Hugo Chavez, Ricardo Lagos, and Felipe Calderón. He received his B.A. in journalism from Mexico's Iberoamerican University.

CARLOS LAURÍA, Committee to Protect Journalists

Carlos Lauría is the Senior Americas Coordinator for the Committee to Protect Journalists. Originally from Buenos Aires, Argentina, Lauría began his journalistic career as a contributor to the regional newspaper *Diario La Unión*, where he was promoted to managing editor. In 1991, he began working at *Playboy Magazine Argentina* where he also became managing editor. In 1994, Lauría settled in New York City as the chief correspondent at the U.S. bureau for the largest magazine publisher in Argentina, Editorial *Perfil*. In this position, he wrote and edited hundreds of stories that were published in the various magazines owned by the company, particularly *Noticias*, the world's largest Spanish-language newsmagazine. He has been invited to speak about the current crisis in Argentina by the American Jewish Committee (June 2002) and to discuss developments in the murder of photographer José Luis Cabezas, who worked for *Noticias*, by the Freedom Forum (April 1997). He is a journalism graduate of Universidad Católica Argentina.

JORGE MORALES BORBÓN, *Frontera* and *La Crónica*

Jorge Morales is the Assistant Editor for *Frontera* in Tijuana and *La Crónica* in Mexicali, Baja California. He has worked for Periódicos Healy for 11 years, starting as a reporter for *El Imparcial* in Sonora. At Periódicos Healy he has been a correspondent and editor on the Nogales border region; the Mexico Office Editor; and the Assistant Editor of *El Imparcial*. At *El Imparcial* on April 2, 2005, Alfredo Jiménez Mota, a crime reporter under his supervision, disappeared from his home. Jiménez has been missing ever since and is feared dead. At the time of his disappearance, he was investigating drug-trafficking families in the region. After his disappearance, *El Imparcial* announced it would no longer investigate drug trafficking and organized crime. Jorge Morales has been recognized for his investigative reporting, having earned the National Award for Journalism in 2003 and 2004; the Award for Journalistic Excellence from the Interamerican Press Society in 2003 and 2005; and the second place prize for Best Investigation about Corruption in Latin America from the Instituto de Prensa y Sociedad (IPYS) and Transparency International in 2005. Morales studied communications at the Universidad de Sonora and obtained a degree from the Tecnológico de Monterrey. He is currently working on an M.A. in administration with an emphasis in marketing.

DANIEL ROSAS, *El Mañana*

Daniel Rosas is the Managing Editor for *El Mañana* newspaper in Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas. Rosas began his career in journalism in 1992 coordinating small projects and covering special reports. Since then, he has served as the Editor for *El Occidental*, managed several editorial boards and led efforts to improve the online version of *El Mañana*. From July to December 2007, Rosas served as a fellow at Mexico's Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education (ITESM), where he presented seminars for up-and-coming journalists. In 2005, Rosas accepted a fellowship at the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City and in 2004 worked with editors from *USA Today*, the *Washington Post* and the *Dallas Morning News* while at the Poynter Institute in Florida. The Department of State invited Rosas to cover Mexico-U.S. relations while touring Washington, D.C., Chicago and Austin in 2005. Throughout his press career, Rosas has participated and organized numerous journalism panels in Peru, Mexico and in the United States. He received an Applied Science Degree with a Marketing Specialization from Laredo Community College in 1996.

ARTURO SARUKHAN, Mexican Ambassador to the United States

The grandson of refugees in Mexico, Ambassador Arturo Sarukhan is a career diplomat who joined the Mexican Foreign Service in 1993, and currently serves as Mexico's Ambassador to the U.S. He was posted to the Mexican Embassy in the United States as a junior diplomat, served as Chief of Staff to the Ambassador, and was the head of the counternarcotics office at the Embassy. In 2000 he became Chief of Policy Planning at the Foreign Ministry and was appointed by the President as Mexican Consul General to New York City in 2003. He resigned from this post and took a leave of absence from the Foreign Service in 2006 to join Felipe Calderón's presidential campaign as a foreign policy advisor and international spokesperson and became the Coordinator for Foreign Affairs in the Transition Team. In November of 2006 he received the rank of Ambassador and in February of 2007 was appointed Mexican Ambassador to the United States. Ambassador Sarukhan is active in various organizations such as the Mexican Council on Foreign Affairs, the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London and the Philharmonic Orchestra of the Americas. He has taught in various universities and published articles on issues related to foreign policy in a variety of journals and magazines. He holds a B.A. in International Relations from *El Colegio de México* and an M.A. in US Foreign Policy from the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) at Johns Hopkins where he was a Fulbright Scholar and Ford Foundation Fellow.

JOEL SIMON, Committee to Protect Journalists

Joel Simon is the Executive Director of the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). Prior to joining CPJ as the Americas Program Coordinator in 1997, and then the Deputy Director in 2000, he worked as a journalist in California and Latin America. He began his career as a writer and photographer based in Central America, where he focused on Guatemala's civil war. Simon moved to Mexico City in 1989 and worked as an associate editor for Pacific News Service and as a freelance writer and photographer for a number of U.S. publications. In Mexico, Simon covered immigration, environmental issues, and the debate over the North American Free Trade Agreement. From 1991 to 1994, Simon was based in San Francisco and worked as a contributing editor to the *SF Weekly*. He returned to Mexico in 1994 to report on the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas as a freelance correspondent for the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Over the next three years, he covered the peso devaluation and resulting political upheaval in Mexico while making several reporting trips to Cuba. Simon's book on Mexico's environmental crisis, *Endangered Mexico: An Environment on the Edge*, was published by Sierra Club Books in 1997. At CPJ he has participated in missions to Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Yugoslavia, Tajikistan, Mexico, Colombia, and the Gambia. He has written widely on press issues, including freedom of the press and international law, for *Columbia Journalism Review*, *Slate*, *Newsday*, and others. He holds a M.A. in Latin American Studies from Stanford University.