

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **JANE MAYER WINS THE 2020 NELLIE BLY AWARD FOR INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING**

ALBANY – Jane Mayer, Chief Washington Correspondent for *The New Yorker* and author of the New York Times bestseller *Dark Money: The Hidden History of the Billionaires Behind the Rise of the Radical Right*, has been selected as The Museum of Political Corruption’s 2020 winner of the Nellie Bly Award for Investigative Reporting. Official announcement will be made on May 5<sup>th</sup> (in honor of Nellie Bly’s birthday) at 10 am on the Museum’s website.

“I am honored and delighted to receive this award, and to have my name associated with one of my heroes, Nellie Bly. Her trailblazing, fearless spirit as well as her commitment to exposing injustice and corruption have inspired countless reporters including myself,” said Mayer.

“It’s especially meaningful to me because my grandfather, the historian Allan Nevins, worked as a young man at Bly’s newspaper, the New York World. Further, my great-grandmother, Anna Steese Richardson, editor of Ladies Home Companion was like Bly, a pioneering female journalist in New York City, and would have appreciated this tribute as much as anyone. It is no longer a novelty for women to become journalists today, but their voices, and those of all reporters who hold the powerful accountable, have never been needed more.”

Prior “Nellie” recipients include *New York Times* reporters Susanne Craig, and the investigative team of Megan Twohey and Jodie Kantor. Last year’s award went to Jim Heaney, of *Investigative Post*, for his reporting on the Buffalo Billion scandal. Judges for the 2020 Nellie Bly Award included Karol Kamin, Chair, Frank Anechiarico, Rex Smith, Susan Arbetter, Meave Tooher, Susan Weber, and Philip Plotch.

“Jane Mayer’s tough-minded and honest journalism is a model for investigative reporters everywhere,” said Rex Smith, Editor-at-Large for the Albany Times Union and a member of the selection committee. “Her reporting has, over the years, given American readers information vital to the performance of their role as citizens.”

Mayer has been the recipient of numerous honors including the George Polk Prize, the John Chancellor Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Goldsmith Book Prize; the Edward Weintal Prize, the Ridenhour Prize, two Helen Bernstein Book Awards for Excellence in Journalism, the J. Anthony Lukas Prize, the Sidney Hillman Prize, the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award, the James Aronson Award for social justice journalism, the Toner Prize for political reporting, the I. F. Stone Medal for Journalistic Independence, and, most recently, the Frances Perkins Prize for Courage.

Established in 2017 and bestowed annually by The Museum of Political Corruption, the Nellie Bly Award recognizes excellence in investigative reporting, particularly in the area of corruption. It is named for the intrepid investigative reporter Nellie Bly (1864-1922, born Elizabeth Cochran Seaman). While best known for her 1887 expose on abused mentally ill patients at Blackwell's Island, the Nellie Bly Award was particularly inspired by her 1888 undercover journey to Albany, where she demonstrated it was possible to "buy" a vote in the New York State Legislature for \$1,250. Bly never paid the sum (she wrote about her experience in an article for her paper, Pulitzer's *New York World*), but the Museum has set the cash prize for the award at \$1,250.

The Museum of Political Corruption was chartered in 2015 by the New York State Board of Regents. It is an Albany, NY-based, nonprofit, nonpartisan institution. Together with its educational outreach wing, The Center for Ethical Governance, the MPC is committed to educating and empowering the public by offering a better understanding of political corruption and encouraging solutions that promote ethics reform and honest governance.

More information about the MPC and its Center for Ethical Governance can be found at [www.museumofpoliticalcorruption.org](http://www.museumofpoliticalcorruption.org).

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SCHEDULE AN INTERVIEW:**

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