



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

School of Public Policy and Global Affairs

Institute of Asian Research



CENTRE FOR
KOREAN RESEARCH

THE CENTRE FOR KOREAN RESEARCH PROUDLY PRESENTS

**WITNESSING GWANGJU:
LEARNING FROM THE PAST TO INFORM THE PRESENT**

WITNESSING
GWANGJU

A MEMOIR

Paul Courtright



BY DR. PAUL COURTRIGHT

FRIDAY OCTOBER 16, 2020

5PM-6PM (PDT)

ZOOM LINK WILL BE SENT TO REGISTRANTS





- **How to register**

Please fill out a form here by October 14

<https://ckr.iar.ubc.ca/friday-october-16-2020/>

The Zoom link will be sent to registrants' emails

- **Dr. Paul Courtright**

Paul Courtright is a professor (adjunct) at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, founder and current Chair of the Board for the Kilimanjaro Centre for Community Ophthalmology (www.kcco.net) and serves as the Trachoma Technical Lead for Sightsavers. He grew up in the US, Iran, Taiwan, and Australia and, after university, served in the Peace Corps in South Korea. He completed his Masters (Johns Hopkins Univ) and Doctorate (UC Berkeley) in Public Health focusing on epidemiology and eye diseases. He was an Assistant Professor in the Department of Ophthalmology at the University of British Columbia for 7 years, establishing and managing the BC Centre for Epidemiologic & International Ophthalmology. For over 20 years he lived and worked in Egypt, Ethiopia, Malawi, South Africa, and Tanzania establishing, with his wife, the KCCO in Moshi, Tanzania. He has published over 250 scientific articles and has received awards from the American Academy of Ophthalmology, the Premio Vision Mundi de Lucha Contra la Ceguera, and the Antonio Champalimaud Vision Award. In 2020 he published *Witnessing Gwangju*, the first memoir by a foreigner who witnessed the Gwangju Uprising in South Korea in May 1980. He is married with two sons and currently lives in San Diego.

- **Talk Summary**

When I witnessed the weeklong uprising in Gwangju in May 1980, I had no idea that the event would become the foundation for democratic change in South Korea. I recently published my memoir, *Witnessing Gwangju* (the Korean translation is entitled 푸른 눈의 증인), based upon extensive notes I took at the time. During my talk I will cover three topics, illustrating examples from the Uprising in 1980 and how they also resonate today: leaving out the unheard minimizes the full nature of events, conflict is always more interesting than cooperation, and how a false narrative can persist long into the future.