



THE FROMM INSTITUTE  
FOR LIFELONG LEARNING  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

# FROMM FOCUS

The Newsletter of the Fromm Institute

Issue #8 • Nov. 1, 2021

## THANK YOU – SEE YOU SOON

Wasn't it just a short time ago when we started the online Fall Session? Have eight weeks really passed by this quickly? Can you believe how far we've come and how much we've all learned? As I write this message to you, I cannot help thinking that time really did fly this session. The good news is that together we finished another great session of learning and re-learning many great lessons.

Thank you to our Fall faculty for embarking on their own learning to be able to teach us clearly online. Thank you to our staff for all their hard work and support. Most importantly, thank you to all our Fromm students for joining us and for your patience as we dealt with many of the tricks played on us by online ghouls. Because of all of you, we have once again reached the end of a session with a sense of accomplishment as well as more of that magnificent curiosity compelling us to look forward to the upcoming academic horizon promising even more enlightenment and community including many in-person classes back on USF's campus in Fromm Hall.

On behalf of Carla, Scott, Herbert, Dawa and Alfredo, please stay safe during our Winter break and enjoy all your Winter holidays. We all look forward to seeing you again in the Winter Session.

- *Derek Leighnor, Executive Director*

### HOLIDAY SESSION 2021

This year the Fromm Institute Holiday Session will take place on **Tuesday** and **Wednesday, December 14 & 15** via Zoom. Enrollment is available now at <https://fromm.gatherlearning.com>.

### WINTER SESSION 2022

Catalogs will be emailed and online enrollment will begin on **November 29** – the Monday after Thanksgiving. Winter Session begins on **Monday, January 10, 2022** and runs through **March 10**.

### GIVING

As 2021 comes to a close, please consider a contribution to our annual fundraising campaign, join the Alfred and Hanna Fromm Legacy Society, or simply remember us on Giving Tuesday (**November 30, 2021**). To donate to the Fromm Institute or to ensure our future through your estate plan, call us at **415-422-6805**, or visit <https://fromminstitute.org/giving> and click on the 'DONATE NOW' box at the top of the page. Thank you for your continued generosity.

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## COLIN POWELL'S NARRATIVE

*By Laverne Simon*

*"I see these things,  
Yet am I slave,  
When banner's flaunt and bugles blow,  
Content to fill a soldier's grave,  
For reasons I will never know."*

*By Colonel C.T. Lanham*

*Read at Fort Benning Georgia, by Colin Powell At His First Army Training Post (Boot Camp)*

Colin Powell is the embodiment of the American Dream. He was born in Harlem to immigrant parents from Jamaica. He knew the rough life of the streets of Harlem. He overcame a very average start school. He was a C student. He, then, joined the army and the rest is history. Colin Powell never attended an ivy league school and graduated from the City College of New York. He was a firm believer in public education. A department at City College of New York is named after him. He believed people of color could get a superior education from public institutions and many of his classmates that graduated from City College went on in life to hold prominent positions.



His is a story of a black kid of no early promise, from an immigrant family of limited means who was raised in the South Bronx in New York and somehow rose to become the National Security Advisor to the President of the United States and then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It is a story of hard work, luck, and occasional rough times. His is a story of faith in himself and faith in America. Above all it is a story of love of family, friends, the Army and of his country. A story that could have only happened in America.

He began his military career teaching ROTC at The City College of New York. The enlistment oath always sent

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As a young Lieutenant

shivers down Colin Powell's spine, "I Colin Powell do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States."

Each time Colin Powell left his army post, in the south, he remarks that he was plunged back into the Old South every time. He could go into Woolworth's and buy anything, as long as I did not eat there. He could shop in a department store, as long as he did not use the men's room. He could walk along the streets as long as he did not look at a white woman. Racism in the south was new to Colin Powell and he had to find a way psychologically, to cope with it. He wanted above all to succeed in an army career. He began to identify his priorities. He wanted to rise above destructive rage, no matter how provoked. If people in the South wanted him to live with crazy rules, then he would play the hand that was dealt him for just playing on only part of the football field. Then he would be a star playing on that part of the field. None of the indignities that happened to him, in the South, during that time, were going to inhibit his performance. He was not going to let himself become emotionally crippled, because he could not play on the whole field. He did not feel inferior and was not going to let anybody make him believe that he was. He was not going to let someone else's feelings become his feelings about himself.

Racism was not just a black problem he believed, it was an American problem and until America solved it, he was not going to let it make him a victim instead of a full human being. He occasionally felt hurt, anger, but most of all he felt challenged. I'll show you!

Colin Powell's first taste of the White House was when he became a White House Fellow, beating out 15 candidates and being the oldest one. Colin Powell did not graduate from West Point, so he was chosen above many West Point graduates. He became National Security Advisor to several Presidents. That job was not chosen as a token, but very real. In the years that he worked with Ronald Reagan and George Bush, he found no trace of racism within them.

I am writing this piece because Colin Powell is my hero and a fellow African American, who served in the Army as I have. As well as also being from New York, it is so sad to lose him. I am not going to talk about the mishap of Iraq, in his United Nations speech. I think that it is not a part of who he was. He will be sorely missed by both African Americans and all of his White friends that he made coming up through the ranks of life.

Quotes and some parts taken from his memoir [My American Journey](#).

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## FISA DIVERSITY TASK FORCE EVENTS IN NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER

**TUESDAY, NOV. 16 at 10 A.M.** *“Before there was such a thing as ‘California,’ there were the People and the Land”*

Join **William J. Bauer Jr.**, Professor of American Indian History at University of Nevada, in a lecture about the states’ indigenous people and their lives and legacies. He’ll discuss how these original residents shaped California before the state even had a name. His most recent book, [We Are the Land: A Native History of California](#) will help frame the lecture. To register for the event please [SIGN UP HERE!](#)

**WEDNESDAY, DEC. 1 at 11 A.M.** *“Attacking Families: Today and Yesterday”* with **Francisco E. Balderrama**,

Emeritus Professor of Chicano Studies and History at California State University Los Angeles and co-author of [Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation](#). Balderrama’s research program focuses on the Mexican community during the early 20th century with particular attention to relations with the Mexican nation. To sign up for the event please [CLICK HERE TO REGISTER.](#)

**THURSDAY, DEC. 9 at 10 A.M.** *“Interpreting the Classics Today”* with **Carey Perloff**. Ms. Perloff led A.C.T. for 25 years and has directed plays by many of our era’s greatest playwrights, plays starring renowned actors performing in prestigious venues world-wide. Hear her thoughts on her current project, bringing the great plays of the ancient Greeks to life on the modern stage. To sign up for the event please [CLICK HERE TO REGISTER.](#)

### FROM YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD ASTRONOMER - PROF. FRAKNOI

On **Thursday evening Nov. 18** and **Friday morning Nov. 19**, an almost total eclipse of the Moon will be visible from throughout the U.S. In a lunar eclipse, the Moon & the Sun are exactly opposite each other in our sky, and the Earth gets between them. This means the Earth’s shadow falls on the Moon, darkening it. It’s a nicely democratic event; no special equipment is needed to see it (provided it’s not cloudy or foggy). However, it is a late evening, early morning event, so you have to be prepared to stay up late or get up early and be sleepy the next day.

To read or download Prof. Fraknoi’s Eclipse Information Sheet please [click here.](#)



# POETRY FOR A PANDEMIC

Fromm Institute student and writer, Lary Schiller offers up a some thoughts on an insect for this week's **Poetry for a Pandemic**. Submissions to **Poetry for a Pandemic**, **Express Yourself** or **In The Virtual Gallery** are accepted on a rolling basis. Email your submissions to **Scott Moules** in the Fromm Institute office ([moules@usfca.edu](mailto:moules@usfca.edu) or [fromm@usfca.edu](mailto:fromm@usfca.edu)).

## PUMPKIN SPIDER

*By Lary Schiller*

Sitting in front of my computer, reading  
I turned and looked out the window into  
Our garden, purple blossoms, the huge oak  
And there, as if suspended, a woven web  
Almost invisible but for a shaft of sunlight  
And in the middle, still, patient, waiting  
A pumpkin spider sat, admiring her work.

Once, I walked into a web  
And wiped my face so violently that  
My glasses flew away and I  
Never found them.  
I used to take a broom and  
Sweep away these spiders

But now I look at the web with  
Wonder; how could such a small  
Creature construct this perfect  
Geometric home, and I leave it  
Alone, to wait for an  
Unsuspecting fly.







This week Fromm Institute student and writer **Barbara Sapienza** submits a story of searching for lost friends and is apropos of the season. **Express Yourself**, is a column created to share your thoughts, opinion pieces or other creative writing for the rest of the Fromm Institute community. If you would like to share your work, please submit articles to **Scott Moules** either at [moules@usfca.edu](mailto:moules@usfca.edu) or [fromm@usfca.edu](mailto:fromm@usfca.edu).

## HIGH-SPEED HAUNT

*by Barbara Sapienza*

“What stands out in your visit to Portugal?” Gramma asks her eighteen- year-old granddaughter upon her return.

“The spookiest part was the visit with Inez’ family.”

I think of her story, especially her animated eyes as I drive from my house in Sausalito in rush hour traffic across the Golden Gate, heading to Bryant and 18th, taking the first art class since COVID, 2021.

“Her Grandma took us to the cemetery to see her relatives - sister, brother, father, mother. Tombs, Grandma! Even pointed to the place where she’ll be buried. UGH!” She says.

Kids have trouble with the dead.

I focus on driving, spirited by commute traffic, especially when the signals on Geary synchronize. I flow through the river of cars, following the green arrows as they count down 14, 13, 12; next set 6, 5, 4; next 3, 2, 1, then yellow. How fun to slide through the yellow light, making it just before RED.

At Stanyan I hang a right, heading for 17th toward the Mission. But wait, I see Peter my first supervisor. 1981, Haight Ashbury Clinic. He’s flaunting his lisp, smiling, telling me, “Use your voice.”

At Haight he gets in.

“Peter!”

“Yes, its me. Take a deep breath, feel your feet.”

“That’s what you used to say in supervision. Thank you, you’re still helping me stay present.”

“Remember you got to know when to stop and when to go.” He disappears through the windshield. He died twenty-five years ago.

I need air, so I open the windows.

Before turning onto 17th I see Fred, my art teacher, waving from his porch, like he’s been waiting for a ride to his art class at UC Extension. I stop. He gets in.

“Your work’s gestural like Clifford Still, even better. Color like Sam Francis,” he says. I smile at his generosity.



I continue up the steep hill to the very top of Clayton where his ghost dissolves at the stoplight. I catch my breath and the clutch: Fred died, twenty years now.

When the light changes the steep downhill begins to Market.

But wait! At Saturn, Carla, the high school nurse waves, condoms flying from her hands. I stop. She gets in, “Remember 1974, Barb” she says, “the night before the prom when I gave condoms to high school seniors. You were aghast.”

“Like now, Carla, you’re leading the way.”

“And those dildos and other paraphernalia I sent you.” I hear her hearty, throaty laugh as she passes through the window. She died in 2004 at 60.

I make the downhill, cross 18th Street, brushing Carla-dust off my lips, passing bars like Moby Dick’s in the Castro. Boys walk arm in arm; an old woman wears tight underpants showing off her sturdy thighs. Still slipping through yellow lights with ghosts in mind; bicycles behind and beside me; workers double-parked, I see Vinnie on 14th and Castro.

I screech the brakes. A bicyclist gives me the finger. Vinnie gets in. My VW fills with shadows like in Milla’s graveyard story. Last I saw Vinnie: in a hospital bed in his living room on 14th dying with AIDS. I sat with him as his eyelids fluttered, slipping away, smiling and crying at the same time.

“Vinnie, what are you doing here? I miss you.”

“Helping you through your long drive,” he says. Then he slips away, too. Died at 35.

Wait! On the trolley line stands Hélène in pink chiffon, floppy hat, white gloves, welcoming me to her garden party. “We’ll do, A Streetcar Named Desire party,” she says, red voluptuous lips shine like her sleek hair. When the trolley approaches, she hops on. Helene died, 2004.

Like Inez’ grandma, I’m nourished by dead friends who haunt the streets of San Francisco, keeping me company on a speedy diagonal across the cityscape. I arrive at the art studio with fairy dust in my heart, ready to do printmaking with living friends on the press called Joanna, a gift from the recently deceased artist Joanna.

## COURSE EVALUATIONS ARE COMING TO YOUR EMAIL INBOX

As we near the end of our Fall 2021 Session, course evaluations will be emailed out to you shortly. Please take a few moments and evaluate each class you have taken. You can even evaluate the program as a whole. Your evaluations help us make better decisions about curriculum and are a vital resource for the professors who get to hear directly from you about what worked or didn’t in your classroom experience. Thank you for taking the time to fill out your evaluations!

NOTE: NEW DATE

## CONVERSATORY ON RIGHTS AROUND THE WORLD WITH PROF. MARA KOLESAS



NEW DATE: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1 P.M.

LIMITS OF SUPRANATIONAL JUSTICE: THE  
EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS &  
TURKEY'S KURDISH CONFLICT

*Dilek Kurban in Conversation with Mara Kolesas*

*Dilek Kurban is a Max Weber postdoctoral fellow at the European University Institute (2021-2022). She holds a PhD from Maastricht University Law Faculty, a JD from Columbia Law School and a master's from Columbia University. Her dissertation received the Erasmus Prize in the Netherlands and was published as a monograph under the title Limits of Supranational Justice: The European Court of Human Rights and Turkey's Kurdish Conflict (CUP, 2020). The book has been awarded a Special Mention by the 2021 International Society of Public Law (ICON.S) Book Prize Committee. Kurban's research interests are regional human rights courts, state violence, legal mobilization and judicial politics, with a particular focus on authoritarian regimes and a regional focus on Turkey. Her research has also been published in edited volumes and in peer-reviewed journals, including *Human Rights Law Review* and *Columbia Human Rights Law Review*. Before transitioning to academia, Kurban engaged in policy-oriented research in Turkey. Earlier in her career, Kurban worked at the UN Department of Political Affairs in New York.*

REGISTER HERE for the Conversatory on **Nov. 15** at 1 p.m.

REGISTER HERE for the Discussion Group on **Nov. 15** at 3 p.m.

NOTE: NEW DATE

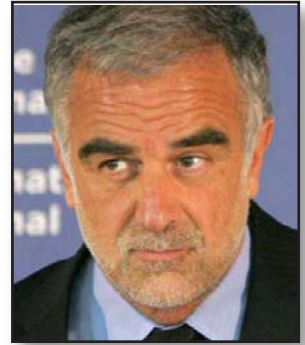


# CONVERSATORY ON RIGHTS AROUND THE WORLD WITH PROF. MARA KOLESAS

Wednesday, December 8, 10 a.m.

NARRATIVE ON WAR & JUSTICE  
IN THE 21ST CENTURY

*Luis Moreno Ocampo in Conversation with Mara Kolesas*



*Luis Moreno-Ocampo is the Founder Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, where he served from 2003 to 2012. He was involved in 20 of the most serious conflicts of the 21st century including Darfur, Korea and Palestine, and indicted presidents Omar Al Bashir, Laurent Gbagbo, Muammar Gaddafi, Joseph Kony and other leaders involved in massive crimes. He had previously served as a Prosecutor in Argentina from 1985-1992, having a key role in one of the first transitional justice models developed in the world. He was the Deputy Prosecutor in charge of investigations during the Junta Trial (1985). He was also similarly involved in the cases against Junta's subordinate commanders and officers (1986-87). He led the prosecution of two military rebellion cases (1988 and 1990), and a military malpractice case against the top Army commanders in the Malvinas-Falkland war (1988). As Federal Prosecutor of Buenos Aires, he led the investigation of dozens of grand corruption cases involving business leaders, ministers and judges. Oxford University Press will publish in January 2022 a book about his experience: War and Justice in the 21st Century.*

**[REGISTER HERE](#) for the Conversatory on Dec. 8 at 10 a.m.**

**[REGISTER HERE](#) for the Discussion Group on Dec. 8 at 12 p.m.**

## CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC - FALL CONCERT SERIES

The San Francisco Conservatory of Music (SFCM) is pleased to announce some of its remaining fall 2021 concert series, which includes a combination of in-person and live-streamed events. Calendar listings are below. Some events require ticketing. Please see SFCM's performance calendar for a complete concert schedule. Details and programs are subject to change.

### CALENDAR LISTINGS - LATE FALL 2021 EVENT HIGHLIGHTS:

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15 AT 7:30 P.M.**

**New Music Ensemble Concert  
Conducted by Nicole Paiement**

What's cool about this evening:

- A piece by acclaimed composer Nico Muhly, who recently included a new work by an SFCM alum in his curated SoundBox series with SF Symphony.
- It's all new music by composers living and working in the industry today.



*Nicole Paiement has gained an international reputation as a conductor of contemporary music and opera. Her numerous recordings include many world premiere works. Maestro Paiement's 2012 Dallas Opera debut conducting Peter Maxwell Davies' 1979 thriller, The Lighthouse earned rave reviews. Subsequently, Paiement was appointed Principal Guest Conductor at The Dallas Opera.*

[For more information or to make a reservation click here.](#)



**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11 AT 7:30 P.M.  
SFCM Orchestra with Earl Lee**

What's cool about this evening:

- Earl Lee, the new Assistant Conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, leads the SFCM orchestra.
- Recent alumni Julia Pyke '21 is featured as a flute soloist in a piece by Lowell Liebermann. Music by Brahms and Tchaikovsky will also be performed.

*A current Associate Conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and former Resident Conductor of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Earl Lee is a renowned Korean-Canadian performer who has captivated audiences worldwide. Earl's passion for music is reflected in his diverse career as both a conductor and cellist.*

[For more information or to make a reservation click here.](#)