

The background of the cover is a complex, textured image. It features a central, bright orange and yellow circular area that resembles a microscopic view of a cell or a virus. This central area is surrounded by a darker, more textured green and brown area, which also appears to be a microscopic view of a different structure. The overall effect is a high-contrast, scientific-looking background.

COLLEGE MAGAZINE  
**Pomona**

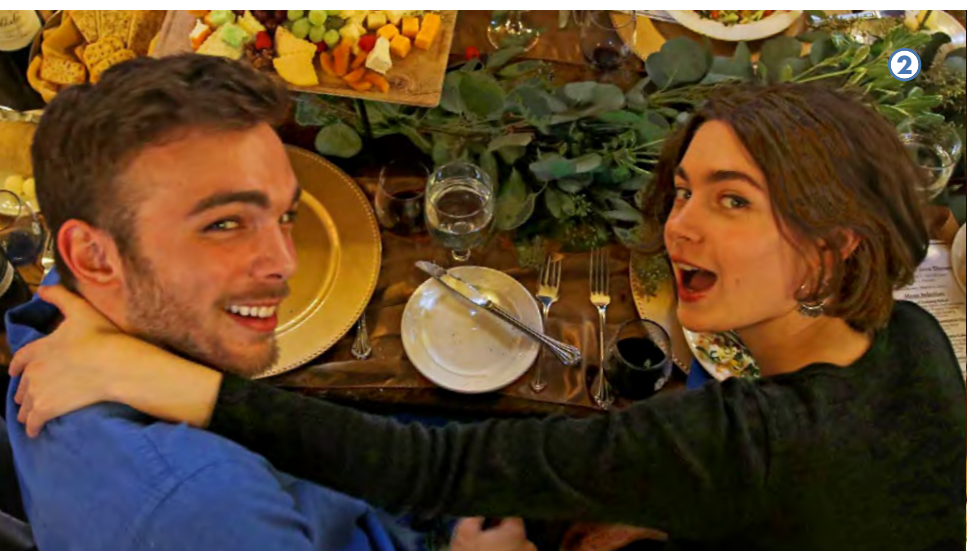
*Spring/Summer 2020*

**PANDEMIC  
OCRACY**

ITE



1. Jade Hill, Netta Kaplan and Franco Liu; 2. Tyler Bunton and Cleo Forman; 3. Miguel Delgado-Garcia and Diana E. Rodriguez; 4. (back row) Samantha Little, Tariq Razi, Seena Huang, (front row) Megan Kuo, Jordan Grimaldi and Ali Barber; 5. (back row) Nick Borowsky, Ben Moats, Matthew Wagner, Jordan Huard, Sharon Cheng, Gabriel da Motta, Katherine Pelz, Chris Arbudzinski, (front row) President G. Gabrielle Starr, Ayleen Hernandez, Alexandra D'Costa Velazquez Acosta, Khadijah Thibodeaux and Miguel Delgado-Garcia



# Class of 2020

This issue of *Pomona College Magazine* is dedicated to the Class of 2020, members of which are pictured here in Frary Dining Hall on March 11 for the President's Senior Dinner, a celebration that turned out to be the last collective event held on the Pomona campus before the pandemic forced the cancellation of all events and, ultimately, the closure of college campuses all across the country. The pandemic also forced the postponement of Commencement 2020 until some future date, as yet undetermined, when it will be safer to come together to celebrate.



# This Isn't Over

By G. Gabrielle Starr  
President of Pomona College

**This isn't over, not by a long shot.** America's cities are still in turmoil, as are hearts and minds across the world, after we watched the horrifying death by suffocation of George Floyd, an African American man whose life was snuffed out under the knee of a police officer over 526 seconds. He pleaded for his life, asked for his mother. Onlookers begged the officers holding Floyd's neck and body to the ground to stop—to have mercy.

It's not over. It's not even just begun. This is yet one more in a long line of deaths: pointless, painful, final. One man died by jogging. A woman by opening her door. A boy by playing in a park. And the crisis that has in America brought forth bloody flowers and strange fruit (the blistering language used to describe lynchings sprung from trees across my country) has spread.

Protests rock the world: in London, Mexico City, Amsterdam, Nairobi, Haifa, Lagos, Buenos Aires, Tokyo and beyond. Meanwhile, nations that are nearly paralyzed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and particularly the minority communities within them who are hard-hit by medical and financial inequalities, are facing choices. What do we do? How do we express outrage? Most importantly, how do we make change?

Many people ask me these questions, and as an academic, and now president at a small liberal arts college in California, I seek answers. I'm the mother of two children, both Black like me. The terror I feel for them sometimes leaves me gasping for breath. Yet I know there is a road I must walk if any of this is to change for them, and for children across the U.S. and around the world.

The hatred delivered to Black people wasn't born on America's streets. It runs so deep in our history and can rear its head anywhere. This is revealed in the protests around the world. The name for this systemic hatred is simple: ugly. It is the ideology of white supremacy, an ideology born of the need to control populations across the world as Europe expanded its empires. It was born, equally, of the need for those who perpetuated it to feel morally just.

I recall coming across a 400-year-old poem attributed to John Cleveland while carrying out dissertation research in the British Library two decades ago: a dialogue between "a fair Nymph" and "a black boy." The boy pursues the nymph; the irreparable darkness of his skin threatens the proclaimed purity of hers. A solution is suggested through the metaphor of a printer's press. The nymph says, "Thy ink, my paper, make me guess/ Our nuptial bed will make a press." The boy's ink

will ultimately be written on her body, leaving a message for others to find.

The author must have thought himself a wit, while keeping a safe distance from the blood, brutality, murder, abuse, rape and fundamental degradation of the realities of slavery. But I can't—won't—keep my distance from the reality of racial hate and the necessity of making change happen today.

Each morning I must stand up and acknowledge my Black heritage for what I know it to be—a sign of strength, and a commitment to life even in the face of dark days. Then, I must straighten my back and return to a life of finely honed, severely tested optimism, in which education is held to be our last, best hope.

Thus, I work to make it possible for students to learn, research to advance, professors to teach. I work to enable the transmission, and even expansion, of the shared inheritance of humanity, the long, hard-fought knowledge we on this planet have gained, husbanded and promised to preserve. This has never been more crucial: By one estimate earlier this spring, more than 1.5 billion children had lost access to all education. Such students could fall as much as two years behind their peers.

Perhaps there is a slight opening in this moment, where the slowdown and solitude of the pandemic meets the crowds and cameras on the streets. A chance to be truly heard? We know we need far more than a fleeting "teaching moment."

I tell my children, college students, anyone who will hear: Whatever you do to address the inequality, the brutality, the hatred and pain of racism, you must realize you cannot fight without knowledge. So spend the coming months and years as you prepare for adulthood doing just that. Study policies that help reduce the use of force, mitigate poverty, cure those who need healing. Learn the tools of justice and the history of their uses and failures. Indeed, the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution was passed, in part, to stop deadly harassment by "lawful" authorities of African Americans in the antebellum period.

Help your generation and mine, and those between us and beyond, to see past the misdirection, to rebut the lies and half-truths and to find a path together. It isn't over.

This essay was originally published in *The Financial Times* under the title "What to tell young people about systemic hatred in our society." It is reprinted with permission.



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## Remembering Bob Mezey

The first time I met Bob Mezey, I was 16 years old and visiting Pomona College; I had no training as a poet. Bob had a reputation for being difficult—he was widely considered to be a master poet, but rumors swirled about his sharp tongue, frank opinions and habit of publicly renouncing poets that didn't pay homage to the tradition of meter and form. I was a sensitive kid, and the slightest cruel word might have crushed me. Years later, I learned that Bob himself was also just 16 when he first sent his poems to John Crowe Ransom at Kenyon College. Perhaps this had something to do with how he handled our first meeting. I gave him my poems and eagerly awaited his response. "Well," he said, "you don't really know what you're doing, but I see talent. I hope you come here." Even before I began as a student at Pomona College, Bob sent me poems in the mail, photocopies of the works of Borges, Frost, Justice, along with instructions to read them carefully, listen to the sound and see if I could imitate the meter.

Later as a student at Pomona College, Bob and I frequently met for breakfast at Walter's in Claremont. He always arrived early, and I'd find him drinking coffee, reading poetry. More than once he looked at my work and said, "This is not poetry; write something in verse. Keep the meter; use your ear." Bob would bring in scanned versions of Larkin, Frost and Wilbur. He'd point out the ionics and spondees and explain how the poetic masters could rough up the verse, but only after years of practice. Once, while reading Wilbur's "The House," I saw his eyes brimming with tears. It was clear to me then that poetry was not just Bob Mezey's profession; it was something much deeper than that.

Bob had a promising start to his career: He'd won the Lamont

Prize, and many people expected him to be the next big thing in poetry. Over the next few decades, Bob garnered further success for his translations, introductions to important poets and poems appearing in major journals. But during the last 20 years, it became increasingly difficult to find his work, even in the formalist journals. What happened? Had he offended one too many people, or was his style of writing simply out of fashion?

Years later, I began to expand my own poetic repertoire to include free verse. Bob cautioned me that writing a good free verse poem was far more difficult than people thought. "But in good free verse," he'd say, "you'll still hear the ghost of the meter." Bob rarely spoke of his own work in free forms. When I asked about *Naked Poetry*, he said, "Wish I'd never been part of the damn thing." Somewhat ironically, just as the momentum of the poetry world was swinging in the direction of *Naked Poetry*, Bob was making a sharp turn back to formalism, back to the original teachings of Ransom.

In late April, I called Bob to say I finally had a draft of a poem I'd been working on since 2009—would he look at it? "Send it along," he said. Bob was 85. On a Sunday morning, I woke early, and made coffee, eager to see if he'd written back—he had a habit of working late. But there was no response from Bob—only an email from his daughter, sharing the news that he had caught pneumonia, or possibly the virus, and passed during the night. What did he think of that final poem? "Not bad," I imagine him saying, "only a few lines in here I might quarrel with."

—Jodie Hollander '99  
Minturn, CO

Alumni, parents and friends are invited to email letters to [pcm@pomona.edu](mailto:pcm@pomona.edu) or "snail-mail" them to *Pomona College Magazine*, 550 North College Ave., Claremont, CA 91711. Letters may be edited for length, style and clarity.

## Remembering Richard Elderkin

The loss of Richard Elderkin is very sad news. Professor Elderkin was on the admissions committee in 1985 that admitted me. When I arrived he told me he hand-picked me as an advisee because I was majoring in math, and he was intrigued and interested in the young man who wrote my admissions essay. I told him I could introduce him to the guy if he gave me a couple days. We hit it off immediately, and he spent the next four years supporting, encouraging and guiding me.

Brilliant, kind, thoughtful, caring, curious, loyal, engaged and Buckminster Fuller(!) are words that come immediately to mind when I think of Professor Elderkin. I find comfort in knowing the very large positive impact he and his wife had on Pomona College, Claremont and, in turn, the world for more than three decades. I am a wiser, better teacher because of his example, and I reflect and tell stories about our interactions regularly because of his concern for me while I was a student at Pomona.

May his memory continue to grow as a blessing to all who know and care for Richard.

—Donald Collins '89  
San Diego, CA

## Athletic Mentors

Looking back, I don't think I appreciated the quality of the staff nearly enough when I was at Pomona. I spent a lot of time around the athletics department. I realize now how much those people shaped my life and who I am today. Bill Swartz, Curt Tong, Pat Mulcahy, Gregg Popovich, Lisa Beckett, Moits Thomas, Charlie Katsiaticas and Mike Riskas. All great people and great educators, setting examples and teaching valuable lessons, whether you played for them or not. I wish I had realized how special they were at the time.

—Richard Wunderle '91  
University Place, WA

# Pomona

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PRESIDENT  
G. Gabrielle Starr

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY  
Pomona College complies with all applicable state and federal civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination in education and the workplace. This policy of non-discrimination covers admission, access and service in Pomona College programs and activities, as well as hiring, promotion, compensation, benefits and all other terms and conditions of employment at Pomona College.



# Essential PPE

During the pandemic, the Philosophy, Politics and Economics Program, known on campus as PPE, saw its initials co-opted in the national media as the pandemic focused public attention on shortages of personal protective equipment. So, when Professor Eleanor Brown '75, chair of the program, was casting about for some memento to send to the graduating PPE seniors, she hit upon the idea of co-opting a piece of personal protective equipment "to proclaim the essential nature of this quintessential liberal arts degree." Modeling the PPE's new PPE in the photo above is Rachel Oda '20.

# THE CLASS OF 2024

Even in the midst of a global health crisis, the work of the admissions office has gone on with the selection of the new Pomona College Class of 2024. Here are a few facts about the new class of Sagehens:

**745** were offered admission.

**49** U.S. states plus the District of Columbia, Guam and Puerto Rico, are represented.

**45** other countries were home to new admits.

**52%** of the class are female and 48% male.

**58.8%** are domestic students of color.

**20.7%** of the class will be first-generation college students.

**26** transfer students were admitted.

**4** military veterans were admitted, representing the Army, Marine Corps and Navy.

**90%** are in the top 10% of their class.

**6** are graduates of the Pomona Academy for Youth Success (PAYS).

**16** admitted students were matched through Pomona's partnership with QuestBridge.

**20** were admitted through the Posse Foundation.



AMERICAN ACADEMY  
OF ARTS & SCIENCES

## Starr Named to Academy

**President G. Gabrielle Starr** has been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences joining a new class of members recognized for outstanding achievements in academia, the arts, business, government and public affairs.

Starr is a highly regarded scholar of English literature whose work reaches into neuroscience and the arts. Her research looks closely at the brain, through the use of fMRI, to help get to the heart of how people respond to paintings, music and other forms of art. She is a national voice on access to college for students of all backgrounds, the future of higher education, women in leadership and the importance of the arts. She took office as the 10th president of Pomona College in 2017.

The Academy was chartered in 1780 to “cultivate every art and science which may tend to advance the interest, honor, dignity and happiness of a free, independent and virtuous people.” Academy members are elected on the basis of their leadership in academics, the arts, business or public affairs and have ranged from Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson to such 20th-century luminaries as

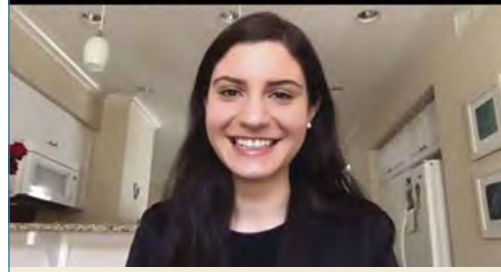
Margaret Mead, Martin Luther King Jr. and Akira Kurosawa.

For 2020, the Academy elected 276 new members. In addition to Starr, the group includes singer Joan C. Baez, former Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr., author Ann Patchett, poet and former Pomona College professor Claudia Rankine, among others.

Starr joins a number of exemplary Pomona alumni and former faculty in the AAAS, including scientists Jennifer Doudna '85, J. Andrew McCammon '69 and Tom Pollard '64; author Louis Menand '73; art historian Ingrid Rowland '74; artist James Turrell '65; journalist Joe Palca '74; and genomic biologist Sarah Elgin '67.

The Academy is led by Pomona College President Emeritus David Oxtoby, who was inducted into the Academy in 2012 and was named its president in 2018. He served as president of Pomona College from 2003 until 2017.

Starr becomes the third Pomona College president to join the Academy. David Alexander, who served as president of Pomona from 1969 to 1991, was inducted into the Academy in 2006.



From top: Aimee Bahng, Tom Le, Jane Liu, Jorge Moreno, Gilda Ochoa and Alexandra Papoutsaki

## Wig Awards 2020

Six professors have been selected to receive the 2020 Wig Distinguished Professor Award for excellence in teaching. The award is the highest honor bestowed on Pomona College faculty, recognizing exceptional teaching, concern for students and service to the College and community. Here's a list of this year's recipients, along with anonymously written nomination comments from their students:

### Aimee Bahng

*Assistant Professor of Gender and Women's Studies*

“Professor Bahng is one of the most intellectually generous people I have ever met. Her courses are fascinating, excellent discussions that I feel have contributed to my growth as a person. She masters the difficult dance of encouraging rigorous intellectual work while recognizing the strangeness of academia as an elite space (particularly in the context of Gender and Women's Studies).”

### Tom Le

*Assistant Professor of Politics*

“I met Professor Le my sophomore year in an upper division international relations class. At first, I was intimidated by his candor and overwhelming expertise on the subject of East Asian politics. However, in the span of a few weeks, I realized how lucky I was to have the chance to take one of his classes. Professor Le has always pushed me to be better, work harder and care more. His leadership style is inspiring, and Pomona is lucky to have him as faculty. Thank you, Professor Le, for always encouraging me to be a better scholar, student and friend.”

### Jane Liu

*Associate Professor of Chemistry*

“It's amazing how a professor can make such a big difference in your academic experience, even if you only see them once a week for lab. Professor Liu is not only extremely knowledgeable and a talented scientist, but she is also one of the kindest human beings I have ever met.”

### Jorge Moreno

*Assistant Professor of Physics and Astronomy*

“Professor Moreno has completely reimagined the possibilities of the STEM classroom. His teaching style and commitment to students—particularly students that have been historically excluded from STEM spaces—makes him one of the most beloved professors at Pomona. In his short time at the College, Professor Moreno has made an impactful impression on students from all disciplines. He is truly an advocate for his students.”

### Gilda Ochoa

*Professor of Chicana/o Latina/o Studies*

“Gilda Ochoa is the most deserving faculty member for this award because she is always available for students regardless of their major or background. Gilda Ochoa is the person to ask you how you are feeling rather than how you are doing. She will listen to you and make you feel heard and cared for. Her research advances social justice by centering underrepresented voices.”

### Alexandra Papoutsaki

*Assistant Professor of Computer Science*

“I was not the best computer science student and was never going to end up going very far in it, but Professor Papoutsaki still worked hard to make sure I understood things. Some people who are as evidently smart as she is in a given field aren't able to make things accessible to those who don't share their knowledge, but she can. I think it shows not just her talent for teaching, but what a genuinely great person she is.”

Physics major **Adele Myers '21** has been awarded a Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship, which provides \$7,500 a year for undergraduate education expenses to sophomores and juniors who intend to pursue careers in mathematics, natural sciences or engineering. Working with physicist Greg Spriggs at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Myers discovered evidence of a phenomenon called water entrainment in nuclear blasts over water.

Recent graduate **Sal Wanying Fu '19** has received a Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowship for New Americans, a \$90,000 merit-based grant for outstanding immigrants and children of immigrants who are pursuing graduate school in the United States. A current astrophysics doctoral student at University of California, Berkeley, Fu is among 30 students selected from a pool of more than 2,000 applicants. She is the fourth Pomona graduate to join the Paul & Daisy Soros Fellows.

**Franco Liu '20** has been awarded a Downing Scholarship to study linguistics at the University of Cambridge for 2020-21. An international student from China, Liu was hooked on the discipline after taking an introductory course with Professor Michael Diercks during his first year of college. The award will cover Liu's tuition, fees, living expenses and round-trip travel, as well as a stipend for books, local travel and personal expenses.

**Yannai Kashtan '20** became the first Pomona student and the first chemistry student to win a prestigious Knight-Hennessy scholarship, which provides a full ride to Stanford University to pursue any graduate program of his choosing. The award criteria for winners include “rebellious minds and independent spirits” and “future global leaders.” He plans to study photoelectrochemical CO<sub>2</sub> reduction with groups working on integrated artificial photosynthesis modules.



## New Director of Athletics Joins Sagehen Team

**Innovative and accomplished** athletics administrator Miriam Merrill will lead Pomona-Pitzer Athletics into its next era after being selected as director of athletics following a national search.

Merrill, previously the associate director of athletics at Hamilton College in Clinton, New York, also served as interim director of Hamilton's NCAA Division III program for four months in 2019. She starts at Pomona-Pitzer on July 1, and also will be professor and chair of the Department of Physical Education at Pomona College, overseeing the joint athletic department's activity classes, faculty/staff fitness and wellness program, intramural/club sport and recreation programs and academic offerings.

“Miriam is a collaborative and inspiring leader, and I'm confident she has both the vision and the experience to help take Pomona-Pitzer athletics to the next level,” said Pomona College President G. Gabrielle Starr.

Merrill brings broad experience in athletics and academia to Claremont. She earned a Ph.D. in the psychology of human movement at Temple University in 2019, and previously has served as an athletics director at Richard J. Daley College, a Chicago community college, and as head coach of women's track and field at Robert Morris University in Chicago. As an athlete, she was an NCAA Division I All-American in track and field for the University of Cincinnati in 2001 and was inducted into the university's Athletics Hall of Fame in 2012.



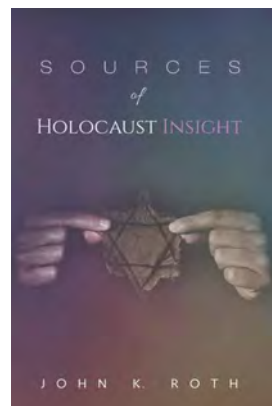
# Holocaust Insight

An Interview with John K. Roth '62

**“More than 50,”** describes both the years of academic inquiry about the Holocaust and the number of books by John K. Roth '62, Edward J. Sexton Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at Claremont McKenna College. Undoubtedly one of the preeminent scholars in the field of Holocaust studies, he recently added a new book to his collection. *Sources of Holocaust Insight: Learning and Teaching about the Genocide* reflects on the people, the texts, the events and places that have informed and influenced his understanding of that atrocity.

Roth is founding director of the Center for the Study of the Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights (now the Mgrublian Center for Human Rights) at Claremont McKenna. He was named the U.S. National Professor of the Year by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in 1988. Roth is also the recipient of the Holocaust Educational Foundation's Distinguished Achievement Award for Holocaust Studies and Research.

*Pomona College Magazine's* Sneha Abraham, a former student of Roth's, talked to him about his academic formation, his new book, questions of the human condition, God, and what the



## Sources of Holocaust Insight

By John K. Roth '62  
Cascade Books 2020  
304 pages | \$35

Holocaust requires of us.

This interview has been condensed and edited for space and clarity.

### PCM: How was your Pomona experience formative for you as a philosopher? What was that experience like?

**Roth:** When I came to Pomona College in the autumn of 1958, I didn't know what philosophy was. I had some experience with religion, and my father was a Presbyterian minister, so I grew up in a home where the Bible and ideas about God were important. I was aware that there was something called philosophy, but I really didn't know very much about it. I didn't take a course in philosophy at Pomona until I was a sophomore. When I got into it, I thought, "This is interesting. Maybe I'll get some answers to my questions by studying philosophy."

But I rather quickly found out that that wasn't going to happen because philosophy is much more about questions than it is about answers. Philosophers always come up with answers, and philosophers are salespeople in some ways. They want you to accept what they say. But the

power of the discipline goes back to Socrates and the use of questions to produce dialogue and develop the wonder about things that Plato

and Aristotle thought was the origin of philosophy. Philosophy begins in wonder.

Over time, I grew to love that part of philosophy. Philosophy is the discipline that persists in asking questions. That can be very frustrating if your goal is to get answers. Philosophy tries to do that, but unavoidably, the questions keep coming back.

By the time I had finished my sophomore year, I was committed to majoring in philosophy. And then something else happened. And this is a tribute to Pomona College. I just loved being in college. Pomona accounts for that. I fell in love with college because of Pomona. My experience there made a huge impact on me. I've spent most of my life in the culture of small liberal arts colleges, which I just think are national treasures, and as I think about the condition of our country right now, I think the contributions that small liberal arts colleges make are increasingly important. And probably endangered a bit too.

### PCM: You've been working in this field of Holocaust studies for more than 50 years.

**Roth:** Yes. It's added up to be that long. And it wasn't where I planned to work. I didn't go to the counseling center and say, "How do you become a Holocaust scholar?" I like to say that the Holocaust found me. It did so partly through [the late Philosophy Professor] Frederick Sontag, who is a legend at Pomona and became a close, close friend of mine—we taught and wrote together. When I was his student, he was very interested in what philosophers call "the problem of evil."

Several of the courses that I took from Fred Sontag took me into that problem—that is, how and why does massive destruction of human life take place? And what sense, if any, can be made of it? How do we deal with those questions?

But the Holocaust was not yet where I was. Getting my attention focused on that took a while. It wasn't until I was on the faculty of Claremont McKenna, which I joined in 1966, that the Holocaust found me and changed my life.

In the early 1970s, I followed the lead of my teacher, Fred Sontag, who said one day, "I think you might be interested in reading some of Elie Wiesel's writings." I read Wiesel and was captivated and compelled to find out more about what I was reading. This is why I say that the Holocaust found me more than I found it. And it changed my life. I became a different person, professionally and existentially. My life reoriented because as I found out more about what had happened to people like Elie Wiesel and his family. I discovered that a host of important questions were embedded in that experience and history. I had to follow where they led.

### PCM: Why did you write this book? What was the impetus?

**Roth:** I was inspired to write the book because of another book that has meant a lot to me over the years. It is called *Sources of Holocaust Research* and was written early in the current century by a very important Holocaust scholar named Raul Hilberg. I used that book in teaching because it provides a good way for students to see how a scholar goes about studying that massive event.

Hilberg's book made me realize that I have Holocaust sources

too, and that led to seeing the book that I might write. My sources are documents sometimes, but more often, my sources are people, texts, testimonies, places, experiences. So, I thought to myself, "Well, what if I write about sources of my understanding of the Holocaust?" Or as I like to phrase it, my sources of Holocaust insight.

### PCM: You mentioned that you're the son of a Presbyterian minister. How does being an American and a Christian affect your study of the Holocaust?

**Roth:** When I read Elie Wiesel and I began to feel the need to learn more about what had happened to him and why it happened to his family, my study made me realize that my own tradition, Christianity, was deeply implicated in the genocide. This led me to grapple with the dark underside of Christianity. It created a personal dilemma I still wrestle with.

I put the dilemma this way. For me, Christianity has been something good, but as some of my Jewish friends would remind me from time to time, and I knew this from study too, "Well, Christianity hasn't been so good for us." The Holocaust remains a big, big problem for Christians. You have a good example of that right now because, after many, many years, the Vatican archives have been opened to allow scholars—once we get the COVID-19 pandemic under control—to explore the controversial history of Pope Pius XII, who reigned during the Nazi period. He's been a controversial figure. Did he do what he should have done during that period with regard to the plight of the Jewish people?

So debate about the Holocaust and Christianity is ongoing. For me, it's existential, because Christianity is my tradition. What do I do as I keep learning that my tradition has a dark and destructive side? My study and teaching about the Holocaust is a continuing way to cope with that. And maybe in some ways, to try to make some amends, if I can, for that terrible shortcoming.

On the American side, the role of the United States during the Holocaust also raises questions. It does so about immigration; it raises questions about action that was taken or not taken. And it certainly involves issues about racism. Black Americans fought against Nazi racism but experienced American racism nonetheless. I've found that my identity as an American, as well as a Christian and a philosopher, continues to have points of contact with the Holocaust, which was primarily European in its geography but had international dimensions and implications too. Some of those connections and reverberations are reflected in the fact that the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum has become such an important place in our national capital. There's a long story about that: Why do we have a museum about the Holocaust situated close by the Washington Monument in Washington, D.C.? That's an intriguing and significant question.

What I've found is that all of these identity questions drove me further and deeper in understanding that it was important to spend time teaching, learning and writing about the Holocaust.

**PCM: You write about Richard Rubenstein, Elie Wiesel and Franklin Littell and how they encourage you to tell the story in your own way and to carry on the dialogue as best you can in your prayers and quarrels with God. I really liked the way you put that. What does that mean for you?** ▷

**Roth:** Unlike some people who confront the Holocaust, my encounters with that catastrophe have not turned me into an atheist. I resonated much more with the approach that Wiesel took in his writings. People who really fall in love with Elie Wiesel's writings are probably people who have some deep interest in things religious because it's hard to read Wiesel without finding, over and over again, that he's writing about questions that have to do with God and religious practices and traditions. In particular, Wiesel is constantly carrying on a quarrel with God.

One of the things I learned as a Christian that was very helpful to me is that, in the Jewish tradition, quarreling and arguing with God and protesting against God are part of the spirituality of that tradition. Christianity tends to play down such themes because of the strong emphasis that Christianity puts on the idea of God as love. But if God is more ambiguous and mixed than that, then the Jewish tradition of carrying on arguments and protest as part of a relationship with God has a bigger role. I found I really liked that about the approach that I was discovering as I studied Wiesel, Rubenstein and other post-Holocaust Jewish thinkers.

So, I have a quarrelsome relationship with God. For me, that's valuable just to the extent that it underscores the insight that God isn't going to fix everything. Whether it's fair or not, it's up to us to try to do that as much as we can. But I hold onto a relationship with God because it helps me to maintain my conviction that history is not all that is. Reality is more than history. And I'm hopeful that, in some way, that means that what the Nazis did to the Jews doesn't have the last word. That's my hope. I don't want injustice and suffering and murder to have the last word. They may have it. I don't know for sure that they won't, but my hope is that they don't. My teaching and writing about the Holocaust seek to encourage and support that hope.

**PCM: What is your take on the human condition? Are we basically good?**

**Roth:** I wax and wane between hope and pessimism. I often say that my study of the Holocaust, overall, has made me more melancholy than I was as a young person. That mood isn't the same as despair, but it includes aspects of that darkness. Melancholy isn't paralyzing. It can combine with and even produce resistance against destructive powers.

**PCM: Do you believe in moral progress?**

**Roth:** Not in any simple way. No, I don't. I think Albert Camus was insightful in his book *The Rebel* when he said that human beings can only arithmetically reduce the amount of suffering in the world. What he meant by that, I think, is that we can and must do everything we can to reduce suffering and injustice, but, unfortunately, we aren't capable of doing away with those things. So, according to Camus, you resist, you try your best to thwart and curb and reduce these things, but if your sensibility is that you're going to continue to make progress until such time as suffering and injustice are inconsequential, you're misguided.

I think that the ongoing struggle against anti-semitism fits what Camus saw. Many of us who began a long time ago to teach about the Holocaust hoped that such work would curb if not eliminate

anti-semitism. But we learned that this plague is more endemic and virulent than we wanted to believe.

So, I don't believe in moral progress in any simple kind of way, but I do hope that Martin Luther King Jr. was right when he said that the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice. That will happen, though, only if people make it happen. [During this time of pandemic,] we keep talking about the "curve" and flattening it. That curve isn't going to bend or flatten unless people act in ways that serve the common good. Even then, as we're learning, we're probably not going to eradicate the novel coronavirus or the disease of racism and injustice, at least not completely.

**PCM: Does the Holocaust call moral relativism on the carpet?**

**Roth:** Yes. I have a friend, Michael Berenbaum, who wisely refers to the Holocaust as a negative absolute. We may disagree about moral values, but probably, we can come closer to agreement if we look at what we think is absolutely wrong. Even there, drastic differences may persist. The Nazis did not think that destroying Jewish life and tradition was wrong. For the Nazis, that was right and good. So it's complicated, but as I like to say, the Holocaust was wrong, or nothing could be. If we don't say that, then we really do open the door to the pernicious view that might makes right. Earlier this year, Attorney General William Barr emphasized that the victors write history. Even if he wasn't incorrect factually, that proposition is morally wrong because it is the ally of might makes right, a view that cannot withstand scrutiny.

The Holocaust and events like it had better be the end of moral relativism, or we're in more trouble than we need to be. But the dilemma is that this case of one of those where argument may not settle the matter. This is a place where my concept of insight comes in. We have to recognize that there may always be people, powerful people, who act as if might makes right and who think they will win and get to write history their way. Study of the Holocaust alerts us to have our eyes open about what to do in that case.

**PCM: You say that through writer and Auschwitz survivor Charlotte Delbo you understand the importance of taking nothing good for granted. That's the title of your epilogue as well. So, what good do you not take for granted?**

**Roth:** The Holocaust destroyed so much that was good. So, of all my Holocaust insights, none is more important than take nothing good for granted. Over and over again, especially privileged Americans like me do take good things for granted, including life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Study of the Holocaust helps to drive that point home, but nowadays the COVID-19 pandemic and the renewed awareness of systemic racism in American life lift up that awareness too.

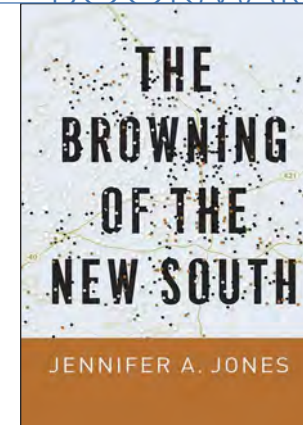
**PCM: Delbo essentially says, I'm paraphrasing, but: "Do something useful with your life. Don't let everything be useless knowledge or senseless."**

**Roth:** Delbo's moving writing about Auschwitz emphasizes how her experience there was full of what she called useless knowledge. She

saw torture, and she knew about murder. None of this was edifying, let alone helpful. Such knowledge was destructive and degrading. So as she works to show her readers such things, she hopes that they won't end up saying, "So what? You know, I'll just put this on the shelf and go on about my life." She was looking for somebody who would read her writing and maybe, in some good way, be changed by it. Writings that come out of Holocaust experiences are sometimes so powerful that if you let them into your life, they have a way of reorienting you and changing you. Charlotte Delbo's writings have been that way for me

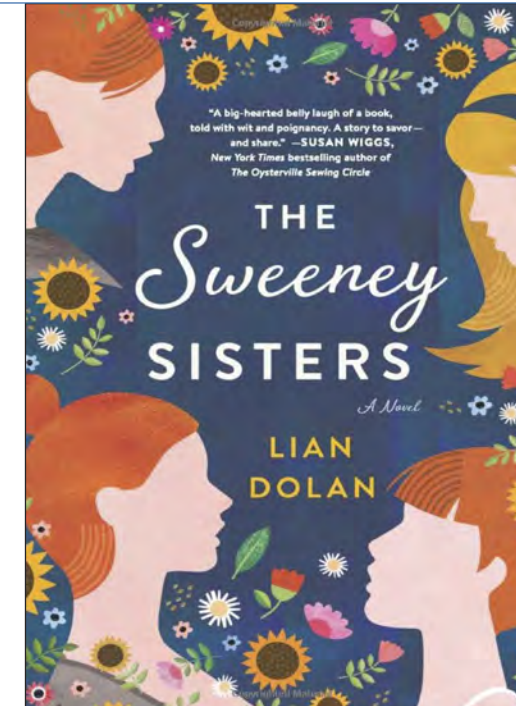
**PCM: I'm not sure if this was your comment in the book or if you were**

## BOOKMARKS



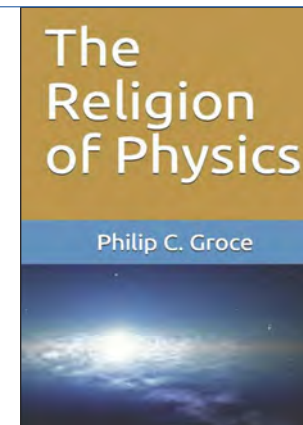
### The Browning of the New South

Jennifer A. Jones '03 takes an ethnographic look at changing racial identities in an evolving Southern city.



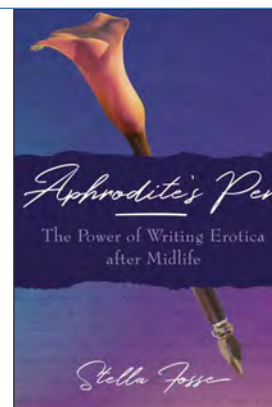
### The Sweeney Sisters

Lian Dolan '87 returns with her biggest, boldest, most entertaining novel yet—a hilarious, heartfelt story about books, love, sisterhood and the surprises we discover in our DNA.



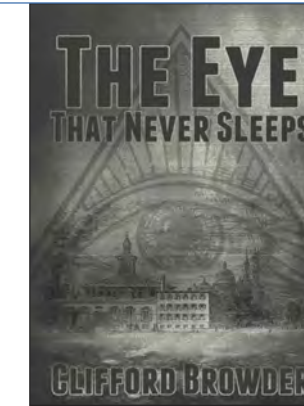
### The Religion of Physics

Philip C. Groce '62 melds science and religion into a conceptual framework that God can be defined as energy.



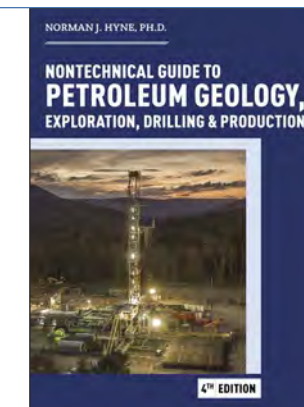
### Aphrodite's Pen

Jody Savage '75, writing as Stella Fosse, seeks to empower older women writing about erotic experiences in life, the bedroom and beyond.



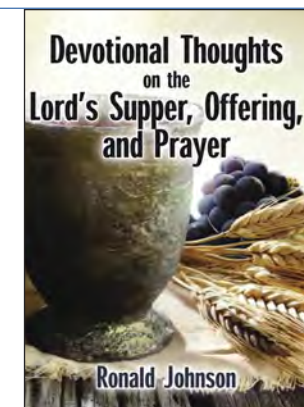
### The Eye That Never Sleeps

Clifford Browder '50 offers a classically told detective novel that creates a web of intrigue while giving the reader a tour of a bygone era of America through the filter of New York City.



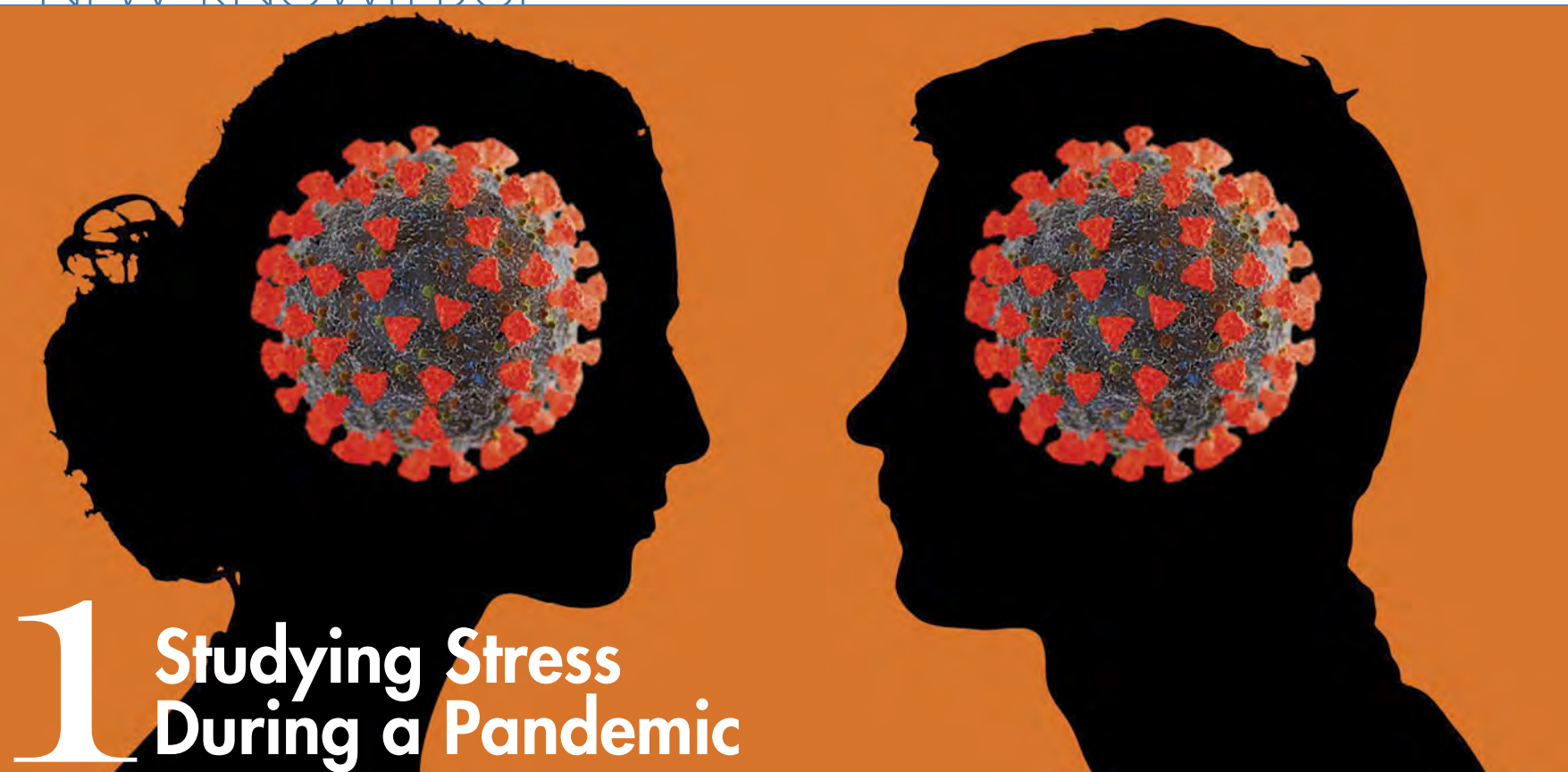
### Nontechnical Guide to Petroleum Geology, Exploration, Drilling & Production

Norman J. Hyne '61, in the new fourth edition of his widely used textbook, provides broad insight into the nature of gas and oil production today.



### Devotional Thoughts on the Lord's Supper, Offering and Prayer

Ronald Johnson '71 compiles 64 talks given prior to the Lord's Supper, 14 talks for the offering and two talks on prayer.



# 1 Studying Stress During a Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic—and the personal and financial emergencies that accompany it—are causing heightened levels of stress and anxiety across all demographics. In the U.S. alone, the pandemic has touched the lives of millions, and the economic halt has led to record-high unemployment.

To study the effect these stressful events are having on the people living through them, Professor of Psychological Science Patricia Smiley has received a \$164,138 research grant from the National Science Foundation. Her study will explore the changes in stress response in adults and children brought on by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The one-year study titled “The COVID-19 Pandemic and Changes in the Stress Response: Identifying Risk and Resilience in Adults and Children” is a collaboration with Professors Stacey Doan of Claremont McKenna College and Cindy Liu of Harvard Medical School. The researchers will focus on acute and chronic stress, the transmission of stress between caregivers and their children, and risk and resilience factors associated with exacerbating or reducing stress.

The research team will capitalize on an ongoing longitudinal study of stress and adaptation of 150 families with young children in Los Angeles County. “The pandemic will allow us to address fundamental questions about the effects of chronic stress that we would not otherwise be able to answer,” says Smiley. “Uncertainty is something our brains dislike and that’s when we see increased cortisol production, a stress hormone, in our study participants. In our original study, we saw heightened cortisol levels in those participants who are not able to quickly adapt to stressful situations, so in the time of the current pandemic, they may be more susceptible to chronic stressors, showing higher cortisol levels and poorer psychological health.”

# 2 Gaze Sharing and Remote Work Collaboration

During the coronavirus pandemic, working remotely has become, in some cases, the only way for many workplaces to continue to function. That has added a new urgency to a line of research that Alexandra Papoutsaki, assistant professor of computer science, was already pursuing before the pandemic began. To continue her work, she recently was awarded a \$105,572 National Science Foundation (NSF) research grant, which she will use to study gaze sharing in support of more effective remote work collaboration.

Gaze sharing, in which collaborators can see where each other’s gaze is directed on a shared screen, has been shown to have a positive effect in various visual tasks such as writing and programming.

Studying a person’s gaze is significant because it is a sign of human attention and intention and has a central role in workplace coordination and communication. Through eye tracking, researchers can assess eye movements to determine where a person is looking, what they are looking at and for how long they look at a screen.

Researchers like Papoutsaki have been developing tools to lessen some of the problems encountered in remote collaborations.

Papoutsaki’s two-year study aims to better understand gaze sharing and examine previously overlooked dimensions of remote collaboration. First, she will investigate the effect of the choice of the communication channel—either audio or video-based communica-

tion that is used in conjunction to gaze sharing in the screen collaboration process. Second, she will seek to understand how the awareness of someone else’s gaze affects groups of up to six remote collaborators that go beyond the traditionally studied pairs.

# 3 Modeling the Next Gravitational Wave Detector

“Gravitational waves are tiny ripples in space and time that Einstein himself thought people would not be able to measure,” Professor of Physics Thomas A. Moore explains. “But now they have been measured, and that promises a lot of interesting astronomy to be done in the future.”

Moore has received a \$145,223 grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to develop, test and share a computer application that simulates how future gravitational wave detectors would react to binary star systems. Moore’s three-year project, “Adding Spin to a Gravitational Wave Detector Simulator,” will create undergraduate summer research opportunities beginning in 2021 that expand on his work with Yijun “Ali” Wang ’19, now a graduate student in physics at Caltech. The project was “partly inspired by the interest that a lot of my students have because of the recent detection of gravitational waves,” Moore says, referring to the historic 2015 observation that led to the 2017 Nobel Prize in Physics for Rainer Weiss, Barry C. Barish and Kip S. Thorne.

The 2015 observation of waves created by a collision between two black holes was accomplished through the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory, or LIGO, which consists of two U.S.-based facilities, one in Hanford, Washington, and the other in Livingston, Louisiana. Each facility has two arms that stretch 2½ miles in different directions and use vacuum systems, lasers and mirrors to detect gravitational waves.

Moore, who has taught physics at Pomona since 1987, has been particularly interested in a planned space-based gravitational wave detector known as LISA, for Laser Interferometer Space Antenna, and notes that a detector built of satellites would have certain advantages over those on Earth. Computer modeling would allow scientists to evaluate potential designs before undertaking such massive projects.

# 4 Developing New Chemical Reactions for Drug Discovery

Nitrogen-based sulfur compounds such as sulfonamides, sulfamides and sulfamates are important compounds that have therapeutic applications against cancer, HIV and microbial infections. But existing approaches to making these compounds are limited by the commercial

availability of the starting materials and by harsh chemical reactions that prevent late-stage functionality of the compounds.

Assistant Professor of Chemistry Nicholas Ball has received a \$394,145 research enhancement grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to focus on the development of new chemical reactions that can facilitate drug target discovery using sulfur (VI) fluorides. For this three-year grant, Ball will work with an industry collaborator, Pfizer’s Christopher am Ende, and Chapman University’s Maduka Ogba. This collaboration will expand opportunities for Pomona College students to gain research experiences at Pfizer and in computational chemistry.

Ball’s lab has been working on sulfur-fluoride exchange chemistry, which is a promising new pathway to synthesize sulfur-based compounds by using easy-to-handle starting materials such as inexpensive Lewis acid salts and organic-based catalysts. The successful implementation of the research proposed for this grant will represent a considerable advance over current methods that rely on starting materials that are challenging to synthesize or isolate.

Equally important is the industry research experience that undergraduate students will gain from this research. The work in this proposal will expose them to biomedical research with significant focus on synthesis and medicinal chemistry.

# 5 Exploring the History of Environmental Law

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation’s highly competitive New Directions Fellowships are awarded annually to exceptional faculty in the humanities and humanistic social sciences who seek to acquire systematic training that pushes the edges of their own disciplinary background. One of the recipients this year is Aimee Bahng, assistant professor of gender and women’s studies.

Through this \$285,000 grant, Bahng will explore where property law and environmental law overlap or diverge, a path of inquiry which has taken her into legal terrain that is straining her disciplinary training in literary studies and feminist theory.

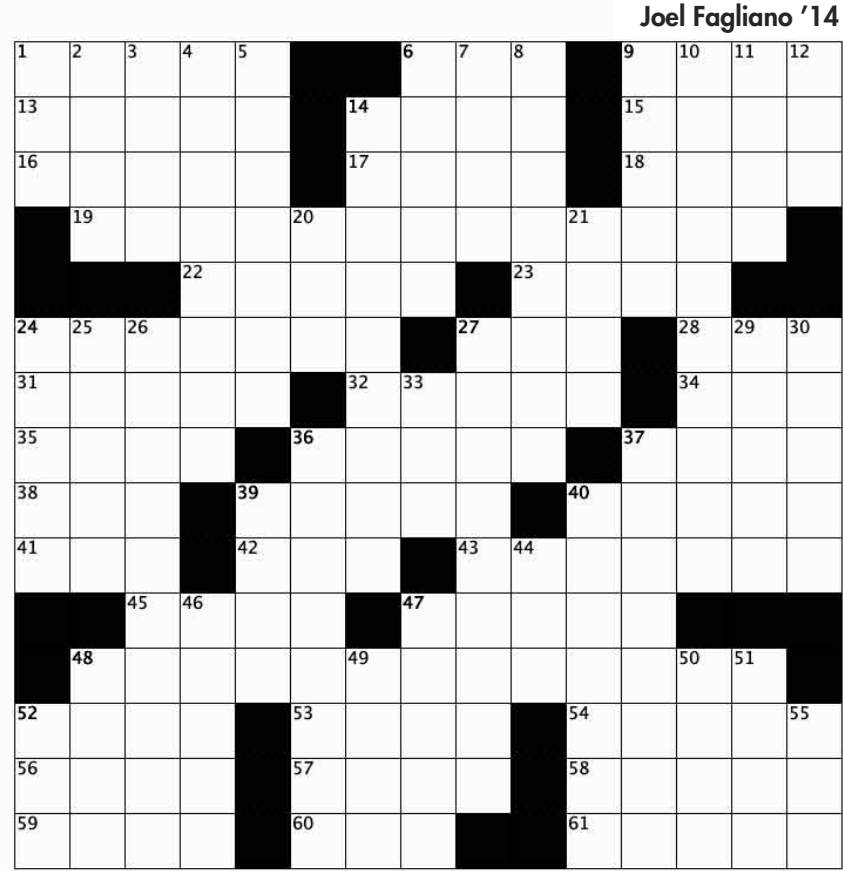
Working at the interstices of environmental justice, feminist science studies, and Indigenous Pacific and transnational Asian American studies, Bahng proposes to study the history of environmental law around oceanic bodies of water. She plans to analyze how human governance of the environment emerged out of Western liberal humanistic concepts of property. It questions whether the property-based origin of our existing legal framework can be an effective lens through which to legislate the oceanic commons; it will also explore historical determinations of who and what is able to bear rights.

Bahng hopes to spend at least part of her fellowship time pursuing coursework in environmental law at Lewis and Clark Law School, native Hawaiian law at the William S. Richardson School of Law at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, and indigenous law at the University of Victoria in Canada.



"Initial Hints"

- ACROSS**
- Clothing items worn by Superman and Dracula
  - Urgent police message, for short
  - Border on
  - Like the numbers 11, 17 and 23
  - Floating chunk of ice
  - Call \_\_\_ on (claim)
  - Material for a surgical glove
  - Misfortunes
  - World's largest furniture retailer
  - "BRB, I'm going to buy my favorite soda \_\_\_"
  - Daring
  - Boxing match
  - Like language that's insensitive to the handicapped
  - Top color on a traffic light
  - Yiddish laments
  - Writer Kafka
  - Moves briskly, as a horse
  - "That's amazing!"
  - \_\_\_ trap (part of a dryer)
  - Where you might see the abbreviations in this puzzle's theme clues
  - Yawn-inducing person
  - Sum up
  - Belle's love
  - Cold-weather jacket
  - Michael Bloomberg for Bloomberg L.P., e.g.
  - Give weapons
  - Apple Wallet document
  - Format of many a BuzzFeed article
  - Eat between meals
  - "JK, I was only pretending I knew 1960s first lady \_\_\_"
  - Fast-swimming shark
  - Sacha Baron Cohen persona
  - Doofus
  - Baker's appliance
  - One of five in the Olympic logo
  - \_\_\_ and whey
  - The "m" of Einstein's famous equation



© 2016, The New York Times

- DOWN**
- Military rank below sgt.
  - \_\_\_ Spring (2010s movement)
  - Falafel holder
  - Up-and-coming
  - Frequent feature of Cosmopolitan magazine
  - Metal mixture
  - Sport played on horseback
  - Safest options
  - French farewell
  - "BTW, I should tell you I don't commute by car, I \_\_\_"
  - Lyft competitor
  - Bag-screening org.
  - Prestigious distinction for an All-American athlete
  - Avenues: Abbr.
  - Physiques, informally
  - Insurance giant with a duck mascot
  - Bouquet tosser
  - "LOL, you've never eaten butter? Try this \_\_\_"
  - It gives off a foul, sulfury smell
  - Singer Thom of Radiohead
  - Perspiration
  - Prescriptions, for short
  - Of the third order
  - Put on the cloud, maybe
  - Soak up sun
  - Outdoor meals on blankets
  - Soak up sun
  - Desktop images
  - Parts of potatoes served as an appetizer
  - Coffee, slangily
  - Nobel-winning writer Wiesel
  - Urgent
  - Talks like this in "Star Wars" films he does
  - Honoree on the second Sunday in May
  - "Shame on you!"

TAKING TIME OUT

Since we're all spending a lot of time at home these days, this new section offers some amusing pastimes for those looking for a bit of relaxing fun.

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE

This crossword puzzle was designed by Joel Fagliano '14, the digital puzzle editor of *The New York Times* and assistant to the print crossword editor, Will Shortz. The answers are available at *PCM Online*.

COLOR ME CREATIVE

For those who have joined the adult coloring craze—or who want to give it a try—here's a familiar image from the Pomona College campus. Send us a scan of your work ([pcm@pomona.edu](mailto:pcm@pomona.edu)) to show off in a future issue.



SPECIAL REPORT

# Pomona vs. the Pandemic

## It all happened so fast.

The pandemic caused by the novel coronavirus hit Southern California and the rest of the country with a rate of acceleration that, for a time, left colleges like Pomona announcing new and sweeping steps seemingly every day. Advisories quickly became urgent warnings and unprecedented changes. Within the period of a few days in March, the College went from limiting travel to closing events to the public to canceling them entirely to sending most of its students and employees home to work and study remotely for the duration. As this magazine went to press, many decisions about the future remained to be made. But in the meantime, here's a look back at the pandemic semester of Spring 2020.

# A Pandemic Timeline

Pomona sends out the first of several health and travel advisories to the campus community about the expanding global epidemic caused by the novel coronavirus shortly after the first case is reported in the United States.

Jan. 24, 2020

The disease caused by the novel coronavirus is named COVID-19.

Feb. 11, 2020

The Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) reaches out to faculty about contingency plans in case the College needs to switch to remote instruction. The College seeks to curtail air travel by limiting sponsorship or reimbursement to trips that are deemed essential.

March 3, 2020

ITS holds the first of many workshops for faculty on distance learning technologies. One of the last public events to take place on campus is a baseball game between Pomona-Pitzer and Claremont-Mudd-Scripps at Pomona. Pomona-Pitzer wins 9-3.

March 9, 2020

All events are closed to the public, and most are canceled. All internal gatherings are limited to no more than 100 participants.

March 10, 2020



The Pomona-Pitzer baseball team defeats Claremont-Mudd-Scripps in one of the last public events held on campus before the cancellation of all spring semester events.

# Going Virtual

## The last day of March

in the year 2020 will be remembered as the day when Pomona College's curriculum entered a virtual new world.

By then, most students had already moved off campus, and most staff and faculty had begun to work from home. During a prolonged spring break, professors and staff had worked furiously to shift the curriculum temporarily to online instruction. Leading up to the virtual relaunch, the College's Information Technology Services (ITS) had held countless workshops to guide members of the faculty in the use of a range of online tools, provided laptops to students and everything from tablets to video cameras to faculty. Professors had also spent the time reviewing course plans, seeking the best way to communicate content and create interaction online.

The result was a reliance on multiple approaches and technologies as professors sought to move online in the way best suited to their content and teaching style. "Our faculty have been experimenting with pedagogical techniques like flipped classrooms, where they record their lectures in advance," Assistant Professor of Computer Science Alexandra Papoutsaki wrote, "while others have been trying different setups for real-time class meetings. Some have brought mini whiteboards home, some have been trying document-cameras so that they can project what they write on paper in real-time, and others are using set-ups like mine, switching between laptops and tablets."

Professors also reached out to their students, both to touch base and to prepare for the resumption of classes. "Because I am aware that people's transitions have varied quite a bit in smoothness and results," Associate Professor of Psychological Science and Africana Studies Eric Hurley noted, "the very first concrete thing I did was to ask all my students to 'please do let me know in an email if there are things about your particular situation that you think I need to know and consider as I try to support your navigating the remainder of the course in balance with life.' Of course, the College has been consistent in its offers of technical and other support, but I figured that some issues and difficulties are kind of particular and that they can only be troubleshoot as they come up. In fact, I did have a few responses to that, ranging from how virtual meetings might interact with students' accommodations to the challenge of focusing on coursework while living in a small space housing a large number of people."

Some professors chose not to try to recreate the classroom experience, moving instead to more individualized research. Associate Professor of Sociology Colin Beck explained, "Both of my seminars were



already planned to transition into student-focused work—discussions on topics that they were interested in, longer research papers, peer workshops on drafts, etc. It's not possible to recreate the magic of those discussions online, but it is quite easy to move the research process into Sakai discussion forums and Zoom office hours. So, for both classes, I have excised the minimal post-spring break "content" in favor of having students focus on their own research."

Some classes and disciplines offered greater challenges than others. Science classes with hands-on laboratories were forced to take on new forms. Professor of Physics Janice Hudgings reported: "For labs, we've switched from actually building the circuits with a breadboard to 'building' the circuits in an online circuit simulator, which allows us to do all the same measurements that we would have in the lab. The circuit simulator is a useful new tool that we wouldn't have learned without this shift to online teaching—so that's a nice win!"

Music faculty did their best to meet all the complexities of guiding ensembles and individual lessons in such dispersed wide-ranging settings. "Applied lessons—one-on-one instruction on an instrument or voice—are going forward," wrote Professor of Music Donna Di Grazia, "but it is taking herculean efforts to do so. Many students had borrowed instruments on campus from the department, which is now making arrangements to rent instruments at the department's expense and have them delivered to as many of these students as possible. The logistics of doing this are complex, and students also face challenges doing lessons or practicing with parents and siblings home, "and there is nowhere one can retreat and practice without distractions or without distracting everyone else."

Several faculty members praised the work and dedication of the ITS staff for accomplishing so much so quickly. Professor of Geology Eric Grosfils wrote: "The end-to-end development and testing of the Virtual Server by ITS was amazing and deserves a special call-out. This is something that would normally happen over many months; ITS did it in roughly two weeks. Without this capability, a big hunk of my computing-heavy course would be dead in the water. As it stands, I simply have to help my students adapt to a new way to access that computing!"

As at most of the nation's top colleges and universities, after a long debate and consultation with students, in recognition of the differing situations of students in completing their work after the campus was closed, Pomona's faculty voted to adopt a special grading policy for that semester. As a result, for spring 2020, students' transcripts will show only grades of P (pass), NRP (no report, pandemic) or I (incomplete). No letter grades were to be recorded. In addition, student transcripts will bear the notation "COVID-19: Enrollment and grades reflect disruption of Spring 2020."

After delaying the decision as long as possible, the College also determined that it would be unsafe to hold the usual Commencement exercises on campus for the Class of 2020, so after consulting with members of the class about their preference, the College announced that Commencement 2020 would be postponed until some as yet undetermined future date when it would be safer for the new graduates to return to campus to celebrate together the end of their four-year educational journey. [PCM](#)

Pomona informs its students that they must leave campus by March 18 and should not expect to return before the end of the semester. Spring break is extended to two weeks, after which the College plans to resume its class schedule through remote instruction. All spring events are canceled.

March 11, 2020

Pomona announces that all student workers will continue to be paid whether or not they are able to continue their employment by remote means. Students who cannot leave campus are asked to submit a petition to stay.

March 12, 2020

Students begin to leave campus.

March 13, 2020

The College announces a prorated refund of room and board for all students leaving campus, as well as covering all approved travel costs and other forms of emergency financial assistance for departing students.

March 14, 2020

The CDC issues an advisory calling for no gatherings of 50 or more people.

March 15, 2020

California Gov. Gavin Newsom issues an executive order urging people aged 65 and older or suffering from certain health conditions to shelter at home.

March 16, 2020

Packing Supplies  
Entrance  
Please Have ID Ready

Last Name  
M-Z

Exit Only

Pomona students pick up boxes and other packing supplies at Bridges Auditorium as they prepare to leave campus.

The pandemic turned the Sagehens' first invitation to the Sweet 16 into a bittersweet memory.

# BITTERSWEET 16

By Robyn Norwood

The team mobs Jack Boyle '20 after he hit the game-winning shot to send the Sagehens to the Sweet 16.

First came the shot: Jack Boyle's spectacular three-pointer from the corner as time expired on March 7 sent Pomona-Pitzer to the Sweet 16 of the NCAA Division III men's basketball tournament for the first time in program history.

"It felt like it hung in the air for almost an eternity," says Boyle PI '20, before the ball splashed through the net for a 71-70 victory over 10th-ranked Emory and the Sagehens ended up in a celebratory pile near midcourt.

Next came the shock: Sitting on a plane five days later on March 12 as they pulled away from the gate at Ontario International Airport to fly to their next game near Chicago, players' and coaches' phones started to ding.

"We were 100 yards from the terminal and we all looked up at once and saw that the NCAA tournament had been canceled at all levels," says Charlie Katsiaficas, men's basketball coach and professor of physical education. "A flight

attendant was standing right beside me, going through the normal routine that they do when you're pulling back in terms of the air mask and the seat belt and all that. So I said, 'Excuse me, ma'am, the game we're flying to has just been canceled. Is there any way you can take us back to the terminal so we can get off the plane?'

"She goes running up the aisle and I'm thinking to myself, there is no way they're going to allow us to get off this plane. She comes back 30, 45 seconds later and says, 'Yep, we're going to pull back in and let you guys get off.'"

So unfurled one of the most emotional turnarounds in the history of Pomona-Pitzer Athletics. The only way a season usually ends on a buzzer-beating victory is when a team wins a championship, unless a team's not good enough to make the postseason at all. Instead, it ended by getting off a plane.

The shot was one shining moment, now forever in suspended animation.

"You realize that your sports career is over, for many of us," James Kelbert '20 says from his home in San Jose as classes moved online and events across the country were suspended or canceled because of the global coronavirus pandemic. "You have people crying; you have people just very upset. It's a weird feeling, because you're done, but you hadn't lost. You go through a whirlwind of feelings and emo-



tions, just trying to navigate all of those.

"But at the end of the day, you've got to keep it in perspective, at least from my point of view. This is a serious pandemic going on. This is probably the best thing for all of us."

The play will live on in Sagehen lore.

Down two points with 2.2 seconds to go in the second round of the NCAA tournament, Pomona-Pitzer had the ball out of bounds near the Sagehens' bench.

The strong-armed Kelbert, also the goalie for the Pomona-Pitzer water polo team, stood on the sideline to inbound the ball. Alex Preston '21 set a screen in the lane to free Boyle. And Kelbert led Boyle with a pass like a quarterback leading a receiver, hitting him with a two-handed, diagonal cross-court pass as he arrived in the far corner.

"Preston set a great screen, so I was I was able to get pretty wide open," Boyle says. "Kelbert made an absolutely phenomenal pass."

A defender rushed in to try to block the shot, but Boyle threw a fake.

"I saw the guy fly by me, and then I had a clean look at the basket. I felt confident in the moment that I could get a good shot off, and so I just let it fly," Boyle says.

And so it ended.

After their third-round game against Elmhurst College in Illinois was canceled, the team deplaned and returned to campus, where students were packing to leave for the semester. For seniors Boyle, Kelbert, Micah Elan PI '20, Adam Rees '20 and Matthew Paik '20, it was the end of the line.

"That's the tough thing, just trying to squeeze in that emotional journey," Kelbert says. "I think there was a four-day turnaround between being on that plane ready to take off and then me leaving campus for the last time as a senior. People were trying to sell as many things as they possibly can, especially seniors who were like, 'What am I going to do with my fridge now?'"

Realizing there would be no exit meetings, no banquet, no closure, Katsiaficas and his staff called a meeting for the next day, and the team played some loose, somewhat socially distanced pickup ball, then had Domino's pizza for dinner amid informal awards and recognition.

"We all just kind of got to enjoy each other's company and play the game we love," Boyle says.

The son of University of Colorado Coach Tad Boyle and older brother of high school senior Pete Boyle, who plans to attend Pomona and play for the Sagehens next season, Boyle is back home near Boulder, studying online and plotting his future. After interning last summer for the San Antonio Spurs, coached by former Pomona-Pitzer coach Gregg Popovich, he plans to pursue coaching for at least a while, maybe get an MBA.

Kelbert ultimately plans to pursue medicine.

"This just makes me want to become a doctor a whole lot more," he says. "Just because you see the bravery and you see the selflessness that they go through, because a lot of people are treating tons of victims without any personal protective equipment, knowing very well they could get infected and die from this."

"It's really tough to see them go through these plights but it's definitely strengthened my own convictions."

The Division III NCAA championship game would have been April 5 in Atlanta, sharing the weekend stage with the NCAA Division I Men's Final Four. Who is to say where Pomona-Pitzer's run might have ended?

"I think guys were like, we want more, we want to see where we can take this thing," Katsiaficas says. "But we also know there are a bunch of other teams that are dealing with similar situations. Division II was in the middle of their national tournament and Division I was just heading into a lot of their conference tournaments. So you had teams all over the country that were chasing their dream of winning a national championship. Spring sports are having their whole season canceled. So there are plenty of disappointments throughout the country. But as we get further away from it, you realize this had to be done. It's something that makes sense for the country."

The pain and frustration, over time, subside.

"It's great to go out, I guess, on a high like that," Boyle says. "To have your last college athletics experience be that moment." [PCM](#)

A Dining Service employee serves a student with a salad in a "Grab-and-Go container."



Pomona closes all academic buildings and expands its work-from-home policy. The College's Dining Service switches to a "Grab-and-Go" system in which the students remaining on campus receive their meals in take-out containers and return with them to their rooms.

March 17, 2020

A special, two-week spring break begins. Most students have left campus by this date. Slightly more than 80 students who are unable to leave for various reasons end up staying on campus.

March 18, 2020

In response to Gov. Gavin Newsom's sweeping new stay-at-home order, Pomona asks all staff members who can work from home to do so. Pomona makes Zoom accounts available to all students, faculty and staff and holds first training in using the online conferencing platform.

March 20, 2020

All students remaining on campus move into the Oldenborg Center residence, where they can all have singles and space for social distancing.

March 24, 2020

Classes resume with remote instruction. The College announces that, respecting the wishes of the Class of 2020, the year's Commencement ceremony will be postponed until a future date to be determined.

March 30, 2020

The College estimates the extra cost, to date, of dealing with the coronavirus pandemic at between \$6 million and \$7 million, including refunds of room and board and financial support for departing students.

April 13, 2020



# Job-Hunting in the Pandemic

**I**n the fall of 2001, Hazel Raja, now associate dean and senior director of Pomona's Career Development Center, was living in New York when the unthinkable happened—the terrorist attacks of 9/11. "I'd taken out a large loan to go to New York University. It had always been my dream," she explains. "I remember feeling overwhelmed and lost; I was emotionally drained by all of the loss, trauma and upheaval. I struggled to focus on a job search right away. What's happening now feels very familiar."

The global pandemic has created skyrocketing unemployment just as many of Pomona's new graduates are job-hunting. "Students will need to continue to practice patience and focus on what they can control. They need to understand that their Plan B is just as important, right now, as their Plan A," says Raja. "The pandemic has impacted hiring. There have been delays and fewer jobs posted. Students and our new graduates have to be realistic," she says. "But there are things that they can do. And that's how the CDO can be helpful."

## PCM: What services are available through the CDO?

**Raja:** The CDO is operating all of our services remotely. We're offering close to 30 remote career advising appointments a day, as well as online info sessions and other resources through Handshake, plus alumni networking opportunities through our virtual programming and resources like Sagehen Connect and SagePost47.

Hiring has gone entirely online; recruiters are conducting all of their interviews via phone and/or videoconferencing. If students don't feel 100% comfortable with using those platforms to interview, they

should connect with us to get trained. We can do mock interviews with them and will share tips to ensure that they are successful in presenting themselves competitively and authentically in this job market.

## PCM: Who is hiring in this environment?

**Raja:** There are industries that have increased their hiring as a result of the pandemic. For example, many companies are relying on their communication channels to share messaging, so they are hiring communications professionals who focus on social media and public relations. Companies that make remote work easier like Zoom, Slack,

Microsoft Teams, Skype, etc., are hiring. Obviously, the health care sector and pharmaceuticals are booming. Additionally, the public sector: governments, county offices, the schools are actively recruiting. They're looking for people to help quickly launch projects to support communities. Other areas that are actively hiring include accounting, logistics and delivery.

Start-ups are a great option right now for students and graduates who are enterprising and nimble. There are a lot of start-ups that are looking for new graduates because of the skills they bring, their ability to be creative and innovative thinkers and their ability to quickly pivot.

In contrast, there are industries that are actively cutting jobs. If somebody said to me, "I want to get a job in the airline industry," I would say, "Well, there are very few to no jobs being posted in aviation right now." Additionally, leisure and entertainment have been hit hard. It's important to recognize that there are some fields, and some jobs, that may just evaporate for the time being or disappear altogether. If a student is struggling because of the lack of opportunities in their chosen career path, I hope they will feel comfortable leaning on the CDO for support and advice.

## SURP Becomes RAISE

The College's temporary shift to online interaction took on new forms as summer arrived. Most notably, the College's usual Student Undergraduate Research (SURP) program was restructured, temporarily, into the Remote Alternative Summer Experience (RAISE), a program designed to provide rising sophomores, juniors and seniors with multi-week, paid fellowships that will allow them to pursue independent projects or connect with faculty research programs, all through virtual means. More than 400 Pomona students have chosen to take part in the program this summer.

"Students' proposals covered subjects ranging from art to environmental analysis and from physics to philosophy," wrote President G.

Gabrielle Starr in an email about the new program. "Supported with a \$2,500 fellowship, each student will design a final product that encapsulates what they learned, achieved or created this summer and that can be shared with the Pomona College community—and we can't wait to see the results when summer is over. We are deeply grateful to our community of generous donors who have immediately responded by providing over \$1.1 million of restricted endowed funds, as well as new gifts, to support our students this summer."

In other forms of summer support for students, the College provided funding for up to 125 Pomona College Internship Program (PCIP) students who will be exploring potential career paths via internships performed remotely in fields such as public policy, healthcare research and publishing. The institution also okayed the hiring 55 current students to work remotely to assist staff and faculty offices across the campus.

## PCM: How can students job-hunt under safer-at-home orders?

**Raja:** Seventy-five percent of jobs are found through networking; therefore, 75 percent of a student's job search or internship search should focus on networking.

In a situation like this where your options to physically network are extremely limited, you need to have a really strong online brand—that's really important now because opportunities to woo potential firms in person are not an option.

Students have to "practice their pitch," and they just have to keep applying for jobs. To be quite frank, I don't think students apply for enough opportunities. In this type of environment, it's even more important that they are actively applying and that they apply for even more opportunities than they would have normally.

It's worth noting—if you need to take a pause because the industry you want to go into is not making decisions, ask yourself: What can I do between now and when it reopens to show how actively engaged I have been, and how can I improve my candidacy for when things reopen?

## PCM: What advice do you have for students on summer plans?

**Raja:** Summer is a time for building skills through experiences. That expectation hasn't changed but the source of how you gain

those skills may have to be adjusted. It's worth noting that now that companies and organizations are reopening, there is going to be great need for them to ramp up quickly. They're likely going to be looking for short-term manpower to help pick things back up again. And that is something that I think college students are the perfect candidate for, because short-term work is exactly what they're looking for in the summer months.

Additionally, the Pomona College Internship Program (PCIP) and RAISE program are supporting hundreds of students in developing their knowledge and employability skills through internships and independent projects. While those programs are closed for this summer, students can also develop great skills through remote campus employment. Available jobs are posted on Handshake.

Additionally, students could take advantage of online learning, online teaching or tutoring opportunities, or working for summer programs for kids (if they enjoy doing that kind of thing).

If students have lost their internships or plans for the summer or are not getting any responses, they need to reflect on what they can do to stay relevant. How can they stay on the radar of the person who hired them or would have been interested in their candidacy under other circumstances? What can they do to help support the employer or that organization remotely, if they're willing to let them do that?

## PCM: How can alumni help?

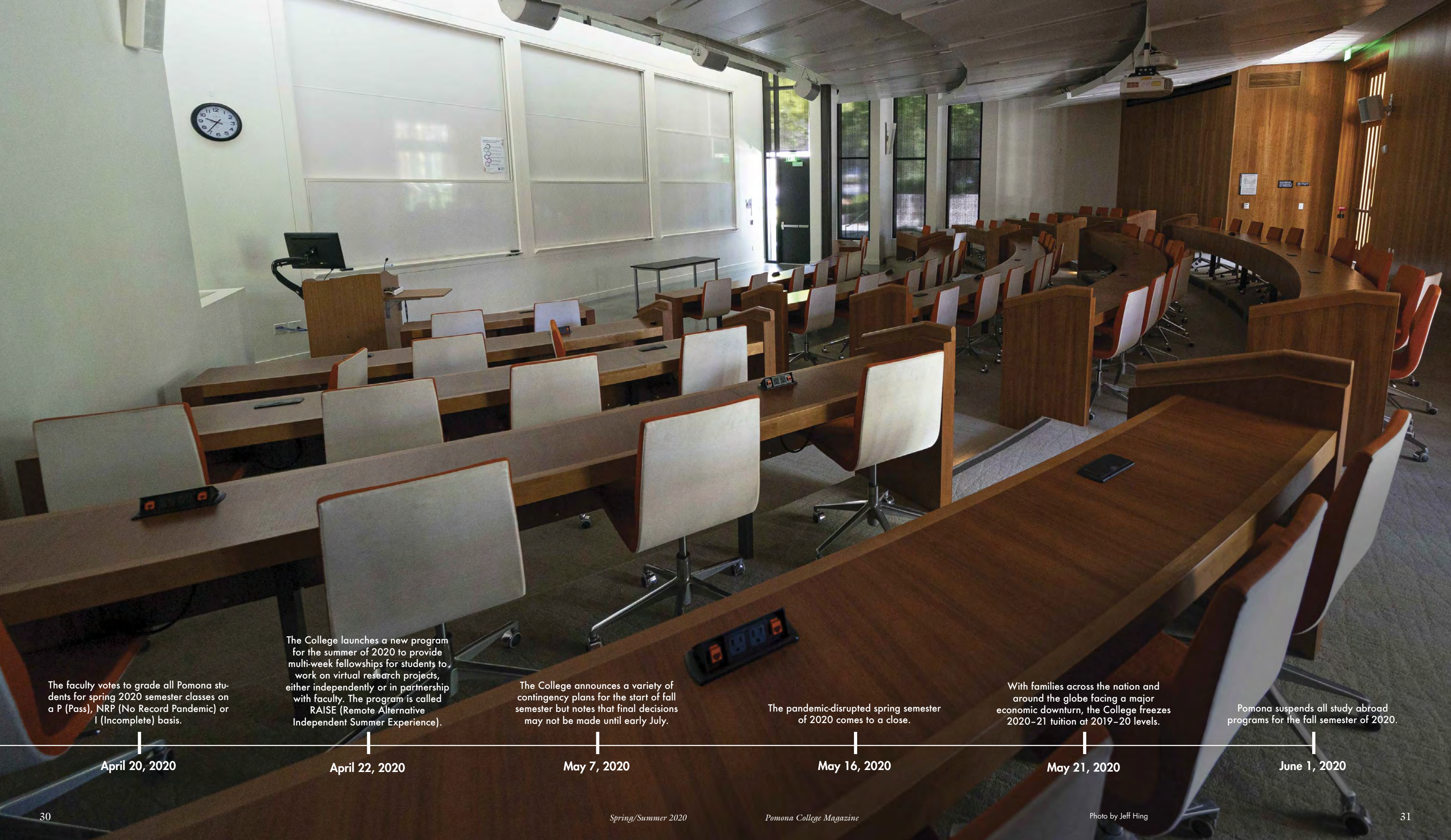
**Raja:** Alumni and parents can be a great resource to students right now. We are working with the Alumni Office and Parent Relations to explore a number of avenues to connect our students to Sagehens and Sagehen-supporters out in the workforce. Our #HelpingHens campaign, which launched in April, signposts mentorship options and the promotion of jobs and internships.

## PCM: What should students do to cope as they search for work?

**Raja:** Students need to take time to process what's happening and take care of themselves by prioritizing their well-being. You are a better job-searcher if you feel good about yourself. And you will feel good about yourself if you are sleeping well, eating well and taking care of yourself.

This can be a very isolating experience. Students should really be thinking about their emotional health and schedule time to connect with their roommates, friends and mentors. Mental health is also not something that can be neglected. If students had therapy appointments lined up, they should keep doing them virtually, because job-searching can lead to increased anxiety, regardless of the environment. It's really easy to be down on yourself and take things really personally if you're not taking care of your well-being. [PCM](#)





The faculty votes to grade all Pomona students for spring 2020 semester classes on a P (Pass), NRP (No Record Pandemic) or I (Incomplete) basis.

April 20, 2020

The College launches a new program for the summer of 2020 to provide multi-week fellowships for students to work on virtual research projects, either independently or in partnership with faculty. The program is called RAISE (Remote Alternative Independent Summer Experience).

April 22, 2020

The College announces a variety of contingency plans for the start of fall semester but notes that final decisions may not be made until early July.

May 7, 2020

The pandemic-disrupted spring semester of 2020 comes to a close.

May 16, 2020

With families across the nation and around the globe facing a major economic downturn, the College freezes 2020-21 tuition at 2019-20 levels.

May 21, 2020

Pomona suspends all study abroad programs for the fall semester of 2020.

June 1, 2020

# Sagehens on the Front Lines

**Emergency room physician** Jonathan Gelber '10 is on the front lines battling the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic at Highland Hospital in Oakland, California. Jennifer Doudna '85, internationally famous for the CRISPR-Cas9 gene-editing technique, is establishing a high-capacity coronavirus testing lab on the University of California at Berkeley campus. And Victoria Paterno '75 P '07, an assistant clinical professor in pediatrics at UCLA Medical Center who had retired from private practice, volunteered to return for COVID-19 duty. Those are just a few of the many Sagehens across the country who are responding to the pandemic. Here are a few of their stories in their own voices.

## Jonathan Gelber '10

*Emergency Room Physician, Oakland, CA*

"We do care predominately for vulnerable patients, people of unstable housing or frankly, homeless," Gelber told CNN on March 30. "When we work to plan discharges, when we tell people things like 'shelter in place,' [we've learned] to make sure people have a shelter to 'shelter in place' in. We think it's a lot easier to tell somebody like me to go hang out at home for two weeks and get food delivered. It's a little harder when the patient is a 55-year-old gentleman who lives in a tent encampment under the 45th Street bypass, and with 15 other people. So we've learned how to plan for that and see our problems ahead of time before they arise. That's saying, hey, how do we keep the curve flat, how do we keep patients like this from infecting other patients at shelters, at homeless encampments, as well as the general patient population? And how do we keep the people in the emergency room safe from infecting each other in the lobby?"

## Zack Haberman '10

*Emergency Room Physician, Stockton, CA*

"My ER serves a diverse community, including a large elderly and socioeconomically underserved population. I am seeing the number of COVID patients continue to grow. While I can draw on what I've learned from basic science at Pomona, medical school and residency, the scariest part of the virus is how much is unknown. In many ways, I am used to that—my job is to see patients with an unknown illness or problem and make life-or-death decisions based on incomplete information. However, the more I see and read about the virus, it doesn't seem to respond in the same way that other serious heart and lung emergencies do. Because of that, we still don't know the best way to treat patients—especially the sickest ones. And unlike most emergencies, it is putting myself, my co-workers and our families at risk. I've already had to take care of my colleagues who have fallen ill from COVID, and I get a pit in my stomach knowing that there will be more to come."

## Vian Zada '16

*Fourth-year Medical Student, Georgetown University*

"Medical students across the country are helping out with the response in virtual ways. For me, I am part of the MedStar Telehealth Response Team and, with other students, am calling thousands of patients with their test results. I am also a coach with our school's disaster preparedness exercise, and leading Zoom sessions for first-year medical students. I also have an Instagram page @studentsagainst-covid, which I am managing with some health professionals in the San Diego area, where I grew up. We are hoping to target younger audiences with information on social distancing and disease prevention."

## David Siew '98

*Internal Medicine Physician, Kirkland, WA*

"Our hospital identified the first large-scale outbreak of COVID-19 disease in the United States after noting an influx of patients with unexplained respiratory disease from a local care facility. Up until that point, COVID-19 still felt a world away and none of these patients had the primary risk factor: international travel. We were shocked to discover ourselves at the initial national epicenter of the pandemic. I am amazed and humbled by the mobilization of our hospital and the multidisciplinary effort of every member of our organization to care for the community. My group continues to treat many hospitalized patients with the disease and has compiled the lessons we are learning for other health care providers. ... The growing and evolving body of knowledge regarding COVID-19 requires providers to assimilate new information on a daily basis. Since there are many uncertainties, we have to collaborate with others and form our own critical conclusions on which to base our testing and treatment strategies."

## Daniel Low '11

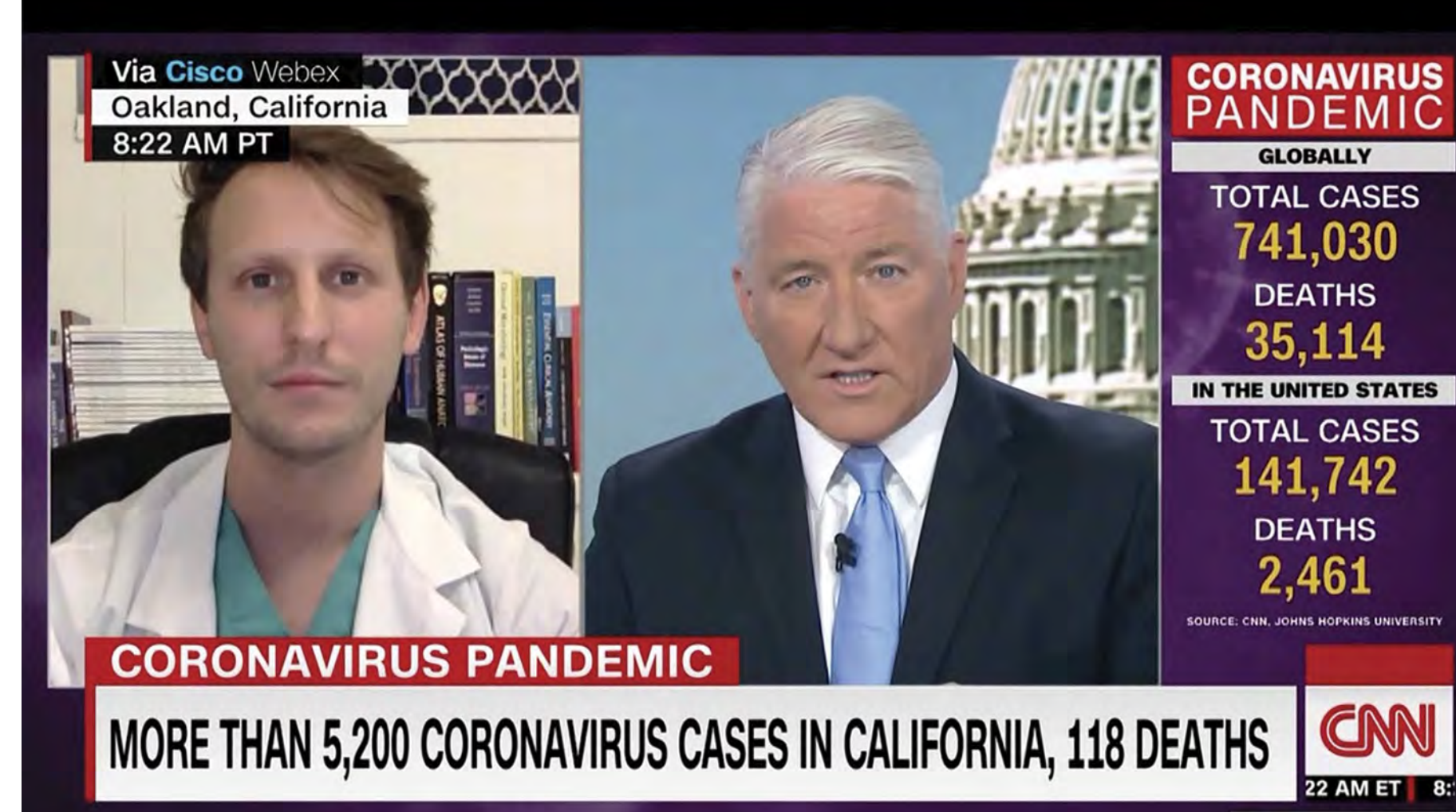
*Famiy Medicine Physician, Seattle, WA*

"I think it is critically important to highlight the disproportionate effect that COVID-19 has on marginalized communities. Certainly, COVID-19 has touched virtually everyone, but the manifestations are exacerbating existing socioeconomic and racial inequities in our country. Community health centers are being hit particularly hard and are having particular difficulty in serving the most disenfranchised individuals in our communities. Without a critical lens focusing on the most vulnerable, things as seemingly utilitarian as the ethical rationing of limited ventilators will ultimately worsen healthcare disparities because criteria for respirators often focus on the absence of chronic conditions, and yet we know that structural violence and systemic racism have resulted in communities of color and economically disadvantaged people having higher rates of chronic conditions at baseline. I'm trying to push an agenda that focuses on and responds to the most underserved during this crisis, as we already have emerging data demonstrating that these communities are the most hard-hit."

## Kate Dzurilla '11

*Nurse Practitioner, Brooklyn, NY*

"I live on the Upper West Side, and look forward to 7 p.m. every night when we open our windows to hear cheers, applause, trumpets, bells, dogs barking, etc. Each night over the past week the cheers are



Dr. Jonathan Glater '10 is interviewed on CNN on March 30, 2020.

growing louder. I cheer for my colleagues working in medicine, but also for the other essential personnel that are making this time in our lives easier, like those working in grocery stores, hardware stores, and bodegas, and delivering food and driving public transportation that helps me get to work. It reminds me that we're all in it together, and that despite how unbelievable and painful this time is, we still feel hope and optimism."

## Vicki Chia '08

*Chief Resident in Obstetrics and Gynecology, Boston, MA*

"I have borne witness to the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the birth experiences of patients whose communities have historically experienced denials of reproductive freedom. Restricting the presence of a patient's labor support person(s), disclosing their diagnosis of COVID-19, and making the recommendation of separation from their baby feels like an emotional assault on a new parent, especially one who has limited resources in terms of housing and childcare. Additionally, my fellow health care providers and I are experiencing the shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) through hospital policies that ration or require reuse of PPE, and limitations in testing capacity have resulted in late diagnosis and delayed identification of health care worker exposures."

## Shennan Weiss '00

*Neurologist, East Brooklyn, NY*

"As a neurologist I was consulted for cases of stroke, seizure and confusion. We saw an increase in the number of our consultations as the

COVID-19 pandemic grew. We saw at least five cases of catastrophic large blood vessel strokes in patients under 60 who were infected with COVID-19. On at least one occasion, we intervened with a thrombectomy revealing a larger than normal blood clot. Not all of these patients survived as a result of related respiratory complications. Those who did survive were discharged to nursing facilities often still suffering from debilitating hemiparesis and aphasia."

## Johanna Glaser '10

*Fourth-year Medical Student, UC San Francisco School of Medicine*

"I just finished a rotation in a skilled nursing facility at the local VA [Veterans Affairs] hospital. All of my patients during this time, men over 70 years old with comorbidities, were among the highest risk for serious illness and death if exposed to SARS-CoV-2. It's been devastating to see the fatality rate of this pandemic among the elderly, especially those residing communally, with about a fifth of all deaths in the U.S. due to COVID-19 being linked to nursing facilities. Luckily, not a single occupant of the facility where I was on rotation had any worrisome symptoms nor had tested positive for the virus. This, however, came at the cost of extreme isolation for this otherwise highly sociable group of men. ...

"I hope that we can take this moment to reexamine how we deliver health and essential services in our country, with a new focus on marginalized populations and health equity. ... In the medical context and more broadly, let us take this unprecedented event as an opportunity to avoid unnecessary suffering and inequality in the future."

AN EXCERPT FROM

# FIELD OF BLOOD

By Joanne Freeman '84



**W**RITING THIS BOOK was an emotional process. Immersing myself in extreme congressional discord and national divisiveness at a time of extreme congressional discord and national divisiveness was no easy

thing. At various points, I had to walk away and get some distance. At other points, unfolding events sent me scurrying to my keyboard to hash things out. Of course, there are worlds of difference between the pre-Civil War Congress and the Congress of today. But the similarities have much to tell us about the many ways in which the People's Branch can help or hurt the nation.

Many years ago, when I began researching this book, it was far less timely and far more puzzling. There seemed to be so much violence in the House and Senate chambers in the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s. Shoving. Punching. Pistols. Bowie knives. Congressmen brawling in bunches while colleagues stood on chairs to get a good look. At least once, a gun was fired on the House floor. Why hadn't this story been told?

That question is answered in the pages that follow, which reveal for the first time the full scope and scale of physical violence in Congress between 1830 and the Civil War. Yet even knowing that answer, I didn't fully grasp how such congressional fireworks could remain under cover until last year. In a long and intimate Politico interview, former House Speaker John Boehner revealed that some time ago, during a contentious debate over earmarks (items tacked onto bills to benefit a member of Congress's home state), Alaska Republican Don Young pushed him up against a wall in the House chamber and threatened him with a knife. According to Boehner, he stared Young down, tossed off a few cusswords, and the matter ended. According to Young, they later



**The Field of Blood: Violence in Congress and the Road to Civil War**  
By Joanne Freeman '84  
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018  
480 pages, \$28

became friends; Boehner was best man at Young's wedding. And according to the press reports that addressed the incident, it wasn't the first time that Young pulled a knife in the halls of Congress. In 1988, he reportedly waved one at a supporter of a bill that would have restricted logging in Alaska. (He also angrily shook an oosik—the penis bone of a walrus—at an Interior Department official who wanted to restrict walrus hunting in 1994, but that's an entirely different matter.) Two of these confrontations made the papers when they happened, but only recently has the Boehner showdown come to light. Remarkably, even in an age of round-the-clock multimedia press coverage, what happens in Congress sometimes stays in Congress.

From a modern vantage point, it's tempting to laugh—or gasp—at such outbursts and move on, and sometimes that's merited. (The oosik incident is definitely worth a chuckle.) As alarming as Young's knifeplay seems, it says less about a dangerous trend than it does about a somewhat flamboyant congressman.

And yet congressional combat has meant much more than that—especially in the fraught final years before the Civil War. In those times, as this book will show, armed groups of Northern and Southern congressmen engaged in hand-to-hand combat on the House ▶

# The Authoritarian Pandemic

An Essay by Mieczysław P. Boduszyński  
Associate Professor of Politics, Pomona College

THE WORLD WAS ALREADY in an authoritarian moment even before COVID-19 overwhelmed our lives in the spring of 2020. After a surge of democratization following the end of the Cold War, in the late 2000s democratic gains began to reverse. Since 2006, more countries have declined in freedom than gained it. At the same time, democratic openings in diverse parts of the world have failed to produce democracy. Neither the Arab Spring of 2011 (with the notable exception of Tunisia) nor electoral challenges to autocracy in countries such as Venezuela and Zimbabwe succeeded in reversing the slide toward authoritarianism. Only six of the world's 15 most populous countries (India, the United States, Indonesia, Brazil, Japan and Mexico) can now be classified as democracies. And yet even in these countries, the trend has been toward growing executive power and illiberal populism.

The novel coronavirus has already exacerbated these trends, for reasons both internal and external to the countries experiencing democratic decline.

I begin with the internal. Coronavirus has led people to fear for their lives. History teaches us that when people fear for their lives, they tend to be willing to trade freedom for security. Measures like border closures are immensely popular because it shows people that the state is doing something. In this ▶



**“Since 2006, more countries have declined in freedom than gained it.”**

floor. Angry about rights violated and needs denied, and worried about the degradation of their section of the Union, they defended their interests with threats, fists, and weapons.

When that fighting became endemic and congressmen strapped on knives and guns before heading to the Capitol every morning—when they didn't trust the institution of Congress or even their colleagues to protect their persons—it meant something. It meant extreme polarization and the breakdown of debate. It meant the scorning of parliamentary rules and political norms to the point of abandonment. It meant that structures of government and the bonds of Union were eroding in real time. In short, it meant the collapse of our national civic structure to the point of crisis. The nation didn't slip into disunion; it fought its way into it, even in Congress.

The fighting wasn't new in the late 1850s; it had been happening for decades. Like the Civil War, the roots of congressional combat ran

**“The nation didn't slip into disunion; it fought its way into it, even in Congress.”**

deep. So did its sectional tone and tempo; Southern congressmen had long been bullying their way to power with threats, insults, and violence in the House and Senate chambers, deploying the power of public humiliation to get their way, antislavery advocates suffering worst of all. This isn't to say that Congress was in a constant state of chaos; it was a working institution that got things done. But the fighting was common enough to seem routine, and it mattered. By affecting what Congress did, it shaped the nation.

It also shaped public opinion of Congress. Americans generally like their representatives far more than they like the institution of Congress. They like them all the more if they are aggressive, defending the rights and interests of the folks back home with gusto; there's a reason why Don Young's constituents have reelected him twenty-three times. The same held true in antebellum America; Americans wanted their congressmen to fight for their rights, sometimes with more than words.

This was direct representation of a powerful kind, however damaging it proved to be. The escalation of such fighting in the late 1850s was a clear indication that the American people no longer trusted the institution of Congress to address their rights and needs. The impact of this growing distrust was severe. Unable to turn to the government for resolution, Americans North and South turned on one another. The same held true for congressmen; despite the tempering influence of cross-sectional friendships, they, too, lost faith in their sectional other. In time, the growing fear and distrust tore the nation apart.

Toward the start of my research, I discovered poignant testimony to the power of congressional threats and violence. It took the form

of a confidential memorandum with three signatures on the bottom: Benjamin Franklin Wade (R-OH), Zachariah Chandler (R-MI), and Simon Cameron (R-PA). And it told a striking story.

One night in 1858, Wade, Chandler, and Cameron—all antislavery—decided that they'd had enough of Southern insults and bullying. Outraged by the onslaught of abuse, they made a difficult decision. Swearing loyalty to one another, they vowed to challenge future offenders to duels and fight “to the coffin.” There seemed to be no other way to stem the flow of Southern insults than to fight back, Southern-style. This was no easy choice. They fully expected to be ostracized back home; in the North, dueling was condemned as a barbaric Southern custom. But that punishment seemed no worse than the humiliation they faced every day in Congress. So they made their plans known, and—according to their statement—they had an impact. “[W]hen it became known that some northern senators were ready to fight, for sufficient cause,” the tone of Southern insults softened, though the abuse went on. The story is dramatic, but what affected me most when I first read it was the way the three men told it; even years later, they could barely contain themselves. “Gross personal abuse” had an impact on these men, and it was mighty. Not only did it threaten “their very manhood” on a daily basis, but by silencing Northern congressmen, it deprived their constituents of their representative rights, an “unendurable outrage” that made them “frantic with rage and shame.” To Wade, Chandler, and Cameron, sustained Southern bullying wasn't a mere matter of egos and parliamentary power plays. It struck at the heart of who they were as men and threatened the very essence of representative government.

They had to do something. And they did.

These men were doing their best to champion their cause and their constituents in trying times, and they said so in their statement. They had written it “for those who come after us to study, as an example of what it once cost to be in favor of liberty, and to express such sentiments in the highest places of official life in the United States.” They were pleading with posterity—with us—to understand how threatened they had felt, how frightened they had been, how much it had taken for them to fight back, and thus how valuable was their cause. In a handful of paragraphs, they bore witness to the presence and power of congressional violence.

When I first read their plea, it brought tears to my eyes. It was so immediate and yet so far away. It was also stunningly human, expressing anger and outrage and shame and fear and pride all in one. Not only did it bring the subject of this book to living, breathing life, but it showed how it felt to be part of it. By offering a glimpse of the emotional reality of their struggle, Wade, Chandler, and Cameron opened a window onto the lost world of congressional violence.

The lessons of their time ring true today: when trust in the People's Branch shatters, part of the national “we” falls away. Nothing better testifies to the importance of Congress in preserving and defining the American nation than witnessing the impact of its systemic breakdown. [PCM](#)

Joanne Freeman '84 is the Class of 1954 Professor of American History and of American Studies at Yale University. “Author's Note” from *THE FIELD OF BLOOD: VIOLENCE IN CONGRESS AND THE ROAD TO CIVIL WAR* by Joanne B. Freeman. Copyright © 2018 by Joanne B. Freeman. Reprinted by permission of Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

sense, a pandemic resembles war, which also tends to produce a “rally-around-the-flag” effect in which people are willing to stand behind their leaders, often in an uncritical way. We saw this with the Patriot Act after 9/11 in the United States, but even way back in the Middle Ages, European monarchs increased their power as a result of the plague that devastated the continent at the time.

Democracy may be sufficiently robust to withstand a temporary strengthening of executive power and a weakening of independent institutions to respond to a crisis in well-developed democracies. However, in new or fragile democracies, autocrats looking to maintain their power and patronage under the cover of coronavirus can deal a fatal blow to democratic institutions. They can harness a sense of fear or disruption to solidify their own power or that of their ruling clique or to expand it further. They can also use disinformation as a tactic—as a way of distracting, dividing and discrediting legitimate, factual sources of information while disparaging experts. In the end, disinformation, too, undermines democracy. This tactic, sadly, has also been deployed here in the United States more recently, but it has a long history in the autocratic toolbox.

The legitimacy of elections—the most basic ingredient of democracy—can also be undermined by leaders under the cover of the coronavirus threat. This can entail suggesting that alternate voting methods are inherently corrupted or delaying elections in the name of the pandemic.

Consider the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), a region I teach and write about at Pomona. MENA leaders are using COVID-19 as an opportunity to expand their political and security authorities. These changes are likely to be permanent and will lay the groundwork for stronger authoritarianism across the region. Egypt has cracked down on journalists, including detaining prominent Egyptian journalist Lina Attalah and summoning foreign correspondents to complain about their critical coverage of the country’s coronavirus response. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu struck a deal to form an “emergency government” that would allow him to remain in office after three failed attempts to form a ruling coalition. Jordan and Morocco have similarly used emergency powers to arrest journalists and citizens for “spreading rumors” about the virus.

But there is an external autocracy-strengthening dimension to the pandemic as well, and also one that bolsters trends that had emerged before COVID-19. In recent years, the democracy and human rights promoting role of the United States has diminished greatly. Part of this is a function of declining U.S. power, but it is also about the Trump administration’s relinquishing of America’s traditional democracy-promoting role. The administration has not only turned a blind eye to repression around the world, but in some cases the president himself has openly praised autocrats like Egyptian president Abdel Fattah al-Sisi while disparaging allies like German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

This has created a permissive international environment for the spread of autocracy around the world. While in the past the threat of U.S. censure (though that was hardly consistent even before Trump) moderated the authoritarian excesses of regimes from Eastern Europe

to Latin America. Now they feel they have the acquiescence of a White House only interested in a transactional foreign policy.

The coronavirus has distracted Washington, giving autocrats even more room to ramp up repression. On top of that, the Trump administration’s “America First” approach means that it has yielded the diplomatic prerogative to competitors such as China, Russia and Iran, who have cleverly exploited the void by offering assistance and spreading disinformation. China’s influence was growing even before COVID-19, but with growing economic hardship, countries are pursuing new forms of economic cooperation with Beijing. Ironically, despite its own coronavirus failures and despite being the source of the pandemic, China’s reputation is improving. China, of course, is not interested in democracy and human rights and, if anything, prefers to deal with other autocratic states. Meanwhile, the perceived shortcomings of the U.S. response to the pandemic coupled with domestic failures—think the brutal killing of George Floyd and the resulting protests—have lowered American credibility as a promoter of democracy and human rights. “I can’t breathe,” the Chinese foreign ministry recently tweeted in response to U.S. criticism of its policies in Hong Kong.

Thus, the pandemic has strengthened the fortunes of the world’s “autocracy promoters”—countries such as China, Russia, the United Arab Emirates and others. In part this is because the Trump administration (with the

possible exception of the Chinese power grab in Hong Kong), which has already proven that democracy promotion plays a minor role in its foreign policy, is even less willing to stand up to them.

In sum, both internal and external counter-democratic trends—many of which were already evident before coronavirus spread across the globe—have only been strengthened by the pandemic. In the short and medium term, the effect on democracy around the world is thus grim.

What about the longer term? The answer will depend in part on how ordinary citizens react to the expansion of state power in both democracies and dictatorships. After all, when a vaccine is made available and the threat of the virus dissipates, governments will have less room for maneuver. Corruption and overreach will be exposed. Will people rebel, or will they be complacent?

We might see evidence of both, depending on the country. In Hong Kong, we have seen protests against Beijing already. In Iraq, Algeria, Iran and Lebanon—all places in which there were ongoing mass protests before COVID-19 and where services are poor and corruption is rampant—protests could quickly re-emerge. On the other hand, major protests could also contribute to a second wave of infections, providing a pretext for further government crackdowns.

Yet, in another scenario, protests might not erupt at all, given the fear of past violent government repression and the fact that anti-protest measures are likely to be more brutal than ever. And also because the measures deployed in response to the pandemic could give civil society, opposition groups and other vestiges of democracy a decisive death blow in countries where democratic institutions were already weak. [PCW](#)

## *A Democracy Reader: Responsibilities of Office*

AN EXCERPT FROM

# THE OATH AND THE OFFICE

By Corey Brettschneider '95

## YOU WANT TO SERVE YOUR COUNTRY.

You aspire to run for office—and not just any office. You want to be president of the United States.

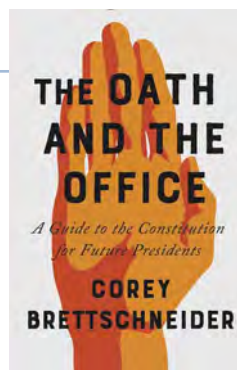
If you succeed, you will control the most advanced technology ever conceived, much of it secret. You will be able to authorize missile strikes, negotiate treaties, and spy on people around the world. And with a vast payroll, you will now run the largest employer in the country—the federal government.

For a moment, say that you win. You might hope to use this power to achieve great things such as ending poverty, providing affordable health care, or eliminating violent crime. You will have the ability to influence legislation and shape decisions about how to use the enormous federal budget. Lives, jobs, and trillions of dollars hang in the balance—and you have the ability to tip it. As you wave to your inauguration crowd through a blizzard of confetti, nothing seems out of reach.

Be careful: History might judge your presidency harshly. You don't want to be lumped in with Andrew Johnson, a president who opposed and undermined the core values of the country. Surveys of historians from 2002 and 2010 each ranked Johnson as one of the worst presidents in American history. He was impeached by the House of Representatives (but not removed from office by the Senate) for firing his secretary of war Edwin Stanton, an ally of many in Congress at the time. Far worse, he fiercely opposed the Fourteenth Amendment—the monumental civil rights achievement of Congress after the Civil War. The amendment guaranteed equal protection of the law and extended citizenship to African Americans and all people born or naturalized in the United States. That amendment was necessary in part because Johnson essentially refused to execute the Thirteenth Amendment, which banned slavery—a violation of his sworn duty to carry out the law of the land.

On the other hand, Abraham Lincoln, who directly preceded Johnson, is seen as one of our greatest presidents. Among his many achievements, he kept the country together by winning the Civil War and shepherded the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery. Why was Lincoln able to be so great? He had a diligent fascination with the Constitution, the core principles that upheld the nation and the presidency, and the history of the Framers (the collective term we use for the storied people who crafted the Constitution, such as James Madison and Alexander Hamilton). As the political theorist George Kateb writes, “Lincoln revered the principle of human equality and believed that he therefore should revere the US Constitution, the system of government created under it ... making real the abstract principle of human equality.” For Lincoln, that meant standing up for the fundamental values of the oath and the Constitution while working within the constraints that limited his office. To end the evil of slavery nationwide, he didn't rule by dictate; instead, he used the Constitution's legal procedure to pass an amendment accomplishing his goal. Lincoln was a great president because he understood how the office of the presidency—used as the Framers had created it—could preserve, protect, and defend constitutional values.

As we shall see, the oath requires that the president uphold the Constitution—even parts with which he or she disagrees. If you fail to do so, you'll end up with Johnson on the list of worst presidents. If



### The Oath and the Office: A Guide to the Constitution for Future Presidents

By Corey Brettschneider '95

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you succeed, you can be remembered with Lincoln among the greats.

All presidents, from George Washington to Donald Trump, began their terms with dreams of accomplishing great things. But whether your presidency is monumental or disastrous will hinge largely on a simple thing: that you, a future president, understand how the responsibilities of the Constitution apply to your job.

What do you need to know to be president? Most of all, you need to know the U.S. Constitution. As president, your first task is to recite the oath of office. You'll stand in front of your inauguration crowd, guided by the chief justice of the Supreme Court, and recite the following words: “I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the Office of the President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.”

This oath is your public contract with the American people, and reciting it is your first constitutional responsibility. Before you recite it, you must know what it means and where it comes from. The oath is found in Article II of the Constitution, which established the presidency and defined its powers and limits. Ratified in 1788 and amended three years later in 1791 with a Bill of Rights, the Constitution contains a series of principles that limit the power of all federal officials, including the president, and defines the powers that those officials do have. The Constitution will serve as your blueprint for how to do the president's job, helping you to anticipate the pitfalls that all presidents should avoid.

The oath itself is a reminder that your powers are conditionally granted and come with limits. The Constitution, in literally dictating your first instant in office, signals clearly that you are not free to act however you wish. Article II goes on to provide directions for what you must do and avoid. The oath is thus not merely a ritual—it is a recognition that you temporarily occupy an immensely powerful office, and that you must internalize the demands and responsibilities that come with it. Notice that you are promising to “preserve, protect and defend” the Constitution—not just to avoid violating it. In pledging to “faithfully execute” the office of the president, you promise to put aside your private interests to occupy a public and limited role on behalf of the American people. If you are not willing to work within these limits and take initiative to promote the document, the Oval Office isn't for you.

It was George Washington's second inaugural address—which at 135 words remains the shortest in history—that gave voice to the ideas underlying the oath and the office. Today, we tend to think of inaugurations as grand affairs, with modern presidents using them to draw widespread attention to their agendas. But Washington's 1793 inauguration was much more subdued—fitting, since his address em-

phasized the limits of the presidential office. He held the inaugural ceremony in the relatively modest Senate Chamber of Congress Hall, located just steps from Independence Hall, where he had presided over the Constitutional Convention six years earlier. This choice of venue signified his respect for the legislative branch as a coequal to his own executive branch. In his speech, Washington challenged Americans to stop him should he fail to live up to his duties:

*Previous to the execution of any official act of the President, the Constitution requires an oath of office. This oath I am now about to take, and in your presence: That if it shall be found during my administration of the Government I have in any instance violated willingly or knowingly the injunctions thereof, I may (besides incurring constitutional punishment) be subject to the upbraidings of all who are now witnesses of the present solemn ceremony.*

In emphasizing the solemnity of the oath, Washington here was speaking to future presidents and the future Americans charged with holding them accountable. Washington is asking you, a future president, to respect the obligations and the limits of your new office. And to those of us who won't be president, Washington is reminding us that we, too, must ensure that a president carries out the duties of the office.

Washington's words here provide the impetus for our focus on what the Constitution demands of a president. This guide will detail what you need to know—how to take the oath seriously, and how to understand both the obligations and the limits that it places on you. It is not enough merely to avoid constitutional punishment, although that punishment—in the form of impeachment, censure, or losing an election—is still something you should worry about. You should go beyond this bare minimum requirement of the office, and defend the values that the Constitution enshrines. Unlike President Johnson, and like President Lincoln, you must recognize what the Constitution requires: read it, study it, and through your speech and actions, promote it.

It's crucial that you see the Constitution's rules as legitimate constraints, not obstacles to get around. But the Constitution is more than just these rules: it stands for a wider morality of limited government and respect for people's rights. You must find a way for your actions and words to honor and expound those values, while abiding by the limits that your office places upon you. You might be tempted to see the Supreme Court as the sole authority to tell you when you've strayed from constitutional values. Sometimes, it does play this role: courts have often limited the president by declaring his actions unconstitutional. But as you will see, the court's role in American history has often been limited. The Supreme Court has sometimes protected civil liberties that presidents have put under threat, but at other times it has failed to do so. As president, you have an obligation to go beyond what courts require of you, taking it upon yourself to defend the principles and rules of the Constitution. In order to do that, you must first understand what those principles and rules are.

As a professor of constitutional law, my job is to introduce students to the core tenets of the Constitution. My students are often amazed by the scope and foresight of this document. It does more than create our entire system of government. It also provides tools that can limit those who try to abuse that system to violate the rights of the people.

The Constitution creates and defines the duties of the three branches of government: legislative, judicial, and executive—the last of which contains the office of the presidency. The Constitution strictly limits the president's powers in Article II, but it also limits the president in other creative ways: by granting certain powers to the other two branches, letting states retain certain privileges, and enshrining the rights of the people. Each of the three branches interprets the Constitution and encourages the others to act in ways that are consistent with its requirements.

This includes you, no matter where you live or what you do. The Constitution is not magically self-enforcing, and there is no “Constitution police.” Not even the Supreme Court will always succeed in defending the Constitution's values and enforcing the proper limits it places on you. Fortunately, you will not be alone in defending the Constitution. In the end, it is essential for all citizens to recognize that there is no guarantee that presidents or courts respect the Constitution. By demanding that elected representatives—whether senators or town council members—read, understand, and comply with the Constitution, the people can make sure that the requirements of the Constitution do not become, as Madison worried, mere “parchment barriers.” Ultimately, the president is checked not by the Constitution itself, but by the American people demanding that it be respected.

To uphold this duty, though, you need to understand the principles of the Constitution for yourself. Together, we'll be taking a deep dive into our country's founding document.

The Constitution isn't the first thing most people think about when they vote for a presidential candidate. My own interest in politics certainly didn't start with the Constitution.

When I was growing up in Queens, my father worked for a local politician. I sometimes tagged along for political events. And in Queens, the political event of the year was the Queens Day Celebration—a parade that transformed Flushing Meadows Park, a faded gem that had twice held the World's Fair, into the center of the world—in my young eyes, at least. It was the sort of grand event that all the major figures from Queens would attend—and perhaps among them, a certain future president. It was there, at age nine, that I first saw my boyhood hero at the front of the parade: Edward Koch, the mayor of New York City.

At the time, Koch was larger than life. Some even mused that he might become the first Jewish president. Now I was walking directly behind him, right under Koch's enormous arms, which he threw open every few seconds as he bellowed to the crowd, “How am I doin'?” The crowd of onlookers screamed their approval.

Just then, Koch whispered to a local politician next to him, “I'd love some ice cream. Vanilla.” The politician turned behind, pointed to a man next to me, and snapped, “Get the mayor some ice cream. Vanilla!” The aide turned and sprinted across the field next to the parade route, and returned about ten minutes later with a vanilla ice cream cone.

That was the day I decided I wanted to be mayor. To the mind of a nine-year-old boy, being mayor meant having the power to seemingly get anything—even ice cream—and get it on demand.

What can a nine-year-old boy intuit about politics? A lot, actually. For many adults, it's moments just like these that draw them to politics in the first place. For them, the presidency is shorthand for >

fame and power. They want to live in the White House. They want access to the staff. The helicopters. Air Force One.

When they wrote the Constitution, the Framers were well aware of the trappings of power. That is why the Constitution's oath is meant to take a private citizen, whose focus lies with his or her own beliefs and desires—whether ice cream or the nuclear football—and transform that person into a public “officeholder,” whose job is to safeguard the Constitution and the country it governs. Presidents, of course, are required to recite the oath. But reciting it is not enough; they should read the oath carefully, internalizing its fundamental principles and the constraints it creates on the office. When you've just been elected by millions of people, you might feel as if you're authorized to do as you wish—or whatever your supporters want you to do. But the constraints on your office are critically important. In fact, they are a defining feature of our system of government.

In this guide, we will examine the difficult balance between respecting the wishes of the people who elected you and respecting the limits the Constitution places on your power. These limits constrain presidents who cater to the worst prejudices of the people who elected them. But such safeguards, which operate by slowing down the pace of government, can also contribute to government gridlock.

President Harry Truman observed this conundrum firsthand. In 1952, as he was preparing to leave office, Truman turned to an aide and predicted what would happen to his successor, former general Dwight Eisenhower, who was accustomed to the military's famous

**“But the constraints on your office are critically important. In fact, they are a defining feature of our system of government.”**

efficiency. “He'll sit here and he'll say, ‘Do this! Do that!’ And nothing will happen,” Truman mused. “Poor Ike.”

Truman's words indicate a central irony of the American presidency: yes, the office is immensely powerful. Yet it is so often constrained and thwarted—by Congress, the courts, the press, the states, ordinary citizens, and even by its own executive bureaucracy. This limited role in the constitutional system is no doubt frustrating for presidents, but it serves the wider goal of the Framers: respecting individual rights and the rule of law—the notion that we are not governed by individuals' whims but by standards common to all. The constraints are a feature, not a bug. They ensure that the oath is not a set of mere words, but that there are mechanisms for constraining a president.

The “Poor Ike” story is often told by scholars of the presidency. It was reported in Richard Neustadt's influential book *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*. Neustadt's book taught future presidents and their aides how to use the power of persuasion to lead the country. With its focus on power, the book was so popular in the 1960s that President Richard Nixon's chief of staff, H. R. Haldeman, made it required reading for all staffers in the White House. Later, as we'll see, after Nixon was impeached for his role in the break-in at the Watergate Hotel and the subsequent cover-up of the event, one Nixon staffer told Neustadt that “you have to share the responsibility” for the illegal actions because of the ideas in his book.

Neustadt took this accusation seriously. He had learned to understand the Constitution when he was a student in civics class and as-

sumed that his readers had done the same. But during Watergate, he realized that the decline of civics education meant that Nixon's staffers had not developed an appreciation for the limits of the Constitution, instead focusing more on presidential power. Our guide makes clear what Neustadt's book did not: that the Constitution is not a mere obstacle to get around, and trying to do so would be a disservice to the Framers' ideas. To understand the Constitution, you need to see that the powers it grants are of a particular kind—loaded with tripwires, trapdoors, and springboards that protect the rights of the people and the rule of law. Presidents should celebrate, not bemoan, this complex design.

The best guide we have to the Constitution is the Federalist Papers. Written anonymously during the course of a single year between 1787 and 1788, the Federalist Papers were the project of three Framers—James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay—and were an effort to persuade New York and other states to ratify the Constitution. Like many of their fellow Framers, Madison, Hamilton, and Jay were concerned about the tyranny of Great Britain, against which they had just revolted. As a result, the Federalist Papers focused a great deal on how the governmental structure outlined in the Constitution would protect citizens from a flawed government—including a despotic president. They emphasized what it meant to be a legitimate leader.

James Madison, an author of the Federalist Papers and a primary writer of the Constitution, will serve as our guide throughout this book. Madison is a good guide in large part because he was the Framer who most consistently stressed the limits on the president,

writing, “the ultimate authority ... resides in the people alone.” He was also the most influential proponent of a Bill of Rights. And as president, Madison went beyond what he believed he was required to do by the courts, using his own veto power to strike down laws he viewed as violations against the Constitution. This guide may not always agree with Madison: for instance, in matters concerning hiring and firing, where he wrongly ascribed too much power to a president. But overall, it is Madison's vision of a limited presidency that inspires the ideas of this book.

Madison's vision of the presidency was just one of many debated at the time. Another Framer, Alexander Hamilton, stood for a markedly different vision. These days, Hamilton, a famous delegate to the Constitutional Convention from New York who later became secretary of the treasury, receives a good deal more popular attention than his fellow Framers. (Let's just say there is no Madison: The Musical.) At times, Hamilton was Madison's ally—recall that they wrote the Federalist Papers together. But they often clashed, especially on where presidential limits ought to lie.

Hamilton referred to the need for “energy in the executive,” by which he meant the president's ability to make great things happen quickly. In a Hamiltonian view, the president is not a king—but does retain some kingly powers. He argued that the president should have broad powers in war and foreign policy, even though the Constitution didn't say so explicitly. Madison disagreed. These debates still resonate long after the Founding. For example, some legal prece-

dent has suggested that the president is not required to uphold the equal protection of the laws in certain areas, such as immigration. Other thinkers have suggested the Constitution's ban on “cruel and unusual punishment” may not prevent the president from using or sanctioning torture. President Nixon even famously claimed the president couldn't be indicted while in office. However, with Madison as our guide, we will push back against this strain of Hamiltonian constitutional thinking that emphasizes the powers of the president over the constraints on the office.

A president who takes the oath seriously needs to consider these Framers' competing visions. But the Framers aren't the only thing that needs to be considered: the president also needs to consider the text of the document, case law, and the meaning of later amendments such as the Fourteenth Amendment and its Equal Protection Clause. The Framers' ideas should be honored—particularly Madison's vision of a limited presidency—but only as a guide, not as the final word on what the Constitution means.

Madison designed the Constitution to ensure that those of us who will not be president—“the people”—could protect the office from a president who failed to carry out the oath. He and the Framers gave us a Bill of Rights and institutions such as the judiciary, the Congress, and state governments to protect those rights if a president failed to do so.

In modern-day politics, we often try to understand what “We the People” want through polls and policy preferences. But the Constitution means something different by “We the People.” These words don't just refer to voters and their preferences of the moment. And

they don't mean that a populist president who claims that his personality reflects the desires of the people has a mandate to ignore the requirements of the law. Rather, “We the People” is an ideal of a “constitutional” people—citizens not only versed in the Constitution, but who demand that public officials, especially the president, comply with it.

Lincoln explained this constitutional ideal when he distinguished between people's base instincts and their “better angels.” Later, eulogizing the war dead at Gettysburg, Lincoln explained that ours was a government “of the people, by the people, [and] for the people.” That phrase best explains the Constitution's meaning and how it treats the ideal of a constitutional people. We are a government “of” the people, because ultimately all government officials work for and are accountable to “We the People”—an idea expressed in the Constitution's first three words. We are a government “by” the people, in that we participate in elections and in lawmaking. Finally, we are a government “for” the people, because we recognize in our founding document that each of our fellow citizens is a rights holder. Without the right to free speech, we could not conceive of the ideas necessary to make democratic decisions. If we were denied religious freedom, we could not truly develop our own beliefs.

The Constitution protects this higher ideal of “the people” most obviously through the Bill of Rights—the first ten amendments to the Constitution. But the structure of the original Constitution itself also protects the rights of the people. Madison gave the best early ex-

planation of the Constitution's ideal of “the people.” To him, the Constitution protected not just against kingly domination, but also against the “tyranny of the majority.” A president might become a tyrant by catering to the worst prejudices of the populace, but Madison argued that the people could never be stripped of their rights—even if a large majority of people favored such a move. Those rights allow the people to be the Constitution's best protector. Sometimes, the people can exact punishment on an errant president indirectly, by working through the other branches: for example, by demanding vigilance from Congress. But the people can also take action directly, using rights like the First Amendment's free speech protection to criticize a president.

As president, you will be constrained by these legal dynamics of the Constitution. But far more integral to your presidency is something else: the Constitution's political morality. By this, I mean the values of freedom and equality that inform the document beyond its judicially enforceable requirements. We can tell whether presidents embrace the Constitution's values not just by their executive orders or official appointments, but by how they speak to the American people. No court can tell you what to say. But you still must be guided by the Constitution in this crucial endeavor. As president, you should speak for all of us—and more, you should speak for what our country stands for, and aspires to be. ...

Some people may tell you that you have to choose between the words and the principles of the Constitution when interpreting the document, or that you should just listen to the Supreme Court. None of these approaches is complete. Looking to the Constitution's

text, the history of Supreme Court rulings, and the broader values underlying the Constitution gives us the best method to resolve constitutional disputes and discover the document's meaning. I refer to this approach as value-based reading.

So what are constitutional values? They are best understood as principles of constitutional self-government—principles that realize the ideal of an American populace with all citizens regarded as equal, always retaining their right to rule and influence public life. Although the text of the Constitution is the first place to look for signs of these values, they have also been argued over and worked out through Supreme Court cases throughout American history. We will look to these cases as an important guide to the Constitution, sometimes invoking the conclusions of the court's justices and, where necessary, pointing to how the case law should evolve to better reflect the Constitution's deeper values. And throughout, we will come back to the architect of the Constitution itself: James Madison. In the Federalist Papers, his public speeches, and other writings, Madison is essentially speaking to us across the ages.

We should listen. [FCM](#)

Corey Brettschneider '95 is professor of political science at Brown University. Excerpted from *THE OATH AND THE OFFICE: A GUIDE TO THE CONSTITUTION FOR FUTURE PRESIDENTS*. Copyright © 2018 by Corey Brettschneider. Excerpted by permission of W. W. Norton & Company. All rights reserved. No part of this excerpt may be reproduced or reprinted without permission in writing from the publisher.

# A Democracy Reader: Freedom of the Press

## Q&A: The First Amendment in Action

*As multiple crises converged on the nation in May, reporters Marybel Gonzalez '09 of Telemundo Chicago and Sam Kelly '18 of the Chicago Sun-Times were sent into the Chicago streets to cover the protests and confrontations with police that followed the death of George Floyd in police custody in Minneapolis. Amid a global pandemic, a national reckoning with racism and police brutality and deep political divisions, Gonzalez and Kelly reflected on working in journalism in a time of crisis amid cries of "fake news" from the President of the United States.*

**PCM: What was your role in covering the recent protests in Chicago?**

**Gonzalez:** I've been covering the protests since they first started here in Chicago. The first large-scale George Floyd protests were held May 30 in downtown Chicago. Since then, our entire news team has been diligently covering all angles of the current events. In conjunction with our NBC 5 sister station, we've covered every major neighborhood in Chicago and its suburbs. Telemundo has specifically focused on the largely Hispanic communities, including Pilsen, Little Village, Belmont Cragin, Brighton Park and West Chicago, to name a few.

**Kelly:** I'm a breaking news reporter, so I work on the 24-hour breaking desk. I work the night shift. The protests were the news, and so that's what I was covering. I got sent out into downtown Chicago on Saturday night and I put my bike on the bike rack of my car. I parked outside of downtown and then I biked in. I think the worst of the confrontations between police and protesters was in the afternoon that day. But it was still certainly pretty hectic late that evening as well. The cops were frantically just driving all over the place, in some cases. In other cases, there were large congregations of police just trying to hold lines to make sure people

weren't passing beyond a certain point in town. Things escalated on and off throughout the evening as far as confrontations between police and protestors.

**PCM: Tell us what you've witnessed.**

**Gonzalez:** From peaceful demonstrations and civil resistance to looting and acts of violence between police officers and residents, I've witnessed firsthand how the George Floyd protests and riots have unfolded across our city and surrounding areas. I've reported on a crowd of thousands who took to the streets of downtown Chicago chanting while they marched, while others knelt and took a moment of silence to call for an end to racial violence. On the other hand, we've also witnessed looting of commercial retail stores and small mom-and-pop shops. We've interviewed business owners on the aftermath of these acts, some of them denouncing the vandalism, while others saying they understand the anger behind them. In areas like Brighton Park, Pilsen and Cicero we've done stories about how local gang members guarded their neighborhood stores against looting.

We've also reported on how some have used their own resources, platforms and creativity as a way of protest. In Little Village, for example, a group of people performed an Aztec dance to show the Latino community's support for the Black Lives Matter movement. In the city of Aurora, business owners commissioned local artists to paint murals on their boarded-up storefronts to show solidarity for the protests. Outside of Chicago Police headquarters, Black female clergy leaders read prayers and poems out loud demanding police reform.

The manner and platforms in which activists, residents and protestors have expressed their solidarity varies. However, based on interviews we've conducted, the call to action of many of them is the same:

people are demanding justice for George Floyd and for all others who have died while in police custody.

As a journalist, it's been important to cover all angles of how these events, as they add context as to why these protests are taking place.

**PCM: Sam, you saw one officer spit at a protestor and others tackle a protestor and hit him with a baton. How surprising was it to see that kind of reaction from police?**

**Kelly:** Not very surprising, to be honest. I understand the history of police in this country and Chicago especially. I've lived here my whole life. I understand that tensions are really high among protestors and among police. I work with police every day in my job, as far as my usual reporting, so I wasn't surprised to see them responding that way.

I have a lot of personal feelings about the police relationship with Black communities and communities of color and impoverished communities, but I have to put those aside as a journalist and just report what I see as accurately as possible and try to let justification or lack of justification for any actions make themselves clear without inserting myself into the situation. But that can be hard sometimes because I'm also just a person, and I have my own feelings about the situation.

In that instance, I wasn't filming when the cop spat at the protestor's feet because up until that point, it had just been a guy walking by with his fist raised, shouting slogans, shouting "Black Lives Matter," "No justice, no peace." He purposefully walked very near the officers but never threatened violence or anything. I wasn't filming every single thing I saw because there was so much happening, but once I saw the cop spit at the guy's feet, I pulled my phone out. But you know there were a lot of moments like that, but I wasn't really processing them emotionally as much as just trying to do my job.



Marybel Gonzalez '09 reporting from the streets of Chicago.

**PCM: Have you covered protests in the past? If so, how are these protests different?**

**Gonzalez:** While working as an investigative reporter along the U.S.-Mexico border in the Rio Grande Valley, I covered protests calling attention to family separations due to enforcement of the Zero Tolerance Policy, rallies against and in favor of border wall construction along that region, and protests related to the detention of migrant children in the area. However, the George Floyd protests are vastly different from ones I've covered in the past. For one, the scale of these protests is notable. People across the globe have taken to the streets to protest in the name of George Floyd. Social media platforms have also played a large role in this. People have used those streams to coordinate virtual protests. These avenues have allowed people to upload images and videos of the protests as they are happening. While this has led to a plethora of valuable information being shared, it's also caused a lot of misinformation to spread as well.

It's also worth noting that these protests are happening in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of that, we've had to be mindful of how we can cover these protests up close, while also ensuring the safety of our news team and our interviewees. Now more than ever, newsrooms require we have all hands on deck to cover the fast-changing events. However, due to the pandemic, many newsrooms across the nation have had to cut staff and therefore also resources that are needed in times like these.

**PCM: There have been instances of reporters being injured or arrested. Have you felt unsafe?**

**Kelly:** The only times I ever felt unsafe were when I got caught in the middle of skirmishes or potential skirmishes. There were a lot of times when protestors would

start to congregate near cops and maybe a few rocks would be thrown. Obviously the police's plan for diffusing the situation—and it worked pretty well for them—was just to run in a line at the protestors. Every time that happened, the protestors would turn around and sprint back down the street. I was on my bike, like I said, so a few times I felt nervous about getting caught up in that. I also knew in those moments the police wouldn't distinguish me from anyone else, so I had to run with them.

**Gonzalez:** Across the country, we've learning of incidents of violence against media. We've heard reports and seen videos of photographers and reporters allegedly being assaulted by law enforcement and residents. We've even heard of reports of journalists arrested while covering a protest.

Our company has been very good at providing security for us if we are covering any large-scale protest or rally. We've also been instructed to drop our assignment if we feel our safety is in jeopardy.

However, it is concerning that members of the media are facing violent acts and arrests. Now more than ever, we need journalists on the ground covering what is happening in real time. We are committed to informing our viewers of these historic moments. Incidents like these only interfere with our duty to ensure public transparency and our responsibility to tell the stories of those involved in these current events.

**Can you speak to the commitment of being a journalist covering this issue at a time when the media is facing such challenges?**

**Kelly:** It bothers me to see the way Trump talks about the press and the attitudes that people have developed about the press. Because I think when journalism is done correctly, it's a valuable resource to our community, to our society.

That being said, I understand the frustration that a lot of communities have with the press, communities that may have been misrepresented historically. I don't necessarily hold it against anyone who has those convictions in good faith. I have seen a lot of things on social media about journalists who are coming under attack at protests. And it is infuriating, absolutely, and it makes me upset. But I also think a lot of the journalism community is making this about themselves, and that bothers me as well, because the communities that are protesting have been dealing with that violence forever, for generations. So if anything the recent events have encouraged me to try to be mindful of my role in the situation as best as I can. The last thing I want to do is make things worse. Within my power, my main goal has been to put an accurate description out there that includes the voices and perspectives that maybe haven't been heard from as much in the situation that's going on.

**Gonzalez:** I believe journalism is critical in shaping our democracy. Journalism ensures transparency at all levels. Through fact-checking, it holds those in power accountable; through storytelling, it gives a voice to those at the center of a given event. Journalism ensures the public is well-informed so that they can make their own decisions about the issues that make a difference in their communities. I would say that democracy cannot exist without freedom of the press. **PCM**



AN EXCERPT FROM

# HOW DEMOCRACIES DIE

By Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt '95

## IS OUR DEMOCRACY IN DANGER?

It is a question we never thought we'd be asking. We have been colleagues for fifteen years, thinking, writing, and teaching students about failures of democracy in other places and times—Europe's dark 1930s, Latin America's repressive 1970s. We have spent years researching new forms of authoritarianism emerging around the globe. For us, how and why democracies die has been an occupational obsession.

But now we find ourselves turning to our own country. Over the past two years, we have watched politicians say and do things that are unprecedented in the United States—but that we recognize as having been the precursors of democratic crisis in other places. We feel dread, as do so many other Americans, even as we try to reassure ourselves that things can't really be that bad here. After all, even though we know democracies are always fragile, the one in which we live has somehow managed to defy gravity. Our Constitution, our national creed of freedom and equality, our historically robust middle class, our high levels of wealth and education, and our large, diversified private sector—all these should inoculate us from the kind of democratic breakdown that has occurred elsewhere.

Yet, we worry. American politicians now treat their rivals as enemies, intimidate the free press, and threaten to reject the results of elections. They try to weaken the institutional buffers of our democracy, including the courts, intelligence services, and ethics offices. American states, which were once praised by the great jurist Louis Brandeis as "laboratories of democracy," are in danger of becoming laboratories of authoritarianism as those in power rewrite electoral rules, redraw constituencies, and even rescind voting rights to ensure that they do not lose. And in 2016, for the first time in U.S. history, a man with no experience in public office, little observable commitment to constitutional rights, and clear authoritarian tendencies was elected president.

What does all this mean? Are we living through the decline and fall of one of the world's oldest and most successful democracies?



### How Democracies Die

By Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt '95

Crown, 2018

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At midday on September 11, 1973, after months of mounting tensions in the streets of Santiago, Chile, British-made Hawker Hunter jets swooped overhead, dropping bombs on La Moneda, the neoclassical presidential palace in the center of the city. As the bombs continued to fall, La Moneda burned. President Salvador Allende, elected three years earlier at the head of a leftist coalition, was barricaded inside. During his term, Chile had been wracked by social unrest, economic crisis, and political paralysis. Allende had said he would not leave his post until he had finished his job—but now the moment of truth had arrived. Under the command of General Augusto Pinochet, Chile's armed forces were seizing control of the country.

Early in the morning on that fateful day, Allende offered defiant words on a national radio broadcast, hoping that his many supporters would take to the streets in defense of democracy. But the resistance never materialized. The military police who guarded the palace had abandoned him; his broadcast was met with silence. Within hours, President Allende was dead. So, too, was Chilean democracy.

This is how we tend to think of democracies dying: at the hands of men with guns. During the Cold War, coups d'état accounted for nearly three out of every four democratic breakdowns. Democracies in Argentina, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Thailand, Turkey, and Uruguay all died this way. More recently, military coups toppled Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi in 2013 and Thai Prime Minister >

Yingluck Shinawatra in 2014. In all these cases, democracy dissolved in spectacular fashion, through military power and coercion.

But there is another way to break a democracy. It is less dramatic but equally destructive. Democracies may die at the hands not of generals but of elected leaders—presidents or prime ministers who subvert the very process that brought them to power. Some of these leaders dismantle democracy quickly, as Hitler did in the wake of the 1933 Reichstag fire in Germany. More often, though, democracies erode slowly, in barely visible steps.

In Venezuela, for example, Hugo Chávez was a political outsider who railed against what he cast as a corrupt governing elite, promising to build a more “authentic” democracy that used the country’s vast oil wealth to improve the lives of the poor. Skillfully tapping into the anger of ordinary Venezuelans, many of whom felt ignored or mistreated by the established political parties, Chávez was elected president in 1998. As a woman in Chávez’s home state of Barinas put it on election night, “Democracy is infected. And Chávez is the only antibiotic we have.”

When Chávez launched his promised revolution, he did so democratically. In 1999, he held free elections for a new constituent assembly, in which his allies won an overwhelming majority. This allowed the *chavistas* to single-handedly write a new constitution. It was a democratic constitution, though, and to reinforce its legitimacy, new presidential and legislative elections were held in 2000. Chávez and his allies won those, too. Chávez’s populism triggered intense opposition, and in April 2002, he was briefly toppled by the military. But the coup failed, allowing a triumphant Chávez to claim for himself even more democratic legitimacy.

It wasn’t until 2003 that Chávez took his first clear steps toward authoritarianism. With public support fading, he stalled an opposition-led referendum that would have recalled him from office—until a year later, when soaring oil prices had boosted his standing enough for him to win. In 2004, the government blacklisted those who had signed the recall petition and packed the supreme court, but Chávez’s landslide reelection in 2006 allowed him to maintain a democratic veneer. The *chavista* regime grew more repressive after 2006, closing a major television station, arresting or exiling opposition politicians, judges, and media figures on dubious charges, and eliminating presidential term limits so that Chávez could remain in power indefinitely. When Chávez, now dying of cancer, was reelected in 2012, the contest was free but not fair: *Chavismo* controlled much of the media and deployed the vast machinery of the government in its favor. After Chávez’s death a year later, his successor, Nicolás Maduro, won another questionable reelection, and in 2014, his government imprisoned a major opposition leader. Still, the opposition’s landslide victory in the 2015 legislative elections seemed to belie critics’ claims that Venezuela was no longer democratic. It was only when a new single-party constituent assembly usurped the power of Congress in 2017, nearly two decades after Chávez first won the presidency, that Venezuela was widely recognized as an autocracy.

This is how democracies now die. Blatant dictatorship—in the form of fascism, communism, or military rule—has disappeared across much of the world. Military coups and other violent seizures of power are rare. Most countries hold regular elections. Democracies still die, but by different means. Since the end of the Cold War, most democratic breakdowns have been caused not by generals and sol-

diers but by elected governments themselves. Like Chávez in Venezuela, elected leaders have subverted democratic institutions in Georgia, Hungary, Nicaragua, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Russia, Sri Lanka, Turkey, and Ukraine. Democratic backsliding today begins at the ballot box.

The electoral road to breakdown is dangerously deceptive. With a classic coup d’état, as in Pinochet’s Chile, the death of a democracy is immediate and evident to all. The presidential palace burns. The president is killed, imprisoned, or shipped off into exile. The constitution is suspended or scrapped. On the electoral road, none of these things happen. There are no tanks in the streets. Constitutions and other nominally democratic institutions remain in place. People still vote. Elected autocrats maintain a veneer of democracy while eviscerating its substance.

Many government efforts to subvert democracy are “legal,” in the sense that they are approved by the legislature or accepted by the courts. They may even be portrayed as efforts to *improve* democracy—making the judiciary more efficient, combating corruption, or cleaning up the electoral process.

Newspapers still publish but are bought off or bullied into self-censorship. Citizens continue to criticize the government but often find themselves facing tax or other legal troubles. This sows public confusion. People do not immediately realize what is happening. Many con-

tinue to believe they are living under a democracy. In 2011, when a Latinobarómetro survey asked Venezuelans to rate their own country from 1 (“not at all democratic”) to 10 (“completely democratic”), 51 percent of respondents gave their country a score of 8 or higher.

Because there is no single moment—no coup, declaration of martial law, or suspension of the constitution—in which the regime obviously “crosses the line” into dictatorship, nothing may set off society’s alarm bells. Those who denounce government abuse may be dismissed as exaggerating or crying wolf. Democracy’s erosion is, for many, almost imperceptible.

How vulnerable is American democracy to this form of backsliding? The foundations of our democracy are certainly stronger than those in Venezuela, Turkey, or Hungary. But are they strong enough?

Answering such a question requires stepping back from daily headlines and breaking news alerts to widen our view, drawing lessons from the experiences of other democracies around the world and throughout history. For the sake of clarity, we are defining a democracy as a system of government with regular, free and fair elections, in which all adult citizens have the right to vote and possess basic civil liberties such as freedom of speech and association. Studying other democracies in crisis allows us to better understand the challenges facing our own. For example, based on the historical experiences of other nations, we have developed a litmus test to help identify would-be autocrats before they come to power. We can learn from the mistakes that past democratic leaders have made in opening the door to would-be authoritarians—and, conversely, from the ways

that other democracies have kept extremists out of power. A comparative approach also reveals how elected autocrats in different parts of the world employ remarkably similar strategies to subvert democratic institutions. As these patterns become visible, the steps toward breakdown grow less ambiguous—and easier to combat. Knowing how citizens in other democracies have successfully resisted elected autocrats, or why they tragically failed to do so, is essential to those seeking to defend American democracy today.

We know that extremist demagogues emerge from time to time in all societies, even in healthy democracies. The United States has had its share of them, including Henry Ford, Huey Long, Joseph McCarthy, and George Wallace. An essential test for democracies is not whether such figures emerge but whether political leaders, and especially political parties, work to prevent them from gaining power in the first place—by keeping them off mainstream party tickets, refusing to endorse or align with them, and when necessary, making common cause with rivals in support of democratic candidates. Isolating popular extremists requires political courage. But when fear, opportunism, or miscalculation leads established parties to bring extremists into the mainstream, democracy is imperiled.

Once a would-be authoritarian makes it to power, democracies face a second critical test: Will the autocratic leader subvert democratic institutions or be constrained by them? Institutions alone are

not enough to rein in elected autocrats. Constitutions must be defended—by political parties and organized citizens, but also by democratic norms. Without robust norms, constitutional checks and balances do not serve as the bulwarks of democracy we imagine them to be. Institutions become political weapons, wielded forcefully by those who control them against those who do not. This is how elected autocrats subvert democracy—packing and “weaponizing” the courts and other neutral agencies, buying off the media and the private sector (or bullying them into silence), and rewriting the rules of politics to tilt the playing field against opponents. The tragic paradox of the electoral route to authoritarianism is that democracy’s assassins use the very institutions of democracy—gradually, subtly, and even legally—to kill it.

America failed the first test in November 2016, when we elected a president with a dubious allegiance to democratic norms. Donald Trump’s surprise victory was made possible not only by public disaffection but also by the Republican Party’s failure to keep an extremist demagogue within its own ranks from gaining the nomination.

How serious is the threat now? Many observers take comfort in our Constitution, which was designed precisely to thwart and contain demagogues like Donald Trump. Our Madisonian system of checks and balances has endured for more than two centuries. It survived the Civil War, the Great Depression, the Cold War, and Watergate. Surely, then, it will be able to survive Trump.

We are less certain. Historically, our system of checks and balances has worked pretty well—but not, or not entirely, because of the con-

stitutional system designed by the founders. Democracies work best—and survive longer—where constitutions are reinforced by unwritten democratic norms. Two basic norms have preserved America’s checks and balances in ways we have come to take for granted: mutual toleration, or the understanding that competing parties accept one another as legitimate rivals, and forbearance, or the idea that politicians should exercise restraint in deploying their institutional prerogatives. These two norms undergirded American democracy for most of the twentieth century. Leaders of the two major parties accepted one another as legitimate and resisted the temptation to use their temporary control of institutions to maximum partisan advantage. Norms of toleration and restraint served as the soft guardrails of American democracy, helping it avoid the kind of partisan fight to the death that has destroyed democracies elsewhere in the world, including Europe in the 1930s and South America in the 1960s and 1970s.

Today, however, the guardrails of American democracy are weakening. The erosion of our democratic norms began in the 1980s and 1990s and accelerated in the 2000s. By the time Barack Obama became president, many Republicans, in particular, questioned the legitimacy of their Democratic rivals and had abandoned forbearance for a strategy of winning by any means necessary. Donald Trump may have accelerated this process, but he didn’t cause it. The challenges facing American democracy run deeper. The weakening of our democratic norms is rooted in extreme partisan polarization—one that extends beyond policy differences into an existential conflict over race and culture. America’s efforts to achieve racial equality as our society grows increasingly diverse have fueled an insidious reaction and intensifying polarization. And if one thing is clear from studying breakdowns throughout history, it’s that extreme polarization can kill democracies.

There are, therefore, reasons for alarm. Not only did Americans elect a demagogue in 2016, but we did so at a time when the norms that once protected our democracy were already coming unmoored. But if other countries’ experiences teach us that polarization can kill democracies, they also teach us that breakdown is neither inevitable nor irreversible. Drawing lessons from other democracies in crisis, this book suggests strategies that citizens should, and should not, follow to defend our democracy.

Many Americans are justifiably frightened by what is happening to our country. But protecting our democracy requires more than just fright or outrage. We must be humble and bold. We must learn from other countries to see the warning signs—and recognize the false alarms. We must be aware of the fateful missteps that have wrecked other democracies. And we must see how citizens have risen to meet the great democratic crises of the past, overcoming their own deep-seated divisions to avert breakdown. History doesn’t repeat itself. But it rhymes. The promise of history, and the hope of this book, is that we can find the rhymes before it is too late. **PCM**

Daniel Ziblatt ’95 and Steven Levitsky are colleagues at Harvard University, where Ziblatt is the Eaton Professor of the Science of Government and Levitsky is professor of government. Excerpted from HOW DEMOCRACIES DIE. Copyright © 2019 by Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt. Excerpted by permission of Broadway Books. All rights reserved. No part of this excerpt may be reproduced or reprinted without permission in writing from the publisher.

# Policing the Police

By Patricia Vest

**A confident, no-nonsense** person, Joyce Hicks '74 spent most of her career in city government, fixing and managing agencies by making data-driven decisions. A UC Berkeley-educated lawyer, she was recruited to lead several departments in Oakland, including its Citizens Police Review Board (CPRB). Toward the end of her professional career, she led for almost a decade one of the most powerful civilian police oversight bodies in the country, San Francisco's Office of Citizen Complaints (OCC), now the Department of Police Accountability.

But on May 25, Hicks did something uncharacteristic. She rushed to judgment, certain that she had just witnessed a murder.

The death of George Floyd under the knee of a Minneapolis police officer overcame her with so much emotion that she wept. "In my career I had never seen such a sustained and callous disregard for life and plea for mercy," says Hicks, who is African American. "George was just a bit older than my own son."

For his part, Sheriff Paul Pastor '71 thought he had pretty much seen it all during more than 40 years in law enforcement, but on May 25, he, too, was taken aback. "What happened in Minneapolis took place in the midst of America's long-standing unresolved racial divide," the longtime sheriff of Pierce County says. "Police officers encounter this divide on a regular basis, and their decisions have the potential to perpetuate it or to help resolve it. In Minneapolis, we saw an instance of perpetuation."

Both Hicks and Pastor pointed out that policing involves hard ethical and legal decisions that frequently have to be made in difficult and chaotic situations.

One of the first things that Hicks did as executive director of Oakland's CPRB in the mid-2000s was to take an 10-hour ride along with a police sergeant. One of the things she quickly learned was the

inadequacies of the practice of hiring young officers, some even straight out of high school. "They don't have enough life experience and knowledge necessary yet to process some of the situations they will be in," she says about young cadets.

In George Floyd's case, three officers involved were charged with aiding and abetting second-degree murder. Two of those officers

were novices. "When you're a rookie cop and your field training officer is doing something wrong, it takes a lot of courage to say stop. There has to be a culture shift. You have to have your own moral code."

Pastor agrees. He advises law enforcement agencies to reexamine their cultures because "culture is more pervasive and powerful than rules and procedures. This does not mean that all agency cultures are hopelessly tainted. It means that we need to

refine and rededicate to key ethical values. Where we find that we fall short, we need to own up and make changes."

He argues that the men and women who carry badges make millions of good, ethical decisions every day. "But there are also instances in which we let the community down," he says. "Instances in which our people do the wrong thing. Instances in which we hurt community members and undermine what we claim to stand for."

Pierce County is more than 1,500 miles from Minneapolis, but Pastor says people in his community have experienced the same profound anger, frustration and disappointment felt in communities across the country. He saw those same feelings among his personnel in the Sheriff's Office.

"I believe that it is necessary for us to 'call out our own' when mistakes are made or when conduct is just plain wrong," he says. "The actions in Minneapolis reflect on the credibility of my deputies. I tell my new recruits that, whether fair or unfair, the conduct of any

of us reflects on all of us. Especially in the age of hand-held video and body cameras, our conduct is on display and subject to review."

He adds that incidents involving the use of force against Black men by police officers stand as markers of America's racial divide. "Those who peacefully protested earlier incidents as well as those who protest the death of Mr. Floyd have a simple but important message. Namely, that 'equal justice under the law' is the very essence of what America is supposed to stand for.

"I've seen things get better in our profession. Hopefully, I've contributed to that a bit. But things still need to get better than this. And the recent incident in Minneapolis sure feels like a setback."

Unfortunately, Hicks believes, for Blacks in America, setbacks have become the norm. She recalls that her father, who was a pilot with the original Tuskegee Airmen during World War II, protested the mistreatment of Black officers by white commanders. "We're still protesting some of the things my late father once protested," she says. "As a society, we're going backwards in terms of race baiting and inciting violence based on race."

But in terms of civilian oversight of police, she believes the country is moving forward. "The work in San Francisco and the progress these agencies are making around the country is hard work, but it is forward-thinking," she says. "But until this country can come to grips with racism, the job of police officers will continue to be treacherous and also be a microcosm of our society."

At a time when there is a public outcry for police reform, Hicks believes a civilian agency overseeing a police department can make a difference. While in San Francisco, she had to build relationships with community groups, police administrators and union officials. She carefully examined police department patterns through data collection, and she also had to improve the caliber of investigations focusing on complaints that raised policy issues, such as vehicle pursuits and use of force.

Under her leadership, San Francisco civilian investigators looked into citizen accusations of misconduct or neglect of duty, interviewing the complainant, the officer and witnesses and gathering internal and external documentary evidence. The office's decisions were based on relevant evidence. If the investigators sustained a complaint, Hicks would send a report to the police chief, who could hold a disciplinary hearing. Hicks also had the discretion to forward a complaint to the police commission if the chief did not agree that misconduct had occurred. For more serious misconduct, Hicks filed charges directly with the police commission, with or without the concurrence of the

police chief. "Civilians can hold the police accountable in ways that extend far beyond individual complaints, potentially covering broad areas of police practice and policy," she notes. "It is important to effect change on police department policies. Only a small number of officers will be impacted with disciplinary matters, but policy change is department-wide."


One of the programs Hicks is most proud of is the mediation program created at the OCC. The voluntary program meant that both the complainant and the police officer had to agree to mediate. In San Francisco over 90% of the eligible officers and 55% of complainants agreed to participate in mediation. "We had the highest voluntary per-capita officer participation rate in our mediation program in the nation. We had skilled mediators who conducted these mediations. The conversation wasn't always about an apology, but it was about both the officer and the complainant having an opportunity to explain their position."

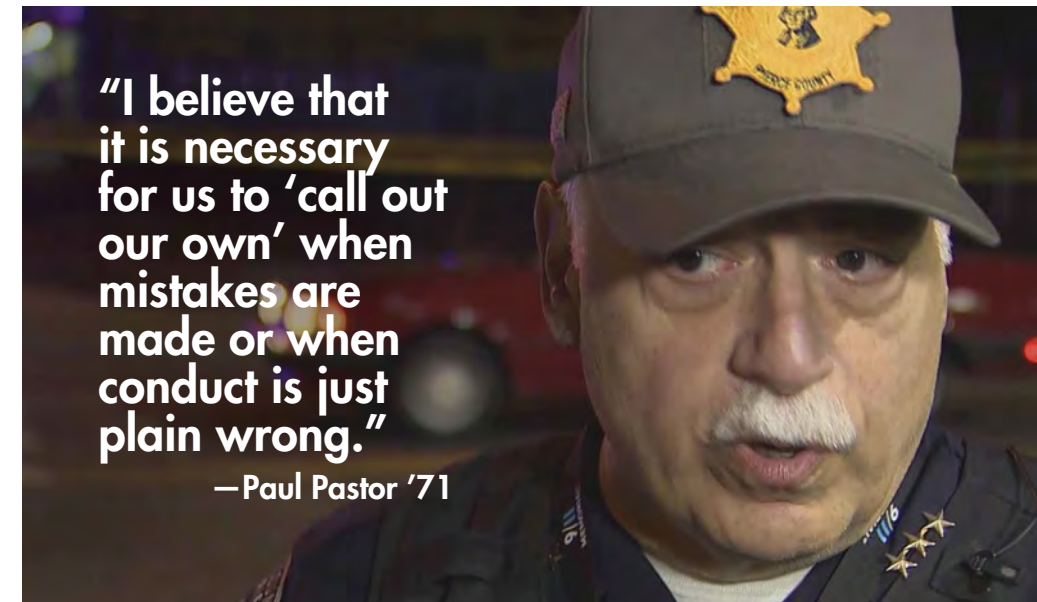
Currently there are more than 200 civilian oversight boards in the U.S. and 18,000 law enforcement agencies, according to the Na-

tional Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement, an association where Hicks was a board member. There's no strict definition for these boards, and their latitude could encompass responsibilities ranging from investigation to review and audit. In addition to Oakland and San Francisco, where Hicks served, other major cities with civilian oversight agencies include New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Los Angeles and New Orleans.

Beyond their outrage, both Hicks and Pastor believe policing can be done right and that change must come.

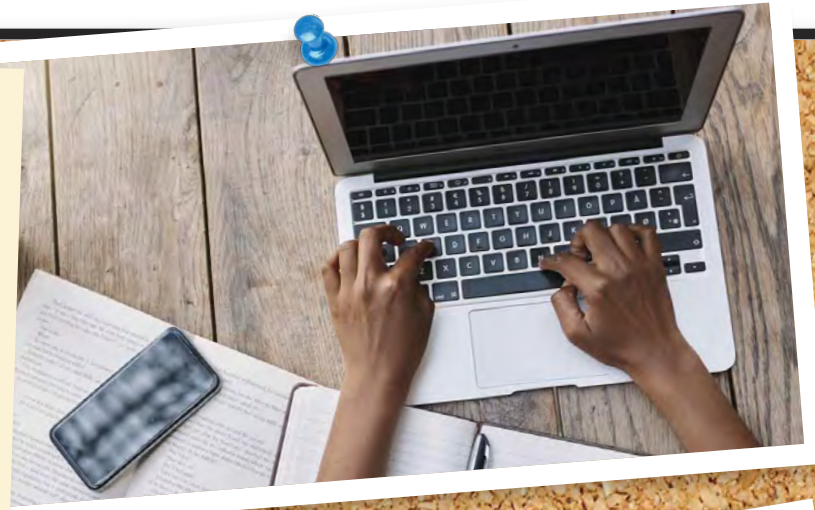
"I have hope," says Hicks. "I have worked in environments where police chiefs and commissioners want to create change, but we need civilians on the front lines always reminding them that you must have civilians keeping you accountable."

In his upcoming retirement, Pastor hopes to make a further contribution at a national level. "I've been doing things with the Major Sheriffs Association of America and the National Executive Institute at the FBI. I'd like to spend more time on that," he says. "I would also hope that new graduates would consider a career in policing. I have found it to be both morally and intellectually engaging. We are not a perfect profession, nor are we perfect people. Like America, we have a long way to go. But we regularly make a positive moral difference in the communities we serve. Few other professions do this as often or as intensely as does policing." 



## Sagehen Student Summer 2020 Opportunity Fund

Many students are facing a loss of critically needed income due to the loss of summer jobs, internships, and research prospects. The College has established the Remote Alternative Independent Summer Experience (RAISE) program to facilitate a broad range of remote activities that will continue to provide academic and professional growth opportunities throughout the summer. A gift to this Fund ensures that, even during these challenging times, students can continue to explore their interests this summer in experiential and immersive environments. Visit [pomona.edu/give-today](http://pomona.edu/give-today) to give to the Sagehen Student Summer 2020 Opportunity Fund.



## Sagehen Emergency Impact Challenge

## A Record Show of Philanthropic Support

We're excited to share the successful outcome of the Sagehen Emergency Impact Challenge crowdfunding campaign that ran May 1-2 to increase support for the new Remote Alternative Independent Summer Experience (RAISE) Program and the Draper Center's Pomona College Academy for Youth Success (PAYS) students and families. Partnering with the One Pomona: A Virtual Sagehen Gathering event, the challenge far surpassed its goal of 470 donations to reach a total of more than 800 donations that raised over \$70,000 and unlocked \$147,000 in challenge bonus funding.

Thank you to everyone for coming together in this time of difficulty to help meet critical needs for Pomona students and our PAYS students and families. The kind generosity shown was not only impactful but also contributed to our most successful 47-hour participatory campaign to date!

## One Pomona A Virtual Sagehen Gathering May 1 & 2, 2020

## ONE POMONA Sagehen Gathering Brings Alumni Together for a Virtual Trip Home

Nearly 1,200 alumni from 27 countries registered to take a virtual trip home to campus for One Pomona: A Virtual Sagehen Gathering. May 1-2, Sagehens from the Classes of 1949 through 2019—and one from the Class of 1946!—came together for Pomona's first-ever, online alumni gathering to attend specially curated livestreamed events with President Gabrielle Starr, Dean of the College Robert Gains, Dean of Students Avis Hinkson and others. Attendees also got a sneak peek tour of the new Benton Museum of Art at Pomona College and perused the Best of Pomona video catalog of distinguished guest speakers and Blaisdell Award winners. Alumni celebrating class reunions this year were treated to their own unique class chat rooms and Zoom meet-ups.

While on Pomona's virtual campus, attendees could also engage in direct chats with groups or individuals and download special content to save. Many alumni took the 47-question Pomoniana Challenge trivia quiz and also played Cecil's Participation Challenge, earning points for exploring the site. Congratulations to our 71 prize winners! Chirp!

## Thanks, Bobby Lee

Our deepest appreciation goes to Bobby Lee '02 for his three years of service as Pomona College's National Chair for Annual Giving: 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20. During his tenure, the Pomona College Annual Fund raised more than \$15M, and in 2018, marked its first increase in alumni participation in 14 years. Under Bobby's leadership, the Office of Alumni and Parent Engagement adopted its first crowdfunding platform, which enabled a new style of targeted fundraising campaigns used for the Draper Center, Empower Center, Pomona College Internship Fund, Alumni Scholarship Fund, and many more areas of need. Bobby steps down from his role on June 30, and we are pleased to welcome our new National Chair for Annual Giving, Nathan Dean '10.



## 2020 Alumni Awards

### The Alumni Distinguished Service Awards

The Alumni Distinguished Service Award pays tribute to an alumnus or alumna in recognition of that person's selfless commitment and ongoing volunteer service to Pomona College. Many thanks and congratulations to our 2020 Distinguished Service award winners (photos above, left to right): **Frank Albinder '80**, **Jim McCallum '70** and **Harry E. Pukay-Martin '70**. Read about these exceptionally dedicated alumni at [pomona.edu/distinguished-service-winners-2020](http://pomona.edu/distinguished-service-winners-2020).

### The Blaisdell Distinguished Alumni Awards

The Blaisdell Award recognizes alumni whose contributions and achievements in their profession or community mark them as distinguished persons even among the distinguished body of Pomona alumni. Congratulations to this year's Blaisdell Award recipients (photos below, left to right): **Steven G. Clarke '70**, **Jennifer Doudna '85**, **Ann Hardy '55** and **Anjali Kamat '00**. Learn more about these extraordinary alumni at [pomona.edu/blaisdell-winners-2020](http://pomona.edu/blaisdell-winners-2020).



**'48 Betty Fussell**, Santa Barbara, CA, writes: "Still scribbling. New memoir will be out 2021: *How to Cook a Coyote: A Manual of Survival*."

**'52 Harriet Sanders**, Murphys, CA, writes that she and **Jim Sanders** '52 "both turn 90 this year and still alive and kicking. We moved into a senior mobile home park that has many activities. Murphys now has 27 wine tasting rooms! Come and visit."

**'53 Barbara McBurney Rainer**, Carmel, CA, writes that she continues to work in ceramics as a founding member of Peninsula Potters, a partnership of 52 years with a studio workshop in Pacific Grove.

**'55 Ann Hardy**, Mountain View, CA, is a 2020 recipient of the Blaisdell Distinguished Alumni Award, which recognizes alumni for high achievement in professions or community service. Hardy, a pioneer in the computer industry, was vice president of Tymshare and cofounder of both Key Logic, a computer security business, and Agorics, a software consulting business. Despite her lack of a science degree after being discouraged by a professor, Hardy talked her way into a computer training course at IBM in 1956, becoming a programmer when other paths were blocked. In the late 1960s, she heard of a startup in California called Tymshare and told the cofounder he needed to hire her to write the operating system for the computer they were about to purchase. The product based on her system was the most consistently profitable division of the company for 20 years, and Hardy rose in the ranks to vice president. When Tymshare was acquired in the 1980s, she left to start her own computer security business, Key Logic, which she ran successfully for several years. She then started a software security consulting company, Agorics, which worked to bring online checking to banks and the government. ● **Joyce Lester Welsh**, La Habra, CA, writes: "After the loss of my husband in 2018, life goes on. To stay busy and find joy is a quest. Looking forward to the reunion."

**'56 David Wark**, St. Paul, MN, writes: "Turned 86 this year, but still practicing as a licensed psychologist. I tell my friends I'm practicing retirement, and someday I will get it right. 'Till then, on we go!'"

**'57 Muriel Anderson**, Seaside, CA, writes that she and **Paul Anderson** '57 are happily living in the Monterey Bay area and "Paul has retired from the Army after serving as a cardiologist for 20 years. He has also retired from doing medical-legal exams for workers' compensation and state disability exams. Muriel has retired as his editor; she was happy to have finally found a use for her English writing major at Pomona."

**'59 Katie Goodridge Ingram** P'93, Ojai, CA, has published a

book, *According to Soledad*, about leading a hybrid life as a child born in Mexico to parents from the United States.

● **Gary Gwilliam**, Alamo, CA, writes: "I continue to practice law at the firm I founded 42 years ago. I am a plaintiff's civil litigation trial lawyer specializing in serious injury work and employment/civil rights cases."

**'60 Richard Reed**, Oak Park, IL, writes: "I retired in 2017 after careers in social work (organization) and adult education. I especially enjoyed offering citizenship classes. I'm enjoying retirement, keep fit at the 'Y,' follow mystery shows."

**'61 Willard Berry**, Washington, DC, has written his first novel, *Chasing Gods*. It chronicles the calamitous life of the author's third great-grandfather, Ephraim Berry, who was brought down by paternal scorn, an economy destroyed by war, and the cropless "Year without a Summer." According to an article in the *Davis Enterprise*, the novel is a cautionary tale of how the drive and desire for spirituality can lead to corruption and to the harm and loss of all that one holds dear. After graduating from Pomona College, Berry earned his Ph.D. at Duke University. He taught political science for 10 years at Georgia State University before moving to Washington to work on public policy, spending the next 33 years as the chief executive of several trade associations. ● **Ralph Bolton**, Palm Springs, CA, who retired as a Pomona College anthropology professor in 2015, has retired as president of The Chijnya Foundation, a nonprofit he founded in 2005 to provide assistance to communities in extreme poverty in southern Peru. The board of the foundation presented Bolton with a plaque that reads as follows: "In recognition of 15 years of distinguished leadership as the founder and president of The Chijnya Foundation and for his dedication to work for the benefit of the communities of the Altiplano, for teaching us to make the world a better place and for giving us the satisfaction of helping others." The work of the foundation has been supported over the years by many in the Pomona College community, including Bolton's former students and faculty colleagues. He remains on the foundation board while enjoying more time to travel and write and to work with Peruvian anthropology students and colleagues. ● **Jarle Eldevik** P'95, Blue Jay, CA, writes: "My wife and I are healthy and active. Enjoyed a great visit at X-mas of our son John '94 (professor at Hamilton College in NY) and his wife Madeleine '94 and their three daughters." ● **Anne Kellogg**, Los Osos, CA, writes: "Sending healthy energy to all of us seniors self-isolating in California. A time for restraint, spiritual retreat and creativity. May the world heal before more are lost. We are all in this together even though we have to be physically apart to slow the curve."

**'64 Joanna Biggar** P'94, Oakland, CA, writes: "In this time of 'sheltering' a special note of gratitude to



**'64** Jerry Kelly, Jim White and Bill Wissler on their annual ski trip to Lake Tahoe. (See Class of '64.)



**'65** Professor Leonard Pronko's first kabuki production in 1965. (See Class of '65.)

the class of '64 for the wonderful and wide-reaching online community we have going. (Hat off to **Pete Briggs** P'93.) ● **Jerry Kelly**, Buffalo, NY, and the Fourth Quarter Ski Team of **Jim White**, Bill Wissler and himself traveled to Lake Tahoe for their sixth annual ski trip. He reports it went smoothly with just a few glitches: "On our very first ride up a Heavenly chair lift Jerry dropped one of his poles. On our trip to Northstar, Jim invited an old friend who promptly skied us into the ground on the black diamond runs. But we were fortunate that the weather provided brilliant sunny ski days during the entire week. Next year we're headed for Banff and Lake Louise on January 31st to February 7th and invite any classmates to join us!" (See photo.)

**'65 Patrick M. Kelly**, a prominent trial lawyer and past president of the State Bar of California, has joined the panel of distinguished neutrals at ADR

Services, a leading provider of alternative dispute resolution services. "Mr. Kelly is one of the pre-eminent trial lawyers, litigators, law firm leaders and professional association leaders in the country," ADR Services announced in a news release. "He has vast experience in numerous substantive and human relations areas that he will bring to bear in efficiently, effectively and economically resolving matters as a mediator, arbitrator or referee." Kelly had been a litigator at Wilson Elser Moskowitz Edelman & Dicker since 1980. He sees a role in alternative dispute resolution as a fitting end to a long career. In 2019, the Los Angeles County Bar Association, of which Kelly is a past president, presented him with the Shattuck-Price Outstanding Lawyer Award, in recognition of extraordinary dedication to the high principles of the legal profession and to improving the administration of justice. ● **Linda Kwon Quist**, Everett, WA, writes that as she read the

PCM "In Memoriam" article on Leonard Pronko, Professor Emeritus of Theatre and Dance, "it brought back wonderful memories of the very first kabuki production in 1965. It was a double bill *Benven the Thief* and *The Monstrous Spider*. This was the first and only drama production I took part in. I performed a dance and had a minor speaking part. I was excited at this opportunity to take part in kabuki at Pomona since my mother's big passion and hobby was Japanese dance. Her older brother brought kabuki productions to Maui, Hawaii, where they lived and where I grew up. Their parents, my grandparents, immigrated from Southern Japan. Other members of the class of 1965 that I remember who took part were **Charles Newman** and **Alice Jones**, who besides acting did the specialized makeup and wigs. It was a most memorable event." (See photo.)

**'66 Robert (Bob) Michael**, Fort Collins, CO, writes that he "recently drove the Karokoram Highway from Xinjiang in far western China to the Hunza Valley in Pakistan. Possibly the world's most spectacular mountain road?"

**'68 Tom Schumann**, Deming, WA, writes: "Well, I have to admit that I was as surprised as anyone when Morganna and Anastasia won women's doubles at Milan's Bonacossa. Admittedly, since it was the fifth year in a row, we had a nice 2011 Armand de Brignac—that's the 15 liter—on ice. That should put them back on the cover of Tennis View. Did I say they've appeared eight times? That's three more than Serena... but I don't like to brag about it. For our part, we're still at the villa on Ile d'Yeu. It was tempting to sell—did I mention we picked it up for a tidy \$3 million? That's Euros of course, but, again, I don't like to brag. The point is that, really, we have enough property and if we sold anything it should be the horses. But then there goes the Belmont, so I guess the horses stay. Did I mention that we won the Preakness last year? Love to see anyone. Stop by. Bono knows how to get in touch with us."

**'70 Steven G. Clarke** P'12, Los Angeles, CA, is a 2020 recipient of the Blaisdell Distinguished Alumni Award, which recognizes high achievement in professions or community service. Clarke, UCLA Distinguished Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry, is an authority on the biochemistry of the aging process and how protein modification can regulate biological function. His current research interests include understanding the roles of spontaneous protein damage and repair in aging, especially in Alzheimer's disease. Clarke earned his Ph.D. in biochemistry and molecular biology at Harvard University in 1976 and joined the faculty in the Department of Chemistry and the Molecular Biology Institute at UCLA in 1978. He directed the UCLA Cellular and Molecular Biology Training Program from 1988 to 2018 and the UCLA Molecular Biology Institute from 2001 to 2011. From 2012

to 2107, he was the Elizabeth R. and Thomas E. Plott Chair in Gerontology at UCLA. His achievements have been honored by the William C. Rose Award in Biochemistry from the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, the American Chemical Society Ralph F. Hirschmann Award in Peptide Chemistry, a MERIT award from the National Institutes of Health, a Senior Scholar Award in Aging from the Ellison Medical Foundation, and by selection as the 107th Faculty Research Lecturer at UCLA. He is a recipient of the UCLA Academic Senate Distinguished Teaching Award, including the Eby Award for the Art of Teaching. ● **Jim McCallum**, Bethesda, MD, is a 2020 recipient of the Alumni Distinguished Service Award for selfless commitment and ongoing volunteer service to the College. He has been involved in the area of Washington, DC, organizing events at the Smithsonian Institution and White House. He also has stayed active as a class volunteer, co-chairing reunions, and has served as an all-around booster at Pomonathons, 4/7 service events and other gatherings. Stints on the Torchbearers Board and now the Alumni Board have rounded out a happy, ongoing connection. ● **Phyllis Hagstrum Meshulam** P'05, Sebastopol, CA, won an Artists Embassy International Prize for her book of poems, *Land of My Father's War* and will be the Sonoma County Poet Laureate for 2020-2022. ● **Harry Pukay-Martin** is a 2020 recipient of the Alumni Distinguished Service Award for selfless commitment and ongoing volunteer service to the College. He has served on numerous reunion committees, including chairing or co-chairing the 40th, 45th, 47th and 50th committees, and was president of the Torchbearers from 2010 to 2014. He partnered with staff to establish the new multiyear "Flight to 50," a program that engages classes from their 47th Reunion to their 50th Reunion and led the effort to endow a scholarship in the name of the class celebrating its milestone year.

**'71 Susan Kleinberg**, New York, NY, a multimedia artist, exhibited *Exquisite Vicissitudes*, a collection of new prints based on the medusa population proliferating in acidifying crystalline seas, in February and March at Carl's Atelier in Santa Monica, CA. The images derive from the waters in Ponza, off the Italian coast. In addition, Kleinberg's video, *Helix*, developed with the scientific team of the Louvre and previously shown at the Venice Biennale 2019, was screened in the atrium of Westfield Century City in February. ● **Karl Taylor** P'95, Danville, CA, received the Haagen-Smit Clean Air Award from the California Air Resources Board, a high honor for achievements addressing air pollution and climate science. Taylor, a longtime Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory climate scientist was among seven winners. He was commended for "contributions—both in building essential infrastructure to improve climate modeling and through his own far-reaching research exposing differential forcing effects of anthropogenic sulfate aerosols—[that]

have helped make it possible for the climate science community to evaluate and improve climate change modeling, to distinguish human impacts on climate and to estimate uncertainty in projections of future climate change." Taylor created the Taylor Diagram, which is used in evaluating the relative merits of different climate models in simulating multiple variables. It appears in hundreds of research papers each year and is routinely used by several major climate modeling centers. He also has contributed to the scientific assessment reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as lead author of the chapter on "Climate Models and Their Evaluation" in 2007, as review editor in 2013 and as contributing author to a total of seven chapters in the 1995, 2001 and 2007 reports. The IPCC was awarded the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize jointly with Al Gore for its efforts to "build up and disseminate greater knowledge about man-made climate change."

**'72 Richard Herrell**, Washington, DC, sends along a 47 sighting, a graphic noting the "average number of listeners who donate their vehicles to support WAMU, my DC NPR station, each week." (See image above.)

**'73 Dawn Downey**, Kansas City, MO, has written a third book, *Searching for My Heart: Essays About Love*. It has been included in the collection of the Mid-Century Public Library in Kansas City.

**'75 Cathy Corison** P'16, St. Helena, CA, whose winemaking career began after taking a wine appreciation class at Pomona, has been nominated for a 2020 James Beard Award in the category for "Outstanding Wine, Beer or Spirits Producer" for demonstrating consistency and exceptional skill in her craft. ● **Berta Maria Hines**, Portland, OR, has written an article titled "Releasing the Fear: Boosting Your Immune System and Healing the Presence of Disease." The physician and creative healer's website is [drbertamariabines.com](http://drbertamariabines.com).

**'76 Marcy Helfand**, Dallas, TX, writes: "It was a busy year for grandchildren. Triplets (boys) in June, then another grandson in January. That brings the total to five."

**'77 Artist Barry X Ball** P'19, New York, NY, recently mounted his

first solo show at the Dallas Nasher Sculpture Center, titled *Remaking Sculpture*, according to an article in the *Dallas Morning News*. The article notes that "Ball uses 3-D scans and printing methods designed with complicated computer-assisted programs that allow him to work in stone in ways that were unthinkable even two decades ago."

**'80 Frank Albinder**, Washington, DC, is a 2020 recipient of the Alumni Distinguished Service Award for selfless commitment and ongoing volunteer service to the College. With his devotion to Pomona as clear as the tattoo of Cecil Sagen on his right arm, Albinder has been an advocate for the College since he graduated. When he moved to Boston for graduate school, he couldn't imagine life without Pomona, so he served as an alumni admissions volunteer and as the Boston Chapter Chair for the Pomona Alumni Association. He served as chapter chair again in San Francisco and Washington, D.C., and was on the Alumni Board for many years before becoming president for the 2009-10 academic year. For several years, he conducted an Alumni Weekend choir. He has hosted numerous winter break parties in Washington and has served as co-chair for most of his reunions. ● **Alison Rose Jefferson**, Los Angeles, CA, was selected by the Los Angeles City Historical Society as one of the individuals and organizations recognized in 2020 for exceptional contributions to the greater understanding and awareness of Los Angeles history. She received her award at the organization's annual gala on March 8 at the Dunbar Hotel on Central Avenue. Jefferson received the Miriam Matthews Ethnic History Award for her book, *Living the California Dream: African American Leisure Sites during the Jim Crow Era*. She also was the keynote speaker for the event, giving a talk on the history of the Dunbar and the Central Avenue district when it was the hub of African American community and cultural life. ● **John J. Ngai**, Berkeley, CA, became director of the National Institute of Health's Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) Initiative in March. "The BRAIN Initiative aims to revolutionize our understanding of the brain and brain disorders," said Dr. Francis S. Collins, NIH director. "We welcome Dr. Ngai's leadership in steering this groundbreaking 21st century project." The initiative is a large-scale effort to accelerate research in neuroscience. Ngai earned his Ph.D. in biology from Caltech and was a postdoctoral researcher at Caltech and at the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons before starting his faculty position at the University of California at Berkeley, where he has taught for more than 25 years. His lab uses a wide array of tools and techniques to study the cells and molecules behind olfaction, including fundamental research on how the nervous system detects odors and turns them into neural signals sent to the brain. He is also interested in unraveling the diversity of cell types in the brain and understanding how the nervous system repairs itself



'82 John Starr, Emil Kakkis and David Reboussin on a Super Bowl ski trip. (See Class of '82.)

following injury or degeneration. His work has led to the publication of more than 70 scientific articles in some of the field's most prestigious journals, and 10 U.S. and international patents. Ngai has received awards from the Sloan Foundation, Pew Charitable Trusts and McKnight Endowment Fund for Neuroscience, among others.

'82 John Starr P'15, P'18, Emil Kakkis P'16 and David Reboussin got together for a Super Bowl ski trip before the Kansas City Chiefs' victory over the San Francisco 49ers. (See photo.) • Penny Yee, Clinton, NY, who holds the James L. Ferguson Chair in psychology at Hamilton College, has been appointed as the college's next associate dean of faculty, effective July 1. She previously served as associate dean of faculty from 2013 to 2018, when her role emphasized curriculum. For her upcoming three-year term, Yee will bring her expertise in advising to the collaborative work of developing faculty connections to a new, integrated advising project. Yee earned a master's degree and Ph.D. in human experimental psychology from the University of Oregon. She joined the Hamilton faculty in 1991. Among her many accomplishments, she has twice been the recipient of the Hamilton College Class of 1963 Faculty Fellowship (2004 and 2013) and in 1993 was a co-recipient of a National Science Foundation grant to establish a Center for Cognitive Study at Hamilton.

'83 Jennifer Doudna, Berkeley, CA, is a 2020 recipient of the Blaisdell Distinguished Alumni Award,

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which recognizes high achievement in professions or community service. An internationally renowned professor of chemistry and molecular and cell biology at UC Berkeley, Doudna is one of the discoverers of the revolutionary gene-editing technique known as CRISPR-Cas9 and has been a vocal proponent of its responsible use. Her early guidance for more research and discussion came to the fore after the "CRISPR babies" announcement of late 2018, when she and other leaders denounced a Chinese scientist's claim of creating twin "designer babies." Doudna is an investigator with the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, senior investigator at Gladstone Institutes, and the executive director of the Innovative Genomics Institute, which this spring quickly shifted its focus to testing and research to battle the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. She cofounded and serves on the advisory panel of several companies that use CRISPR technology in unique ways, including Inari, Synthego, Mammoth Biosciences and Caribou Biosciences. She is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Medicine, the National Academy of Inventors and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Doudna is also a Foreign Member of the Royal Society and has received numerous other honors including the Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences, the Japan Prize, Kavli Prize and Wolf Prize. Doudna's work led *TIME* to recognize her as one of the "100 Most Influential People" in 2015 and as a runner-up for "Person of the Year" in 2016.

'86 Kevin Leonard was named the new dean of the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), Edwardsville, IL, in April and will assume the role July 1, according to a college press release. He was previously professor and chairperson in the Department of History at Middle Tennessee State University since 2017 and chair of the Department of History at Western Washington University from 2011-17.

'87 Novelist Lian Dolan, Pasadena, CA, has published a new book titled *The Sweeney Sisters*, which Good Reads named as one of its most anti-



## James Named Dean of Wharton

'91 Erika H. James P'24 has been named the next dean of the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, effective July 1. "Erika is an award-winning scholar and teacher and a strong, proven leader who serves as dean of the Goizueta Business School at Emory University," said Penn President Amy Gutmann. "A passionate and visible champion of the power of business and business education to positively transform communities locally, nationally, and globally, she is exceptionally well prepared to lead Wharton into the next exciting chapter of its storied history."

Since becoming dean of the Goizueta Business School in 2014, James has introduced and led an effort to build an innovation and entrepreneurship lab open to all students on campus. She grew the Goizueta faculty by 25 percent by the end of her first term, building a critical mass of junior faculty and seasoned scholars in key academic areas such as behavioral and decision-based research, business analytics, and health care innovation. With strong faculty input and support, she also expanded corporate engagement with the creation of a research-based corporate think tank.

"Erika has consistently and constructively drawn upon her own scholarship in the areas of leadership development, organizational behavior, gender and racial diversity, and crisis leadership," Pritchett said, "applying her own insights into human behavior to foster a work culture that allows people to thrive personally and professionally. She has led faculty and student workshops on such topics as unconscious bias and building trust across divides and has been engaged as a consultant by some of the nation's largest and most prestigious firms."

At Emory, James undertook a significant redesign of the undergraduate business curriculum, integrating immersive learning, technology, and partnerships with Emory College's liberal arts curriculum.

Prior to her deanship, she served as the senior associate dean for executive education at the University of Virginia Darden School of Business, working closely with faculty to reimagine executive education and lifelong learning opportunities.

She has also been named one of the Top 10 Women of Power in Education by *Black Enterprise* and as one of the Power 100 by *Ebony Magazine*. She holds a Ph.D. and master's degree in organizational psychology from the University of Michigan

pated books for April. Her previous books were "Helen of Pasadena" and "Elizabeth the First Wife." • Julie Nicoletta has been teaching history, art and architecture classes at the University of Washington, Tacoma, since 1996, during which time she has held many titles and responsibilities around the campus, including being the first adviser for the current iteration of the university's student newspaper, *The Ledger*.

'88 David Blatner, Woodinville, WA, is now CEO of Creative-Pro Network, a resource for graphic designers and marketing professionals. He and Debbie Carlson '90 have two teenage sons.

'91 Greg Fitchitt, regional president of the Howard Hughes Corp. in Columbia, MD, leads the company's \$5 billion development project in downtown Columbia, which will add 14 million square feet of mixed-use development to Maryland's flagship planned urban community.

'92 Tim DeRoche, Los Angeles, CA, writes: "My second book *A Fine Line: How Most American Kids Are Kept Out of the Best Public Schools* published on May 17th, the 66th anniversary of the Brown v. Board of Education ruling. The book examines the laws and policies that assign children to public schools based on where they live. Last year, my first book, *The Ballad of Huck & Miguel*, was featured on CBS Sunday Morning. Both books benefitted from the help of a number of my Pomona friends and former classmates. On the family side, Simone finished her master's degree at USC and now works as an occupational therapist at City of Hope Hospital, helping cancer patients with their rehab. Our daughter Neve is 5, and son Orik is 2. Please reach out if you pass through Southern California! [tim@timderoche.com](mailto:tim@timderoche.com)"

'94 Ed Gulick was recently promoted to vice president at High Plains Architects in Billings, MT. A licensed architect in Montana and Idaho, he is the current president of the Billings Architectural Association. He received his master's degree in architecture from Yale University in 1998 and has taught at Montana State University, Billings, and Rocky Mountain College. His work in downtown Billings includes Home on the Range, the former Good Earth Market, Swift Building Lofts and Valley Credit Union. He has worked on 11 of High Plains Architects' 12 LEED platinum certified buildings and has more pending.

'99 Jodie Hollander, Minturn, CO, a poet who studied under Robert Mezey at Pomona and remained close to him until his death in April at 85, wrote a tribute to the emeritus professor of English and poet-in-residence in the *Kenyon Review*. Hollander and her husband Aaron were wrapping up work on a podcast about Mezey after conducting 25 interviews. She also was seeking a home for some of Mezey's unpublished poems.

'00 Anjali Kamat, New York, NY, is a 2020 recipient of the Blais-

dell Distinguished Alumni Award, which recognizes alumni for high achievement in professions or community service. A Peabody Award-winning and Emmy-nominated investigative journalist, writer and documentary filmmaker, Kamat's reports from around the world cover geopolitics, the global economy, migration, poverty, racism, social movements, wars, and the intersection of money and politics. She has been a correspondent and host for New York Public Radio, Al Jazeera's current affairs documentary show *Fault Lines*, and the daily television and radio news hour *Democracy Now!* Her work also has appeared in *The New Republic*, *Dissent* and online at Slate and Trump, Inc., a joint reporting project by WNYC Studios and ProPublica Trump, Inc. and The Stakes podcasts. Kamat spent 2011 covering the Arab uprisings from Egypt and Libya. She currently is writing a book on South Asian labor migrants in the Middle East for Verso Books. On June 1, Kamat joined *Reveal* as a senior reporter based in New York. *Reveal* is the nonprofit Center for Investigative Reporting's website, public radio program, podcast and social media platform. • Jon McCumber has joined the Chicago office of Cresset as a registered investment advisor, according to a news release. Prior to joining Cresset, he was an executive director and investment specialist with J.P. Morgan Private Bank in Chicago.

'01 David Chen, Denver, CO, was recognized by *Asian Avenue Magazine* as an "Asian American Hero of Colorado" this year along with four other outstanding community members. Chen was selected for his advocacy for bike and street safety, which included testifying to the state legislature and working with victims' families. • Michael Lane has been promoted to managing director with SC Capital Partners in Shanghai after 10 years as an executive director for the Singapore-based private equity firm. Prior to joining SC Capital, he had served as a senior associate with Morgan Stanley's real estate asset management business from 2006 to 2009. He served as a research analyst for Cushman & Wakefield from 2003 to 2004 and as an associate financial advisor for Merrill Lynch from 2001 to 2003. • Elise Nussbaum competed on *Jeopardy!* last November, finishing as a three-day champion with winnings of \$80,400. "It was great to have Adam Boardman and Alice Chung cheering me on from the audience! And of course I credit Professor Peggy Waller with inspiring me to major in French, a choice that helped me run the first category ("The Occupation of France"). The whole experience was completely surreal, and an excellent way to become reacquainted with the LA area."

'06 Sophia Booth Magnone and Max Wainwright '07, San Francisco, CA, are delighted to announce the birth of their child Clementine Booth Wainwright on March 25, 2020. Although the family would not necessarily recommend giving birth during a global pandemic, Clementine is doing her part to make sheltering in place as exciting as possible. • Lisa Parrillo, Boise, ID, a re-



'01 Elise Nussbaum competing as a three-day champion on Jeopardy! (See Class of '01.)



'07 A group of Sagehens met in Big Sky, MT, for some fun in the snow. (See Class of '07.)

constructive urologist, has been named partner at Idaho Urologic Institute and the Surgery Center of Idaho. She attended medical school at Eastern Virginia Medical School in Norfolk, VA, and completed her urology residency at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, going on to complete a fellowship in genitourinary reconstructive surgery at the University of Colorado in Denver.

'07 Emma Spiro, Seattle, WA, writes: "A group of friends and family met in Big Sky, Montana, for some fun in the snow before heading back to various cities about to enter quarantine. We are thankful to have had this time with lifelong friends and are now doing our part to flatten the curve. Thank you to all our healthcare workers!" Among those on the trip with Spiro: Chris DuBois '06, Becky Abbey, Dave Dorsey, Maria Popkovich, Sam Rorick, Audrey Bergmann and Kyle Edgerton '08. (See photo.)

'08 Adam Schleyhahn recently became director of sales at Fluid Components International (FCI), according to a corporate news release. Prior to joining FCI, he was a member of the corporate staff at Swagelok's headquarters in Cleveland, Ohio. He was previously the general manager of sales for San Diego Fluid Systems Technologies, representing Swagelok products. He earned his MBA from UCLA Anderson School of Management. • Jenn Wilcox Thomas, San Francisco, CA, and husband Ahin Thomas welcomed baby girl Sameera Reed Thomas in January 2020. Big sister Annika and dog Blankets are quite enthusiastic about her arrival (as are the parents). (See photo.)

'09 Drew Hedman became major league run production coordinator for the Arizona Diamondbacks in January 2019 after working as a pro scout for the organization for the previous year. A 50th-round pick, he played professional baseball for four years in the Red Sox or-



'08 Jenn Wilcox Thomas and husband Ahin Thomas welcome baby Sameera. (See Class of '08.)



'10 Ali Standish introduces baby Luka to one of his fellow "Sagechicks." (See Class of '10.)

ganization, topping out at Double-A. "I certainly knew the odds weren't in my favor, but with that being said, I always tried to be stubborn enough to think I'd be the exception," he told Fan Graphs. He worked as an assistant coach at Vanderbilt University before gaining a front-office internship with the Washington Nationals, which led to the scouting job with Arizona. ● **Samantha Kanofsky**, Berkeley, CA, runs her own company called SoulLight Counseling and Communications, which she describes as "communication coaching and nature immersion for fast-paced individuals and organizations." One of the services offered is leading workshops based on the Japanese practice of *shinrin-yoku*, which roughly translates to "soaking in the forest atmosphere."

'10 **Ali Standish**, Raleigh, NC, and her husband Aki Laakso, whom she met while studying abroad in Cambridge, England, welcomed their first child, Luka Standish Laakso, on January

20, 2020. Unable to gather with 2010 classmates and their young families for Alumni Weekend because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Standish printed photos of friends' babies to "introduce Luka to his fellow Sagechicks." His new friends are Omri (**Becca AbuRakia-Einhorn**), Rory, (**Ingrid Vidal Cullen** and **Jed Cullen**) and Charlize Izumi McClure (**Alex Scharr**). (See photo.)

'20 The athletic achievements of **Zack Senator** as a member of the Pomona-Pitzer men's water polo and swim teams were the subject of a feature in an article in his hometown newspaper, the *Palisadian-Post* of Pacific Palisades, CA. Senator's future plans include starting in January as a management consultant at the global consulting firm Deloitte in Los Angeles.

# Obituaries

## ALUMNI

'49 **Clella Claire Carpenter Snider** P'73, P'82, Whittier, CA (11/10/19), at age 91; lived fully with a vision beyond her times while constantly maintaining a positive attitude; born June 24, 1928, in Azusa, CA; remembered fondly her early years growing up in Paso Robles from 1933 to 1938; as a child, wanted to be a park ranger, even though women were prohibited from ranger service at the time; enjoyed family pack trips into the Sierras and recounted sitting around a campfire and listening to the packers' tales; lived in Downey when World War II broke out; the events remained a vivid image all her life; graduated from Pomona with a degree in music specializing in piano; met **William (Bill) Snider** '49 there and they married shortly after graduation; moved into their home in Whittier in 1953, where she lived for 66 years; raised three children, spending time at the beach house, fly fishing in the Sierras, camping in Baja California, courageously attempting to ski and driving throughout Canada and Alaska in their Scout with a canoe on top; touched the lives of many young women as a Girl Scout Leader for 12 years; received a teaching credential through the University of Southern California and a master's degree as a special education teacher from what is now California State University, Fullerton; taught a class for children with special needs at La Colima School in Whittier; after retirement became the accompanist for the New Century singers for 28 years; enjoyed being active in PEO and was a member for 70 years; also participated in a Red Hat group, book club, writers' workshop and beloved swimmers'/breakfast group; attended Whittier First Friends Church; traveled throughout the United States (including Alaska and Hawaii), Africa, Egypt, Mongolia, Japan, Brazil, Scandinavia, Russia, Ireland, China and several mainland European countries; the love of travel stemmed from her enjoyment of adventure stories and books as a child; survived by her brother and his wife (Charles and Alice Carpenter), three children and their spouses (**Bonnie Jean Snider Johnson** '73 and Ramsey Johnson, Stan and Gerylyn Snider and **Karl Snider** '82 and David Sateren), as well as five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

'50 **Ralph Kain Campbell**, Polson, MT (1/12/20) at age 92; shortly after high school, was conscripted into the Marines and based at Camp Pendleton, where he served in the medical corps; after the end of World War II, he attended Pomona, just a short drive away from Redlands College, where his future wife, Jan, was studying to be an elementary school teacher; married soon after their graduation in 1950, and made a honeymoon out of driving cross-country to Connecticut where he attended Yale Medical School, specializing in pediatrics; did his residency at Los Angeles

Children's Hospital in Hollywood, followed by medical practices in Pomona and Claremont and teaching pediatric cardiology at LA Children's; raised five children of his own and had many stories of rushing to the hospital in the middle of the night in his supercharged Studebaker Avanti to care for an ailing infant; after vacationing in Montana, moved in the early 1970s to a beautiful lakefront orchard on Montana's Flathead Lake called Finley Point; became a physician with the Bureau of Indian Affairs; started the Lake County Public Health Department, where he had the privilege of being the first Lake County Health Officer; served as physician to the county jail; as a pediatrician, became Polson's first medical specialist and practiced in his own small office in town, as well as his in-home office; built a family farm with cherries, apples, an experimental pear orchard, honeybees, a large vegetable garden and the most delectable chickens and eggs imaginable; along with other local growers, soon saw the need for a more adequate packing facility and helped establish Skidoo Packers, which was built on the south end of his property, presently the site of Flathead Lake Cherry Growers; was a pioneer in the organic farming business, developing his own organic fertilizer company, Glacier Natural Products, Inc.; spent any free time he had with numerous volunteering efforts, including medical missions with Jan in Ecuador and Belize and serving as trustee on the district school board, secretary of the Montana Board of Pediatrics and numerous volunteer and leadership positions with local churches where he and Jan worshiped; also was percussionist for the pit orchestra with Port Polson Players; enjoyed sailing, water-skiing, swimming, tennis, hiking and keeping up his running skills in local races, in which he excelled into his late 60s; after retiring from medical practice, poured himself into the field of nutritional science and became a contributing editor for *The Orthomolecular Medicine News Service*; co-authored two books on child nutrition that are presently sold worldwide—*The Vitamin Cure for Children* and *The Vitamin Cure for Infants*; was profoundly changed by his Christian faith in Jesus Christ and often quipped, "You just don't get it, 'til you get it!"; preceded in death by his best friend and cherished wife of 67 years, Jan, and his beloved son, Ken.

'50 **Charles "Ray" Fowler** P'79, Shreveport, LA, (3/25/20), at age 91; a longtime Claremonter known for his deep voice, warm smile, puns and calm air of having everything under control; predeceased two months earlier by his wife of 67 years, **Barbara Fowler** '52 P'79; raised in Long Beach, loved to surf the world famous "wave," before it was wiped out by the Long Beach breakwater; following in the footsteps of his mother (Edith Moore, '26), attended Pomona College, majoring in English literature; while in college served as youth minister at Claremont United Church of Christ (CUCC) and began dating Barbara; they married shortly after her graduation in 1952, moving to Northern California; completed his divinity degree at the Pacific School of Religion and worked part time as minister to young adults at Oak-

land First Methodist Church, where his wife founded the nursery school; returned to Claremont in 1954 when he was hired as the assistant minister at CUCC; daughter Sarah was born that year, followed by Lauren in 1957; in 1959 the family accepted a posting as educational missionaries to Izmir, Turkey; upon the family's return in 1962, transitioned from the ministry into counseling, building a private practice in marriage and family therapy while pursuing a Ph.D. in sociology at the University of Southern California; a founding faculty member at Pitzer College in 1964, taught extension courses at several campuses in the University of California system throughout the 1960s; the Fowlers were committed to the principles of equal rights and equal opportunity and led innovative educational and community programs in the "War on Poverty"; after 10 years in private counseling practice and college level instruction, he became executive director of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists, establishing the AAMFT national office in Claremont Village; after retiring, bought A. Kline Chocolatier on Second Street (ostensibly a selfless act of sacrifice to ensure the continued presence of a crucial small family business); served on city and community commissions; was a familiar face—and voice—at meetings and hearings; the Fowlers loved trees and worked tirelessly against the many threats faced by Claremont's trees; the magnificent ginkgo in their front yard and the piles of brilliant golden leaves drew friends, neighbors and Pomona students to see it; in 2017, the couple moved to Louisiana to be near daughter Sarah and family; a year later, a dear friend sent a box of ginkgo leaves from the tree; Mr. Fowler's thank you email said, "That sudden sight of those few Ginkgo leaves made us realize that, of all the symbolic elements of our 61 years of life in that location, unchanging from the day we moved in, 'The Tree,' and especially its leaves epitomized the special stability of our life there." Survived by daughters, Sarah (Phil Boswell) of Shreveport, LA, and Lauren (Michael O'Malley) of Park City, UT; four grandchildren; two great granddaughters; the extended Blakeley and Blanchard families; five godchildren; and dear friends across the country and globe.

'50 **Mary Mowry** P'86, Bonita, CA (5/18/20), at age 90, the day before her 91st birthday; born in St. Paul, MN, moved to California as a toddler; graduated from Pomona as a zoology major, always cherishing the bonds made there; her daughter, **Linda Mowry Beck** '86, followed her footsteps; met Robert Mowry after college, marrying shortly thereafter; a son, Robert, was born, followed by Richard, then Jeanne and Linda; the family vacationed in Bakersfield, Idyllwild, Palm Springs, San Juan Capistrano, Boulder, CO, and Kauai, HI; Bob was forced to quit his medical practice when the children were still young due to Parkinson's disease; Mary took such detours in stride, gradually assuming the role of primary care provider not only for the four children, but also of Bob; despite his physical disabilities, they were

able to take many international trips; unfortunately, further complications led to Bob's premature death; Mary continued in her work with the Parkinson's Support Group in San Diego, which she and Bob founded and which became a model for similar support groups around the country; Mary was honored for this work in 2005; after several years, met her next life partner, Russell Rhue; they coordinated several wonderful summer trips for the Mowry clan; Mary always was very organized, planning each step of summer birthday celebrations and meals; relished the time together, group pictures, water balloon tosses and swimming; family reunions were highlights of summer for eight grandchildren; moved to Fredericka Manor in the San Diego area after Russ passed away; spent Christmas 2019 with extended family and her last week and a half with Linda, who facilitated virtual connections with other family members (due to COVID-19) prior to Mary's unexpected passing; Mary was happy to meet, at a distance, her new great-granddaughter; continued to be the same gracious, considerate, thoughtful, loving mother she was throughout her life; passed away with her four children by her side; will be sorely missed and will continue to live on through her children, grandchildren and great-grandchild.

'51 **Mervin (Merv) A. Nerling** (3/30/20) at age 91; possessed a keen mind and a dry wit, which he "gleefully exercised" on all; enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served during the Korean War, honorably discharged as a lieutenant; married Marcia Walkey in 1954 and had a daughter, Diane; two sons, David and Rick, two grandsons and four great-grandchildren; enrolled at San Diego State University in 1955, receiving an elementary teaching credential and master's degree in school administration; spent the next 37 years with the San Diego City Schools where he served as teacher, consultant, program coordinator and principal for nine district schools, completing his career as principal of The Revere School for Severely Handicapped Children in 1991; collected vintage books and newspapers and sang tenor.

'52 **Barbara Blakeley Fowler** P'79, Shreveport, LA, at age 89; a longtime Claremont resident, preservationist, activist, kindergarten teacher and volunteer; born in Glendale, CA and raised in Santa Ana, CA spending summers on her grandparents' apricot farm in Hemet; majored in sociology at Pomona, where she began dating **Ray Fowler** '50 and graduated Phi Beta Kappa; the couple married that year and moved to Northern California, where she founded and directed the nursery school at the Oakland First Methodist Church; returned to Claremont in 1955, when her husband took a post as assistant minister at Claremont United Church of Christ; bought a house at the corner of Seventh Street and Yale Avenue, a block from the church, raising daughters Sarah and Lauren there; from 1959 to 1962, the Fowlers lived in Izmir, Turkey, while Mr. Fowler taught at the church-founded American Collegiate Institute (ACI); Ms. Fowler officially taught

English as a second language at the school part time and unofficially assisted neighbor children in learning the language while navigating the joys and challenges of running a household in a different culture; directed the school's bookmobile program, for which the Fowlers drove to rural villages on Saturdays with a handful of ACI students to distribute books to children; spent summers traveling in the Middle East and Europe with other missionary families; after returning to Claremont, continued her studies in early childhood development at Pacific Oaks College in Pasadena, ultimately earning a master of arts in early childhood education from Claremont Graduate University; a long teaching career with the Pomona Unified School District began in the then-new Head Start program and continued over 30 years as a kindergarten teacher at Lincoln School; the couple became activists for historic preservation in the late 1960s as they watched a house across the street demolished and citrus groves targeted for development; one of a core group of citizens who undertook a door-to-door petition drive in a grassroots effort that succeeded in creating the Claremont Historic District in the city's zoning plan in 1971; the Fowlers used personal finances to save two old houses from demolition; in the late 1980s, the Fowlers championed another historic preservation cause: saving the 1908 Barbara Greenwood Kindergarten bungalow in Pomona and serving as foundation board members and docents for the building for decades; passionate about the environment, the Fowlers were pioneers in small scale solar projects, installing solar panels on their home and small rental properties; also passionate about the beauty and importance of trees, working tirelessly to protect Claremont's trees from the threats of budget cuts, drought, politics and ill-advised pruning; her daughter remembers that when the city was contemplating removal of all the elms along Indian Hill Boulevard due to the threat of disease, her mother threatened to chain herself to a tree; she later received Sustainable Claremont's Tree Champion Award; volunteer activities included the League of Women Voters, Claremont Reading Conference, Claremont Civic Association, Claremont Heritage, Sustainable Claremont, Tree Action Group (TAG), city parks and recreation and Pilgrim Place; their support for many organizations led to deep friendships; in 2017 the Fowlers received the Claremont Heritage Lifetime Achievement Award, "for many years of service and contribution to the preservation of our cultural, natural and built environment"; in 2017 the Fowlers moved to Louisiana to be near their daughter Sarah and her family; survived by two months by her husband of 67 years (see obituary above); also survived by daughters Sarah (Phil Boswell) and Lauren (Michael O'Malley); four grandchildren; two great grandchildren; brother Robert and his wife Milly (Blanchard) Blakeley; the extended Blakeley/Blanchard families; and dear friends across the country and globe.

'52 **Patrick Andrew Powell**, Claremont, CA (2/26/20), at age 90; born in Loma Linda, CA, the youngest of three sons; grew up in Fontana with his extended family, working in the family lumber yard; graduated from Chaffey High School in 1948; while biking through Europe in 1949, met his German pen pal of six years, Steffi Beck, who would become a close, lifelong friend; returned to Germany the following year to study at the University of Köln; graduated from Pomona College, where he met his wife, **Anne Martha Hooker**; they married in 1953, beginning a 56-year union; drafted by the U.S. Army, served in Germany as the newlyweds explored Europe in their spare time; returning from Germany, lived in Arizona, pursuing studies at Thunderbird School of Global Management; began teaching at La Puente High School in the mid-1950s, forming a faculty bridge group that met monthly for more than 50 years; earned his master's degree in administration from Claremont Graduate School in 1961, becoming a school administrator at La Puente; in 1967 the family moved to Ottawa Drive in Claremont, where the children grew up and he would live for 53 years; preceded in death by his wife of 56 years in 2009; survived by son Andy and daughters Anne Elizabeth and Susan as well as a grandson, Albert.

'53 **David Holton** P'80, (1/23/20) at age 88; last days were surrounded by his loving family, answering their questions, sharing many laughs, a meal and his favorite wine; a third-generation Californian, grew up in Corona and became an Eagle Scout; graduated magna cum laude in physics and elected Phi Beta Kappa at Pomona, where he met his future wife Marilyn Hendrickson (Stanford '55); earned a master's in civil engineering at Stanford University; worked for Shell Oil Co. and the California cities of Palo Alto, Ventura and Modesto among other employers; owned 13 homes around the state while raising two children; built a retirement home in Twain Harte, CA, where family and friends gathered to enjoy the outdoors; active in the Tuolumne County Historical Society and Museums, Stanislaus Wilderness Volunteers, Tuolumne Wine Association, Twain Harte Design Review Committee, Christian Men's Chorus, Sonoma Lions Club and the Community Services Unit of Tuolumne County Sheriff's Department; hiked and snowshoed in his beloved Sierra with friends and sometimes alone, to find peace and restore his soul; in 2013 moved to Stoneridge Creek retirement center in Pleasanton, CA, near daughter Suzanne; one joy was a gathering of four Pomona fraternity brothers each year for 47 years; after singing in the Men's Glee Club at Pomona, remained active in many choirs, in later years directing the Stoneridge Creek choir; a favorite achievement was climbing to the top of Clouds Rest in Yosemite National Park; survivors include Marilyn, his wife of 66 years; son Doug Holton and daughter Suzanne Simmons, grandchildren and great grandchildren.





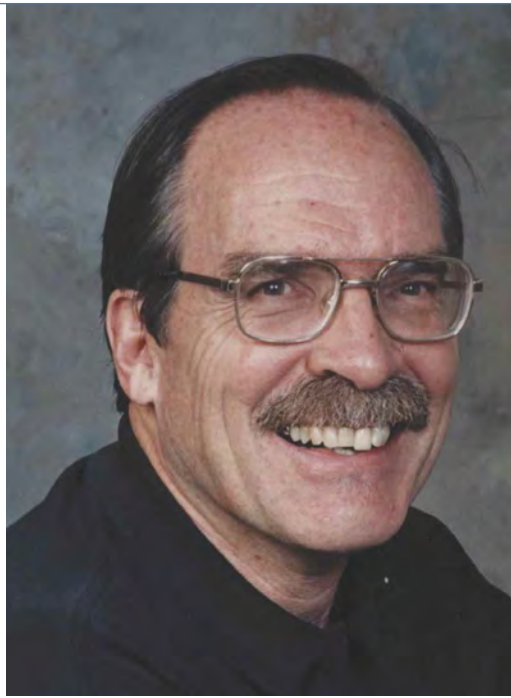
## Richard Elderkin

Professor Emeritus of Mathematics and Environmental Analysis

Richard Elderkin, professor emeritus of mathematics and environmental analysis, died of Alzheimer's disease on March 9, 2020. He was 74. Elderkin was a member of the Pomona faculty from 1974 until his retirement in 2013.

One former student noted that Elderkin was "extremely generous with his time in helping me with research ... he is very good at helping students put together difficult topics." Another former student recalled Elderkin's Classic Environmental Readings discussion-based course and said, "He always kept things interesting by guiding the discussion with provocative questions."

A recipient of various Mellon Foundation grants for his research, Elderkin was an expert in mathematical population ecology with a research focus in mathematical modeling. Offering their collective reflections on his impact on the College's Math Department, Professors Jo Hardin, Ami Radun-



skaya and Shahriar Shahriari noted that it was Elderkin, together with Emeritus Professor of Mathematics Kenneth Cook, who first gave Pomona a national presence in mathematical modeling, leading several teams to first place in the national Mathematical Con-

test in Modeling. "While at Pomona, he worked closely with students doing research on interdisciplinary problems and dynamical systems, generating excitement for how broadly mathematics can be used. Several of us are grateful to Rick for bringing us to Pomona College," they wrote.

Professor Char Miller, director of the 5C Environmental Analysis Program (EA), remembers his colleague Elderkin as "a remarkably generous soul, gifted teacher and dedicated collaborator."

Rick Hazlett, emeritus professor and past coordinator of the EA Program, says Elderkin, who helped launch and guide Pomona's EA Program 20 years ago, was a community-minded mathematician. "He had a great laugh, an ever approachable, attentive, good natured personality, and absolute devotion to the importance not only of teaching mathematics to his young students, but doing so in a meaningful way," Hazlett remembers.

A native of Butte, Montana, he received his bachelor's degree from Whitman College and his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Colorado, Boulder.

## Robert Mezey

Professor Emeritus of English and Poet-in-Residence

Professor Emeritus of English and Poet-in-Residence Robert Mezey died at the age of 85. Mezey taught at Pomona for more than 20 years, and his work was published widely in *The New Yorker*, *Harper's Magazine*, *New York Review of Books* and *Paris Review*, among others.

He once said he chose to teach poetry to stay close to the language he loved. "Getting paid to talk about poetry" is how he described his job. His courses always included reciting poetry and memorizing passages—"have them in their hearts," he said.

Poet and memoirist Garrett Hongo, '73 shares one of his memories. "When my second book came out, I gave a reading at the Huntley Bookstore. Bob came, sat quietly in the back row through the whole thing, then spoke to me. He said, 'Well, I don't know if it's poetry, but it sure is powerful, emotionally speaking.'"

"The man swung from love to reproach, meeting to meeting, yet tenderness to others and devotion to art were his dominant traits. He lit up when the topic was the love of poetry and he shared it," says Hongo.



*Poetry of E.A. Robinson* (1999), and, with Donald Justice, *The Collected Poems of Henri Coulette* (1990).

He devoted a decade of his poetic energy to translating other people's poetry, much of it from Spanish to English. His translations included works by César Vallejo and, with Richard Barnes, all the poetry of Jorge Luis Borges.

He received several

prestigious honors such as a Robert Frost Prize, a prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and a PEN Prize. In addition, he received fellowships from the Ingram Merrill Foundation, the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts.

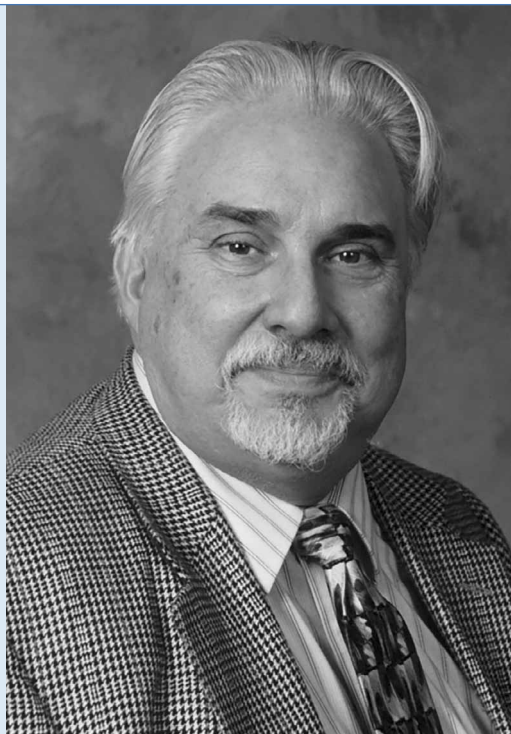
He received his B.A. from the University of Iowa and completed graduate studies at Stanford University. In addition to Pomona, Mezey taught at various institutions, including Case Western Reserve University; Franklin & Marshall College; California State University, Fresno; the University of Utah and Claremont Graduate University.

## Catalin Mitescu

Professor Emeritus of Physics and Astronomy

Catalin Mitescu, professor emeritus of physics and astronomy, passed away Saturday morning. He was 81. A professor at Pomona for 47 years, much of it as the Seeley W. Mudd Professor of Physics, Mitescu was known for his roaming intellect, his ability to lecture on complex topics in physics without notes and his complete dedication to his students.

"Probably the smartest man alive," one of his students once wrote. "He not only taught me a great deal of course content but shaped the way I think about science. He took a course overload to teach a class with me and only one other student in it." Another student wrote simply: "With an incredible mind and a lot of patience, this man can do the impossible—make physics understandable." A third student, looking back on the occasion of Mitescu's retirement, wrote: "The scientific depth and rigor Prof. Mitescu brought to teaching were always balanced by a holistic approach to science and its philosophical underpinnings. Rarely a day goes by in my own professional life that these standards and this wisdom do not somehow echo in my mind and ask me to aim higher."



One of Mitescu's former colleagues, Physics Professor David Tanenbaum, remembers: "Prior to his arrival at Pomona, he had a strong bond with the rich traditions of Richard Feynman and major players in the physics community. He

brought these to Pomona and developed new ones both here in the U.S. and in France at the École Normale Supérieure, where he was a frequent collaborator.

Most faculty will remember Catalin for his role as parliamentarian at faculty meetings, but he also led the Cabinet for many years and served for many years as head of the Goldwater selection committee and the advisor for the 3-2 Engineering Program."

Mitescu was also a man of deep faith. Committed to the Orthodox Christian Church, he served as a deacon for many years at Holy Trinity Church in Los Angeles, then as an ordained priest there and administrator of the church's St. John the Evangelist Mission in Claremont. Beginning in 1993, he served at Saint Anne Orthodox Church in Pomona, becoming archpriest in 2007. He was also engaged with the Southern California Orthodox Clergy Council, serving as secretary and president, and the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America, serving as president of the Spiritual Consistory and chair of the Department of Missions. He retired from the active priesthood in 2015.

A native of Bucharest, Romania, Mitescu immigrated to Canada as a child, graduating from McGill University in Montreal before coming to California to earn his Ph.D. at Caltech.

## Mike Riskas

Professor Emeritus of Physical Education

Mike Riskas, professor emeritus of physical education and former head coach of baseball, passed away on April 1, 2020. He was 85 years old.

Riskas retired from Pomona in 2003 after 42 years serving in a wide variety of roles—from coach to facilities coordinator. As an emeritus professor, he stayed connected with many of his students, following their lives and careers through correspondence. He was a special friend and aide to all his colleagues and served the Department of Athletics and Physical Education at Pomona and Pitzer Colleges to the utmost.

"Coach Riskas set the bar and gold standard in terms of what it meant to be a coach, an educator and a professional. He was a cherished and valuable mentor for so many of us through the years. But most significant, he was a dear friend," writes Professor of Physical Education and Men's Basketball Coach Charles Katsiaficas.

Riskas first arrived in 1961, serving as assistant football coach for 24 years and head baseball coach for 25. He was named NCAA Division III West Region Coach of the Year in 1986, as



well as the Quarter Century Award from the American Baseball Coaches Association.

Riskas was known as a team player, supervising schedules, maintaining athletic facilities, arranging for transportation, meals, strength-training

and other needs for all the athletic teams and directing the intramural program. He also served as chair of the Pomona-Pitzer Hall of Fame Selection Committee, administered all NCAA compliance paperwork and taught such classes as tennis, weight training, volleyball, cardio conditioning, handball, racquetball, swimming and wrestling.

Emerita Professor of Physical Education Lisa Beckett says, "There is good reason why Coach Riskas was given the nickname 'Iron Mike.' The strength of his character was unsurpassed. Honest, fair, generous, kind, loyal, genuine and resilient... that was Mike. Coach Riskas made a positive impact on anyone lucky enough to be around him."

In 2001, Riskas took a three-year sabbatical from Pomona, and Major League Baseball (MLB) sent him to Greece as a coach-in-residence to develop their grassroots baseball. He helped coach the Greek national team to a 2003 silver medal in the Senior Europe Tournament, and the team qualified for the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens.

He was inducted into the UCLA Baseball Hall of Fame in 1996 and into the Pomona-Pitzer Athletic Hall of Fame in 1997. In 2017, Riskas was honored with the SCIAC Distinguished Service Award for his meritorious service to intercollegiate athletics.

# Teaching Politics in the United States in the Age of COVID-19

An essay by **David Menefee-Libey**  
Pomona College Professor of Politics



COVID-19 arrived smack in the middle of the semester I first started teaching Politics 142, Anti-Democracy in America. The pandemic shut down our class meetings, disrupting our normal ways of working together, but it fit disturbingly well into the content that we were studying.

The pandemic has laid bare the United States in 2020, as we encounter the public health consequences of deep social and political inequality, widespread economic precariousness, white supremacy, polarized and dysfunctional politics, hollowed-out government, and a scandalously inadequate health care system.

First, a little background. I've long meant to teach a course like this as a counterpoint to Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, the 1830s study famous for its generous portrayal of American civil society. ("Among the novel objects that attracted my attention during my stay in the United States, nothing struck me more forcibly than the general equality of conditions.") A bunch of events finally gave me the push: Donald Trump's election in 2016, Danielle Allen's Pomona commencement speech in 2018, and Daniel Ziblatt '95 publishing *How Democracies Die* with his colleague Steven Levitsky that same year.

The Anti-Democracy course took on some hard topics, including the challenge of defining democracy in the first place, the building of the United States on slavery and settler colonialism, deep and polarized disagreements about who is an American and what the United States should be, historical and contemporary white su-

premacry, economic oligarchy, punitive economic and social policy, and corrupted and dysfunctional elections. The 14 amazing Claremont Colleges students in the seminar were up to the challenge, though. They did the readings, formed their own views, discussed their agreements and disagreements in our bi-weekly seminars and wrote ambitious papers.

Again and again, COVID-19 connected with the readings. In *How Democracies Die*, Levitsky and Ziblatt showed how anti-democratic political leaders all over the world commonly attack the institutions of government and challenge the legitimacy of professionals and experts. As the pandemic emerged in March, we learned the Trump administration had gutted pandemic preparation in 2018, and we watched as the President and other Republican leaders dismissed the warnings of public health officials and researchers around the world as a "hoax."

We read several studies on polarization and the "culture wars" in the United States. The pandemic offered an immediate case study, as many conservatives politicized the quarantine and the wearing of protective face masks. In April, Vice President Mike Pence refused to cover his face even at the Mayo Clinic.

In *The Second Founding: How the Civil War and Reconstruction Remade the Constitution*, Eric Foner showed how the framers of the 14th Amendment struggled to defend elected governments from armed terrorists in the South in the 1860s. This seemed a part of America's distant past until April, when armed "protesters" tried to storm the

Michigan capitol as the legislature deliberated closing public facilities across the state to slow the spread of the virus.

The racial dimensions of the pandemic became obvious within weeks, as public health researchers published data showing higher infection and mortality rates among people of color in the United States. Students in the seminar had already read a variety of materials on white supremacy in the United States, and they couldn't help but notice that virtually all of the anti-quarantine "protesters" in the news were white.

Rick Hasen's newly published *Election Meltdown* seemed alarmist to some of us, as he warned about the fragility of U.S. voting systems. Then we watched the Republican state legislature and the Wisconsin Supreme Court overrule Democratic Governor Tony Evers' plea to delay the state's primary election, forcing residents to risk exposure to the coronavirus if they wanted to cast their votes.

Students read about the chaotic state of public health insurance and access to medical care in Jamila Michener's *Fragmented Democracy*. This prepared them to understand reports about disparities in access to health care during the pandemic, particularly the research showing larger numbers of uninsured and untreated people resided in states whose governments had refused to enact the Medicaid expansion available under the 2010 Affordable Care Act (commonly called Obamacare).

In 2019, Jacob Hacker published an updated version of *The Great Risk Shift*, which focused in part on the dismantling of job

security, unemployment insurance and pension guarantees in the United States since the 1980s. This book in particular struck a chord for the students in the seminar, who are about to enter the labor force in an economy devastated by the pandemic. As the semester ended, unemployment neared 15 percent, and bipartisan majorities in Congress targeted their first recovery legislation primarily at businesses and investors.

In short, the pandemic became part of our curriculum this semester. Again and again, COVID-19 taught us hard truths. In 2020, as the election nears, democracy in the United States is at best more aspiration than reality. At best.

Let me close on a personal note. After teaching about U.S. politics at Pomona College for more than half my life, I struggled with giving students such dark material during such dark times. But I was deeply grateful for the opportunity to work through this syllabus with those 14 young people twice a week this spring. In the face of everything, the students in the seminar remained engaged and committed, more than willing to face, consider, discuss and write about the implications of these readings (and the pandemic) for their own futures, and the future of the United States and the world.

We face daunting challenges, but those students give me hope.

David Menefee-Libey is professor of politics and coordinator of the Public Policy Analysis Program. He has been a member of the Pomona College faculty since 1989.



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