



THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

McLean Center for the Study of Culture & Values

MCSCV Newsletter — 2019

Message from the Director:

In November 2017, The Catholic University of America renamed this research facility after Father McLean as the McLean Center for the Study of Culture and Values. Following Father McLean's legacy in global outreach the McLean Center has continued conducting the annual seminars begun in 1984, publishing studies written by scholars from different cultural and philosophical traditions across the world, and sponsoring regional conferences and seminars in different countries.

In addition, the McLean Center has been endowed with certain capacities to foster research efforts of CUA faculty and visiting scholars. In last two years, the McLean Center initiated substantive plans about semester seminars and colloquies. The goals of such exercises were to formulate research agendas that could frame the activities of the network of scholars

Meetings of the leadership team of the Council for Research in values and Philosophy held at the McLean Center advanced the preparation of seven panels and a special session devoted to the work of Father Mclean at the World Congress of Philosopher in Beijing. These presentations were well attended and excellently received. This group articulated themes and research agendas such as the meaningfulness of life and philosophy beyond boundaries .

Currently we are in the final stages of preparation for the 2019 Annual Seminar titled, The Meaning of Democracy: Foundations and Contemporary Challenges The seminar will conclude with a session open to the wider CUA community on the relations of institutional cultures and values embedded in contemporary economics institutions and practices. This session will extend the on campus activities of the McLean Center reported below and also introduce the next phase of Mclean Center's on campus programs on the cultures and values embedded in American public life and the vernacular realities of ethnic and immigrant populations.

A closing note: when we were preparing the McLean materials for the CUA archives, we discovered a *samizdat* edition of a collection of articles from the late 1970s. It included not only a paper by Father McLean but also an introduction written by the person that would become (a few months later) Pope John Paul II. This documentation of the intellectual origins of a multi-year research project for Polish scholars was directed by Father McLean and centered at the Catholic University of America. This collaboration flourished well beyond one country and its world wide outreach produced hundreds of studies, now published in print and online, in the publication series "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change."

A sincere thank you to all who have made contributions and an invitations to new voices that can extend the mission initiated by Father George McLean



John A. Kromkowski

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June 29, 2019

WEDNESDAY COLLOQUIES AT THE MCLEAN CENTER

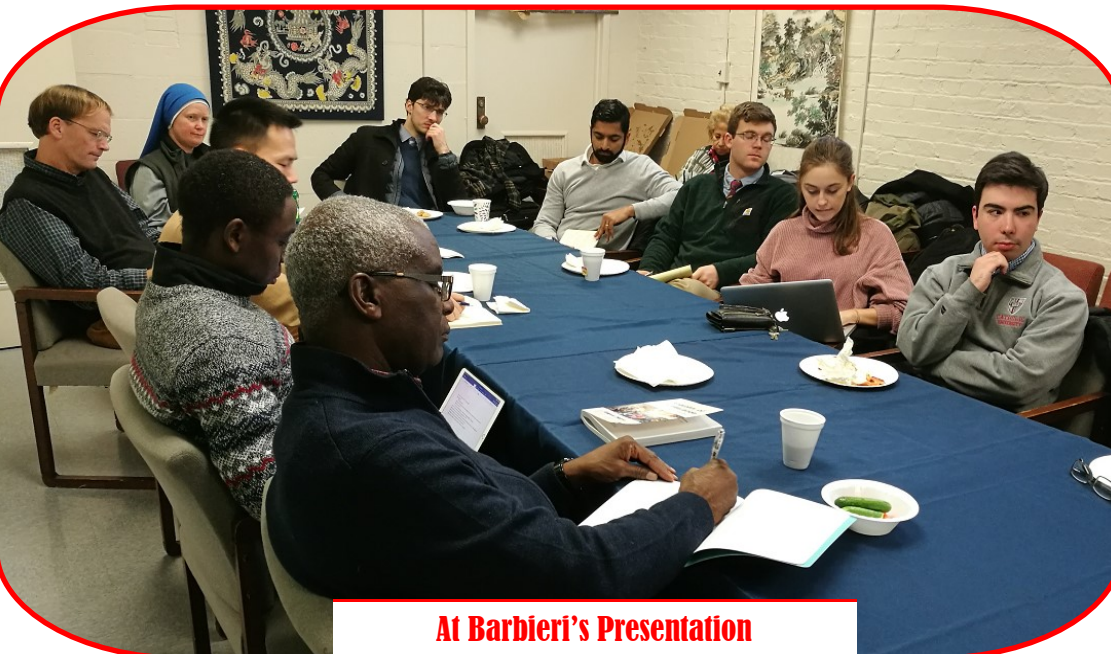
Washington, D.C.

Washington, D.C., January-April, 2019: The McLean Center for the Study of Culture and Values at the Catholic University of America hosted a series of colloquies on Wednesdays in the Spring semester of 2019. The original research conversations held in the 1980s were chaired by George F.



At Barbieri's Presentation

McLean and John A. Kromkowski. They engaged scores of faculty members and representatives of each of the Schools that constitute CUA. The original colloquies were synopsised and later became Volume One in the RVP Publication Series "Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change." The



At Barbieri's Presentation

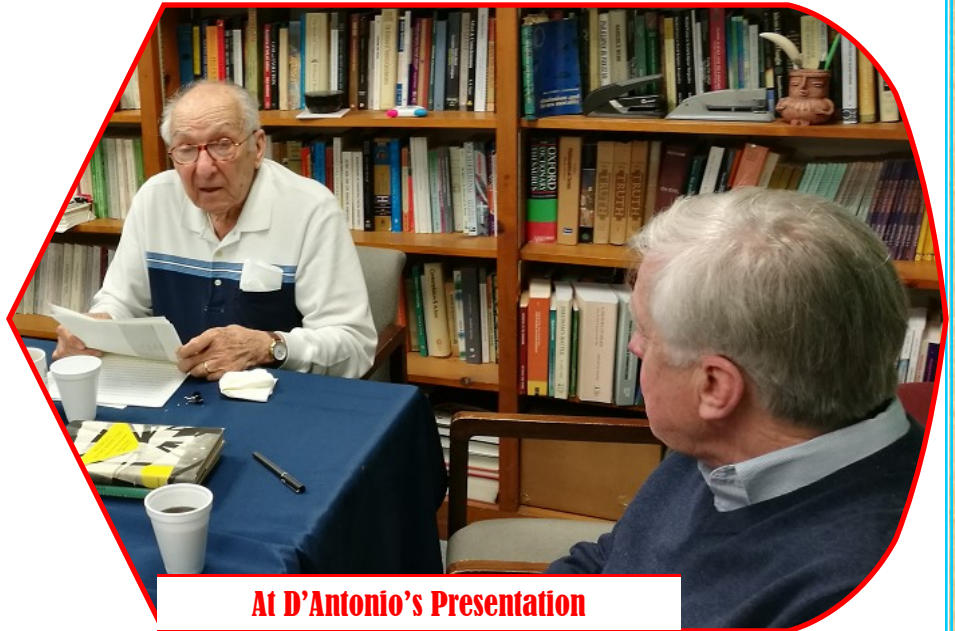
publication of this summation was entitled *Research on Culture and Values: Intersections of Universities, Churches and Nations*. This modest beginning blossomed under the direction of McLean who catalyzed other conversations throughout the world in universities, research insti-

utes and academies of sciences. McLean deepened such conversations through the sponsorship of the annual seminars held at CUA each year for visiting scholars and frequently included CUA faculty and the Washington-based research communities.

Moreover, international participants in these scholarly events constituted a network that replicated the CUA colloquies and broadened them to become conferences, meetings and panels in their own regions and at The World Congresses of Philosophy held every five years, as well as in smaller-scale study groups at the academic institutes. These provided opportunities to rediscover how to understand cultural

traditions and values, and the dynamics which produced transformational currents and events of our times; to search for new ways of expression of the human and divine mystery of existence; and to undertake the academic responsibility to drive the search for wisdom and understanding. Among the products of such initiatives see the more than three hundred philosophical studies in the RVP publication series “Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change” (www.crvp.org).

The Wednesday colloquies began with William A. Barbieri, Professor of CUA School of Theology and Religious Studies. He introduced the general thematic “The Meaningfulness of Life” for the



At D'Antonio's Presentation



At D'Antonio's Presentation

RVP research project in the next few years. As the general theme the meaningfulness of life contains five subthemes: (1) for the person, the moral life and self-cultivation; (2) in relation to social existence,



At Nolan's Presentation

communicative action, and the common good; (3) with respect to human relations with nature; (4) as founded in the human relation to Ultimate Reality; and (5) in cross-cultural and interreligious perspective.

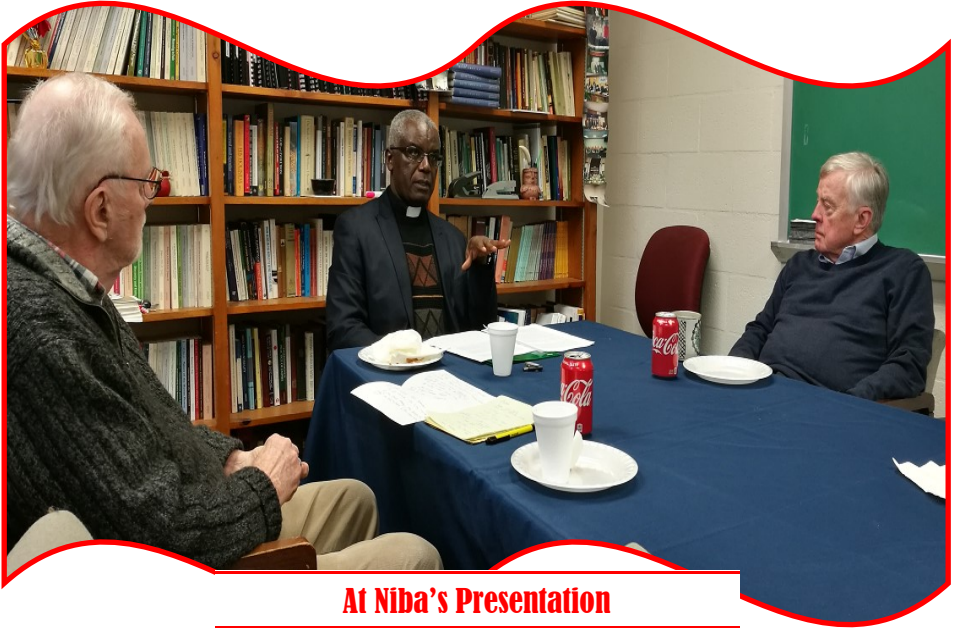
On February, 13 William V. D'Antonio, Professor of Sociology and Research Fellow of the McLean Center and the CUA Institute for Research in Public Policy and Catholic Studies, gave a detailed illustration on his academic life "The Academic as Activist." He humorously outlined his life experiences that included service in the US Navy, teaching and coaching in high school, his professionalization in sociology and evidence-based advocacy. He has published numerous books on social changes, social policies and religion in society, especially he created new journals that are attentive to religious behaviors and social phenomena on the maintenance of longitudinal data sets and cross-tabs on Catholics in the United States and the importance of such evidence for understanding



At Nolan's Presentation

contemporary culture and values in America.

On February 27, James L. Nolan, Professor of Sociology from Williams College and visiting Professor at the CUA Department of Sociology, gave a lecture on "What They Saw in America: Alexis de Tocqueville, Max Weber, G.K. Chesterton, and Sayyid Qutb." Nolan's talk was based on his book in the same title published by Cambridge University Press in 2016. Nolan's presentation offered a historical review of sociological research and its mode of understanding religion in America. His use of accounts of the American spirit articulated by scholarly visitors at various moments and periods of development provide a fresh analytics of culture and values.



At Niba's Presentation

On March 6, Michael Suh Niba, Professor of Philosophy from the Catholic University of Cameroon in Bamenda, gave a talk on "Evangelization and African Culture." Niba studied philosophy at the Pontifical Urbaniana University in Rome. Niba gave a detailed analysis on the phenomenon of some African Christians who live a double life between their Christian faith and their native practices; how to understand the true meaning of Christianity in different cultural settings. Currently Niba is a Research Fellow at the McLean Center and participating in the Center's seminars as well as completing a research project on the intersection of Christianity, vernacular cultures and secular in-



At Sollensberger's Presentation

stitutions, philosophy of religion, as well as John Paul II's notion on person.



At Sheahan's Presentation

On March 27, David Sollenberger, Lecturer of CUA Department of Politics, presented a talk on "The Political Philosophy of Walt Whitman." This talk was based on his dissertation. Sollenberger analyzed Whitman's various poems to show a conflict between the desire to embrace a modern "liberal" form of liberty where Whitman wants to withdraw into private life with friends and lovers as the Civil War becomes inevitable vs a more ancient or "republican" active citizenship that attempts

to use love between men as a public and redemptive force to preserve the union and break the power of slave holders.

On April 10, Luke Sheahan, Associate Director and Postdoctoral Research Fellow of Freedom Project at Wellesley College, gave a talk on "Why Associations Matter: The Individual, the State, and Freedom of Association." Sheahan is a graduate from the CUA Department of Politics. His talk was based on his forthcoming book in the same title (which will be published by the University of Kansas Press. Sheahan applied concepts from political sociology to critique the Supreme Court's free-



At Sheahan's Presentation

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dom of association jurisprudence. 16 students attended the lecture and participated in an intensive discussion of Sheahan's presentation.

The last lecture in the series was held on April 24. Brandon Vaidyanathan, Professor of Sociology and Chair of CUA Department of Sociology, gave a talk on "Beauty, Awe, and Wonder in Scientific Inquiry." This was based on a research project

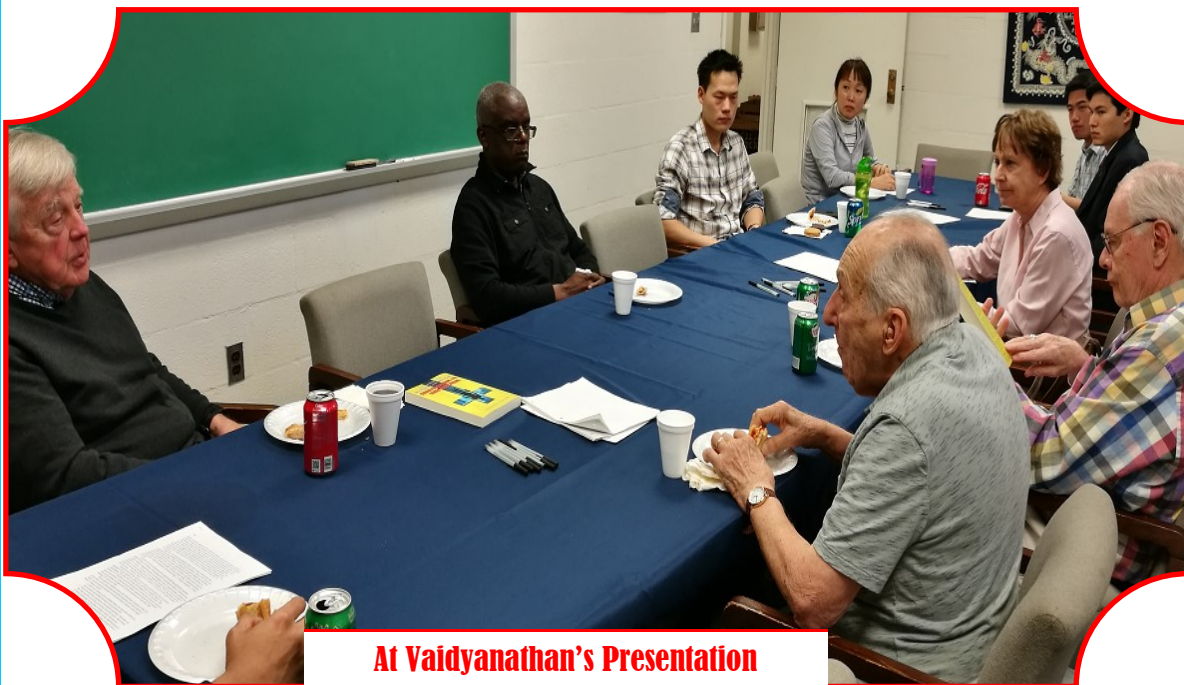
funded by the Templeton Foundation. It is a collaboration of scholars from four countries: Great Britain, India, Italy and the United States. They provide a set of questions to scientists and ask them to give their understanding on the relationship between beauty and sciences.

The McLean Center is currently planning a new series of campus discussions for the Fall Semester. For detailed information and for a list of publications visit the website of the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP) www.crvp.org.

The RVP was founded by George F. McLean in the early 1980s as the international outreach of the MCSCV.



At Vaidyanathan's Presentation



At Vaidyanathan's Presentation

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