



THE HAUSTENSTEIN CENTER FOR PRESIDENTIAL STUDIES

AT GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Direct from the Director - P2

American Conversations: Cornel West and
Robert P. George - P3

Cook Leadership Academy Spotlight - P5



Cook Leadership Academy Spotlight



This spotlight will showcase two of our incredible Cook Leadership Academy Fellows. A recent CLA graduate, Riley Pearl, has made a lasting impact in our community, and an established alumnus, Michael Dykstra, is continually working to improve the lives and health of people in the margins of society.

Journeys with Gleaves

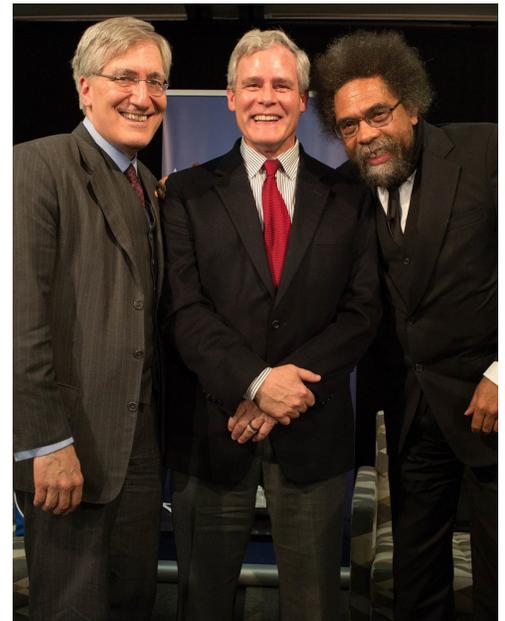
Journeys is a series of longform video-essays on a variety of engaging subjects: history, literature, philosophy, religion, leadership, and governing. During the quarantine, we may not be able to journey much beyond our homes, but that should not stop us from journeying beyond our minds. Stay tuned on the *Journeys* page as we expand upon the series every week in long form. Please visit us at:

www.gvsu.edu/hc

FEATURE ARTICLE PREVIEW

Take a look inside this issue's feature article:

American Conversations:
Cornel West and Robert P. George



"If you don't have intellectual humility, you're going to assume you have everything to teach and nothing to learn. The conversation is not going to be a conversation. It's going to be a lecture. I lecture for a while and then he lectures for a while. That's not going to get us anywhere. When the virtue of intellectual humility is in place, we can get somewhere. When it's in place, then some magic begins to happen." - *Robert P. George*

Direct from the Director

Dear Members of the Hauenstein Center Community:

As I begin my 18th year leading the Hauenstein Center for Presidential Studies, I am happy to report on the ways we've grown strategically to fit into Grand Valley State University's mission, engage the surrounding community, and expand our reach to an ever-larger national audience.

The Hauenstein Center adds value to a Grand Valley degree by producing an abundance of high-quality intellectual content that enriches teaching, coursework, and self-study. We've hosted more than 500 programs featuring world-class speakers such as Annette Gordon-Reed, Martha Nussbaum, Danielle Allen, Barbara Kellerman, Ron Chernow, Akhil Amar, H. W. Brands, David Brooks, Jon Meacham, Mark Lilla, Heather Gerken, Jeff Rosen, Mark Rozell, Ron White, Christopher Hitchens, a number of women governors, and literally scores of other thought-leaders whom students may not otherwise encounter. They have presented to the public on our stage, conversed with lifelong learners at our lunches, and taught undergraduate and graduate students in our classrooms.

We raise the national profile of Grand Valley through our COL Ralph W. Hauenstein Fellowship which has been conferred on Madeleine Albright, Wesley Clark, Robert Gates, William Cohen, Carla Hills, Brent Scowcroft, James Baker, Paul O'Neill and others. We also raise the profile through coverage of our innovative, high-impact programs on C-SPAN. By posting high-quality content, accessed by lifelong learners on a variety of online platforms - our Website, YouTube, Facebook, podcasts, Zoom webcasts, and Scholarworks, we create a lasting resource.

Our Peter C. Cook Leadership Academy helps shape the leaders who will shape their lives, professions, and societies upon graduating from Grand Valley. Our Peter C. Cook Leadership Academy is a highly competitive program that reaches 60-70 young leaders a year. We are the last remaining GVSU academic unit or center to incorporate the Washington, D.C., Seidman Campus into our programming. More than 400 CLA fellows have graduated and are ambassadors to the broader community, here in Michigan and around the world. Our graduates have gone on to found such internationally distinguished programs as Sow Hope and Failure Lab.

We are helping usher in Grand Valley's paradigm shift to online platforms and programs with global reach. Ellen Schindel, who has been leading Grand Valley's new e-learning and micro-credentialing efforts, has said our CLA "leadership competencies" course in the Fall 2020 semester will be part of Grand Valley's beta test.

Our Common Ground Initiative teaches our lifelong learners and citizens a critically important method to help solve problems, manage polarities, and heal our broken nation. Because of the hyper-partisanship in



public life, we unveiled the initiative in 2012 with a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and offer programs ranging from community workshops to the latest academic research. University of Michigan leadership guru Robert Quinn was one of our chief consultants.

Each year we support Grand Valley faculty and students by hosting some 200 academics, most of them at our Midwest History Conference, the only such annual conference in the U.S. The Midwest is fast-becoming a new academic focus for historians, political scientists, English professors, and sociologists. The focus on the Midwest is important because of the central role the Midwest now plays in presidential elections. Each of the speakers who visits our campus goes back home as a potential ambassador for Grand Valley.

We are anticipating reestablishing the public's engagement with Grand Valley on the other side of this pandemic with our high-quality programs. David Eisenhower, Kasey Pipes, Ari Weinzweig, and many other speakers are already scheduled for Fall and Winter semesters. At the same time, because of the success of our new online programs during the pandemic, we can literally switch in a minute back, should future waves of the pandemic lead to new stay-home executive orders.

So stay tuned and stay well.

All my best,

Gleaves Whitney
Director



American Conversations:

Cornel West and Robert P. George

On April 2, 2015, Robert P. George and Cornel West of Princeton University spoke at our American Conversations series to discuss their friendship and its implications in the pursuit of common ground. By reflecting on George and West's conversation during this pandemic, we can remind ourselves what we must bring to the table when engaging in civil dialogue.

West: How shall we begin, my brother?

George: The first thing I would like to do is correct the title of our program. Now the title I have here is "A Workable Armistice in the Culture Wars?" I have no particular love for armistices. What Professor West and I are about is conversations. Getting at the truth. Not just finding a way to agree or a way to avoid difficult issues on which people disagree, but to have a conversation. A conversation whose aim is getting both the interlocutors, or everybody concerned, a little nearer the truth. I think it's important to remember that the goal is truth-seeking, and the bond that should bind together the interlocutors (whether they agree or disagree) is the bond of truth-seeking, understanding-seeking, and wisdom-seeking. For that to happen there needs to be, as anyone would understand, civility. You have to be able to have a conversation with each other, not just shouting at each other, but that's commonplace. Anybody will tell you that, but often people don't practice what they preach about civility. I want to suggest to you that some deeper things are needed. The interlocutors have to acquire, nurture, and preserve in themselves certain virtues. If you're going to work

together in conversation or in debate, to get at the truth, the people involved in the conversation first have to recognize they are fallible and frail human beings. They have to recognize that they could be wrong. Each one has to recognize — even about my most cherished beliefs — I could be wrong. If one has that attitude and understanding — not in a merely notional way, but in a deeply appropriated way — then one will begin to develop a virtue that is indispensable for truth-seeking. That is the virtue of intellectual humility. If you don't have intellectual humility, you're going to assume you have everything to teach and nothing to learn. The conversation is not going to be a conversation. It's going to be a lecture. I lecture for a while and then he lectures for a while. That's not going to get us anywhere. When that virtue of intellectual humility is in place, now we can get somewhere. When that's in place then some magic begins to happen. Because when it's in place you no longer see your conversation partner, however much you may disagree, as an adversary to be defeated much less humiliated in debate. Rather, you understand him not just notionally, but in an appropriated way as a partner in a common enterprise. Seeking

GV



a common goal and a common good of understanding, truth, and wisdom. Working together through the dialectical method that Plato taught us, by telling us, about the dialogues of Socrates and interactions with his interlocutors.

That attitude now is one in which your conversation partner is your partner in that project toward a common goal for a common good. Instead of being an adversary to be defeated.

Brother Cornel?

West: There's a sense in which for now 13 years brother Robbie, Professor George, and I have been wrestling with the four fundamental questions of one of the great, if not the greatest, public intellectual in the history of the United States. His name is W.E.B. DuBois. In 1957, he embarked on the writing of three novels... he was 89 years old. He was that committed. He was that courageous. He was willing to engage in that fallible quest for unarmed truth, but also unapologetic love. Love of truth. Love of justice. Love of neighbor. Now we're Christians; we love our enemies. Don't try that one on your own. You'll need a lot of grace for that one. DuBois was not a Christian, but he was profoundly spiritual. But the four questions: How shall integrity face oppression? What does honesty do in the face of deception? What does decency do in the face of

insult? And how shall virtue meet brute force?

Four pillars that bring us (George and West) together: a quest for integrity, honesty, decency, virtue.

I think one thing we fundamentally agree on: anybody in contemporary America who is fundamentally committed to the quest for integrity, honesty, decency, and virtue is profoundly countercultural...cutting against the grain.

Because instead of integrity, what is dominant in America? Cupidity, love of money. Money, money, money. Cream. Cash rules everything around me. That's Wu-Tang Clan! But, it doesn't have to rule me; it doesn't have to rule us! Instead of honesty, what do we get? Much mendacity. Just downright lies, and I'm not just thinking about one TV

“Four pillars that bring us together, a quest for integrity, honesty, decency, virtue, I think one thing we fundamentally agree on, anybody in contemporary America who is fundamentally committed to the quest for integrity, honesty, decency, and virtue is profoundly countercultural, cutting against the grain.”

channel. The mendacity is across the board.

Why? Because they're fundamentally concerned with what? Money, money, money. So, what do they do? They dumb down the public conversation into name-calling; to sensationalize the infallible and critical conversation necessary for something bigger than all of us.

The same is true when it comes to decency. Just attempt to be a decent human being in a world in which more and more it's the survival of the slickest. Martin King used to say, "the obsession with the 11th Commandment, thou shall not get caught."

Just look at the business page, and look at what you see. Scandal after scandal, more and more politicians, scandal after scandal, and those are the ones who get caught! Can you imagine the

ones getting away with what they're doing and not getting caught?

We're not talking about color, sexual orientation, or even gender; even though most of the folks who get caught are brothers. Because we still got patriarchal power, the major positions of power for the most part still are men.

But my hunch is when the women get the chance to move in, they shall be susceptible and have deep proclivities toward the same seductions and temptations. Because the system itself is one that makes it difficult to be able to maneuver in such a way that it puts a premium on integrity, honesty, and decency.

When we come to virtue, especially in the face of brute force. I think of Ferguson and Staten Island, where precious folk were killed, maimed. How do you express your rage in such a way? Following the legacy of Ella Baker, Rabbi Abraham, Joshua Heschel, Dorothy Day, and Martin Luther King, that rage is expressed through love and justice rather than hatred and revenge. Virtue in the face of brute force.

No democracy can survive predicated on cupidity, mendacity, the survival of the slickest, and escalating hatred and revenge in a context of increasing wealth inequality.

To view the entire conversation, please use the link provided:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iH1lfeoH1IY&t=2681s>



Cook Leadership Academy Spotlight

Riley Pearl



Alumna

“I have gained wisdom and strength through this journey, and yet my world would still be a better place if sickness did not exist. So really, the wall between the sick and the healthy is a concept of being in-between things, being two identities at once. A piece of my identity will always be left behind, not left in the dust to be forgotten but molded and shaped into something stronger over time. I can be a balance of strength and femininity, deep but light-hearted, confident yet humble, a walking contradiction.” Riley is a member of the April 2020 graduating class and has earned her Bachelor of Business Administration, majoring in finance and minoring in psychology. Riley has been a member of the Peter C. Cook Leadership Academy for two years and throughout this last year has shared the lessons she has learned through being a full-time student and campus leader while being diagnosed and treated for stage three cancer. We continue to learn and be inspired by her drive, commitment to serve the places and people she calls home, and magnetic personality. This summer, Riley will join Keyence Corporation as a full-time Technical Sales Engineer at their Detroit location.

Michael Dykstra



Alumnus

Michael graduated from GVSU as a Peter C. Cook Leadership Academy Fellow in April of 2015. Since then, he has been studying medicine at Harvard Medical School, and we are proud to share that he graduated just this month. During his time at Harvard, he was awarded several prestigious fellowships to work with a clinical trial for breast cancer and implementing new technology to diagnose lymphoma in Botswana during the 18-19 academic year. Michael’s passion and research are focused on improving the lives of people at the margins of society which he will continue to pursue next year in his preliminary medicine year at Beth Israel Deaconess in Boston and at the University of Michigan where he will begin his residency in radiation oncology starting in July of 2021. During this time of uncertainty Michael has stepped up and shown leadership through serving as the lead editor of an educational module specifically about considerations of global innovation and collaboration as they relate to the pandemic.

Lunch & Learn with Gleaves

1 PM EDT every Tuesday and Thursday

As we continue to stay home and stay safe, the Hauenstein Center will continue to bring you exciting content. We have been pleased to launch our webinar series that’s broadcast live each Tuesday and Thursday. *Lunch & Learn with Gleaves* has been offered since March 31, 2020, including guests such as H.W. Brands, Ken James, and Hank Meijer. Join Gleaves and a special guest for a brief video conversation that explores a provocative topic. Previous discussions will be available on our website, YouTube, or Facebook pages.

Please use the link below to join the webinar for every session:
<https://zoom.us/j/715140715>

Or Telephone:
US: +1 929 205 6099
Webinar ID: 715 140 715

Support Ralph's Mission

If you are new to the Hauenstein Center family, welcome — and thank you so much for your contributions! For those who are interested in learning more about our mission, and ways to help us continue Ralph's legacy of "fostering ethical, effective leadership for the 21st century," you can visit us at:

www.gvsu.edu/hc

If you would like to become a member of the Hauenstein Center for Presidential Studies, join today and gain access to this newsletter, our podcast *Beyond Aporia*, our postcards, our members-only invitations to receptions and events, and our save-the-date posters! Please visit us at:

www.gvsu.edu/hc/give



THE HAUENSTEIN CENTER FOR PRESIDENTIAL STUDIES

AT GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

-  www.gvsu.edu/hc
-  www.youtube.com/user/HauensteinCenter
-  www.facebook.com/hauensteingvsu
-  www.twitter.com/HauensteinGVSU
-  www.soundcloud.com/commongroundinitiative

