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RESEARCH NOTES
from the Project on Religion and Urban Culture

RESEARCH NOTES ROUNDTABLE

For this, its concluding issue, Research Notes *hosted a special roundtable discussion at The Polis Center, inviting the researchers involved in the Project on Religion and Urban Culture to discuss what has been learned in the preceding five years of the Project. Participants included Jay Demerath, professor of sociology at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and advisor to the Project. Participants from The Polis Center included: Arthur Farnsley, research associate; Etan Diamond, historian; Mary Mapes, historian; Elfriede Wedam, sociologist; William A. Mirola, research associate; and Kevin Armstrong, senior public teacher. The following is an edited version of their discussion, which was moderated by Armstrong.*

ARMSTRONG: For some people in our society, religion is synonymous with community building and creating the common good. For others, religion is intensely personal, private, and should not have a public role. For the last 5 years, you have been trying to sort out how religion has shaped Indianapolis, and how in turn religion has been shaped by the culture of this city. At the broadest level, what would you say is religion's role in shaping this particular city?

FARNSLEY: Indianapolis is fundamentally shaped by the mainline establishment Protestant institutions. To me the most important fact of the second half of the twentieth century has been the degree to which other religious, ethnic, and social groups have been able to merge into the mainstream to become part of the cultural and public life of the city. But that culture was originally defined and shaped by the churches that were on the Circle and the ones that still run up Meridian Street, and that have been part of the public leadership of the city. We are talking about Christ Church and Trinity Episcopal, about Second Presbyterian and Tabernacle Presbyterian, about North United Methodist. For that matter, although they don't quite fit the mold, we are talking about Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation, as well as a newcomer like St. Luke United Methodist Church. The leaders in the city, the leaders at Lilly Endowment, the leaders in civic organizations have come out of those congregations and that shaped the establishment, the elite, and the public leadership of Indianapolis.

MAPES: I think that expectations about what role religion should play in public life have evolved considerably. In the early 20th century people expected churches to speak on issues outside of the religious realm: prohibition, for example, and vice reform, which the Church Federation was particularly active in. While religion still plays an important public role today, the expectation of what kind of role it should play, what kind of issues it should speak to has changed.

WEDAM: I think that private religion is very robust, and public religion is very weak—not absent, but weak. Clearly not everyone would agree with this, but I am thinking how few decisions politicians make and business people make that are influenced by religious principles.

DIAMOND: As much as we talk about religion in the public role, most people in Indianapolis don't go to these big churches. They don't get money from the Lilly Endowment. They don't live near Meridian Street. But they live in somewhere in the city and they go to their particular churches and see themselves as religious people. So from this perspective, we might say that that a very robust private religion is itself the public religion of Indianapolis.

WEDAM: Most of what happens in congregations is still pretty much for and about the individual congregant —which is a private matter. It's hard to know what the public impact of that is. My understanding of public religion is that it touches on a more general acceptance of religious activities in the public arena. And that is harder to see evidence of today.

MIROLA: We have to be specific when we talk about the role of congregations in the public sphere—which sphere? Art says that the elite mainline churches, with the help of Lilly Endowment, have played the key roles. They get invited to the public conversations; they are involved in the political realm. I am willing to take Etan's point that there is this other public realm, in which the smaller, non-elite congregations are very active, though it's not visible to the public.

ARMSTRONG: Let me ask this: how attentive are congregations to these other public realms that you're describing?

WEDAM: You mean at the neighborhood level, for example? At the local level, the picture is very mixed. In some areas of the city, the congregations get a lot of support from the local residents, and congregations pay attention to what happens in the surrounding neighborhoods. In other parts of the city, the congregations are so separate from the surrounding area that they have very little influence, and receive very little input from the neighborhood. They may as well be any place in the city as there.

FARNSLEY: Do you think there are some kinds of neighborhoods that are more likely to be one way and some kinds that are likely to be the other?

WEDAM: Yes, I think that race and class are factors that affect how neighborhoods respond to congregations and the kind of things congregations do in the neighborhoods. To some extent a middle class neighborhood is more likely to have congregations that are more active in the neighborhood. And some middle class congregations in poorer neighborhoods are more active in those neighborhoods.

But it also depends on the historical religious culture of an area. I was surprised when I investigated Greenwood, a suburb south of Indianapolis. It has a mixed population of old farming families, people working in the manufacturing industries, and a new in-migration of middle class professionals who relocated there for job reasons. I found that Greenwood has a very strong religious culture. For example, Greenwood's two public school districts changed their sports schedules so as not to interfere with Wednesday night Bible studies. There is involvement of clergy in the city council, in the mayor's office. The influence of religion in Greenwood is much more "public" than what I discovered to be the case in Butler-Tarkington or Irvington. Mars Hill, a poor white area on the south side, has only a couple of active, involved neighborhood churches, but they have a mostly middle-class leadership. In UNWA, a poor black neighborhood on the northwest side, the most active churches are almost entirely black middle-class congregations in which the members drive in to church from elsewhere in the city.

DIAMOND: You asked about civic leaders paying attention to these different kinds of neighborhoods. I think the middle class neighborhoods get ignored by civic leaders. They will look to the elite neighborhoods and the elite churches because that is where the rich and powerful people are. And when they feel like helping those in need, they will look at the really distressed areas. "We want to go do something in Martindale-Brightwood; we want to go help the UNWA neighborhood." But Indianapolis has lots of middle kinds of people who don't have major social problems. Crooked Creek, for example. Much of the south and east sides are regular places, and in Plainfield or Carmel or parts of Lawrence there are regular middle class neighborhoods with churches that are active locally. But the civic community isn't going to pay any attention to them because they either aren't powerful enough or they are not in as much need.

MAPES: Do those middle class congregations want the civic community to be responsive to them? Or is that not their central focus? It makes sense that residents in a distressed area would want civic leaders to be sensitive to them. The particular needs of a community determine in large part its relationship to the wider city. Middle class communities can have congregations which focus on a more local level, serving the kind of community functions that you describe, playing a role in a council or being involved in a school system without having to reach out to a larger civic body.

FARNSLEY: Let's take this up a level from neighborhoods. The historical and theological structures of some religious groups have allowed them to move toward the center of the culture. Or alternatively, these factors have kept them from doing so. In the first half of the century, the mainline Protestants dominated the culture. Then in the second half of the century, both Catholics and Jews moved toward the center of mainstream Indianapolis culture and became part of the establishment with the mainline Protestants. When

they were on the outside, Catholics and Jews as communities formed their own organizational infrastructure. They formed their own support groups, schools, social service agencies—because they didn't have access to, or didn't want to participate in—the public institutions. Their creation of those parallel institutions gave them a leg up, a point of leverage, that along with economic progress allowed them to move toward the establishment in a way that other traditions did not. I am thinking mostly of the experience of African-Americans in the Black Church, but also of white Evangelicals—the groups with a congregational polity. They didn't organize in the same way under a big umbrella, didn't have the same sort of overarching institutions and social service programs. The fact that they failed to organize in this fashion, for truly religious, historical reasons, made it more difficult for them to move into the establishment.

MAPES: I disagree with that to some extent. That example is particular to a specific time in history. If you look at the 1950's and 1960's, you see African-American ministers establishing alliances and becoming active with each other, and through that, gaining a public voice, a public presence, which is different than the kind of public presence that one would gain through the institutional structure that you described. Nevertheless, the voices outside of the main centers of power constitute an important part of the city's life that need to be considered.

ARMSTRONG: If I'm a civic or social services leader, and I want to know, what is the best combination of congregational type and the local environment that most effectively partners to shape the public life—what would that be?

MAPES: To answer that, you first have to ask: how do they want to shape that community? It is not so much a question of which is the best combination, but rather what are the specific goals of a particular community or congregation and how are those goals reflected in the avenues they pursue.

WEDAM: I don't have an answer to the question, but I think it is very different if you are asking about social services and social welfare issues versus the broader cultural community. What are the particular goals and standards of this community?

DIAMOND: That's a really good point. The fact is, there are lots of different combinations of congregations and local environments. But I think many people simply assume, "Churches? They're all the same. They all do good work."

FARNSLEY: Like *The Indianapolis Star* saying that, on every corner, one of these 1,200 congregations is doing great things.

DIAMOND: Right. If there is one thing we all agree on here, it's that you really to have to cut the distinctions finer. All churches are not the same. It really matters what the particular theological tradition is, what the size is, what kind of history the church has. And this is before we even introduce the context—what kind of neighborhood you're talking about. Is it an inner-city neighborhood that was always African-American, or an inner-city neighborhood that was once white and is now black?

ARMSTRONG: Are there any other factors you would add to that list? If one size doesn't fit all, what kinds of questions should you be asking to discover that?

FARNSLEY: What are the specific resources this specific congregation would bring to a partnership? A congregation that has financial and organizational resources can help get a program going and they can help pay for it. A congregation that has members who live in the neighborhood, and has tight community ties, can get people on the phone and get the door opened when they knock on it. Now, there are lots of congregations that have neither of those things, and there are congregations that have both. But I would want to know which kind of resource a congregation could be. You don't want to assume as people sometimes do that congregations are going to be this fount of volunteers and money and organizational skill, because lots of times they do not have excess capacity. Nor do you want to make the mistake of assuming that because they are based in a neighborhood that the members live in that neighborhood—that they know everybody by their first name. And then you have the theological tradition. If this is a Catholic church, then probably it has some resources, because on average they are a lot bigger. Also, a Catholic church will very likely see itself as having some sort of caring, shepherding mission for the people who live immediately around it—it has a parish. A Protestant congregations may or may not have that, but you don't come to it with that assumption.

ARMSTRONG: Of those characteristics that you have mentioned, which ones have changed most significantly in this century? Are we operating on some old assumptions about the religious life of this city? Which assumptions would you want to challenge most?

FARNSLEY: That people live in the neighborhood where their congregation is located. In fact, the majority say they do not. More than 90 percent drive to worship, and the average drive is 13 minutes on a Sunday morning with little traffic. The related assumption—that because black churches are in African-American neighborhoods their members must live nearby—is equally wrong for the same reason.

DIAMOND: You do want to remember, though, that people have always lived further away from their churches than we assume they do. Look at Second Presbyterian's membership in the 1910s and 1920s. A lot of members lived well north of the church and commuted down on Sunday mornings. In 1947, half of the members lived north of 38th Street when the church was still located downtown on Vermont. And studies from other places around the country in the 1930s and 1940s showed high proportions of church members driving from one town to another to go to church. Maybe today people are living even father from church than they did earlier, but that does not mean that they were once tightly clustered around their church.

DEMERATH: Etan said that Indianapolis is a city in which private religion is public. I think it used to be that way. I think was a city where people wore their religion on their sleeve as a badge of honor. It was a significant, public commitment, especially for people who belonged to mainline congregations and denominations. I think one could argue that, especially in the last half of the century, public religion has gone private. I think we've found that Indianapolis is not as centered on religion as it used to be, nor is any other city. But where does religion finds its own centers, and where are the centers of life, in a city as large and complex as this one is?

ARMSTRONG: What accounts for those changes in the centering of the city?

DEMERATH: I think it is partly the changes that have overtaken Indianapolis as a physical locale, Indianapolis as a political economy. It has spread out and diversified. It has undergone processes that have pulled it apart in certain ways, and this has happened to city after city.

MAPES: If you asked people in the early 20th century what voices of authority they looked to, the clergy would have ranked pretty high. But the survey that we recently did suggests that today people have a very different expectation of what clergy should do, what role they should play, and what influence they should have.

MIROLA: We asked three different kinds of questions that shed a little bit of light here. When we asked people in Indianapolis to rank in order the community leaders who were working to make Indianapolis a better place, clergy came out last out of the four groups. Business folks came out at the top; then politicians, social service agencies, and then the clergy. We asked about how much influence clergy have, African-Americans were more likely to say that clergy had influence. When you asked what influence clergy should have, both whites and blacks said clergy should have much more influence than they currently do. Ninety percent of the African-Americans surveyed said that clergy should have a lot or a moderate amount of influence, whereas 72 percent of whites agreed.

We also surveyed clergy about how much influence they thought they had. Even among people who have been here as clergy for 20 years, 50 percent of Roman Catholic clergy said they saw no change in the amount of influence that they have, as did 55 percent mainline Protestant clergy.

DIAMOND: It's funny. People say that the clergy should have more influence in public life, yet obviously they don't. Whose fault is that? It may reflect the growing role of the clergy as pastoral counselor. We want the minister to be serving the congregation and shepherding his flock, but at the same time, we want him to be out there, influencing the public.

MAPES: The difference between blacks and whites is critical. African-Americans expect that clergy will play an important public role. Historically, the church was one of the few institutions that African-Americans had to gain a presence in public life. For whites, the church has been less important, especially in recent decades, as an institutional base through which to gain a public voice. And we should mention, of course, that a large percentage of the population assumes that clergy shouldn't have a significant public voice—that there should be a stricter separation between religious life and public life.

ARMSTRONG: How does the role of race in religious life in this city compare to others? Do we know?

WEDAM: In Indianapolis, while civil rights activism has been a very important part of the city, clergy have not been as active as in other cities. And I think that the institutional mechanisms for clergy to participate in the public realm are lacking among African-American clergy. The alliances formed around civil rights, while they were powerful and very important, have been short-lived.

FARNSLEY: They are not exactly the Jewish Federation or a Catholic charity.

WEDAM: Right. One group that has some public voice, for example, is Concerned Clergy. It represents a rather small number of congregations and seems to be not very active at the moment—though that may depend on how much coverage the media give them. Another group that has recently formed is the Ten Point Coalition, in the UNWA and Mapleton-Fall Creek neighborhoods. It is an important new effort to watch. But we have yet to see whether their voice as clergy is really about religion or about other kinds of influences—the connections they have to politics, to government, and to business.

FARNSLEY: White Protestant congregations are less intentionally public organizations. Religion is not fully private; it's not fully individual; half the people in the city are at church on Sunday morning. That can't be too private. But the congregations see themselves primarily as places of worship, as places that do religious education. They see themselves, even when they don't want to be, as relatively homogenous groups. They may wish their worship were more inter-racial and wish they had a broader spectrum of socio-economic classes. But for the most part, they don't do those things because that is not the kind of organizations they have become. They are for worship and for raising their children in the tradition. And that makes the clergy's role more therapeutic and family-building—which doesn't lend itself to a public persona.

DEMERATH: Elfriede described private religion as very robust and public religion as very weak. From my perspective, I'm not sure how robust private religion is today. I don't want to accept either that public religion is completely off the page. Religion still has a role in Indianapolis, and some of the same older mainline denominations play a role, and some of the newer Catholic, Evangelical, African-American churches play a role; the Lilly Endowment certainly articulates a role. But just what it is that communicates influence? Is it really the congregation exerting influence, or is it members who exert influence, really on their own behalf?

MAPES: So you think that those individual members of Second Presbyterian who enter civic arenas, such as the chamber of commerce or city hall, with the identity of being a member of Second Presbyterian, do so because it's important for their access to and participation in the larger secular life of the city? The difference today is that even though many people powerful in the city's civic life are members of Second Presbyterian or other prominent churches, they do not see their church membership as one of the critical badges, so to speak, for entry to other arenas.

FARNSLEY: There is no question that religion had a greater collective public presence in the first half of this century. As we know from Brad Sample's research, [1] when they came to those board meetings, their critical badges of identities overlapped. They were going to be in the room with other people who went to very similar congregations; with other people who were members of the founding families of the big companies in town; whose families were from Indianapolis. Gradually, through the course of the 20th century, it just stopped mattering. They might be a member of Second Presbyterian Church, but it doesn't matter as a badge because it doesn't fit of a piece with everything else, the way it did in the first part of the century.

WEDAM: I think that clergy do not get up and talk publicly about moral and social issues because they no longer have the authority—and, in addition, nobody wants to listen.

FARNSLEY: That is not what people are coming to church to hear.

WEDAM: That is right. But what comes first, the listening or the speaking? Take the example of Catholic social teaching: it is a guide to behavior, and to the right answer on certain moral and social questions. And yet, you will very seldom hear that preached in church. And you will certainly not hear that preached in a very public arena—unless they are debating capital punishment down at the State House, and the Catholic Church, as one interest group among other interest groups, gets up and says, yes, well, we don't agree with that.

Now, Archbishop Buechlein did require that pastors explain the church's position on capital punishment on a particular Sunday about six months ago, and I can tell you there was a lot of tension in the air in the church in which I heard it. But you don't see clergy getting up and talking about behavior that is expected of citizens. You don't see them publicly get up and say, 'You ought to behave like this, because it is better for our common interests.'

DEMERATH: Not even with respect to abortion?

WEDAM: You are right, but with respect to abortion I think the influence of the pro-life movement on behavior is much weaker than they like to think.

DEMERATH: You are saying it's not only that clergy are not speaking in the public arena about these issues--—they're not speaking within the congregation about these issues.

FARNSLEY: It's like the old joke. What did the preacher preach on this morning? Poverty. What did he say? He's against it.

MIROLA: Let's be clear about what the clergy told from this survey. Ninety percent of the clergy from our sample said that they preached at least once in the last year on issues of poverty, the poor, the economically disadvantaged—

WEDAM: Okay, but that is once a year—

MIROLA: And 69 percent said that they actively tried to influence public policy, related to the poor and the disadvantaged, in the last year. And the same was true of their speaking about crime, about minority concerns, and trying to influence public policy on those issues. The gap is between clergy who preached about and tried to influence policy on those three issues in particular, and clergy who preached about and tried to influence policy on business development, raising wages, and gay and lesbian rights. Those were 20 percent or less.

ARMSTRONG: Let's talk about ethnicity and religion. Historically, how has religion coped with ethnic changes?

DIAMOND: Well, for much of the century, it didn't have to. Indianapolis never had more than 10 percent foreign population, which is very different from most big industrial cities. Now, you could say that the migration of Southern white Appalachians into Indianapolis introduced a set of ethnic and cultural problems, but even here, the issues are less prevalent than in Chicago or Detroit or Cleveland. There is also the absence of an ethnic Catholic presence like you have in these other cities. There might be a few ethnic churches remaining, but not many.

MAPES: Are there some Catholic parishes that have had to address this issue?

WEDAM: St. Patrick is the largest Spanish-speaking parish, and it has a major outreach to the Latino community. The Hispanic Education Center, which is in the same neighborhood, is run by a religious order of sisters. There are five parishes with Spanish liturgies now.

FARNSLEY: Religion is forced, by default, to deal with ethnic change. In some arenas, like the eventual movement of Catholics and Jews into the mainstream, I've already argued that religion played a crucial role. But some of the attempts have been piecemeal. For instance, with the recent Mexican immigration—t wasn't as if there was some sort of concerted, well-planned effort by the bureaucracy to make St. Pat's the Hispanic church—the people chose it. It has happened in other denominations too. Vida Nueva on the East side, the Methodists kind of designated it as a Spanish-speaking church, and you know, people cope as best they can. The religious organizations here, in good faith, want to try to deal with it. But Etan is right, the institutions already in place absorb new cultures, and we learn to do it as we go along.

DIAMOND: What is interesting is not how the city is absorbing new religious groups but how those new religious groups are adjusting to Indianapolis's culture. There is the Muslim population, a small Indian population, and other non-western religious groups are showing up. But at least at this point they are small

enough that they are not seen as any kind of threat. They are not "problematic." The exception might have been when the Islamic community first went into Plainfield, and there were tensions over Muslims coming into this white bread community. But they did a good job of presenting themselves as being much like everyone else, except for the fact that they were Muslim. They presented a very non-threatening, non-ethnic kind of Islam, almost a Protestant kind of Islam. And maybe that is what these other ethnic religious groups will end up doing, turning themselves into Protestant versions of their religious traditions and making their traditions more palatable for the rest of Indianapolis's culture.

FARNSLEY: The short answer might be that ethnic change has been slow enough and small enough that the religious institutions of Indianapolis have been able to respond to it ad hoc.

DIAMOND: But it is not even that the Indianapolis religious institutions are changing, it is that the ethnic groups make themselves attractive and non-threatening.

ARMSTRONG: But you wouldn't say the city itself is unpracticed in welcoming ethnic groups.

DIAMOND: Let's say it has been out of practice for awhile.

ARMSTRONG: What are some other themes to emerge from the project that we should talk about?

DIAMOND: Cities are typically seen these days as lacking a sense of community. People talk about how cities are sprawling; people in cities are disconnected from one another; cities are fragmented politically, socially, and culturally. Suburbanization and expansion are bad. People have no relationship with one another. I think we've done a pretty good job of showing, no, that is not quite true. There is a sense of community out there in the metropolis. If you want to find community, look to religion. But when you look, you are going to find different kinds of community. It depends on the theological tradition, on the history of the congregation, on the type of neighborhood it is in—all the other things we talked about earlier. Writ large, "religion" is an important source of community in the city. Writ small, religion is more diverse than you might have thought.

FARNSLEY: People should not be forced into the false choice between religion being either this fount of social capital that holds the city into one cohesive whole, or else being something entirely private In fact, it happens in layers. Social capital is built in congregations and people learn valuable social skills there that they take out into the community. They learn how to be good citizens there, even if nobody says, 'These are the Catholic moral teachings on how to build a good city.' You learn to vote, you learn how to read out loud in public, you learn how to disagree with somebody who you still like, and who you expect to be with five years from now. Those are important skills. But there is a layer above that that doesn't get paid attention to nearly enough—namely, that there is a sense of community within whole religious traditions. There is a community among Catholics. There is a community among Jews. There is a community among the establishment Protestants who find themselves on the same boards of directors. There is a community, surely, among Evangelicals. There is community within the Black Church. And there is a layer above that where these religious groups have interacted, and looked for some sort of common ground, and hammered out what it means to live in Indianapolis.

DEMERATH: There are also other kinds of centering mechanisms that need to be examined in a city like Indianapolis. There is our civic culture. And there are seemingly trivial things that loom large within it, like a commitment to sports. Anything the community can get behind is integrative. Religion continues to play a role, but that role has shifted—it is elusive, difficult to find, and difficult to generalize about—but nonetheless, that is what we are looking for.

ARMSTRONG: What else have we not addressed here?

WEDAM: I have the sense that the way religion is expressed is more a reflection of mainstream culture than a warning against it. Jay used the word 'prophetic' as something religion had once been. I do think that religion is less prophetic, less of a distinct, unique voice about how a city should be, how citizens should behave.

MAPES: The early 20th century was a time when religion played an especially active role in the city—but it was also a time when access to the public square was restricted. There were fewer public voices, and so those voices that did gain access were louder and more authoritative. Part of the fracturing within the public

realm occurred because other voices gained a place in it, religious and secular as well. The larger point is that when we think about changes in religion, we need to think about other changes occurring in the city—political, social, racial. They are all inter-related.

WEDAM: Religion has had a democratizing impact on the city. Those voices that used to be on the periphery are a little closer to the center, and have created a more even playing field for all the groups in the city.

DEMERATH: Art raised the issue of social capital. Robert Putnam's thesis [2] is that Americans today do more things alone and fewer things together. Is anybody in Indianapolis as centered on the city as they used to be? Or are people more withdrawn? Are the centers that exist in Indianapolis radiating centers that connect people, or are they insolating centers, that keep people apart and support them privately? These are the kinds of questions at the end that we need to explore.

ARMSTRONG: How does the research we have been doing in Indianapolis inform these issues as they are debated in the national arena?

DEMERATH: We are operating in a long established social science tradition of looking at the city level first. You can get data about the city much more easily than you can about the nation as a whole. When we see what is going on with public religion in this city, we can compare it to what is happening in other cities, and thus in the nation.

ARMSTRONG: What is the single most important fact about religion in Indianapolis?

DEMERATH: The Lilly Endowment.

FARNSLEY: Second Presbyterian Church.

ARMSTRONG: Why the Lilly Endowment?

DEMERATH: Well, every city has a Second Presbyterian Church. I don't think every city has a Lilly Endowment. The Endowment has kept religion in the forefront of public discussion; assisted it when times were bad, served as a bridge over troubled waters, so to speak. I think the Endowment highlights the role of religion in Indianapolis in a way that is unique.

FARNSLEY: I'm sticking with Second Presbyterian. Not by any stretch does Second Presbyterian Church somehow represent all of religion in Indianapolis. And in a concrete sense, the Endowment has surely mattered more, though the overlap between the two is considerable. But look at the story. Second Presbyterian Church started on the Circle as part of the real establishment that was supposed to surround the governor's mansion. It moved north and got this space now taken over by the World War Memorial. Then it ended up further north on Meridian Street, as part of the movement of the Protestant establishment into the suburbs, while the downtown was ceded to the commercial interests on the Circle and the civil religion of the war memorials. Second Presbyterian Church is where Bill Hudnut was the minister before he served four terms as mayor. Second Presbyterian is where the longtime chairman of Lilly Endowment, the Endowment's Vice President for Religion, and the man who created Unigov bumped into each other on Sunday morning. Second Presbyterian Church because they understand the ways the city has changed and are trying to find ways to appeal to other kinds of groups, as with their Second at Six casual worship service for young adults. Second Presbyterian because the current minister, Bill Enright, joined the leading pastor of the African-American establishment to create the Celebration of Hope—the most powerful, conscious effort to racially integrate religion in Indianapolis. The themes are all there: the civic elite membership, members who are important players at the Lilly Endowment, and in city government; the constant attempt to meet their overwhelming social responsibility by new forms of worship and racial dialogue. Second Presbyterian is the story of the change in the city's establishment writ small.

DIAMOND: The single most important religious factor in Indianapolis is the large percentage of independent Christian churches. Yes, Second Presbyterian is important, and yes, Lilly Endowment is important, but to much of Indianapolis, they are not that important. And whether they are being excluded or choose to exclude themselves is not the issue. There are all these small, independent, unaffiliated congregations, and

for those people, this is what makes the city the good place that it is. All those things that we talked about in terms of clergy getting up and talking about issues and morality or public policy—you could go into a lot of these churches and hear sermons every week about the evil things that the government is doing, or about the immorality out there, and that the solution is to go out and be good people because that is what will make the world a better place. I think that's what makes Indianapolis different from most big cities, where you have a lot more Catholics and fewer of these kinds of churches.

WEDAM: I agree with Etan. Of the 1,200 congregations in Marion county, the largest proportion is independent evangelical churches, and they tend to be smaller and keep to themselves. They come out to hear Billy Graham when he visits, but otherwise they live mostly inside the walls of their congregations. That doesn't mean they don't have an effect on local culture. What they hear in church and what they radiate in important ways to their lives outside is 'Change yourself,' and 'Change as many members of your family as you can.' It's individual sin, not social sin that really matters. We have a handful of "new paradigm" churches that are younger and growing, but while they adapt all the tools of modern technology and organization —PowerPoint presentations in the sermons, marketing techniques to grow their churches—it still doesn't get them leadership roles in the civic arena. It makes them more mainstream culturally, more "modern." But their focus is still on individual sin.

MAPES: I don't have a single most important fact that I would mention, because religion is many things, and has many different expressions. If you are looking at the city from a bird's eye view, you are going to see the Endowment. If you take Etan's perspective of an individual living in the city, it might very well be that the most important fact about religion is the congregation.

MIROLA: In a city with 800 or more non-mainline churches, it is still the mainline that exercises power. The Lilly Endowment helps support, and I think maintains against other historical forces at work, the mainline character of this city. This hasn't happened in Chicago, in New York, or probably in any other city. In Indianapolis, the mainline in essence has been shored up by the Endowment.

DEMERATH: It seems to me that the Endowment has done more. The Endowment has brought alternative sources of community centering to Indianapolis. It has brought Catholic churches into its agenda. More recently, even Evangelical churches have come under its wing, in terms of the research it has sponsored. The Endowment has not been just holding the fort for the first half of the 20th century—it has been pushing into the 21st century, and needs to be given its due.

ARMSTRONG: Thank you, all.

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[1] B. W. Sample, *To Do Some Small Good: Philanthropy in Indianapolis, 1929-1933.* (Unpublished master's thesis, Indiana University, Indianapolis, 1998).

[2] Robert.D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000).