

From the Desk of the Chancellor, Oct. 31, 2011

Congratulations to our Center for the Study of Religion and American Culture! The Lilly Endowment just awarded it a grant of \$507,000 to do a three-year study of how Americans use the Bible in their everyday lives. The project culminates in a national conference that will be held in Indianapolis in 2014.

This first large-scale national study on the way scripture is read and interpreted will be conducted by Philip Goff, executive director of the center; Arthur Farnsley, associate director of the center; and Peter Thuesen, chair of the Department of Religious Studies.

Philip Goff is one of several religious historians who were interviewed for last year's "God in America" series on PBS. Peter Thuesen has commented in news media on how the Bible has been reproduced for consumer niche markets, ranging from a Bible produced specifically for teenage girls to a Bible in manga, the Japanese form of graphic novels. Art Farnsley is the author of *Rising Expectations: Urban Congregations, Welfare Reform, and Civic Life*. Based on research conducted in Indianapolis, he examined the current and potential role for congregations as community development agencies and social service providers.

The center's important role on campus and in the community was evident at the center's 20th anniversary celebration, when both Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels and Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard were on hand to acknowledge its dedication to public teaching about the role of religion in American life. Over the years, through scholarship, lectures, and public discussions, the center has been a prominent part of IUPUI's academic and civic engagement in the humanities. The campus has recognized its importance by designating it as a Signature Center and establishing it among the new IUPUI Arts and Humanities Institute partners.

The Lilly Endowment funding will be added to the IUPUI IMPACT Campaign total as a nongovernmental grant.

Comments? Write chancellor@iupui.edu.



Chancellor Charles R. Bantz

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