Inaugural Danforth Distinguished Lectures in Religion and Politics

“Protestant Foreign Missions and Secularization in Modern America”

David Hollinger, Preston Hotchkis Professor Emeritus
University of California at Berkeley

November 18-20, 2013

The John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics at Washington University in St. Louis is pleased to announce the First Danforth Distinguished Lectures to be held November 18-20 at Washington University in St. Louis. The Danforth Distinguished Lectures are convened to initiate and sustain ongoing discussion about the multiple interactions between religion and politics in American public life and thought. The Lectures approach this objective by inviting a distinguished lecturer to focus his or her remarks on some dimension of religion and politics that requires nuanced illumination. For our 2013 Lectures, we are delighted to have David Hollinger, the Preston Hotchkis Professor Emeritus of History, University of California at Berkeley, as our inaugural lecturer.

Professor Hollinger is a renowned scholar of American intellectual history. In addition to his deep record of publication in a number of disciplines, over the course of his influential career he has been named a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a Guggenheim Fellow, a Fellow of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, a member of the Institute for Advanced Study, President of the Organization of American Historians, and Harmswarth Professor of the University of Oxford. His research and teaching have stimulated interdisciplinary conversations and prompted feisty debates on subjects from history of science to Protestant liberalism. He is author of many books, most recently After Cloven Tongues of Fire: Protestant Liberalism in Modern American History (Princeton, 2013).

The title for the Lectures this year is “Protestant Foreign Missions and Secularization in Modern America.” Professor Hollinger will deliver two lectures, the first entitled “The Protestant Boomerang: How the Foreign Missionary Experience Liberalized the Home Culture” (Monday, November 18) and the second “Liberalization, Secularization, and the Dynamics of Post-Protestant America” (Wednesday, November 20). Between these two lectures, on Tuesday, November 19, a symposium featuring commentary by three esteemed scholars of American religion, history, and politics will respond to “The Protestant Boomerang.”

In keeping with the Lecture series’ guiding concerns with stimulating generative dialogue across ideological, methodological, and disciplinary divides, the Center solicits applications from advanced
graduate students and junior scholars in religion, politics, history, and related fields whose research would benefit from attendance and participation in the conference proceedings. Selected participants will attend the three signature events as well as a seminar with Professors David Hollinger, Jon Butler, Darren Dochuk, and Molly Worthen on the afternoon of Tuesday, November 19. Here participants will have the opportunity to discuss their own work and its relation both to the theme of the conference and the larger framework of religion and politics in America. Seminar participants will be eligible for travel subsidies up to $750. In order to accommodate as many participants as possible, we urge all applicants first to request funding opportunities made available through one’s home institution. To apply for the seminar, please prepare a one-page letter of application that includes: a brief description of current research; how you anticipate the Lectures will contribute substantively to your endeavors; a projected budget; and any resources you are receiving through your home institution. Please email your application as a single pdf to rap@wustl.edu, by October 15, 2013.

The Danforth Lectures are free and open to the public. To register for the conference or for further inquiry, please email rap@wustl.edu.