

The IUPUI Common Theme Project, 2009-2010

“Consuming Well for the Wealth of Communities, from IUPUI to the World”

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IUPUI is launching the Common Theme Project, an annual conversation about a theme and book of broad interest and timely importance. For 2008-2009 the university has started with a Common Book project on Ishmael Beah's *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*. Mr. Beah will speak at the IUPUI Campus Center on March 12, 2009, 1 pm.

The Common Theme Project for 2009-2010 begins closer to home, with the consuming people do every day. Our personal decisions as consumers connect us to a vast global economy. These choices affect our own and other people's well-being. We are also more aware of the consequences of our consumption for the environment as well as the new business opportunities presented by the need to retool our infrastructure, industry, agriculture, buildings, and homes. It is time for a campus- and community-wide conversation about the directions we want to take our economy, society, environment, and lives at a time of global interconnection and challenge.

To enrich these discussions, the 2009-2010 book is Bill McKibben's *Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future* (2007). McKibben is coming to IUPUI on Nov. 9-10, 2009 to give the annual author address at 4:30 (11/9) and to participate in a panel at 10:30 (11/10). To support this project, there are plans for an interactive website with a calendar of IUPUI events and initiatives related to the theme, teaching materials for faculty, lists of books and films arranged by issue with links to local organizations working on these issues, podcasts of book discussions, student research projects, a community blog, and a wiki of the local wealth of this community. The website is: www.iupui.edu/~comtheme (under construction).

Focal Topics for 2009-2010

Three focal topics have been identified within next year's theme: *healthy communities, green economy, and just sustainability*. Imagine campus-wide discussions, research, and initiatives on such multidisciplinary questions as:

What would it take to make the easy choice a healthy choice?
How can we get green business, jobs, and infrastructure to pay?
How can we design a more sustainable university?

Get Involved (send information to David Craig: davcraig@iupui.edu)

- Schools, departments, programs, units and student organizations can sponsor their own events related to Common Theme.
- Faculty can teach *Deep Economy*, the website teaching module or related books, films and other materials in their courses.
- Faculty and staff can volunteer to participate in book discussions and website blogs.