

Religion & Teaching in Times of Tension Teaching Resources from Panelists

Overview

Faith in the inevitability of betterment is the driving force of modern knowledge. What happens to our scholarship and teaching when trust in our institutions begins to falter? With increased scrutiny and pressure on our campuses and from the broader public, studying and teaching religion can start to feel unbearable. In this episode of Religion &, our panelists will examine the implications of this tension on teachers, thinkers, and scholars of religion. Join us for a conversation exploring how the state of today's campuses and classrooms impact the work of religion scholars and how we might help our students, readers, and the broader public respond to our current moment through our teaching and scholarship.

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Featured Panelist

Robert Orsi is Grace Craddock Nagle Chair in Catholic Studies in the Religion Department at Northwestern University. He was president of the American Academy of Religion in 2002–03. He studies American Catholicism in both historical and ethnographic perspective, and he is widely recognized also for his work on theory and method for the study of religion.

[*The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950*](#) (Yale, 1985, 2nd ed. 2002). By Robert Orsi.

[*Thank You, Saint Jude: Women's Devotion to the Patron Saint of Hopeless Causes*](#) (Yale, 1996)

[*Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious Worlds People Make and the Scholars Who Study Them*](#). (Princeton, 2004)

[Robert Orsi on History and Presence](#) Podcast from The Maxwell Institute at BYU.

Panelists

Matthew J. Cressler is Chief of Staff at the Corporation for Public Interest Technology and an independent scholar of religion, race, and culture.

[Bad Catholics Good Trouble](#)

- Created by Matthew J. Cressler and featuring art by Marcus Jimenez and web design by Megan Goodwin, Bad Catholics, Good Trouble is a webcomic series about anti/racism and struggles for justice across American Catholic history.

[Authentically Black and Truly Catholic: The Rise of Black Catholicism in the Great Migration](#)
by Matthew J. Cressler

[“Real Good and Sincere Catholics”](#): White Catholicism and Massive Resistance to
Desegregation in Chicago, 1965–1968. *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of
Interpretation*. 30.2

Atalia Omer is Professor of Religion, Conflict, and Peace Studies at the Kroc Institute for International
Peace Studies and at the Keough School of Global Affairs at the University of Notre Dame

[Decolonizing Religion and Peacebuilding](#). 2023. By Atalia Omer

["Turning Palestine into a Terra Nullius: On Amalek and 'Miracles.'" Journal of Genocide
Research](#). May 22. 2025. By Atalia Omer

[When Peace is Not Enough: How the Israeli Peace Camp Thinks about Religion, Nationalism,
and Justice](#) (University of Chicago Press, 2015). By Atalia Omer

[I’m an Israeli professor. Why is my work in Harvard’s antisemitism report?](#) The Guardian (2025)
Atalia Omer

[Religion, Modernity, & the global afterlives of colonialism video](#) with Prof. Atalia Omer and Dr.
Joshua S. Lupo from CSPS India: Centre for Studies of Plural Societies

[Days of Awe: Reimagining Jewishness in Solidarity with Palestinians](#) (University of Chicago
Press, 2019). By Atalia Omer

Nikki Young is Haverford College’s inaugural Vice President for Institutional Equity and Access and
Professor of Religion and Gender and Sexuality Studies. She directs the College’s diversity and equity
work.

[Queer Soul and Queer Theology: Ethics and Redemption in Real Life](#). By Nikki Young and
Laurel C. Schneider (2021).

“Queering ‘The Human Situation.’” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, vol. 28, no. 1, 2012,
pp. 126–31. *JSTOR*, <https://doi.org/10.2979/jfemistudreli.28.1.126>. By Thelathia “Nikki” Young

“Teaching beyond ‘The Shock.’” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, vol. 35, no. 2, 2019,
pp. 99–101. *JSTOR*, <https://doi.org/10.2979/jfemistudreli.35.2.11>. By Thelathia “Nikki” Young