

Religion & Teaching in Tense Times Teaching Resources

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

Bob 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. He is currently at work on *The Cambridge Companion to Religious Studies* and on a social and cultural history of 20th-century Catholic childhoods in the United States, to be published by Harvard University Press.

Panelists

Matthew J. Cressler is a writer, independent scholar, and chief of staff of the Corporation for Public Interest Technology.

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.

Nikki Young is Haverford College's inaugural Vice President for Institutional Equity and Access and Professor of Religion and Gender and Sexuality Studies.

[YouTube Link](#)

[Resources from Panelists](#)

Show Notes

Resources mentioned in webinar

[One Day, Everyone Will Have Been Against This](#). (2025). By Omar El Akkad

[The Message](#). (2024). By Ta-Nehisi Coates

ARDA Resources

[Religion in United States Public Schools](#) Teaching Module

[Social Movements and Religion in American History](#) Teaching Module

[Religious Experience in Everyday Life](#) Teaching Module

Books & Articles

[Comparative Religious Studies: A Pedagogy for Troubled Times?](#) By Christopher Jensen, Ivette Vargas-O'Bryan. *Teaching Theology & Religion* published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd. 2024.

[How Project 2025 Threatens Religious Freedom & Democracy](#) from The Interfaith Alliance. 2024.

[Support for Christian prayer in U.S. public schools varies widely by state.](#) By Chip Rotolo, Pew Research Center. 2025.

[Scholasticide: Erasing Memory, Silencing Dissent, and Waging War on Education from Gaza to the West.](#) *CounterPunch*, 1. Giroux, H. (2024).

[Gaza and the Unsettling Equality of Academic Freedom.](#) *Critical Times* 1 April 2025; 8 (1): 33–84. Ajay Skaria

[“Teaching in Times of Crisis: Covid-19 and Classroom Pedagogy.”](#) *PS: Political Science & Politics* 54, no. 1 (2021): 172–73. Ray, Ayesha.

[Religion and Public Schools: A First Amendment Guide.](#) Charles Haynes. 2025. *Religion & Education*, 52(1–2), 12–25.

[Teaching about Religions in the Social Studies Classroom: The Post-9/11 World and the Post-Truth Age as Superstructures](#) by John Patrick Shekitka

[White Christian Privilege: The Illusion of Religious Equality in America](#) by Khyati Y. Joshi

[How the Coronavirus Pandemic Will Change Our Future Teaching.](#) *Religion and American Culture*. 2020;30(2):147-186. Barrett-Fox R, Bayne B, Cooper V, Espinosa G.

[Strategies for Teaching American Politics in Turbulent Times: Webinar Review.](#) *Political Science Today*. 2025;5(3):11-12. NORDQUIST SM

[“On Studying and Teaching Religion in Dark Times.”](#) *Horizons* 48, no. 2 (2021): 477–89. Mary Doak

[“TRUMP: TEACHING IN A TIME OF CHANGE.”](#) *PS: Political Science & Politics* 53, no. 2 (2020): 357–357. Robert Smith.

Public Education Under Threat: 4 Trump Administration Actions To Watch in the 2025-26 School Year. From The Center for American Progress