

Robert A. Orsi

The Problem of Presence in Modern Religion and Its Study

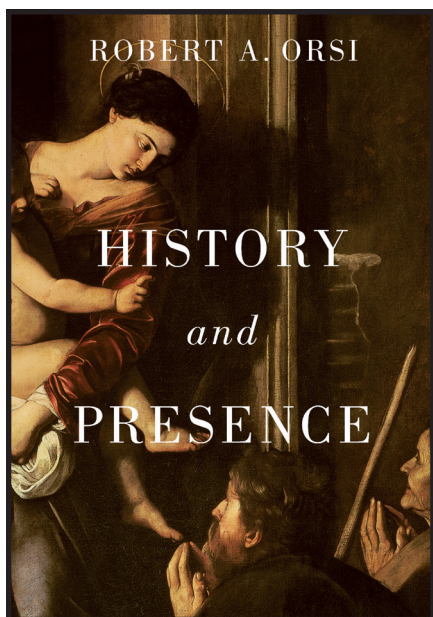
Wednesday, February 17 / 5:00 pm
Free and Followed by Reception

McCune Conference Room
6020 Humanities and Social Sciences Building, UCSB



The question of “real presence” the Catholic doctrine of the literal, physical, embodied presence of Christ in the host coincided with early modern global conquest and commerce and shaped how Europeans encountered the religions of others. The stakes of a seemingly arcane theological dispute over how Christ was or was not present in the Host proved to be extraordinarily high. Robert Orsi explores the role of “real presence” in the making of the modern world, in particular modern religion, and in the study of religion, and calls instead for religious and historical scholarship that attends to the gods really present.

Robert A. Orsi, Professor of Religious Studies and History and Grace Craddock Nagle Chair in Catholic Studies at Northwestern University, is the author of *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880- 1950*, which received the Jesuit National Book Award and John Gilmary Shea Prize from the American Catholic Historical Association. His many other publications include *Thank You, Saint Jude: Women’s Devotion to the Patron Saint of Hopeless Causes*, *Gods of the City: Religion and the American Urban Landscape*, and *Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious Worlds People Make and the Scholars Who Study Them*. His latest book, *History and Presence*, will be published by Harvard University Press (March 2016). Orsi has taught at Fordham University, Indiana University, Harvard Divinity School, and Harvard University, where he chaired the Committee on the Study of Religion.



Presented by the Department of Religious Studies, UCSB.
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