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Bill Schlotter

Emotions and Morality of Charity to be Compared at UCSB Affiliates Spirituality, Culture Discussion

Nearly all faiths and peoples believe that charity is a virtue.

But how it is given, when and to whom are often topics of spirited debate.

Rebecca Anne Allahyari, a visiting professor of sociology and religious studies at UC Santa Barbara, will look at that debate in a lecture titled "Volunteers and the Politics of Charity: Serving the 'Ambassadors of God' and Saving 'the Sinking Classes'" Wednesday, April 10 from 7:30 to 9 p.m. in the Fellowship Center of the First Presbyterian Church, 21 East Constance Ave., Santa Barbara.

The talk is part of the Spirituality and Culture series sponsored by the UCSB Affiliates and the Office of Community Relations in association with the Department of Religious Studies.

Cost is \$5 for Affiliates and Chancellor's Council members and \$8 to the general public. Advance registration is required and can be made by calling the UCSB Office of Community Relations at 893-4388.

In her talk, Allahyari will use as examples two prominent charities, the Salvation Army and the Roman Catholic Church-based Loaves and Fishes.

"These competing visions of charity reveal the complicated and contradictory emotions and morality wrapped up in and around the work of feeding the poor in an era of compassion fatigue and welfare reform," Allahyari said.

Allahyari earned a Ph.D. in sociology at UC Davis and has previously taught at Georgetown University, Princeton University, and the University of Maryland.

Her research interest is in moral identity and self-betterment within religious and political movements.

She is the author of "Visions of Charity: Volunteer Workers and Moral Community" (UC Press, 2000).

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.