



# Volume 1, Issue 1

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The Newsletter of the Department of History  
University of Michigan—Flint

Volume 1, Issue 1

## The War in Lebanon: A Firsthand look by Dr. Joseph Rahme

*"To write history requires a whole life of observation, of enquiry, of labor and conviction."*

*— Thomas Jefferson to Josephus B. Stuart, May 10, 1817*

*"I don't believe in accidents. There are only encounters in history."*

*— Elio Wiesel, International Herald Tribune (Paris), September 15, 1992.*

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### Recollections of, and Reflections on, the July 2006 Israeli War in Lebanon

**War**, a word that litters the landscape of human history. To experience it during one's lifetime, especially in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, has been quite common. To experience it in the post-cold war era, in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, in the age of globalization, with post-modern weapons is indeed disheartening. As an historian studying the past follies as well as ingenuities of human beings, I am perpetually amazed at the chronic human shortsightedness, forgetfulness, and utter disregard of human life. My amazement is further magnified when I consider that West Asia is the birthplace of numerous global religious traditions, among them Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Bahaism, all of which sanctify human life and perceive humans as the "Children of God."



*Dr. Rahme inspects a crater left by the bombardments.*

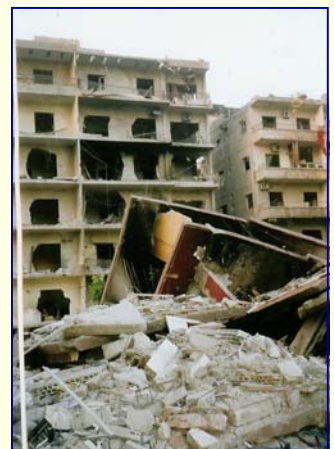
During this most recent war, which lasted about five weeks from July 12<sup>th</sup> until August 14<sup>th</sup> 2006, both an-

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tagonists, the Israeli government and Hizbullah, tried to inflict as much harm, pain, and suffering on their opponent as can be tolerated by the Security Council and interested states. Unlike many Shi'i inhabitants, who experienced the brunt of the war, I was fortunate to be residing in the northern suburbs of Beirut and later on in northern Lebanon, attending to my ailing father. Both areas were directly affected by the war but to a far lesser extent than the southern parts of Lebanon, where whole villages were destroyed or evacuated, or the southern suburbs of Beirut, parts of which were utterly leveled by constant Israeli bombardment.

As a result of the war, fuel, food, and medicine shortages became quite chronic. Transportation and communication were adversely affected because of Israel's strategy to cut off Hizbullah from its Syrian patrons. Bridges and cellular relay towers and stations were bombarded all over the country.

On the last day of the war, Israel dropped thousands of cluster bombs in southern Lebanon and Hizbullah continued to indiscriminately fire its rockets (over 250) into northern Israel. And all of this mayhem, destruction, and bloodshed, to what end?



*Beirut Apartment buildings destroyed by the bombings*

I leave it to the readers to draw their own conclusions.

~Joseph Rahme

Below: The Department faculty and staff enjoy a get together at Churchill's in September.



*"We have need of history in its entirety, not to fall back into it, but to see if we can escape from it."*

*--José Ortega Y Gasset, *The Revolt of the Masses* (1930)*



Dr. Robert Schafer

## Chair's remarks

Greetings to all!

The University of Michigan-Flint celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2006. As one of the original departments of this university, the History Department has contributed consistently to half-a-century of academic excellence. Indeed, the faculty members of the History Department are proud to have been part of this process. As the university grew over these 50 years, so did this History Department and many changes came about. We now average between 90-100 majors in any given year, are among the top five departments in the number of credit hours produced, and have a diverse and global curriculum. The faculty members have also changed in recent years. Several years ago Dr. John Ellis (British history) joined us, while Dr. Ami Pflugrad-Jackisch (early America) came onboard in 2006 Fall Semester. Furthermore, as you view our faculty list, you may find familiar names—Gregory Havrilcsak, David Clark and Michael Kassel. Yes, they are our graduates who went on to get advanced degrees and are now teaching for us. With new faculty members, new events emerged such as the Quiz Night; this is a night of history and fun and I encourage you to attend. Inactive things came back such as the Historical Society (the history club), and its members have taken trips to Chicago and New York. Perhaps, some of you remember the society's trips to Toronto in the past. We also have a very fine website (<http://www.flint.umich.edu/departments/history>) put together by our new secretary Amanda Broadworth. Kindly view our website to see what is happening at the department. Also, please let us know what you are doing, because we would like to remain in contact with you. Feel free to email me at [okuma@umich.edu](mailto:okuma@umich.edu) or Amanda at [amandalb@umflint.edu](mailto:amandalb@umflint.edu).

Roy S. Hanashiro, Chair and Professor

## Quiz Bowl

The History Department's Fourth Annual Quiz Night will be held Friday, March 30, 2007 at Soggy Bottoms on Saginaw Street. Department faculty will serve as the "Quizmasters" for the evening. Places are limited, so everyone is encouraged to sign up in advance to ensure their spot. Participants will be divided into teams of five or you may sign up as a team. All participants will receive a souvenir package (including an official t-shirt), be eligible to win door prizes and each member of the winning team will win a \$25 gift certificate from Barnes and Nobles and other fabulous prizes. The event will begin at 5:30 pm with registration, team selection and munchies. Please see the Department's website for more information, call (810) 762-3366, or send an email to [amandalb@umflint.edu](mailto:amandalb@umflint.edu).

## Dr. Robert Schafer, Professor Emeritus, 1923-2006

Retired UM Flint History Professor Robert Schafer passed away in January 2006 of a brief illness. Dr. Schafer received his Ph.D. in British History from the University of California—Berkeley in 1954. He began teaching at UM Flint in 1956, and was one of only two professors in the History Department until 1965. He retired from teaching in 1989, and moved to San Clemente, California.

While at UM Flint, Dr. Schafer was an actively involved with the International Institute of Flint, serving on both the board of directors and as its president. Dr. Schafer also was an important figure in documenting the history of Flint and Genesee County. He is the author of *Michael A. Gorman: Flint's Super Booster* (1982); *Charles Stewart Mott of Applewood: A Memoir* (1984); *J. Dallas Dort: Citizen Compelet* (1986); and *Producing a Human Mosaic: Immigration and Economic Change in the Development of Genesee County's Population, 1820-1987* (1989), which were published for the UM Flint Archive series. He also authored, "University of Michigan-Flint Archives series of A History of The University of Michigan—Flint," published by the Genesee County Collections Center in cooperation with the Genesee county Historical Society in 1990.

## Arrgh!: Dr. John Ellis Teaches Pirates of the Caribbean

In a course sponsored by the International and Global Studies Program, Professor Ellis took a group of history students to the Caribbean during the spring semester 2006. Entitled "The Pirates of the Caribbean and their World", the course explored the region's history of piracy and colonization. Following intensive lectures and discussion on the Flint campus, the class traveled throughout the British Virgin Islands on board the *Mandalay*, a large "tall ship" in the fleet of the Windjammer Barefoot Cruiseline.

The history, culture and environment of the Caribbean can best be understood by sea and the time spent on ship was an integral part of the experience. As they sailed, the class discussed the maritime history and environmental properties of the Sir Francis Drake Channel and the history, culture and lore of the surrounding islands and bays. Students learned first hand how a sailing vessel operates and even had the opportunity to help hoist the sails. The instructional routine while aboard ship included formal lectures, class exploration of the islands, and discussion sessions on the day's discoveries. On board open buses and in one case via ATVs, the students were introduced to the villages, customs and geographic features of the various islands we visited.

Throughout its explorations, the class was concerned not only with the historical past of the islands but on how the past has influenced contemporary Caribbean society and culture. Stops at places like Soper's Hole, where the islands were first settled by buccaneers, were complemented by visits to places like Little Dix Bay, the first modern resorts to usher in the tourist industry in the 1960s. On Tortola, one group of students sought out the local town library to glance through historical records and had an informative conversation with the local librarian about the heritage and present day culture of the BVI. On Jost Van Dyke, students met a local resident involved with a project to teach the children of the island how to build the traditional sloops associated with the region. A lost art associated with the BVI's maritime past, it is hoped that this craft may in future provide an employment alternative to the tourism sector.

Through their study of the exciting history of the pirates, students enhanced their understanding of the colonial world and the era in which the pirates lived. Through the accompanying travel component of the course, they successfully used their knowledge of the Caribbean pirates as a launching point for a broader exploration of the environmental context, cultural elements and historical trends that have shaped the Caribbean of today. They had a lot of fun too!



"The history, culture and environment of the Caribbean can best be understood by sea and the time spent on ship was an integral part of the experience"



## The Historical Society

The Department's History Club, the Historical Society, elected its new officers for the 2006-2007 academic year.

### 2006-2007 Officers

President	Nic Mihora
Vice President	Robert Mitchell
Treasurer	Skye Gabel
Secretary	Matt Thick



Mr. Gregory Havrilcsak is the group's current faculty advisor. Please check the History Department website for information about upcoming field trips, fundraisers, and Phi Alpha Theta events. The Historical Society meets weekly. Please check Department website for time and location.

## Alumni Banquet

The Alumni banquet will be held on Saturday, April 28, 2007 at the Fenton Yacht Club. Bobby Crim will be the keynote speaker and Michael J. Thorp of WJRT TV 12 will be the Master of Ceremonies. Please see the Department website for details and information regarding tickets. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Mr. Gregory Havrilcsak, [greghav@umflint.edu](mailto:greghav@umflint.edu)





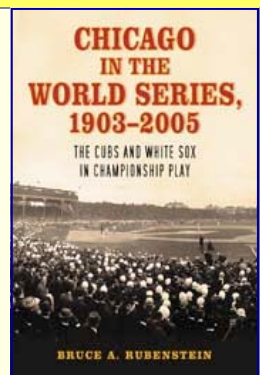
**Roy S. Hanashiro, Professor and Chair**

Dr. Hanashiro will be completing his fifth year as the Chair of the History Department this academic year. He has taught a new course during 2006 Fall Semester titled the "Age of Samurai" which he thoroughly enjoyed. He continues his research on the Burakumin (discriminated minority in Japan) and has recently published a paper on identity. Dr. Hanashiro is also the Director of Master of Arts in Social Sciences, which is a new program that was launched during the 2005-2006 academic year.



**Bruce A. Rubenstein, Professor**

Dr. Rubenstein has presented numerous papers on the history of baseball and sportswriting on the World Series. His latest book, *Chicago in the World Series, 1903-2005: The Cubs and White Sox in Championship Play*, was published by McFarland Press in 2006. The book includes a chapter on each World Series involving a Chicago team in the past hundred years. Contemporary accounts from newspapers and sports publications and Dr. Rubenstein's well-informed commentary provide a rewarding narrative of the Series' history.



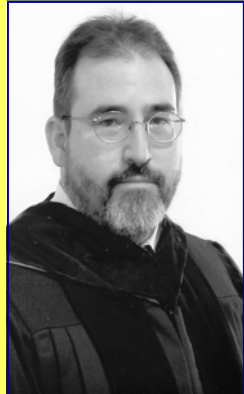
**Joseph Rahme, Associate Professor**

Dr. Rahme recently offered a course on Muslims in North America (HIS 433). He is developing a course on the Historiography of World History beginning with Herodotus and ending with William McNeill to complement his course on 20<sup>th</sup> C. World History. His recent research interests focus on Muslim-Christian relations, formation of local nationalisms, and conceptualization of world history. He is currently working on a reference book on Islam and the "Middle East," and a number of articles dealing with the history of the eastern Mediterranean in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He is a member of the Advisory Board of the Arab-American Studies Center at UM Dearborn, an associate member of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at UM Ann Arbor, and is currently serving as a UM Flint representative to the UM Senate Assembly.



**Theodosia S. Robertson, Associate Professor**

Dr. Robertson recently received the University's campus-wide Teaching Excellence Award for 2006. She also participated in the 2005-2006 campus-wide General Education reform, where one of the two plans she worked on was chosen as the plan to be refined and designed for implementation by 2008. In November, Dr. Robertson presented a paper at the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies conference, "Henryk Grynberg and the Boundless Potential of Documentary Prose." This year, Dr. Robertson has also created online versions of her Western Civilization course (HIS 210 and 211). She is currently creating a web version of her History and Culture of Poland class (HIS 357), which will be offered online beginning in Winter 2008. She is currently leading the revision of the Social Studies Teacher Certification Program into a Comprehensive Group Major. Target completion is 2008.

**John S. Ellis, Assistant Professor**

Dr. Ellis's latest publication, "A Pacific People- A Martial Race; Militarism, Pacifism and Welsh National Identity," will appear in *Wales and War; Society, Politics and Religion in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, a book of essays to be published this year by the University of Wales Press. In his essay, Dr. Ellis argues that Welsh national identity has been contested by two competing images that alternately defined the Welsh as a pacific people and as a martial race. He explores the nature, meaning and power of these conflicting national images and their relationship to broader historical developments, conflicts, and changing notions of national identity in Wales. This past summer, Dr. Ellis was elected Vice President/President elect of the North American Association for the Study of Welsh Culture and History (NAASWCH) at the organization's conference in Swansea, Wales.

**Ami Pflugrad-Jackisch, Assistant Professor**

Dr. Pflugrad-Jackisch joined the History Department in Fall 2006. She received her PhD in History from the University at Buffalo in 2005. She is currently revising her book manuscript, *Brothers of a Vow: Secret Fraternal Orders and White Male Political Culture in Antebellum Virginia*. This April, she is presenting a paper at the Virginia Forum in Richmond, and is currently giving a series of local and regional public talks on the history of Freemasonry in Early America. Dr. Pflugrad-Jackisch has received a Mellon Fellowship from the Virginia Historical Society, and was a Graduate Fellow at the American Academy of Political and Social Science in 2005. She has also received multiple awards and fellowships from the University at Buffalo for her dissertation work.

**Gregory M. Havrilcsak, Lecturer**

For the next three years, Mr. Havrilcsak will be serving on the advisory board for the Teaching American History Program for the Flint Public Schools and was appointed the lead historian for the program. The program is funded by a federal grant from the U. S. Department of Education. He also will begin work on a second Master's Degree in American Military History at Norwich University in Vermont.

## Part-time Faculty

## Department Secretary

**Dave Clark****Mohammed Daassa****Mike Kassel****Amanda Broadworth**

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If you would like to contribute to the History Department's newsletter Please contact Dr. Ami Pflugrad-Jackisch at [pfljack@umflint.edu](mailto:pfljack@umflint.edu)

Also see our website:

<http://www.umflint.edu/departments/history>

Mark you calendar with these Upcoming Events!

»Quiz Night«  
March 30, 2007  
Soggy Bottoms

»Phi Alpha Theta Induction Ceremony«  
April 20, 2007  
Happenings Room, UM Flint

»Alumni Banquet«  
April 28, 2007  
Fenton Yacht Club

*There is a history in all men's lives,  
Figuring the natures of the times deceased,  
The which observed, a man may prophesy,  
With a near aim, of the main chance of things  
As yet not come to life.*

*--William Shakespeare, Henry IV, Part 2, act 3*