

Instructor Epstein studies abroad in Israel

State peaceful despite war in Lebanon

By Shelley Ball
Of The Print

History courses at Clackamas Community College may soon include more information on the current Middle East situation and Jewish history, thanks to the travels of College Instructor Donald Epstein.

Epstein, who usually teaches history at the College, has been on sabbatical since July 1983 in order to study the Hebrew language and Jewish history at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in Israel.

Although he returned to the United States in December 1983, during which this interview was conducted, Epstein has since departed for Israel. He doesn't plan to return to the United States until sometime next June.

Offering a one-year class on Jewish history and expanding the College's western civilizations classes are plans Epstein hopes to accomplish when he resumes teaching at the College in the fall. Epstein also said he would like to organize tour groups made up of local people to Israel.

Should the curriculum plans be accepted by the College's social sciences department, College students could find themselves learning more about the Hebrew and Greek bible, the Holocaust, Arabic/Islamic history and modern Arab/Jewish relations, as well as modern Middle Eastern history.

At a time when Israel is currently involved in the war in Lebanon, one might think twice about visiting the place at all. However, Epstein said the state of Israel itself is peaceful and even though the people would rather not be involved in the war, it is this very act that has brought them peace and security inside the state.

"Most people (in Israel) would want them (Israeli forces in Lebanon) to disengage, but not at the price of a terrorist attack," Epstein said.



College History Instructor Donald Epstein

Photo by Duane Hiersche

Epstein explained that Israel's invasion of Lebanon is responsible for the ceasing of all cross-border attacks for 18 months. Such attacks previously occurred on a near-daily basis. The borders surrounding Israel are quiet, and Epstein himself has been able to travel to the Lebanese border without the threat of danger.

But no matter how quiet life may be in Israel at this time, the people are constantly on guard against any disruptions in their lives, big or small. For example, in the dormitory Epstein shares with four Israelis and two Americans, he said "My (Israeli) roommates keep their machine guns in their closet," where they sit until the students are needed to go out on guard duty for the university they attend.

Every month, Epstein and other university students are assigned to patrol the school buildings with arms in order to look out for thieves, as Epstein said stealing is the major crime in Israel. However, Epstein explained only Israeli students are allowed to carry machine guns when on guard duty.

Israel's strict military policy requires all males and females to serve in the reserves immediately upon graduation from high school and it is only

after the males have served three years and the women two years that they can attend a university.

In addition to their three years in the reserves, men must also serve in the 20-year reserves, during which time they may serve 30 days a year. Radios can be found blaring everywhere, as Epstein explained military codes calling reserve members to action are transmitted over the air waves.

"It's a usual sight to see people scurrying off to their dorms to get their machine guns," Epstein said, and on some occasions enough reserve members have been called away that classes at the university Epstein attends have been cancelled.

Epstein also said many Arabs in the Middle East (no doubt many Americans too) perceive the people of Israel as always carrying guns and being eager to fight (half of the Israeli government's budget is spent on defense). He described the beliefs of the Israeli's by saying, "It's better to carry the gun and be hated than not to carry the gun and die."

As for the Israeli's eagerness to engage in war, Epstein said the total number of war casualties amassed during Israel's 35-year history has equalled

one day's killing at the Nazi death camp of Auschwitz. "I don't think most Arabs realize this," he said.

Although the people of Israel appear capable enough to fight their own battles in their quest for complete freedom, they do not object to the U.S. Marine's peacekeeping force in Lebanon.

"They (Israelis) feel that the Marines' presence in Lebanon is helpful against terrorists and they do see it as a sign of U.S./Israeli cooperation. They want very close ties with the United States—they approved of the Grenada invasion," Epstein said.

Epstein also said the Israeli government would like the United States to be openly supportive of their government's actions, instead of being concerned over what the Arabic states would think should the United States decide to do so. "Pro-Israeli doesn't always mean you're anti-Arab," he said, as he stated Israel is currently on friendly terms with Egypt.

A U.S. backing of Israel could possibly force Syria's troops to withdraw from Lebanon, which Epstein said would cause the immediate withdrawal of Israel's forces and is the reason why Israel desires open support from the United States. In May of 1983, the Lebanese/Israeli Troop Withdrawal Agreement was signed by Israel, which states they will pull out of Lebanon when all other foreign forces are withdrawn first. So far Syria hasn't been willing to cooperate.

Although Epstein said Israel's economy would certainly improve if they weren't involved in the war in Lebanon, he said, "It's a question of Jewish survival and that's an area they're not willing to compromise. It is entirely possible you can have peace and it is entirely possible you can have continuous warfare; the Israeli's are prepared for both options."

Researchers review Barlow, Oregon's history

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In the book "Hardships by Early Settlers, General History of Oregon" by

Charles H. Carey, he states, "Several attempts to cross the Cascade range with wagons were made on other routes by

early settlers, and traces may be found even to this day of the deep ruts worn in the soil, or deep cuts upon trees made by snubbing ropes when the heavy wagons were eased down steep places. These visible signs indicate the difficulties encountered by the hardy and courageous pioneers."

It took one season to build the road, which began service in 1846. In the year 1847, immigrants used this road, and cattle were brought in by this route. The toll was

\$1 per head for stock and \$5 per wagon.

Samuel Kimbrough Barlow passed away July 14, 1867. The following is an excerpt from Barlow research being done by Historian Evelyn L. Greenstreet:

"Samuel Kimbrough Barlow has become a legendary figure in Oregon—an other way of saying fact and fiction often merge. Those of us who compiled this booklet have tried to sort it all out. We have been fortunate in finding so much material for research,

but unhappily it is very seldom that any two accounts agree.

"But Sam did start 'The Barlow Road,' and in some way these three words seem to be a symbol of the pioneer people who came to Oregon—brave, foolhardy,

but magnificent in their obsession. They were so independent, yet so dependent on each other, these souls who claimed the Oregon Country for themselves and their heirs forever."

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