

Danish historian to visit Alfred University

3/20/07

Dr. Niels Brimnes, a professor in the Department of History, University of Aarhus in Denmark, will spend two days - Wednesday and Thursday, March 28 and 29 - on the Alfred University and Alfred State College campuses; his visit is jointly sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities Committee at Alfred University and the Student Cultural Program at Alfred State College. Brimnes will speak at 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 28, at the Orvis Center on the Alfred State College campus; his topic is "The Life and Death of British Colonialism in India." At noon on Thursday, March 29, Brimnes will deliver a talk at the Bergren Forum in Nevins Theatre, Powell Campus Center on the Alfred University campus. His topic will be the "Danish Cartoon Controversy" that resulted when the Danish newspaper, Jyllands-Posten, on Sept. 30, 2005, published a series of cartoons, some depicting the Prophet Mohammad as a terrorist. The resulting controversy touched off what Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen described as "Denmark's worst international crisis since World War II." (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/h...>) That evening (Thursday, March 29), Brimnes will join Dr. Gary Ostrower, professor of history at Alfred University who spent a semester at the University of Aarhus as a Fulbright Fellow and colleague of Brimnes, in presenting a Global Awareness Roundtable on Denmark at 7 p.m. in the Knight Club, Powell Campus Center. Also participating in the Global Awareness Roundtable will be Melissa Polakos, who studied abroad in Denmark. A senior who is majoring in early childhood education and psychology in the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Polakos is a daughter of Paul and Ellen Polakos of Marlboro, NJ, and is a graduate of Marlboro High School. The Global Awareness Roundtable is a monthly event designed to introduce the Alfred community to a variety of cultures from around the world. The informal gathering gives Alfred's international faculty, students and alumni an opportunity to introduce participants to countries as diverse as Japan, Guatemala and Tunisia. Students who have lived, studied or worked abroad also share their experiences and observations. Presentations cover a wide range of topics including history, traditions, art, music and food. Brimnes is currently a visiting fellow in the History of Medicine program at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD, and is working on a book about the campaign to eradicate tuberculosis in India before 1947. He has taught at the University of Aarhus since 1999 and served as director of studies in the Department of History from 2003-2006. He is a specialist on the history of British colonialism with a concentration on India. Brimnes earned the equivalent of his bachelor's and master's degrees in history at the University of Aarhus, and a Ph.D. in history from the University of Cambridge. A revised version of his Ph.D. thesis was published in 1999 by Curzon Press under the title, *Constructing the Colonial Encounter: Right and Left Hand Castes in Early Colonial South India*.