

Slavic Languages and Literatures

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Department Newsletter

Volume 13

Summer 2012

Letter from the Chair

Judith Kornblatt

Dear friends,

It has been a busy year here on the 14th floor of Van Hise Hall. We have advised almost 50 undergraduate Russian majors and six undergraduate Polish majors, and granted BA degrees to five of them. At the graduate level, we awarded four master's degrees and three PhDs. And we promoted one faculty member to associate professor with tenure. Congratulations to all! We handed out awards and scholarships for past and future achievements in the study of Czech, Russian, and Polish to over 15 undergraduates. Four of our dissertators won highly competitive university-wide fellowships for research and writing, and several more won internal fellowships to help them concentrate on their research. One graduate student was selected to participate in the UW-Mellon Dissertation Boot Camp this summer, and 2 TAs were named "honored instructor" by students living in UW Housing. And we are happy to report that our undergraduate advisor won a prestigious (and lucrative...) L&S Advising Award. (All names are omitted for fear of forgetting someone.)

On a more personal level, we welcomed into the world 3 new "Slavic" babies, a "Slavic" grand-baby, and celebrated 2 weddings. (Perhaps there are others we haven't even heard about? Please send pictures.) Unfortunately, we also said goodbye to a long-time lecturer in the department, Lydia Kalaida (see obituary below). In financial support of our



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programs, we received a generous renewal of our Russian Flagship Center grant from the National Security Education Program of the Department of Defense (for more on the Flagship Center, see last year's newsletter and/or <http://www.russianflagship.wisc.edu/>), an ongoing commitment from the College of Letters and Science for the support of the Pushkin Summer Institute (see article below and/or http://slavic.lss.wisc.edu/new_web/?q=node/115), and, perhaps most importantly, over \$75,000 in gifts to our department through the UW Foundation

from alumni and friends. Thank you. Thank you. And thank you.

Numbers, of course, do not tell the full story. We also spent the year reviewing, reiterating, and reinforcing what we in the department feel to be our core principles. Newly articulating our priorities, we found our strength internally in the College and University, as well as nationally, to lie in the balanced nature of our various programs. At the undergraduate level, we are proud to be able to focus on language training along with a rigorous program in literature and culture in at least four different Slavic languages and in translation. The breadth of our language offerings is a definite plus, as is our commitment to advanced language competence in Russian for majors and non-majors alike through the Flagship program. We are also pleased that we can offer small discussion classes at the elementary, intermediate, and advanced undergraduate levels, as well as several extremely popular large lecture-style courses. Our Russian literature survey courses continue to attract over 100 students each semester, the Vampire course draws up to 300 blood-thirsty students, and our traditional Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Nabokov, and other monograph courses can bring in 50 or more eager readers. We hope in the next few years to develop more courses for a wide audience, introducing yet more students to our fascinating area.

The discussion of core principles led this year to a complete revamping of our graduate programs. Again we found balance to be a primary strength, with strong professional training in Slavic literature and culture, as well as one of the best pedagogy programs in the country. We continue to want all of our graduate students to have excellent Russian language skills in all modalities, as well as at least reading knowledge of a second Slavic language and of French or German for research purposes. And a secondary specialization, whether in a second Slavic literature, or in Film, Philosophy, History, Second Language Acquisition, or any other related field. Our new graduate curriculum will reinforce our commitment to the relationship of Slavic cultures to each other and to Europe and America by developing a new track in Comparative

Slavic Cultures, to parallel our currently popular track in Russian Literature and Culture. The new curriculum will also formalize the professional development of our PhD students, building on our reputation for informal, supportive mentoring, by developing “apprenticeship” courses, one-on-one with faculty members, in writing and teaching. In addition, we recommit to helping our students graduate with one or more articles already on their CV, as well as a dissertation that we can help guide toward publication. With clear vision of the current market, we have recommitted to helping our PhDs defend their dissertations by the end of their 6th year of graduate studies, bringing them much more quickly to professional careers, whether within or outside of academia. Finally, we have agreed to create a series of 6 “foundational courses,” exams in which will replace our traditional written prelims. Having passed our departmental committee structure, this new curriculum is currently making its way through various levels of the University. Check out our website (also undergoing revisions this summer) for news throughout the year.

Next year’s task? We embark on a review of the undergraduate curriculum. If you have any thoughts, advice, or just memories of what worked or didn’t work for you, please feel free to let us know as we reconvene our discussions this fall. Write personally to me, to one of your favorite professors, or directly to Slavic@slavic.wisc.edu. Please consider visiting us sometime this coming year. Our annual AATSEEL-Wisconsin conference will take place on October 12–13, 2012, with lively papers by our faculty, graduate students, alumni, and guests. We welcome Alexander Zholkovsky of USC as Keynote Speaker to kick off the program; his lecture will be dedicated to the memory of the late Professor Yuri Shcheglov. Also attending will be alumni Jenifer Presto of the University of Oregon (PhD 1996) and Gwen Walker of UW Press (PhD 2003). Before that, sometime in September, we will host Dr. Boris Egorov, an eminent scholar from St. Petersburg who was a good friend and close colleague of Yuri Lotman, the founder of the Tartu School of Semiotics. Despite the ubiquity of budget cuts, we also plan to host a series of other



UW Slavic students performing "Milaia Moia" in their own inimitable fashion.

distinguished guests and alumni throughout the year. If you would like to visit, whether to present, to attend, or just to meet us for a beer at the Union, please let us know, again either through one of your favorite professors, or directly to Slavic@slavic.wisc.edu. And if you know of former classmates who might not be receiving this newsletter, let us know that as well.

Speaking of visits, perhaps we can come to you. Do you live in a metropolitan area where we might find other UW graduates, and, especially, graduates of the Slavic Department, both undergrad and grad? We'd be happy to work with you, the UW Foundation, and the UW Alumni Associate to arrange a gathering and have one of our professors come out to give a talk. It's a great way to reconnect. Can't do that? Then please don't forget us, nonetheless. Your contributions, both small and large, help maintain the "margin of excellence" in our department. They might send a graduate student to a professional conference. Or underwrite a weekly Czech, Polish, Russian, or Balkan language table. Or help support a film series. Or bring international specialists to campus. More generous endowments can fund scholarships and fellowships, can help us hire lecturers to fill in temporary gaps in our programs, or provide research funds for undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty. Please help us maintain our reputation as one of the pre-

mier Slavic departments in the country. It's easy. Go to our website at http://slavic.lss.wisc.edu/new_web/ and click on CONTRIBUTE. At the same time, drop us a line, whether electronic or on good old fashioned paper. We would love to hear from you. Be forewarned, however. We might ask you for an article for next year's newsletter!

In this issue:

Chair's Letter from Judith Kornblatt	1
Faculty News	4
Pushkin Summer Institute	6
Flagship Reports	7
Awards	9
Graduate Student News	10
Nabokov Conference in New Zealand	11
AATSEEL-Wisconsin 2011	12
In Memoriam	13

Faculty News



David Bethea The most exciting news in David's year was the Pushkin Summer Institute, on which see the separate article on page 6. He was glad of the sabbatical that gave him room to work on it. He'd like to send special congratulations to Dr. Keith

Blasing, who defended his thesis on Platonov and the evolution of the Soviet family in August 2012. Keith had been at work on his project for some time and he deserves real credit for finally seeing it through and defending!



David Danaher After a busy few years in the department, David is looking forward to a year-long sabbatical leave over 2012–13 to finally write his book on Václav Havel (<http://cokdybysme.net/pdfs/rdhavel.pdf>). He'll also be

co-editing, along with a colleague from Poland, a collection of articles to appear in book form entitled *The Linguistic Worldview: Ethnolinguistics, Cognition and Culture*.

He thanks his wonderful teaching assistant, Colleen Lucey, for her work in CREECA 254 ("The Culture of Dissent in Central/Eastern Europe": <http://cultureofdissent.tumblr.com/>) during spring 2012, and he congratulates three of his Czech students who won Czech-related awards this year: Joey Vergara and Andre Tan, who each received a summer FLAS to attend an intensive summer program in Prague, and Megan Munroe, who was awarded a Fulbright Teaching Assistantship to the Czech Republic for 2012–13 (the third UW student to receive it in the last six years!).



Karen Evans-Romaine devoted her teaching this year to Russian language courses at the third-year, fourth-year, and graduate levels, including a course on developing conver-

sation and listening comprehension at the advanced level. For the first time that course, Slavic 705, brought together advanced Flagship undergraduates, Slavic Department graduate students, and graduate students from the CREECA MA program. The combination made for vibrant and stimulating discussions on topics related to contemporary Russian politics, press, economics, and foreign relations, with a brief foray into the American healthcare system and some musing on the American Dream. We followed Vladimir Pozner and Ivan Urgant to Cleveland on their "Single-Story America" tour; saw Pozner again at a press conference in Ekaterinburg talking about presidential elections and his recently published book; followed Russian truckers to the Kazakh border enjoying the New Economic Space between Russia, Kazakhstan, and Belarus; and watched Putin chatting with reporters in the Kremlin, heard Navalny talk about being considered influential by *Time* magazine, and followed protests in Moscow and St. Petersburg. If only we could get our fellow Americans as interested in these topics, we would never have to worry about Russian enrollments again!

This year Karen has been faculty director of *Russkii dom*, the new Russian-language floor in the International Learning Community, located among the lakeside dormitories, in Adams Hall. As faculty director Karen taught a biweekly course in the *Russkii dom* living room each semester: during fall semester she taught a course on Music in Russian Culture, and in the spring semester she taught a course on Russian Image-Makers from Peter the Great to Putin. These classes, taught entirely in Russian, included students from the first- to the fourth-year levels, all of whom participated valiantly and enthusiastically in class, no matter what their language level. Students gave presentations at the end of each semester and showed eloquently how much they had learned.

Outside the classroom Karen continued to work with co-authors Richard Robin and Galina Shatalina, George Washington University, on the fifth edition of the Russian language textbook *Golos*; Book One is out, and Book Two has been her summer project. Together with first author Dianna

Murphy, Associate Director of the Language Institute and the Flagship Program, and Second Language Acquisition graduate student Snezhana Zheltoukhova, Karen studied student and tutor perspectives on tutoring in the Flagship program. An article on that subject is currently under review. She has also worked with Dianna and David Bethea on curricular aspects of the Pushkin Summer Institute.

Karen has mainly been very busy with the Russian Flagship Program. See the separate Flagship update.

Halina Filipowicz's course, LT 247 / SL 245: Representing the Holocaust in Poland: Ethical Issues, which she introduced in 2010–11, is now cross-listed with Jewish Studies 230: Elementary Topics in Jewish Literature. It will be offered again in 2012–13. Last fall, she was commissioned to write a commentary on the poet-playwright Tadeusz Różewicz, which was used in the design of an exhibition held at the 2011 International Book Fair in Frankfurt to celebrate Różewicz's 90th birthday. Additionally, she has signed a contract for her book, *Taking Liberties: Patriotism, Transgression, and Polish Drama, 1786–1989*, and another contract for an essay for the *Women's Review of Books*. In a recently published article, "What's Love Got to Do with It? Adam Mickiewicz's *Forefathers' Eve, Part 4* and the Art of Transgressing the Private/Public Divide" (in the volume *New Perspectives on Polish Culture: Personal Encounters, Public Affairs*, ed. Tamara Trojanowska et al.), she offers a new interpretation of this masterwork of Polish drama and a classic of European Romantic literature. Her article on Jerzy Grotowski's Laboratory Theatre (co-authored with Robert Findlay) has been translated into Spanish and published in the journal *Cuadrivio* (April 2012). She is currently working on a new book, *Post-Holocaust Debates and Theatre: The Case of Poland, 1945–2010*.



Judith Deutsch Kornblatt returned to the classroom after a sabbatical to teach the nineteenth-century Russian literature survey in the Fall and a graduate seminar on Gogol's *Dead Souls* in the Spring. What

could be more fun than that?!? She also served as chair and will continue in that capacity through the 2012–13 academic year. Her hope is to see through a revision of both the graduate and undergraduate curriculums before she steps down. In her free time, she is editing a volume of essays with alum Patrick Michelson (BA in Russian, PhD in History), tentatively titled *Rethinking Russian Religious Thought*. Look for it in a couple of years on *The New York Times* Best Seller List.



Tomislav Longinović has continued to work on strengthening the instruction of Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian/Montenegrin (formerly known as Serbo-Croatian) languages, literatures, and cultures at UW-Madison. In addition, he has reached across campus to a variety of interdisciplinary programs and research circles, including the Visual Cultures program and the Mellon workshop on Music, Race, Empire. In addition, his new book *Vampire Nation* (Duke University Press, 2011), had a very good reception in the humanities field, including a review in the *London Times* higher education supplement, which praised him for his command of "the entire cultural repository of the South Slavs, drawing on oral literature, popular music, contemporary novels and even political speeches." His essay "Millennial Memories," devoted to theme of exile and immigration, has been published in *The Other Shore (A Journal of Slavic and East European Immigrant Experience)*, as well as "Serbo-Croatian: Translating the Non-identical Twins" in *Translation and Opposition* (London: Multilingual Matters). He continues to serve as the undergraduate mentor for WISc, a program devoted to the nurturing of the best internationally-oriented students at UW-Madison and direct the Croatia study abroad program, which is now in its eighth season.



Irina Shevelenko has been working on her book manuscript *Modernism as Archaism: Nationalism and the Quest for a Modernist Aesthetic in Russia*, of which three chapters are complete. The book is under contract with “Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie” (Moscow), and she expects to have the manuscript completed by August 2013.

The work on the English translation of this book manuscript will begin in the coming year. She is also in the process of making revisions to her 2002 book *Tsvetaeva’s Literary Path: Ideology, Poetics, and Identity of the Author in the Context of the Epoch*; a revised edition is under contract with the same publisher. She received tenure this year, and is grateful to all her colleagues in the department and to graduate students for their support, moral and practical, during this process. Finally, Irina has received a Vilas Associate award administered by the Graduate School that will enable her to bring her current project to completion under the best possible conditions.



Jennifer Tishler On February 18, 2012, Jennifer Tishler gave a pre-show talk for the Kanopy Dance production of *Baba Yaga*, “a folk tale set to dance with puppetry.” In working with the artistic directors

of this Madison-based modern dance troupe to come up with talking points for her introduction, Jennifer remembered how much she missed teaching Russian folklore and folk tales. Thankfully for all involved, Judith Kornblatt will be teaching the interdisciplinary course on Russia in spring 2013, which will give Jennifer a chance to offer an undergraduate topics course on Russian folk tales as Lit Trans 247 / Slavic 350.

Pushkin Summer Institute

David Bethea

My most exciting undertaking this year by far was the establishment of the Pushkin Summer Institute, which took place in Madison for six weeks during the summer of 2012 and which was run with the assistance of the UW-Madison Russian Flagship Center and the Noble Network of Charter Schools (Chicago, IL). The Institute is a precollege enrichment program for high school students from traditionally underrepresented groups who are interested in expanding their linguistic and cultural horizons, in this instance with an emphasis on Russian studies. Underlying the program is a multi-pronged strategy that combines intensive language learning with an integrated subject curriculum focused around Pushkin and his texts. The goals of the project are: to build and improve students’ Russian language abilities; to build critical thinking, reading, and writing skills; to stimulate student interest in Russia and Russian studies; to prepare students for the demands of college life; to expose students to the opportunities UW-Madison and the Madison community have to offer.

The Institute’s Russian language coursework is comprised of a 6-week intensive program: students meet for four hours a day in the classroom and have a 1.5–2 hour study hall/tutorial in the evening to review the day’s material or ask questions of tutors. The Russian textbook for the program is *Golosa* (Book 1). In addition to the language classes, courses/workshops on Russian culture are held at least once a week. These courses cover such topics as making *bliny* (Russian crêpes), Russian superstitions, etiquette when visiting a Russian home, Russian folk music, etc. Lastly, once a week students attend a phonetics class that focuses on pronunciation and intonation to further build student cultural and linguistic fluency. The Pushkin Summer Institute’s goal is to advance students from the Novice level to the Intermediate Low level on the ACTFL scale.

The literature/critical thinking component of the program is centered on the life and works of Pushkin. Once a week students attend a lecture given by myself on an assigned reading; students are expected to participate actively in the discussion

during the lecture. All readings are distributed the weekend prior to the lecture; at this time students also receive an essay prompt based on the assigned reading. A discussion group is also held for an hour on Sunday evenings to get the students ready to write their papers. Students write a 1–3 page essay (in English) that is turned in on the day of the lecture; the Friday after the lecture, I hold individual consultations with the students to discuss their writing in terms of content, style, grammar, etc.

I enjoyed tremendously working with former and current grad students who played key roles in staffing the institute: Ben Jens, who was the on-site director and oversaw all our varied activities with great efficiency and good cheer; TA's Anna Borovskaya (Slavic) and Anja Nesterchouk (School of Education), who both did splendid jobs teaching intensive first-year; Karen-Evans Romaine (Slavic and Flagship), who was extremely helpful with arranging our *Golosa*-based curriculum (*Golosa* being her co-authored text); Dianna Murphy (Flagship and Language Institute), who provided time, resources, and invaluable expertise over the course of the year as we set up the program; undergrad Flagship students Ryan Prinz and Kristen Hendricksen, who did absolutely amazing jobs as residential dorm counselors, and Kyle Farrell, who worked as a mentor in the dorm; our own Slavic grad students Colleen Lucy and Melissa Miller, who very professionally organized and compiled OPI assessments; and Zach Rewinski, another grad student from Slavic, who filled various roles—videotaping lectures, assisting with marking, xeroxing, etc.—with unflappable reliability. We also enjoyed having the lead Russian teacher at Pritzker, Phil Stosberg, with us all summer; Phil's presence was indispensable in “breaking the ice” and aiding in the integration of different aspects the program with an eye to the concrete needs of the Pritzker students.

We look forward to our second summer institute in 2013, when we hope to expand the program and eventually to add an in-country component. For additional coverage of the program, see http://news.ls.wisc.edu/?p=9644&utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=summer-snapshots-reaching-out-with-russian.

Flagship Reports

Naira Ovsepyan



Words cannot express how grateful I am for having had the opportunity to study in Russia for a year. As a successful CLS and Overseas Russian Flagship Alumna, I can proudly say that these experiences have altered my life completely and made

me a more independent, open-minded and global individual.

First, I participated in the Critical Language Scholarship Program in Ufa, Russia from June through August, 2011. I had never been to nor studied in Russia before, so this was a unique and challenging experience for me. The professors provided a stimulating learning environment for my classmates and me, which encouraged us to learn more about the Russian language, history, and traditions, and as a result, helped us better assimilate into the rich Russian culture. Many people forget that Russia is a very big and diverse country that is populated by over 160 ethnic groups. Ufa is a great example of this, because the population of Ufa is divided among three major ethnic groups: Russians, Bashkirs and Tatars, all of whom have very different and fascinating cultures that I learned a lot about from my amazing host family and the research I had done with my professor. Looking back on my experiences in Russia, I can confidently say that studying in Ufa was not only beneficial to my overall understanding of the Russian culture, but also gave me the opportunity to see another side of Russia that I have never seen before or since.

After successful completion of the CLS Program in Ufa, I studied in St. Petersburg, Russia for a full academic year, which helped me attain an advanced level of Russian language proficiency that I needed in order to begin the Overseas Russian Flagship Program in St. Petersburg. I can truly say that this has been the most life-changing experience for me, which benefited me personally, academically and professionally. To begin, every single course

that I took during my year abroad has helped me improve my Russian language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) and enhanced my understanding of Russian culture, history, politics, literature, media and the role Russia plays in the world today. It was challenging and required a lot of work during and after class, but the result was beyond what even I had hoped to achieve. My challenging courses, outstanding professors, exceptional Flagship staff at UW-Madison and St. Petersburg State University had all contributed to my overall achievement and helped me reach not only Level 3 proficiency (the goal of the program, which translates into a “level [which] certifies that the applicant possesses an advanced level of competence in Russian to communicate fluently in any kind of topics, do scientific research or conduct professional activity in translation, editing or journalism”; I passed this level already in December!) but also Level 4 on the TRKI scale, which signifies that “the applicant possesses language competences close to the native-speaker level.” Lastly, my loving host family, fascinating excursions and superb internship at Anti-Discrimination Center “Memorial” served to increase my cultural knowledge of St. Petersburg and Russia as a whole – the kind of knowledge that cannot be obtained from books or a classroom environment.

To conclude, I am beyond grateful for these amazing and life-changing opportunities that I was lucky to have participated in. The Overseas Russian Flagship Program was especially rewarding, and I would recommend this program to anyone who is passionate about the Russian language, willing to challenge oneself to go above and beyond of what is expected of him/her in order to achieve one's goals and is considering using the Russian language in one's future career.

Ryan Prinz



Studying in St. Petersburg on the overseas component of the Flagship Program has been a transformative experience, literally. Our program began in Washington D.C. with an earthquake, after which the tremors and new experiences never really

came to end.

All of us faced bumps along the road during our time in St. Petersburg, but we also managed to make amazing progress. For me, the Flagship Program was an opportunity to resolve my issues with dissociative identity disorder. If before I had two separate personalities—Ruslan and Ryan—the Flagship Program proved itself a chance to finally merge my passion for Russian language and culture with my Irish moniker and professional interests. Over the course of the Program, I worked as an intern at St. Petersburg's Center for Social Research and as a volunteer at *Vykhod*, an LGBT-advocacy organization. Each of these experiences not only allowed me to develop new lexicon, but taught me a little something about myself and gave me the confidence to pursue other opportunities. Of course, this soul-searching voyage was not without rough waters. In addition to ever constant linguistic challenges, we (at *Vykhod*) were suddenly faced with a law against the “propaganda of homosexuality,” which provides legal justification for stripping LGBTs of their human rights. Although my time in Russia was full of trials and shocks, I can say that, in the end, I managed to come out unscathed. Not even the Washington Monument can say that! Having finally slept off the jet lag, I am excited for the future and certain that it will involve Russia in some capacity. It, of course, would be remiss of me to not express my gratitude to the Flagship team at Madison who, without fail, was always there to support me when I needed it. I thank them, and the Slavic department as a whole, for always providing me with assistance and guidance and for inspiring me take advantage of every opportunity possible. Spasibo!

Slavic Department Awards

First of all, the Department of Slavic Languages and Literature at UW has received a very prestigious award, the **Polonicum 2011 Distinction**, from the Institute of Polish Language and Culture for Foreigners at the University of Warsaw, Poland. This is a major recognition of our achievements in teaching and researching Polish literature and language, as well as of our achievements in the promotion of the Polish culture, language, literature, and history. The competition was fierce and global, and our Department was awarded in a unanimous, confidential vote.

The honorary patrons of the Polonicum Award competition include the Rector of the University of Warsaw, the Speaker of the Senate of Poland, and the Minister of Culture and National Heritage of Poland. The Polonicum 2011 Awards Ceremony took place on November 28, 2011 at the University of Warsaw. The Rector of the University, University authorities, and many distinguished guests participated in this event. Dr. Ewa Miernowska represented the Department of Slavic Languages and Literature. During the ceremony she delivered a short speech presenting the Department of Slavic Languages and Literature at UW-Madison and gave several interviews to Polish radio and TV stations. We are very proud that the scholarly, educational, and outreach activities of Prof. Halina Filipowicz and Dr. Ewa Miernowska, along with their energetic students and other faculty members of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literature. Read more: http://slavic.lss.wisc.edu/new_web/sites/slavic.lss.wisc.edu.new_web/files/Polonicum2011article.pdf

Student Awards and Honors

Each year the department gathers to recognize the achievements of its members. Here are a few highlights:

Friends of the Department

Our community took a few moments to recognize the substantial support we receive from several



Ewa Miernowska accepts the Polonicum Award for the Department.

Wisconsin families. Both the Lapinski family and the Zawacki family have been instrumental for many years in fostering a strong Polish program at our university. As is obvious in what follows, many of the awards distributed to UW Slavic students in support of their efforts are possible through the generosity of the Zawacki and Lapinski families. They were accordingly recognized at our annual departmental awards ceremony. Our gratitude is immense, as is our excitement at the opportunities this support provides.

Undergraduate Awards

The prestigious J.T. Shaw Prize for Undergraduate Excellence went to **Kristen Hendrickson**, who also gained admission to the Russian Flagship Overseas Capstone Program at St. Petersburg University for the 2012–13 school year. Other awards recognizing undergraduate excellence in Russian went to **Kyle Farrell** for progress in Intermediate Russian and to **Ben Hooyman** for his progress in Advanced Russian.

Our Undergraduates earned numerous awards in Polish studies as well. **Elliott Bartz** received an award from the Lapinski family for his work organizing the department Polish table over the last academic year. This setting for Polish conversation is both an important instructional tool in the department, and a popular gathering place for Polish speakers in the community. Edward I. Zawacki awards for Outstanding Achievement in the Study of the Polish Language, Literature & Culture went to **Jan Morawski** and **Alexander Kaufman**. Michael and Emily Lapinski Undergraduate Scholarships went to **Sebastian Skarbek, Marta Studnicka, Sebastian Sochacki, Nicole Rusek, Irene Resenly, and Elizabeth Waugh**.

Nor did Czech go unrewarded, as **Truman Keys** and **Andre Tan** took home the November Fund Prize for Undergraduate Achievement in Czech.

We are also proud to say good-bye to **Alexander Immendorf, Amelia Kieth-Schwartz, Liubov Korneva, Zhen Qin, and Virginia Armour**, who completed their undergraduate degrees in our department and are moving on to even bigger and better things. Our best to them!

Graduate Awards

First and foremost, as evidence that these things do happen, we present the degrees awarded to graduate students in our department. MAs went to **Peter Hyson, Andrew Pixler, Tommy Tabatowski, and Emily Owens**. Meanwhile, **Amanda Murphy, Nina Familiant, Kieth Blasing, and Ben Jens** completed their PhDs. Congratulations to all!

Other awards included **Sergey Karpukhin's** L&S Teaching Fellow Award, **David Houston's** University Dissertator Fellowship. Travel awards went to **Lisa Woodson, Stephanie Richards, Melissa Miller, Colleen Lucey, Vika Kononova, Sergey Karpukhin, David Houston, and Anna Borovskaya**. **Matt McGarry** took home a Chancellor's Fellowship for Spring 2013. The Xenia Gasirowska Scholarship for Spring 2013 went to **Anna Borovskaya. Vika Kononova and Naomi Olson** received Mellon Dissertation Summer Fellowships. **David Houston** was made a Writing Across the

Curriculum Fellow, and **Lisa Woodson** received an IRH fellowship.

We also recognize **Joey Vergara and Jesse Stavis**, who continued the department's involvement with the HEX (Humanities Exposed) Grant. Joey had the following to say: "I taught an amazing literature and creative writing class at Oakhill Correctional Institute from late-August through mid-June. The first semester was devoted to autobiographies, memoirs, and biographies in Russian literature and the second to the fantastic/absurd in Russian literature (both themes understood very broadly). I've learned so much from the experience and from the men who participated." The program was started by Naomi Olsen and has continued for several years. We are immensely proud of the way our graduate students dedicate themselves to the work.

Other Graduate Student News

This year saw a few more items of good news. Our congratulations to Joey Vergara, who got married this year! We're happy for Melissa Miller, too, who became engaged.

Our cadre of Slavic babies has also expanded by a few since the last newsletter. Keith and Molly Thomasy Blasing welcomed their son Isaac over a year ago in late July. Samuel Alexander Murphy was born to Amanda Murphy and her husband, Curtis in January. And this past June saw the arrival of Silas DeMeester Rampton, who has made his parents very happy indeed.

If there are other points of news from members of our community, and we have callously missed any sort of activity (not just births and weddings, but books published, particularly interesting conferences attended, awards garnered, world records set, etc.) please let us know! See Judith's Chair's letter for contact info for the department, and by all means, keep in touch.

Conference in New Zealand

Naomi Olson

Slavic Department graduate students and alumni represented the University of Wisconsin–Madison at this year’s International Nabokov Conference, the first ever to take place in the Southern Hemisphere. Brian Boyd hosted the conference, “Nabokov Upside Down,” from the 10th to the 13th of January, 2012, at the University of Auckland in New Zealand. Four scholars with ties to the UW Slavic department delivered presentations to an audience of Nabokov scholars from all corners of the globe: Molly Peeney, 2010 graduate of the Slavic PhD program now teaching at the University of Notre Dame; Shun’ichiro Akikusa, former UW–Madison visiting Fulbright scholar from Japan; and current Slavic PhD candidates Sergey Karpukhin and Naomi Olson. The “Wisconsin Mafia,” as they were called, presented on a variety of topics, ranging from Nabokov’s connection to other writers, such as Velimir Khlebnikov and Lafcadio Hearn, to investigations of Nabokov’s

interpretation of the Classics and the theme of neurological conditions in his fiction. The conference proved diverse, lively, and engaging despite the challenge of the staggering time zone difference that attendees faced upon arriving to the remote Pacific Island. The Madison affiliates were proud to be recognized by their fellow attendees as students of UW’s renowned Nabokov specialist (and ‘godfather’ of the “Wisconsin Mafia”), Alexander Dolinin. A brief video retrospective of the conference, created by Yuri Leving for the *Nabokov Online Journal* can be found at <http://vimeo.com/37698217>. For more information on the presentations, look for a conference volume featuring selected presentations from “Nabokov Upside Down,” edited by Brian Boyd, to be published in the near future. We are very proud of our representation at this far-flung conference, and of the enthusiasm of our scholars for their objects of study. A little can take you a long way!



The Madison Mafia

AATSEEL-Wisconsin 2011

The annual AATSEEL-Wisconsin conference was held at UW-Madison's Pyle Center on 21 and 22 October, 2011. This year's organizing committee, Colleen Lucey, Sarah Kapp, and Thomas Tabatowski put together a wonderful conference resulting in two days of informative and interesting discussion.

The keynote lecture at this year's conference was delivered by Gordana P. Crnković, Associate Professor of Slavic and Comparative Literature at the University of Washington, Seattle (that other UW). Dr. Crnković's research interests are quite broad, incorporating Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav Baltic literature and film as well as English and American literature, and literary theory. Her address at UW-Madison was entitled "Ethics, Time, and Meša Semilović's *Death and the Dervish*."

The first panel of papers on Saturday morning focused on writing strategies vis-à-vis the Soviet state. Donald Loewen from Binghamton University presented his paper "Perception and Persuasion: Travel Writing in Stalin's USSR." UW-Madison's history department was well represented by Athan Biss, who offered insights into black Americans' written perceptions of Soviet Russia in his "The Talented Tenth goes to Moscow: New Negro Diplomacy in Early Soviet Russia, 1922–1928." Melissa



Jesse "The Hamburger" Stavis spuriously accepts department recognition for organizing this year's AATSEEL-WI conference.

Miller closed out the panel with her Shaw Prize-winning "Freedom in Exile in the Work of Nina Berberova."

The morning's second panel, surely among the best remembered of recent years, treated issues of desire in nineteenth-century Russian literature. Colleen Lucey presented a fascinating treatment of the theme of prostitution in the complex of texts known as the Petersburg Text. Jesse Stavis's paper, "«Зажмите уши, добры люди!»: On Light, Darkness, Shadows, and (the Absence of) Sex in Lermontov's Obscene Junker Poems" took a sensitive topic and discussed it with both depth and humor.

The last panel of the morning included two papers discussing the Russian language. Mark Baugher from Bryn Mawr College raised the question, "Is the Explicit Instruction of RSL Grammar Necessary?" Snezhana Zheltoukhova from our own program in second language acquisition, discussed linguistic elements of journalistic prose in contemporary Russian.

The afternoon's first panel raised questions of the interaction of the visual and the literary. Jose Vergara looked at "Cognitive Play in Kharm's 'Golubaya tetrad' no. 10." Both our own Sergey Karpuhkin and Joseph Schlegel from the University of Toronto looked at Vladimir Nabokov. Sergey's paper treated Nabokov's approach to the problem of literary evolution, where Joseph's presentation applied Andrei Bely's formal aesthetics to the poetry in Nabokov's *The Gift*.

The final panel of the conference looked into the transitions undergone by various texts through time. Lisa Woodson looked into ways the legend of the vanishing city of Kitezh was appropriated by the Russian Symbolists. Judith Kornblatt looked at the treatment of Orthodox icons under the aesthetics of both modernism and Socialism, and Olga Permitina looked at Olga Slavnikova's adoption of Pavel Bazhov's Ural stories in her novel, *2017*.

The conference was well attended, and filled with opportunities for exchange of ideas and some pleasant times on the Memorial Union Terrace.

In Memoriam

The Department of Slavic Languages sadly notes that our longtime colleague, teacher, and friend—Lydia Kalaida—passed away on July 5, 2012. She was born on December 19, 1923 in New York as the daughter of Boris and Natalia Kalaida. Separately they escaped from the future Soviet Union in 1921 by riding on boats from the Crimea through the Black Sea to Istanbul in Turkey. There they met, married, and lived before coming to New York City in 1923. Lydia had an extensive background in music. In 1946 she completed a BA degree in music at Queens College in New York and in 1947 an MA degree at the State Teaching College at Columbia University. From 1948 to 1960 Lydia was associated with the State University Teachers' College at Cortland, New York where she taught courses on music and elementary Russian. In the summer 1950 she studied art history at London University in England. While on sabbatical during the academic year 1954 to 1955 she studied music at Fountainebleau Conservatory in Paris where she also took piano lessons from the internationally known Nadia Boulanger. Even though Lydia was born in America, grew up here, and lived most of her life here, Russian remained her "native" language. In 1960 Lydia received a position as Instructor in the Department of Slavic Languages at the UW-Madison and taught Russian until her retirement in 1994 as Senior Instructor. She also created and taught a course on Russian culture. In 1961 Lydia's parents moved to Madison where they lived with her. Her father, Boris Kalaida, died in 1963 and her mother, Natalia Kalaida, in 1986.

In 1961 Lydia founded the UW Slavic Choir which she directed for many years. Each fall she would invite about thirty students to participate in the choir which would sing songs in several Slavic languages. Perhaps the main performance each year took place at the December meeting of the Slavic Club when the choir presented a special Christmas program. The choir also sang at retirement homes, charitable groups, churches, hospitals, and other organizations. Lydia's Slavic choir achieved a notable place in the culture of Madison. As a teacher of

upper-level Russian language courses, Lydia was so demanding that students who completed her courses learned excellent Russian. Lydia headed tour groups to the Soviet Union for UW students during vacation several times from 1985 to 1992. She took students to Leningrad and Moscow, acquainted them with Russian art, and guided them through old Russian cities in what is called "The Golden Ring." Lydia served as a lecturer and tour leader for the Smithsonian Institute to the USSR in the summer 1986.

Lydia had many friends not only among neighbors, but also among students who had taken courses from her over the years and who had kept in contact with her. She was a member of the Assumption Greek Orthodox Church. She enjoyed working in the garden behind her home in Madison's east side. She was a connoisseur of Russian cooking and enjoyed introducing students and friends to the pleasures of Russian food. Lydia coordinated a group of eight people of Slavic origin who taught a course on Slavic cookery at UW Extension in the fall 1976 and in the spring 1977. She also published a book called "Slavic Cookery" which appeared in its seventh edition in 2011. Those who were fortunate enough to have been invited by Lydia to celebrate *Paskha*, the Russian Orthodox Easter, were enchanted by the delicious dishes she had prepared. Visitors to Lydia's home soon learned that she also loved dogs and usually had one and often two dogs living with her. Lydia's friends and colleagues will miss her for many reasons.

Appreciation is expressed to Bonnie Sokolov, Father Michael Vanderhoef, and Svetlana Leighton for their help in preparing the memoriam.

Submitted by James Bailey and Judith Kornblatt.

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