



Editors: Dariusz Tolczyk and Valeria Provotorova

SLL@ UVA

*The Newsletter of the
Department of Slavic
Languages and
Literatures at UVA*

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Note from the Chair

Greetings from Charlottesville! Life has been busy as always in the smallest PhD-granting department in Arts and Sciences.

Anna Borovskaya-Ellis is in her second year replacing Lilia Travisano as head of our language program. Anna has taken over 1st-, 3rd-, and 5th-year Russian (the last a conversation course). Anna is a blur of energy and often has students waiting at her door for a turn to meet with her at office hours. For those of you who knew and appreciated Lilia and her uncommon generosity with time, Anna (who sometimes has Lilia over to her office for tea) is to our great good fortune cut from the same cloth.

The biggest news is that Stan Stepanic, our well-known Dracula teacher, has been hired to a new lectureship. The position comes with the possibility of permanence. (It's not called tenure because Stan is not expected to publish scholarly work, just teach.) Stan is immensely gifted in appealing to undergrads. As an advisor of undergrads this past semester, I had several students with no connection to Slavic mention they'd heard of his stellar reputation and were eager to take his class. In a recent semester Dracula, offered in 3 different sections of

75, was 100% full for a combined enrollment of 225, with 743 students on the three waiting lists, which could conceivably be the highest numbers in the *history* of American Slavic studies going back to the 1890s! For the near future we envision Stan teaching Dracula in one large section, Russian and East European film (this semester's section is full at 50 with a waiting list), first-year Polish, and Russian folklore courses.

If you've been out of touch with UVa broadly, the University has a new President, James Ryan. In addition, Ian Baucom, the Dean of Arts and Sciences, has signed on for a second 5-year term.

On a personal front, this past year I taught a graduate seminar on Tolstoy's *War and Peace* in the fall and was on leave in the spring working on my Tolstoy project – one book on his fiction before his crisis and another on the fiction after, the latter of which is my main focus at the moment. I gave papers at both the AATSEEL Conference in Washington ("Tolstoy's Orphans") and the ASEES Convention in Boston ("Tolstoy's Three Ethical Systems"). A personal highlight was skiing in the Swiss Alps, something I've dreamt of doing for many years. I spent a few days at Zermatt on the Italian border and a few more in the Jungfrau region at Mürren. In March I'll be visiting former students Mark Purves (PhD 2007) and Katya Jordan (PhD 2014), now faculty in the excellent Russian program at Brigham Young to give a talk and if I'm lucky get in a little skiing on the side.

An important long-term goal for the department is to establish a fund to offer small scholarship that will help undergrads pay for study abroad in Slavic countries. The goal is to encourage more of them to do so. UVa traditionally has lower rates of study abroad than many other elite universities, and that's a trend we'd like to break. The fund was started 3 years ago by generous donations from Ryan Briggs (BA, Commerce and Slavic Languages and Literatures, 2013) and is approaching, but is not at, the point at which we can start to offer scholarships.



Atop the Schilthorn (familiar from the 1967 James Bond film On Her Majesty's Secret Service) with the Jungfrau about 6 miles away in the background.

We welcome other contributions to an incredibly good cause. I myself studied at the Pushkin Institute in Moscow for a semester as an undergrad (1982) and a year as a grad student (1985-6), and found the experience eye-opening and transformative beyond any reasonable expectation, in ways more important than just its contributions to the career I selected. I learned more the semester I was in Moscow – not just about Russian, but about life, about human cultures and myself – than any other semester of college. We know from many years of experience that when our students *have* taken the plunge in the past, they almost always have returned delighted and often eager to get back as quickly as possible. If you would like to help us, contributions can be made online. Click Make a Gift in the lower right corner of [our homepage](#), then please be sure to specify Slavic Languages and Literatures on the second screen.

Best wishes to all for a great 2019!

David Herman

Chair of Slavic Languages and Literatures

Books Behind Bars

Interview with Dr. Andrew Kaufman



Dr. Andrew Kaufman (Ph.D. Stanford University) is a Lecturer at the Slavic Department and the author of two books on Leo Tolstoy, *Understanding Tolstoy* (Ohio University Press, 2011, paperback 2011) and *Give War and Peace a Chance: Tolstoyan Wisdom for Troubled Times* (Simon & Schuster, 2014, paperback 2015). He is nationally recognized for his educational outreach program *Books Behind Bars*, in which UVA students lead weekly discussions on Russian literature with inmates at a Virginia maximum-security juvenile correctional center. Andrew Kaufman has been teaching works by Turgenev, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Chekhov and other Russian writers to young inmates for nine years. His program has been widely featured on national and international media, including *The Washington Post*, Katie Couric, NPR, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Megyn Kelly Today, Russian national TV, etc. A feature-length documentary about Dr. Kaufman's initiative, *Seats at the Table*, had its world premiere at the Global Peace Film Festival in Orlando (September 2018) Recently, the film was featured at the 2018 Virginia Film Festival.

Dariusz Tołczyk: I haven't heard about anyone taking college students to a juvenile prison to discuss Russian literature with inmates. How did you come up with this idea?

Andrew Kaufman: It was an idea that came out of the intersection of my longtime interest in educational outreach and teaching innovation. I was looking for exciting new ways to teach literature to my UVA students that would make the literature much more immediately relevant to them. In 2009 I happened to be invited to do a workshop in an adult prison about Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, and it was a powerful teaching experience—so much so that I came away with a fresh understanding of Tolstoy's work, despite the many times I'd taught it and written about it. That's where a lightbulb went off: What would happen if I created a class at UVA where I'd put my own students into a similarly unfamiliar environment and invite them to have conversations about Russian literature with people with whom they might never otherwise interact with? Might they, too, come away with a radically new understanding of the works we read? Books Behind Bars was originally an experiment meant to test out this hypothesis.

What did you want to achieve or prove by pursuing this experiment?

Honestly, initially my main focus was on the UVA students, on creating a uniquely relevant classroom experience where they could have authentic conversations

about the literature with people very different from them. I was hoping they'd come away with a deeper, more embodied understanding of the literature as opposed to a purely abstract, or academic understanding. At the same time I believed that this experience would be of value for the residents at the correctional center, too, but I didn't know exactly in what ways. It would take several years before I understood the depth of the impact this experience would have on both groups.

How did the first confrontation with the reality of the juvenile correctional center challenge or confirm your original expectations?

When I started getting UVA student feedback during and after that first iteration of the course in 2010, I knew there was something very special going on here. The feedback and course evaluations had a passion, a depth, and specificity I'd never encountered before in my other classes. At the same time, I knew the residents at the correctional center were enjoying their interaction with the students and getting some things out of the program, but at that point, I still didn't know exactly what.

What literary works are you choosing to teach in your program and why?

We read many of the same authors you'd expect to find in an introduction to nineteenth and twentieth century Russian literature class—Pushkin, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Pavlova, Chekhov, Solzhenitsyn, Akhmatova. The main difference is that we don't read the big novels, only the short stories and poems, because the reading level of residents and other constraints at the correctional center make it



Dr. Kaufman with his UVA students on the way to the juvenile correctional center. Rosalia Films

unreasonable to expect residents will read more than 20-30 pages a week. The unexpected benefit of this approach is that it has taught everyone, UVA students and residents alike, how incredibly rich each work is and how deeply you can penetrate an entire world of human experience on the basis on a few short pages, or even sentences.

Which author and work has made the greatest impression among inmates?

It differs from table to table (UVA students and residents meet in small groups at eight different tables) and year to year. But I can say that Tolstoy's "How Much Land Does a Man Need?" is pretty much universally beloved and understood, while residents are initially put off by his *Death of Ivan Ilyich*, yet have profound discussions about it. I've found in all of my literature classes that the stronger the emotional reaction a student has to a work, positive or negative, the richer the discussion about it will be. A few years ago I started adding Soviet prison camp literature (Varlam Shalamov), and those stories, while emotionally taxing, have stimulated exceptionally rich and specific conversation about what it means to be incarcerated.

What are the most interesting differences between the college students' reactions to the literary works, as opposed to the inmates' reactions?

The UVA students tend to come in with a more sophisticated language to talk about the literature but far less life experience. The

two groups can learn a great deal from one another in this respect. UVA students will hear fascinating interpretations of various works that they're not likely to hear among their UVA peers. For example, the residents sometimes read Pushkin's "To a Poet" as a call to be tough, austere, unbending in a harsh world. In other words, they read Pushkin's words quite literally, rather than figuratively, as a message of creative freedom or individualism. Or, when reading Gogol's "The Overcoat," many UVA students tend to see the work as a call to social justice on behalf of the forsaken men and women among us. Not the residents: They often have little sympathy for Akaky, who, they say, can't hack it in the jungle of life. Too bad for him. At first UVA students are offended by this interpretation, but when they dig into it, they realize that the residents are simply expressing the reality of their lives in the facility and on the streets. It forces UVA students to recognize that their humane, socially progressive reading of the story might have something to do with the own rather sheltered lives.

What do young inmates learn from this experience? What do they value most about it?

I'd say, first and foremost, they value the opportunity to sit down with college students each week and have authentic conversations about the sorts of big life questions young people don't often talk to one another about, or at least in any kind of sustained and meaningful way. "For an hour and a half a week I felt like a human being," many residents say. Even the UVA students describe how the conversations they have with the residents are often deeper and more meaningful than the ones they have with their own friends. Residents also value the chance to try something radically different and a bit risky. They start to wonder what other risks they might take, what other subjects they might study, that they hadn't considered before. And, the messages of Russian literature (about morality, human dignity, freedom, community, social

justice, etc.) resonate powerfully with them. These are messages people have been telling them for years, but it would go in one ear and out the other. By exploring these messages in the form of a story, and talking about them with their peers outside their institution, the messages, they say, seem to stick.

Books Behind Bars must be a huge challenge and eye-opening experience for your college students involved in it. What do they learn from it? What do you want them to learn?

They learn practical leadership skills: how to plan a meeting and facilitate a discussion, how to build successful relationships with people from diverse backgrounds, how to think on their feet, stay flexible and nimble as facilitators while still having a structure in place. On a deeper level they learn what it means to truly listen to another human being without judgement, how to see the full-blooded humanity in others and in themselves. They learn the many layers and dimensions of literature that they hadn't seen before when talking about books in a familiar environment and with familiar people. Many of them learn that they want a different kind of career than the one they thought they wanted before entering this class: a career with heart and soul, a career with a service component, a career with meaning. And they learn what's truly possible in a classroom, the power of education to change paradigms and transform lives, including their own.

What was the greatest surprise in your nine-year experience of teaching the program?

Three surprises: First, the staying power of this program. It seems to stay relevant and fresh year and after year, despite the many changes in our academic and cultural climate. The second surprise is the depth of lasting transformation this experience has had on many UVA students and residents. Many UVA students have changed their career plans entirely as a result of taking this class.

Many residents who never had an interest in attending college were so inspired by their experience of working with the UVA students that they were motivated to apply to, enroll in, and successfully complete college. The third surprise is how much I myself have been changed by the experience of teaching this class. I've become a better teacher, reader, and person. When I watch the students and residents taking the risk, week after week, of breaking down barriers, sharing their most intimate human stories about love and loss, that has inspired me to be better at breaking down barriers in my own life, of taking the risk of being vulnerable.

Link to a recent article, "[Tolstoy Behind Bars: Why UVA Students are Reading Russian Literature in Prison?](#)" by Susan Svrluga in *The Washington Post*:

Link to the *Today Show* feature on Books Behind Bars: "[Meet the college professor who is bringing college students and incarcerated youth together in class](#)"

Link to Andrew Kaufman's TEDx talk: "[The Inmate, the Student, and Tolstoy](#)"



Dr. Kaufman on the Katie Couric Show with Katie Couric and former Beaumont Juvenile Correctional Center resident Douglas Avila

New Bachelors of Arts with the Slavic faculty



L–R Upper row: Dr. Stan Stepanic, Prof. David Herman, Prof. Mark Elson, Prof. Dariusz Tołczyk, Prof. Edith Clowes, Prof. Katia Dianina

Middle row: Alexander Caperton, Carter Green, Dominika Borek, Nika Lomidze, Alexander Johnson, Natalie Shea, Rebekah Leary, Sarah Bouchie, Royce Lindengren

Front row: Kate Motsko, Christina Beggarly, Cameron Tarry, Khongorzul Khosbayar

New PhDs with Slavic faculty



*Prof. Dariusz Tolczyk, Prof. Mark Elson, Dr. Stan Stepanic, Prof. Katia Dianina, **Dr. Reed Johnson and Dr. Viktoria Basham (receiving their PhD diplomas)**, Prof. Edith Clowes, Prof. David Herman*

2018 UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS**Awards for Outstanding Completion of Undergraduate Studies**

The 2018 **Pertzoff Prize** was awarded to Jordan Bernstein, and Cameron Tarry won the **Hammond Award**. Congratulations!

Our graduating majors, Jordan Bernstein, Katherine Motsko, Natalie Shea and Cameron Tarry were elected to the Beta Chapter of the **Phi Beta Kappa**. Congratulations!

As the oldest and most distinguished honor society in the country, Phi Beta Kappa offers membership to less than one percent of all undergraduates. Many of the leading figures in American history and culture have begun their careers with election to the society, including seventeen presidents of the United States. As a result, membership is a remarkable accomplishment, both for the student who achieves it and the faculty and staff whose support and guidance has led to this milestone.

Carrie B. Douglass President, Phi Beta Kappa Beta Chapter of Virginia

2018 GRADUATE AWARDS

Sharisa Aidukaitis received a **Summer Research Grant in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences** for research in Ukraine.

Sasha Bernosky received a summer grant to study Ukrainian language and culture at **Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute**.

Abigail Hohn was inducted into the UVA **Raven Society**. She also won an **Academic Fellowship in Russia from American Councils for International Education** for 2018-19 research in Russian libraries and archives.

Alex Maxwell and Sarah McEleney won **Presidential Fellowships in Data Science** (Digital Humanities).

Sarah McEleney also won **Scholars' Lab Digital Humanities Prototyping Fellowship** for Summer 2018 and **Dean's Dissertation Completion Fellowship** for 2018-2019.

Tierre Sanford received a **Rachel Winer Manin Graduate Fellows Award of Jewish Studies** (awarded by University of Virginia Jewish Studies Program), a **Graduate Student Research Grant** (awarded by UVA Center for Global Inquiry and Innovation), a **Buckner W. Clay Endowment for the Humanities Summer Research Grant for Doctoral Students** (awarded by UVA Institute of Humanities and Global Cultures), as well as an International Workshop Grant for the conference "Ego-Documents in the Soviet Sphere on the Holocaust: Revealing Personal Voices" (awarded by Moshe Mirilashvili Center for Research on the Holocaust in the Soviet Union at Yad Vashem and the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum).

MAY 2018 GRADUATING MAJORS

BA in Slavic Languages and Literatures

Abigail Black

Alexander Johnson

Christina Beggarly

Sarah Bouchie

BA in Russian and East European Studies

Alexander Caperton

Carter Green

Dominika Borek

Khongorzul Khosbayar

Nika Lomidze

PhD in Slavic Languages and Literatures

Reed Johnson

[Victoria Basham earned her PhD degree in 2017. She received the diploma at the 2018 ceremony.]

CONGRATULATIONS ALL!!!



Nika Lomidze



Khongorzul Khosbayar receives her diploma



Dr. Viktoria Basham and Professor Edith Clowes

Natalie Shea and Kate Motsko

University of Virginia Slavic Forum “Crossroads and Terminals: Journeys, Wanderings, and Travel”

The University of Virginia Society of Slavic Graduate Students sponsored an interdisciplinary forum devoted to expeditions, wanderings, travels to distant places, and to return journeys back home.

Our journeys (real, virtual, and imaginary) inevitably lead to crossroads. In a world that is rapidly shifting technologically, culturally, and politically, our understanding of home and the world outside is also shifting and expanding, calling for reassessments of our previously accepted notions.

Forum organized by the Society of Slavic Graduate Students, the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, the Department of French, the Department of English, the Department of Middle Eastern and South Asian Languages and Cultures, the American Studies Program, the Department of Religious Studies, Global Studies, European Studies, and The Program in Medieval Studies at the University of Virginia.

Panel #1: (8:30 - 9:45) *Historical Journeys*

Christopher Halstead: “Wichmann the Younger and the Limits of Saxon Power in the 10th-Century Baltic”

Nell Borys: “Legendy Polskie: A Revitalized Journey of Culture Essay of Allegro’s Popularization of Polish Legends and their Intersection with Present Day Life”

Reese Fulgenzi: “The Commercialization of Russian Ordovician Trilobites”

Moderator: Sasha Shapiro

Discussant: Sharisa Aidukaitis

Panel #2: (9:50 - 11:05) *Writing and Rewriting Maps of Identity*

Stephanie Diane Tsakeu Mazan:

“Communities and Gazes: The Irony of Self-Identity”

Valeria Provotorova: “The Journey of the Nightingale”: Female Identity in Poetry

Maria Chavez: “Representation of Duty and Femininity in Battle for Sevastopol”

Moderator: Jason Schultz

Discussant: Alex Maxwell

Panel #3: (12:30 -1:45) *Many Ways of Straying*

Alex Bernosky: “Ways of Relating in Literature of Displacement”

Jason Schultz: “Mirrors/the Journey Within: Nabokov’s *The Gift* and Briusov’s *The Mirror*”

Abigail Hohn: “The Revolution from a Distance: Nikolai Oleinikov as an Author and Editor of Children’s Literature”

Moderator: Alex Misbach

Discussant: Sarah McEleney

Panel #4: (2:00:-3:30) *Pushpins: Mapping of Movement*

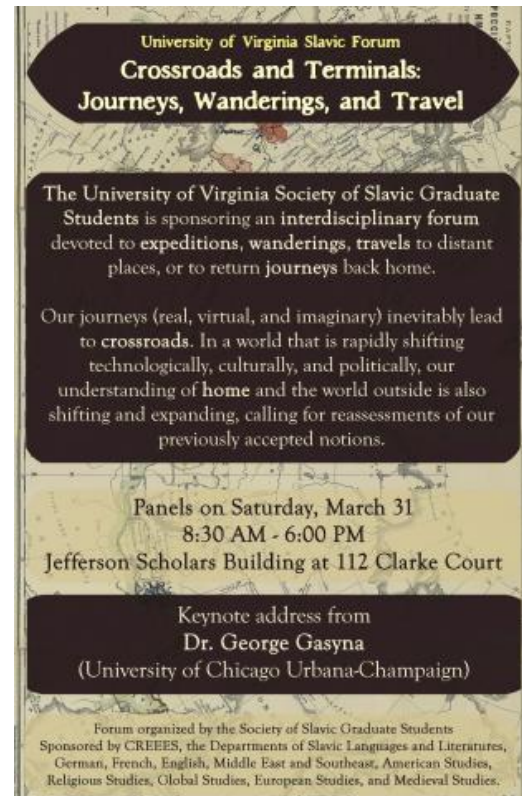
Tierre Sanford: “Resistance in Motion: Mapping Movements In and Out of the Minsk Ghetto, 1941-1943”

Sarah McEleney: “1960s Writers in Koktebel’, Crimea: The Role of Voloshin’s Home in Post-Stalin Soviet Literature”

Reed Johnson: “Journey from Leningrad to St. Petersburg: Geographic and Temporal Doublings in Elena Chizhova’s “The Sinologist”

Moderator: Alex Misbach

Discussant: Abby Hohn



Panel #5: (3:45 - 5:30) *Carried on Currents of Myth and Faith*

Barbara Blythe: “Religious Travel in the Ancient Novels”

Sharisa Aidukaitis: “A Poet of Three Traditions: Images of the Prophet from Classicism, the Bible, and the Koran”

Alexandre Gontchar: “Gogol’s Logic: Dead Souls as a Cultural Geography of the Russian Empire”

Jacob Wirt: “Folk Narration and Leskov”

Moderator: Alex Bernosky

Discussant: Valeria Provotorova

Keynote Address: (5:40-6:40)

George Gasyna: “The Crossroads of Exile (Gombrowicz, Conrad, Stasiuk)”



POLISH LECTURE SERIES

This series of public lectures and events is organized by the Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies (CREEES) and UVA, and is made possible by the generosity of Lady Blanka Rosenstiel and the American Institute of Polish Culture.

The speakers have, thus far, included, among others, former U.S. Ambassadors to Poland, Nicholas Rey and John Davis; former Polish Ambassador to the U.S. Przemysław Grudziński; eminent scholars, such as Piotr Wandycz, Zdzisław Krasnodębski, Bogdana and John Carpenter, Ewa Thompson, John Micgiel, Timothy Snyder, Marci Shore, Clare Cavanagh, Beth Holmgren, Andrzej Nowak; writers, such as Adam Zagajewski, Krzysztof Koehler, Piotr Sommer, Andrzej Stasiuk.

In 2018, we hosted the following lectures:



“Between Empire and Nation-State: Poland’s Eastern Borderlands and the Interwar World”

Kathryn Ciancia, Assistant Professor of History, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Thursday, February 8, 5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m., NAU 211

Organized and co-sponsored by CREEES, the Corcoran Department of History, and the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures

“The Solidarity of the Shaken’: Poland, Ukraine, and the Metaphysics of Revolution”

Marci Shore, Associate Professor of History, Yale University

Wednesday, February 21, 5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m., MONROE 124

Organized and co-sponsored by CREEES, the Corcoran Department of History, and the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures

“A Community Behind Bars: Prisoners in Polish Politics”

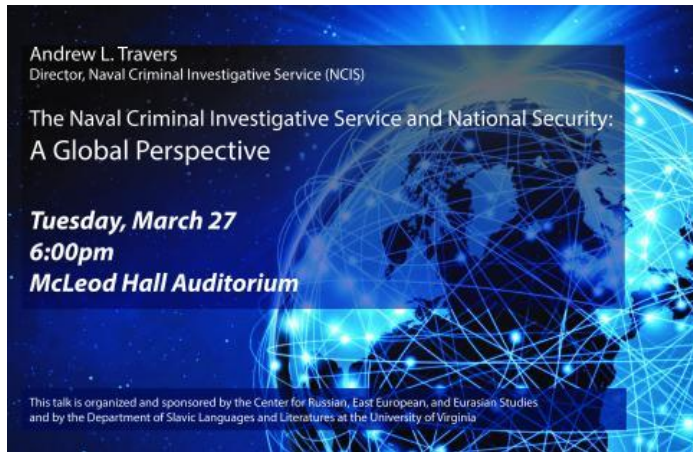
Padraic Kenney, Professor of History, Indiana University

Thursday, April 5, 5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m., NAU 211

Organized and co-sponsored by CREEES, the Corcoran Department of History, and the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures



The Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies



The Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies at the University of Virginia serves as a resource for research and scholarship in the field of Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies. The center supports teaching, research, curriculum development, community outreach programs and university-wide activities. In these efforts the Center cooperates with other educational institutions in Virginia and the Southeast.



"The Naval Criminal Investigative Service and National Security – a Global Perspective"

Andrew L. Travers, Director of the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS)

Tuesday, March 27, 6:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m., McLeod Hall Auditorium

Organized and co-sponsored by CREEES and the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures




"Living by the Code: Gangs of Russia"

Dr. Svetlana Stephenson, Reader of Sociology at London Metropolitan University

Friday, September 21, 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monroe 116

Organized and co-sponsored by CREEES and the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures



UVA Klezmer Ensemble Concert under the direction of Joel Rubin, with special guest Paul Brody (Berlin)

Thursday, April 19, 8:00 p.m., OLD CABELL HALL

Directed by Joel Rubin, the UVA Klezmer Ensemble focuses on the music of the klezmerim, the Jewish professional instrumentalists of eastern Europe, as well as related Jewish and other East European traditions from the 18th century to the present, including Yiddish song.

The performance featured Paul Brody, an American trumpeter, composer, sound installation artist, and writer based in Berlin, Germany. Brody leads his klezmer-jazz band, Sadawi and performs with a number of other groups. He has collaborated with artists as diverse as John Zorn, Kent Nagano, Shirley Bassey, Ran Blake, the Klezmatiks, and Barry White.

John Zorn has written: “Paul Brody is a remarkable trumpet player, composer, arranger based in Berlin... He brought together some of the best players from both the U.S. and Germany to create a new Jewish supergroup. The music combines exciting arrangements, catchy tunes, and compelling solos into another classic of the new Jewish Renaissance... Brody is forging a new Jewish jazz for the 21st Century.”

Now ending its twelfth year, the UVA Klezmer Ensemble has become a vital part of the musical community of Central and Northern Virginia, performing each semester in Old Cabell Hall as well as at conferences and festivals throughout the region. The ensemble is currently made up of undergraduates, grad students, and other members of the greater Central Virginia community. The group is committed to ethnic, racial, cultural and religious diversity. Current and recent members have backgrounds from the US, Russia, Ukraine, Israel, Lebanon, Armenia, Iran, Bangladesh, and India, with religious backgrounds ranging from Jewish to Christian, Hindu, Muslim, and Buddhist.



In 2016, Joel Rubin was a featured performer and teacher at the Jewish Culture Festival in Cracow, Poland, and at Yiddish Summer Weimar, and toured with the Berkeley-based trio, Veretski Pass to Germany and Austria. The group will be recording its second collaborative CD in August, 2018.

From 28 November to 1 December 2018, PETER SOWDEN, freelance acquisitions editor at Routledge Books and Boydell and Brewer Publishers, visited the University of Virginia on Professor Edith Clowes' invitation. He gave a lecture on careers in publishing and conducted a workshop on converting Ph.D. dissertations into books.

PETER SOWDEN WRITES TO US:

I was extremely hospitably hosted, by Edith Clowes, by Ed Barnaby, Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies, and by Dariusz Tolczyk of the Slavic Languages and Literatures Department. I was housed in the magnificent Colonnade Club, and enjoyed very much exploring the campus and Charlottesville.

My publishing work involves acquiring books in Asian studies, Russian and East European studies, early modern and modern history. Routledge has recently published Edith Clowes' edited book on "Russia's Regional Identities: The Power of the Provinces".

The lecture on careers in publishing was attended by about 60 students and there were 17 participants in the workshop on converting dissertations into books. Each of the participants wrote a book proposal and we discussed them. In my view the standard of the participants' work is very high and their involvement in the workshop impressive. I expect that many of the participants will go on to publish books – excellent books which will be well received. I enjoyed my visit to the University of Virginia as well as the lecture and the workshop. For me it was a highlight, something out of the ordinary. I look forward to my next visit!

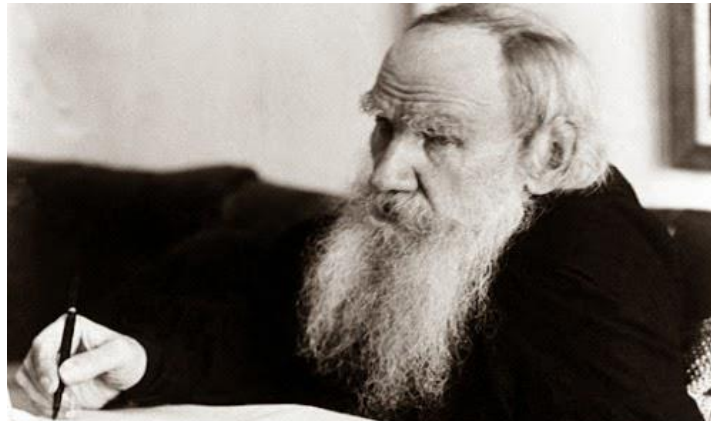
"Rhythm of Russian": Flipping the Russian Language Classroom Using Online Poetry Modules, a workshop led by Abby Hohn

Friday, April 6, 3:00 pm, Language Lab

"Rhythm of Russian" is a website that brings together recordings of Russian poems and interactive text to help students master vocabulary, listening, and stress in Russian.

Students and faculty learned about the project and its applications in Russian language and poetry courses. The workshop consisted of an introduction to the project and methods, an overview of using TEI (Text Encoding Initiative, a type of XML for literary scholars), and pedagogical applications of the site. The event was open to anyone interested in language pedagogy and methodology, using technology as a learning tool, and developing new ways of engaging students outside the classroom. Attendees had the opportunity to explore the site using Language Lab desktops. Sample English poems allowed all attendees to test the application without any knowledge of Russian.

SLAVIC COLLOQUIUM Fall 2018



Prof. David Herman

On Tolstoy

Thursday, November 8

4:30-5:45, Cabell 236

Prof. Mark Elson

Textbook Transitions:

The Importance of Instructor Knowledge
in Effective Pedagogy

Thursday, November 15

4:30-5:45, Cabell 232

Katherine Gasser: Returning to Poland for Deeper Study of Eastern Europe

Two University of Virginia students study foreign languages and cultures overseas as Boren Scholars.

Joshua Zabin of Ashburn and Geneva, a second-year Chinese language and literature and history distinguished major, will study Persian Farsi at the University of Dushanbe in Tajikistan next spring and summer. Katherine Gasser of Vienna, a first-year Russian and East European studies major, will study for a year at the Jagiellonian University of Krakow, Poland.

Boren Scholarships, an initiative of the National Security Education Program, provide unique funding opportunities for U.S. undergraduate students to study less-commonly taught languages in world regions that are critical to U.S. interests, but underrepresented in study abroad, including Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Eurasia, Latin America and the Middle East. The program provides up to \$20,000 for a one-year program and recipients commit to one year of federal government service.

Katherine Gasser became interested in Eastern Europe when an older sister was studying Polish. In the summer of 2016, she and her sister spent six weeks studying the language at the Catholic University of Lublin.

“While I was there, I began to appreciate the culture and history more than I initially imagined I would,

and my studies became a serious interest,” she said. “After that summer, I decided I would study the languages, history and politics of the region as my main focus in college. I began to study Russian at UVA because Russia, as a political and cultural presence, has had a significant impact on the rest of the region and the world.”

While Gasser is not yet committing herself, she said careers in the military or in diplomacy are possible.

“Receiving this scholarship will allow me to study abroad in Poland for a full academic year,” she said.

“Receiving this award means I can continue studying Polish at a more advanced level. The scholarship offers a professional network to its recipients and access to a variety of career opportunities.”

Last year, Gasser took second-year Polish with Professor Dariusz Tołczyk of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures.

“She is a model student – very motivated, hard-working and dependable,” Tołczyk said. Tołczyk also said Katherine Gasser is very well-suited for the career she is considering in national security with a view toward American relations with Poland and Eastern Europe.

Anna Borovskaya-Ellis, an assistant professor in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures and Gasser's instructor of Russian

described her as an inquisitive student with an acute mind and phenomenal memory.

A graduate of the Oakcrest School, Gasser is a member of the Burke Society, a conservative philosophical and debating society, and the Slavic Student Association.

The Boren Scholarships were created by former U.S. Sen. David L. Boren, formerly the president of the University of Oklahoma.

Matt Kelly

Office of University Communications

Source: UVA Today, May 8, 2018
<https://news.virginia.edu/content/uva-students-win-prestigious-scholarships-study-language-culture-overseas>

Kate Gasser writes from Poland where she is currently participating in a one-year study abroad program at Jagiellonian University in Kraków, focusing entirely on Polish language, culture, and history:

My desire to continue to learn Polish propelled me to pursue study-abroad. Immersion gives unparalleled experience and practice with the language. I must apply what I learn in class to every-day situations and interactions. Additionally, I learn vocabulary and cultural practices that I might never encounter in a class. I am fortunate to spend most of my time in the oldest parts of Kraków—my dorm is only a fifteen-minute walk away from the main market square in the Old Town and my classroom windows open to Wawel Castle. My history professor will often mention places in the city related to the class material. Occasionally, his homework assignments are to go to these sites—something that is only possible here! Studying here offers an invaluable opportunity to learn the language and to familiarize myself with the culture.

Every day I spend here, I find so much joy and beauty. My professors are encouraging and enthusiastic, and my classmates are determined and kind. The friends I have made and the strangers I interact with are patient and generous. Besides the wonderful people, the country offers beautiful sights. I spend most of my time in Kraków, which offers endless opportunity to explore its plethora of churches and museums. I have also visited Wrocław, and plan to visit Gdańsk, Poznań, and Warsaw, among others. I know that even after nine months here, my exploration will not be complete and I will have to return to continue it. My time here is beyond what I ever could have expected, and I know it will never cease to surprise me.



Kate Gasser in front of the Mariacki Church at Kraków's Old Market Square



Kate's classroom windows in Kraków open to the Wawel Royal Castle.



The **Polish Student Association** is a new student group on grounds, aimed at providing fellowship and sharing Polish culture with the UVA community. With the twenty-three members it has attracted over the Fall 2018 semester, PSA is in the process of becoming an official student organization at UVA. In addition to growing membership, we work to engage more students with local Polish/Slavic cultural events. We have shared Polish food, and had Wigilia dishes for Thanksgiving potluck dinner. We are also planning to host Polish films. To date, we have had two general body meetings to compile necessary materials to apply for official status, and have gone on a group bonding hike. We are gearing up for an exciting semester in the spring!

Krystyna Cios (co-chair)



The first meeting of the Polish Student Association in September 2018.

From left to right: Matt Pieri, Amelia Peck, Cristina Fronea, Kuba Lipowski, Julia Harris, Smith Phillips, Krystyna Cios

Natalia Kulczycki, Kacper Olijewski, Owen Firstahl. Currently, the membership is 23 and growing

Halloween in Professor Edith Clowes's RUTR 2460 Introduction to Russian Culture and Civilization



L to R (back): John McHale, Haritha Nanduri, Katherine Martins, Lulu Wood, Catherine, Bradberry,

L to R (front): Lan Anh Do, Andre Briere, Andrew DeSantis

Congratulations to the Russian Language Team!

Tuesday, April 10, 2018

LAST LANGUAGE STANDING



LANGUAGE TEAMS BATTLE
TO SEE WHO CAN KEEP THEIR
LANGUAGE IN USE LONGEST!

TO PARTICIPATE, JUST SIGN
UP AND SHOW UP TO SPEAK
IN YOUR TARGET LANGUAGE
FOR 15+ MINUTES.

JOIN A TEAM AT
[TINYURL.COM/UVALASTLANGUAGE](https://tinyurl.com/uvalastlanguage)

10-4, APRIL 10
THE LANGUAGE
COMMONS

FOOD FOR ALL
PARTICIPANTS
PRIZES FOR
WINNING TEAMS

Congratulations to our Russian Language Team for winning the "Last Language Standing" competition. With Abby Hohn as team captain, we had a great turn out of over 90 Russian speakers. This is a great Accomplishment and Congratulations goes to all the students, faculty and supporters who participated.

RUSSIAN PLAY

For the final Russian Tea of the Fall 2018 semester, our UVA Russian students performed four short plays. The plays were based on Mikhail Zoshchenko's Soviet-era short stories: "The Galosh," "Pawning," "Family Happiness," and "The Lampshade." From the woes of bureaucratic red tape to the stereotypical associations of long lines and empty stores, each of the plays poked fun at a different aspect of Soviet life. The plays were a collaboration between the students of the Intermediate Russian Conversation class and several Second-Year Russian students--Thomas Brennan, Henry Carscadden, Trent Chinnaswamy, Aidan Comerford, Liam Daly, Will Donahoe, Ryan Everhart, Sean Groves, Dylan Jones, Yash Kalburgi, James Katz, Chris Kester, Jack Lever, Clara McCool, Liam Murphy, Emma Ross, Allie Schleifer, and Leyla Urushanova. They performed under the direction of Tierre Sanford. Thanks to all of their hard work, the Slavic Department put on one of its best plays to date.





The Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures proudly hosted the Spring 2018 “An Evening of Poetry.”

Over the course of five weeks, the participants diligently practiced the special performance by practicing Russian pronunciation, memorization, and acting with Valeria Provotorova. This event featured students from all Russian levels, including graduate students.

Special thank you to Abby Hohn, Jason Schultz, and Katherine Motsko for their contributions in creating this performance.

Participants

Host – Valeria Provotorova: “I loved you” by Alexander Pushkin

Opening – Jason Schultz: “The Prophet” by Alexander Pushkin

Victoria Herrera: “Yes, it’s settled...” by Sergei Yesenin

James Davis: “A Vision” by Fyodor Tyutchev

Anastasiya Goddard and Jack Lever: “Silentium!” by Fyodor Tyutchev

Christopher Kester: “Thunderstorm, Instantaneous Forever” by Boris Pasternak

Dylan Jones: “Little Bird” by Alexander Pushkin

Andrew DeSantis: “Prologue” from *Requiem* by Anna Akhmatova

Cameron Bertron: “In Memoriam, July 19, 1914” by Anna Akhmatova

Alexandra Bernosky: “Execution” by Vladimir Nabokov

James Katz: “Snow” by Nikolai Nekrasov

Aidan Comerford: “The Acrobat” by Vladislav Khodasevich

Diana Renelt: “On a Bicycle” by Yevgeny Yevtushenko

Devon Parikh: “In Two Years” by Joseph Brodsky

Thomas Brennan: “Awakening” by Alexander Pushkin

Yash Kalburgi: “Among the Worlds” by Innokenty Annensky

Peter Fant: “Foreseeing you...” by Alexander Blok

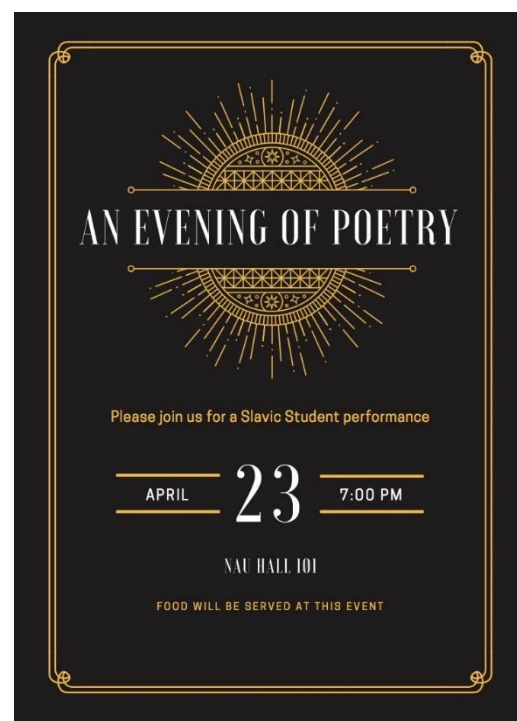
Callie Collins: “I neared my bliss...” by Alexander Blok

John McHale: “To....” By Alexander Pushkin

Ila Kimata and Valentina Zabrovskaya: “Stranger” by Alexander Blok

Jessica Quisenberry: “A Kiss on the Forehead” by Marina Tsvetaeva

Closing – Sarah Guzik: “Somewhere there is a simple life...” by Anna Akhmatova



The Shea House provides a language immersion environment to enhance students' linguistic and cultural competence in their target language and culture by offering quality programming with meaningful activities. Russian pod has been a proud member of Shea for the last three years. In the 2018-2019 academic year we have doubled in size with nine students from all levels of Russian. We host events throughout the year to foster a sense of Slavic community with the rest of Russian learners. For more information about the Russian pod, please visit <http://shea.virginia.edu/russian>.



Shea residents 2017-2018: LA Valeria Provotorova, Diana Renelt, Ila Kimata, Kate Motsko, and Sarah Guzik



Shea House 2018-2019 residents playing monopoly in Russian

Sarah Guzik, Diana Renelt, Roman Bohuk, Tadd Luhan, Natalia Kulczycki, Jess Sommerville, Taylor Williams, and Baylor Towne



Residents play a game testing their art and culture knowledge

Living in Shea has helped me grow my Russian vocabulary and given me the unique opportunity to practice speaking with students who have more experience with the language. – Taylor Williams

As a second-year shea resident, I've enjoyed getting to know so many great new people, and I think that our collective Russian skills have improved tremendously. – Ila Kimata

I joined Shea House to increase my proficiency in Russian, especially my speaking skills. Now starting my second semester, I am quite pleased at my progress, and have additionally greatly enjoyed the various cultural activities we've participated in, including games, movies, and events. – Tadd Luhan

Life in Shea tends to be a busy one! Students keep up with courses, homework, various organizations, and Shea events. Residents attend daily dinners, weekly language hours, and international events. The residents also organize large semester events for other students to attend. Here are some of the more memorable events at Shea...



Shea House has been a positive social experience for me and a great way to maintain my Russian speaking skills. – Diana Renelt

Russian pod makes Medovik cake for the Shea International Dessert Night



My Russian speaking abilities would not have improved as exponentially as they have had I not lived in Shea House this year. I have had so much exposure to culture, and it has brought me closer to people who live here. – Natalia Kulczycki



*Scrabble night!
Students play charades (Krokodil)*



Shea gave me an opportunity to practice and improve my verbal skills in an immersive environment, which can be difficult to find in regular language classes. I met new friends both inside and outside my language group and learned a lot about the traditions and foods of other cultures. Fun weekly language hours and dinners were the highlights of my busy days as a student. The language house gave me once-in-a-lifetime experience that will be hard to forget. – Roman Bohuk

Winter Festival in Shea

After last year's Maslenitsa success, the residents of Shea House decided to host a winter celebration. The residents cooked various Slavic dishes, prepared an arts and crafts table, and decorated the dining area. Students learning Russian were able to enjoy Russian music and experience traditions associated with New Year's. Those who performed a poem also received a special prize from Ded Moroz and Snegurochka!



NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS in 2018

Abigail Black graduated from UVA in spring 2018 with a major in Russian Language and Literature. She is completing a 4+1 MA in Contemporary Russian Studies this year and hopes to commission in the US Navy in 2019.

Anna Gomboeva comes to the PhD program in Slavic Languages and Literatures from Novosibirsk via the University of North Dakota where she earned an MA in English. At the President's Academy in Novosibirsk she earned a gold medal for her diploma research on "The Distinctive Situation of LGBTs in Russia and the World" (Особенности положения ЛГБТ в России и в мире).

Melissa Ivanco graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point with a triple major in Russian, International Relations, and Nuclear Engineering. She has served in Kuwait as a Captain in the US Army and is currently on a two-year leave to complete her MA in Slavic Languages and Literatures. In her spare time Melissa has written and published a number of novels.

Aaron Thompson graduated summa cum laude from the University of Arizona in Russian with a second major in Anthropology. His BA thesis dealt with the impact of the Slavophile thinkers Khomiakov and Kireevsky on the poetry of Fedor Tiutchev. After first teaching English as a second language in Almaty, Kazakhstan and then serving as his company's educational director, Aaron has entered the PhD program in Slavic Languages and Literatures.



Sean Murray, Melissa Ivanco, Anna Gomboeva, Sarah McEleney, Aaron Thompson



FAKE NEWS IS NOTHING NEW

Researchers use data science to compare Soviet-era and modern U.S. writing to detect 'post-truth' journalism

The 2016 Oxford Dictionary word of the year was 'post-truth,' a notion meaning that the public is more greatly influenced by emotional appeals rather than objective facts.

While web-based media has increased the circulation and reach of fake news, the spreading of 'alternative facts' in an effort to assert political influence is not a new concept.

The same lack of traditional journalism standards that the United States saw during the last Presidential election happened in the Soviet Union, although in a vastly different context. State-sanctioned, official sources released content boasting about non-existent successful production and government programs.

In recent years, websites like Facebook and Google have taken efforts to detect fake news, but the extent to which they are effective is questionable. Presidential Fellows in Data Science **Sarah McEleney** and **Alex Maxwell** are investigating how well machine learning and other data science approaches work in detecting fake news in the ideologically distinct environments of the United States and the Soviet-era USSR.

Maxwell and McEleney worked over the course of the 2017-18 academic year fellowship to develop a code to identify false information and apply it to a large dataset of deceptive journalistic work from the U.S. and the USSR, selecting samples of fake news from both contexts.

Their ultimate goal is to see if there is a difference in how well the code works. Will dated fake news from the USSR be easier to detect, or will the code have more success finding false information in contemporary U.S. sources?

After conducting this data analysis on U.S. versus USSR fake news, the researchers plan to investigate how underground, citizen-created groups sought to undermine Soviet fake news. Little research has been done that considers these groups and their impact on political discourse and public understanding. Maxwell and McEleney hope to identify these trends through linguistic data analysis.

The researchers hope that their findings will help to improve data science-based fake news detection and understanding across various cultural contexts.

Source: UVA Data Science Institute
[<https://dsi.virginia.edu/projects/fake-news-nothing-new>]



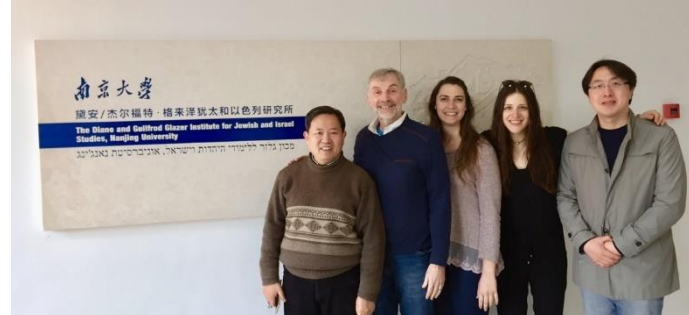
Prof. Edith Clowes, Sarah McEleney, Alex Maxwell, Prof. Dariusz Tolczyk

Tierre Sanford

My 2016-2017 academic year ended with one of the most exciting pieces of news a PhD candidate can receive: I passed my comprehensive examinations and had achieved ABD status. I then had a summer to recover from all the exams before beginning the process of writing and defending my dissertation prospectus. After what felt like the shortest summer break to date, I began a new semester, teaching a course on Yiddish literature while writing my prospectus and searching for memoirs and other literary accounts of life in the Minsk ghetto. I found that most of the memoirs on the Minsk ghetto were Russian-language books, only printed in very small quantities, and only found in scattered locations around the globe. I determined that the two biggest repositories of such accounts were located in Holocaust Museum archives in Israel and the United States. It was this series of events that helped determine how I would spend my time abroad the following semester.

After defending my prospectus, I spent the Spring 2018 semester abroad, conducting research and attending conferences around the world. I was able to travel to four different countries and to meet scholars from around the globe during this time. Before I expound further on my experiences, I'd like to thank the Institute of Humanities and Global Cultures, the Center for Global Inquiry and Innovation, and the Slavic and Jewish Studies Departments for their generous contributions to my research. Without their generous financial contributions, I could not have found many of the rare sources that I am studying for my dissertation today.

In January 2018—after a short jaunt for some purely recreational sight-seeing and delicious food in Barcelona—I traveled to Jerusalem, Israel. There I spent the first two months of my time abroad conducting research in the archives at the largest Holocaust Museum in the world, Yad Vashem. During my first two months in Israel, I collected over twenty memoirs written by Holocaust survivors and their children on life in the Minsk ghetto. I spent days scouring the archives and got to know many of the librarians there very well. I learned a few words of Hebrew, tried my best to make falafel, saw major historical sites within Jerusalem proper, and even traveled to areas outside the city such as Bethlehem and Herodium. Mainly though, I became very



familiar with the archives and archivists at Yad Vashem, learning more and more about the Minsk ghetto and its literature.

In March a delegation of nine UVA faculty and graduate students from the Jewish Studies Program had the opportunity to attend The Second International Roundtable Conference on Jewish Studies in China at Gongshang University. I presented a paper on my research findings from my time at Yad Vashem entitled, “One Month in Minsk: Memoirs of the Invasion of Belarus and the Formation of the Minsk Ghetto.” It was a truly rewarding experience to travel to China and to be integrally involved in ideas of cultural exchange. While many Chinese scholars of Jewish Studies were familiar with the Holocaust, they were less familiar with the events that took place in the Soviet Union. I was able to share translated passages from the literature on the Minsk ghetto, which was often their first exposure to such material. The Chinese scholars were very receptive to the material I shared, asking numerous questions and even extending an

invitation for me to go teach at their university in China someday. The experience culminated in a trip to Nanjing, China, where Professor Xu Xin, the founder of Jewish Studies in China, gave a few of us a tour of Nanjing University and the Nanjing Massacre Museum, which shares many design elements with Holocaust museums such as Yad Vashem and The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM).

I spent the next few months in Washington DC, conducting research at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum before taking my final trip to Jerusalem. I was awarded an international grant by the Moshe Mirilashvili Center for Research on the Holocaust in the Soviet Union at Yad Vashem and the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. From June 3 – 7, 2018, I attended the conference “Ego-Documents in the Soviet Sphere on the Holocaust: Revealing Personal Voices.” The other participants and I formed a group of young scholars comprised of doctoral candidates and new professors from around the world, who came together and discussed our research on personal sources on the Holocaust. I was able to present a paper entitled “Documentation,

Publication, and Transmission: The Written Word as Resistance in Memoirs of the Minsk Ghetto.” After discussing memoirs written by survivors of the Minsk ghetto, I had the good fortune and privilege of being introduced to a Minsk ghetto survivor himself.

Grigorii El’per was a young boy living in Minsk when the Nazis invaded the city in June 1941. Years later, when I interviewed him in June 2018, he was a great-grandfather living in Jerusalem and volunteering at Yad Vashem. His story is a remarkable one: smuggled from the Minsk ghetto after violent pogroms, he lived with a Belarusian woman on the outskirts of Minsk. Forbidden from speaking to locals for his own safety, his only friend was a goat he would walk in the woods outside his home. After almost a year outside the ghetto, two Nazi soldiers occupied the home he was living in. El’per continued his silence, living under the same roof as the Nazis for a few months until the Germans left Minsk. I consider hearing El’per’s story in person, witnessing to his bravery, and observing his desire to contribute to Holocaust remembrance and education to be one of the highlights of my life. It is his voice and the voice of so many others that I hope to share as I continue to work on my dissertation.



Valeria Provotorova is proud to say she had a very successful year. She continued to serve as the Language Assistant in Shea House and the Assistant for the Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies. In the spring of 2018, Valeria passed her PhD comprehensive exams and presented at the 2018 Slavic Forum. She spent her summer in Russia researching in archives and libraries for her dissertation. In the Fall, Valeria completed her prospectus and presented at the Central Slavic Conference with the paper ““The Unheard Nightingale: The Journey of Identity of the Poetess in Nineteenth Century Russian Literature.”



Valeria Provotorova in Moscow, Russia

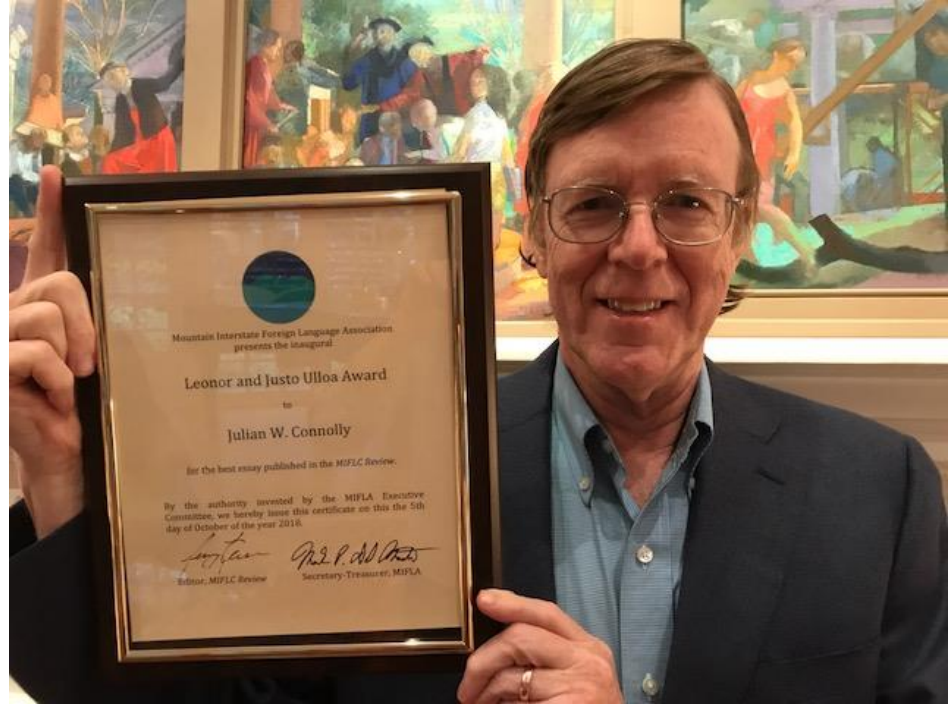
In the spring 2018, **Sasha Bernosky** presented a paper on migrant literature at UVA graduate conference. In the summer, she took a 7-week course in Ukrainian for reading knowledge at Harvard University and explored the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute's archival holdings. She sought materials that showed how Ukrainians in diaspora talked to and talked about Ukrainians who remained in Ukraine.

Sasha Bernosky in Harvard



Prof. Julian Connolly was awarded the Leonor and Justo Ulloa Award for the best essay published in the *MIFLC Review* in 2018. The essay was entitled “From *The Brothers Karamazov* to *The Brothers K*: Dostoevsky’s Last Novel and Modern American Fiction.” In May 2018, he participated in an international symposium entitled “Vladimir Nabokov et la Traduction” held in Lille, France. The title of the paper he presented was “Nabokov’s Translations of Lermontov’s Poetry: The ‘Demon’ Tamed.”

In the summer of 2018, **Katia Dianina** was fortunate to undertake a long-anticipated research trip to Russia and Finland. In pursuit of her new project on the recent religious revival in Russia, she visited 333 churches and monasteries (if this is an exaggeration, it is only a slight one). St. Petersburg, Moscow, Pskov, Novgorod, and everything in-between—the number of restored and new churches that once again adorn the Russian landscape is incredible. The visit to New Valaam in Finland, a remote monastery established by the Valaam monks when they were forced to flee from Russia, crowned this summer religious adventure. Incidentally, there are only two working monasteries in Finland, both of them Russian Orthodox.



Professor Connolly receives the Leonor and Justo Ulloa Award.

Professor Mark Elson directed the 2018 Russian Summer Language Institute. He writes, *We had a successful 37th summer with 11 participants. Once again we proved that two years of Russian (the contents of 1010-2020) can be covered in 8 weeks (meeting 7.5 hours daily). Two of the three UVA participants are now in 3010 and doing well, and one of the two is in 5030. The third decided not to continue although she did very well in the program. I was assisted, for the second time, by Abigail Hohn and Tierre Sanford, both of whom did a splendid job. Tierre deserves special mention for directing the cultural component of the program: two in-class lunches, a Russian Supper, the snack-fest occurring at the middle of the summer, and graduation, as well as the T-shirts and sundry other things (e.g., shopping, cooking, movies), requiring in the aggregate, a great deal of time. Our success is always the result of a joint effort, and the TAs who assist me play a crucial role.*

Prof. Dariusz Tołczyk worked on a book, *Blissful Blindness: Soviet Crimes Under Western Eyes*, while also preparing a revised Polish version of his book *See No Evil: Literary Cover-Ups and Discoveries of the Soviet Camp Experience* (Yale, 1999). At the ASEES Convention in Boston (December 2018), he gave a talk, "Se questo e un uomo... Gustaw Herling and the Question of Human Nature in the Gulag." During his trip to Poland, he found an interesting addendum to Professor Katia Dianina's research on Russian Orthodox churches. In the 15th-century Poland, at the time of the first union between the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, a few very unusual Catholic churches were built in Poland in the gothic style and painted inside with Byzantine/Ruthenian frescos. See the photo of the Holy Trinity Chapel in Lublin (1416) below.



Dariusz Tołczyk in the Renaissance city of Zamość



For Professor **Edith Clowes** 2018 was a busy year with lots of adventures. In January, she was invited to the University of London to give a special hour talk on her recent multi-authored book, *Area Studies in the Global Age* (edited with S. J. Bromberg, 2016), to a group of British area studies leaders—mainly in European Studies and American Studies. The conference had a lovely title, for those of us bent on defending the humanities: “Recovering the Humanities for Political Science and Area Studies.” Although area studies still seem to be under a cloud, this book is gradually getting attention. Professor Clowes hopes that when area studies eventually gain new appreciation, perhaps now as part of global studies, the book will serve as a reader in introductory courses across the spectrum of world areas.

In October Professor Clowes went to Batumi, Georgia, on the stunningly beautiful Black Sea coast. Her job was to give a keynote speech at a conference on “Eastern Europe as a Multi-Cultural Space” on: “Finding Common Ground in the Black Sea: The Imagined Geography of the Black Sea among Regional Writers.”

The conference offered an opportunity to explore an imagined geography that has long interested her—how writers from countries around the Black Sea view their shared sea and its possibilities for cultural exchange. This is a conversation that younger writers and public intellectuals from various countries on the Black Sea littoral have been invoking for quite a while but which, because of seemingly endless conflict of one sort or another, is very long in coming.

A very high point of this trip was meeting up with UVA SLL alumnae, Samantha Guthrie (BA, 2016) and Cameron Tarry (BA, 2018). Samantha gave a wonderful talk at the conference on integration of minorities in Georgia. Cameron is teaching English in the Georgian town of Kutaisi and is learning basic Georgian along the way.

On a personal note, this summer Professor Clowes checked off a box on her existential to-do list. She and her husband enjoyed a week in early July at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships. It was a dream come true.

A Georgian reunion.
Left to right: Samantha
Guthrie, Edith Clowes,
Cameron Tarry



DISSECTING 'DRACULA': A CHAT WITH VAMPIRE EXPERT STANLEY STEPANIC

The University of Virginia offers a wildly popular course called "Dracula." Coming out of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, the course has appeared on student-generated lists of the top classes that 'Hoos should take before they graduate. Course Hero, an educational technology company, even named Stanley Stepanic, who teaches "Dracula," a master educator.

With Halloween nearly upon us, UVA Today caught up with Stepanic for a fun Facebook Live event. He discussed his course, his teaching style and why Dracula is important, and even offered some spooky Dracula movie suggestions.

Over half of Stepanic's course covers Slavic folklore. "Basically, the character Dracula is used as a vehicle to really understand human experience," he said.

We asked Stepanic to share the top 10 things people should know about "Dracula," Bram Stoker's famous 1897 Gothic horror novel. Here is his list.

1. Bram Stoker deleted about three chapters at the start of the novel to save space, streamline the story and reduce the cost of printing. The original notes Stoker left behind indicate he removed characters and a different structure, including a trip



Stanley Stepanic has been teaching "Dracula" for more than 10 years. Students line up to take the popular class. (Photos by Sanjay Suchak, University Communications) October 29, 2018

through a Munich "Dead House," or morgue, and a paranormal researcher.

2. The primary remains we have of this missing section of the novel is a short story published by Stoker's widow, Florence. It appeared for the first time in a 1914 short story collection, "Dracula's Guest and Other Weird Stories."

3. The Dracula character was inspired by several things, but in literature the most important is arguably "Carmilla," the most important tale of a female vampire ever written. Stoker knew the author and worked for him as a drama critic. Stoker also took ideas from other works of vampire literature, including "The Mysterious Stranger." This work has

long been attributed to an anonymous author since it first appeared in English in 1854, but in actuality it was simply a translation of the German tale "Der Fremde" ("The Stranger"), first published in 1847 by Karl Adolf von Wachsmann.

4. The original title of the novel was not "Dracula," but actually "The Un-Dead." Stoker considered at least two other titles, "The Dead Un-Dead" and "Dracula or the Un-Dead." He settled on "Dracula" roughly a week before publication.

5. Stoker's character Count Dracula was not called Dracula at all originally. In Stoker's notes, he indicated at one point simply "Count _____," with a blank as written here, and then eventually began to use the uninspired name "Count Wampyr,"

which he appears to have taken from the Serbian.

6. Count Dracula was not inspired by a real historical figure, Vlad the Impaler, as many people believe. Stoker came across Vlad III Dracula while researching a book about the region of Romania during a visit to Whitby, England. In the text of this book the name Dracula appears three times, and one of them is actually referencing another person. The history the character Count Dracula presents in the novel is actually a conglomeration of ideas Stoker pieced together, some plagiarized from earlier works.

7. Though Stoker is well-known today, he was not in his own day. He was a minor writer at best, and made almost nothing off “Dracula” – roughly a little more than \$3,000, adjusting for inflation in 2018 dollars, hardly a salary one could live off of. That’s not surprising, considering writing was not even his primary job; he was foremost a theater manager.

8. The first foreign-language edition of “Dracula” was actually published in Icelandic in 1901, a curious choice. Even today, scholars aren’t certain of Stoker’s relationship to the translator, who used Stoker’s original preface which connected Dracula to Jack the Ripper, and even rewrote significant parts of the novel. It even has a

different title: “The Powers of Darkness” would be the translation of it in English. In essence, it is a different book.

9. Stoker was primarily remembered for managing the Lyceum Theater in his day, and his biography about his employer, Henry Irving, was praised as his most important contribution to literature. This was his “Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving” (1906).

10. Were it not for the copyright battle against “Nosferatu,” a 1922 German film that bootlegged the plot of “Dracula,” Stoker’s novel may never have become famous.

The legal attention brought by Florence Stoker, and the subsequent stage versions of “Dracula” that made it to film eventually, led it on the path to fame. It is largely adaptations of “Dracula” that made it famous, not the novel itself.

Jane Kelly

University News Associate Office of University Communications

Source: UVAToday, October 29, 2018



Stanley Stepanic's desk in New Cabell Hall features all sorts of vampire kitsch.

Reed Johnson received his Ph.D. in May 2018. He is now teaching at Harvard University. Here is a letter from him:

Greetings from Boston! I'm writing this while sitting at my window and looking out onto a maple tree, all but a handful of its orange leaves now gone. Winter, as they say in *Game of Thrones*, is coming. And while my time at the University of Virginia prepared me for many things—close-reading thorny Russian texts, writing extended academic arguments, teaching smart undergraduate students—it didn't quite prepare me for twilight at 4PM and snow on the ground in April. And yet I'm feeling very glad to be here.

Here, in my case, means Harvard University, where I accepted a position in the writing program and am now teaching composition to first-year students. Not just composition, I should say: One of the strong points of this program is how it gives its instructors—or preceptors, as they call them here—the latitude to teach subjects in our area of expertise or interest, while providing us a well-established structure for imparting the principles of academic writing.

Arriving here this summer, I had only a vague notion of what exactly I'd be teaching come September. I knew I wanted to cover material related to my background in Slavic, but also to design a course that might appeal to students who might not necessarily be



future scholars of Russian literature. Luckily, I didn't need to go further than the TV screen to see the recent surge of popular interest in Russia, along with a cottage industry of punditry around the allegations of interference in recent elections. Here, I thought, was a subject students could really dig into. Starting with an exploration of the "meme warfare" of the troll factory [*fabrika trollei*] in St. Petersburg, I broadened the topic to include historical contexts and theory around these sorts of influence campaigns. In short, I designed my course around the general topic of propaganda.

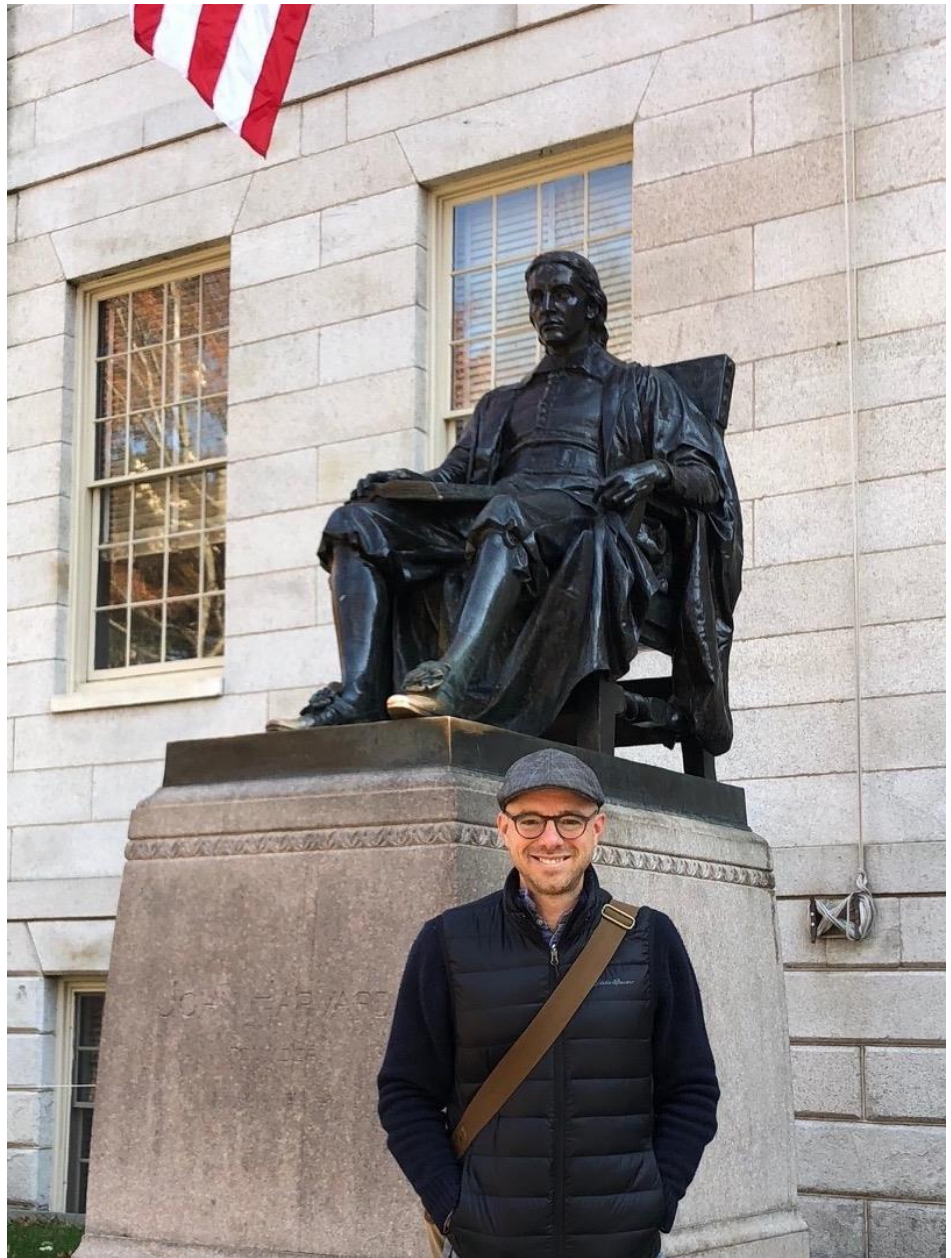
For me, one of the best things about this topic was that it allows me to indulge in my fascination with old Soviet political posters and cinematic agitprop, such as the groundbreaking montage techniques of Soviet

masters like Eisenstein, alongside an exploration of the narrative tools of Soviet and American disinformation campaigns during the Cold War. At the same time, I was confident that these historical cases could be linked to contemporary forms of propaganda. Thus, my students have been able to take the interpretive tools that they've honed in class on propaganda posters from the First and Second World Wars and apply them in written analyses of the text and visuals of social-media memes circulated by Russia's troll factory, as we've done in our first unit. The fundamental techniques of this sort of persuasion, it turns out, are not all that different today.

Which is not to say that new technologies haven't supercharged these old propaganda techniques. Now, in place of the top-down, one-way messaging of governments,

ordinary people have become both the consumers *and* distributors (often unwitting) of propaganda on social media. In class, much of our discussion centers on this intersection of new technologies and age-old techniques of persuasion. This focus on contemporary issues brings with it a host of challenges. I often feel like my course content is shifting week-to-week or even day-to-day as we address new developments in information warfare. But on the positive side, I feel like we are using academic knowledge to make better sense of the changing world around us, a goal that's not always easy to achieve in our rarified academic endeavor. And if this world outside our walls sometimes disturbs you (as it often does me), then it feels positively cathartic to work through current events with two sections of bright students every Tuesday and Thursday.

Even as we discuss these up-to-the-minute concerns, though, my hope is that we're also working on more universally applicable skills, the timeless alongside the timely. Lately, I've been thinking a lot about how analyzing the rhetoric of propaganda is useful for a study of the rhetoric of essay writing. As we look at various sorts of manipulative appeals, we're lead naturally to an examination of things like source credibility, impartiality, and logical reasoning—in other words, exactly the sort of broader concerns that I'd like students to consider in this writing course. And if this coursework makes them more resistant to psychological manipulations and divisive rhetoric—whether this rhetoric comes from inside Moscow's Garden Ring or our very own Beltway—then that is surely for the benefit of us all.



Reed Johnson and John Harvard

Cameron Tarry (BA 2018 in Slavic and History, recipient of the 2018 Thomas Hammond Award in Russian Studies and a member of Honors Societies *Dobro Slovo* and Phi Beta Kappa) writes from Georgia:

"გამარჯობა! For two months now, I have been working as an English Teaching Assistant at Akaki Tsereteli State University in Kutaisi, Georgia, as part of a Fulbright grant. I spend twenty hours a week with the English Philology Department at the university leading discussion sections. Outside of the university, I take Georgian lessons, lead a weekly conversation club, and teach SAT/TOEFL prep classes in the

community. On weekends I've made efforts to travel and see as much of Georgia as possible; for example, this past weekend I visited Gori, Joseph Stalin's hometown in Eastern Georgia.

I feel incredibly lucky to have received such a great Fulbright placement. Not only is my work fulfilling, but Kutaisi has thus far been a wonderful place to live. The food in Georgia is some of the best I've ever had -- I mean, just Google "khachapuri" -- and the overwhelming hospitality of my colleagues at the university has made me feel very comfortable. I have also already made a few Georgian friends; just last week I got to debate the differences between American and British films with my

friend Ana while sampling a few of Georgia's 400-odd wine types! My only real challenge so far is that it's difficult to organize and lead events while adjusting to the nuances of a culture different from my own. I feel fortunate, though, that this challenge is one of adjustment rather than a problem with the Fulbright or my placement.

In the spring I plan to increase my responsibilities at the university by directing an American play. Until then, however, I will continue to immerse myself in Georgian language and culture, hopefully over more wine and khachapuri."



Cameron Tarry at Motsameta Monastery, outside of Kutaisi, Georgia.

Katya Jordan (PhD 2014), an Assistant Professor of Russian at Brigham Young University, has successfully passed her initial review. Last spring, she received a Women's Research Initiative grant that allowed her to spend five weeks in Moscow, researching 19th-c. women's fashion and literary magazines. In the fall of 2018, she had a radio debut. She appeared on two programs aired by BYU Radio: *The Apple Seed*, devoted to Sergei Prokofiev's symphonic fairy tale "Peter and the Wolf," and *Special Collections*, where she talked about Soviet perceptions of the U.S.A. during the Cold War.



Katya Jordan

(December 2018) in Applied Linguistics with a dissertation on Vygotskian Sociocultural Theory and Language learning in University-level science courses. Congratulations!

Holly Myers (MA 2009) was awarded a PhD in Slavic Languages from Columbia University in October 2018. She writes, *My dissertation is entitled "Telling and Retelling a War Story: Svetlana Alexievich and Alexander Prokhanov on the Soviet-Afghan War." I examine the literary techniques and strategies that Alexievich and Prokhanov have employed in articulating different literary narratives of the Soviet-Afghan War (1979–1989). In my study of the substantial revisions that each writer made to their Soviet-Afghan War stories from the 1980s into the twenty-first century, I demonstrate how the literary representations of a military conflict in recent Soviet history reflect the increasing polarization of political and social realities facing authors and readers in the post-Soviet states of Russia and Belarus. I conclude that the relationship between implied author*

and implied reader in these literary texts becomes a political statement about the relationship between the state and the citizen. Thus, the revisions that Alexievich and Prokhanov make to their Soviet-Afghan War stories entail not only aesthetic consideration but political and ethical implications, as well. Last year I published an article on Svetlana Alexievich's changing narrative of the Soviet-Afghan War in the Canadian Slavonic Papers' special issue on this author. (The editor just told me this weekend at ASEES that it's the most-downloaded article in the journal's history!) This semester I began a new job as a Term Assistant Professor in the Slavic Department at Barnard College. I'm working to revise my dissertation into a book, as well as embarking on a new research project: the birth of "documentary literature" as a new genre in post-war Soviet culture. I miss beautiful Charlottesville! And I'd love to meet up with any UVA Slavic Department folks coming through New York City.

New contact
info: hmyers@barnard.edu

Seth L. King was originally in the PhD program in Slavic in the cohort of 2010. He mastered out and received a Fulbright Fellowship to Russia where he studied Russia's relationship to nature and environmental science. In 2013, he matriculated to Penn State University and has just received his PhD



Holly Myers



Peter Shinkle (BA, Russian Language and Literature, 1983)

worked for 19 years as a reporter at various news organizations, including most recently the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. He covered the federal court system, and also wrote investigative stories on subjects ranging from improper disposal of radioactive waste to contamination spread by a lead mining company. His new book, **IKE'S MYSTERY MAN: The Secret Lives of Robert Cutler** (Steerforth Press | December 4, 2018 | \$ 29.95 hardcover) explores the never-before-told story of Robert Cutler, a retired general who was President Eisenhower's secretive right-hand man and the nation's first National Security Advisor. More than a biography of a closeted gay man in public life, the book is a reassessment of the Cold War inner-workings of the Eisenhower White House and Ike's closeness to and dependence on Cutler. **IKE'S MYSTERY MAN** provides a detailed, personal

account of the feelings of a high-ranking official who was deeply involved in nuclear war strategy during the Cold War era as well as never-before-published material about the CIA-led coup in Iran in 1953 and Cutler's attempt to change U.S. nuclear strategy in 1958. The book includes a fairly extensive discussion of Skip Koons, a Russian-speaking US intelligence officer in the 1940s and 1950s, the actions of Soviet armed forces in Manchuria, and Radio Liberty.



A pioneer of the new soul/southern cuisine movement, **Tanya Holland (BA, Russian Language and Literature, 1987)** is chef/owner of Brown Sugar Kitchen in Oakland, California. She is the author of *New Soul Cooking: Updating a Cuisine Rich in Flavor and Tradition* (Stewart, Tabori and Chang, 2003) and *The Brown Sugar Kitchen Cookbook* (Chronicle Books, 2014). In addition to her BA in Russian, she holds a Grand Diplôme

from La Varenne École de Cuisine in Burgundy, France.

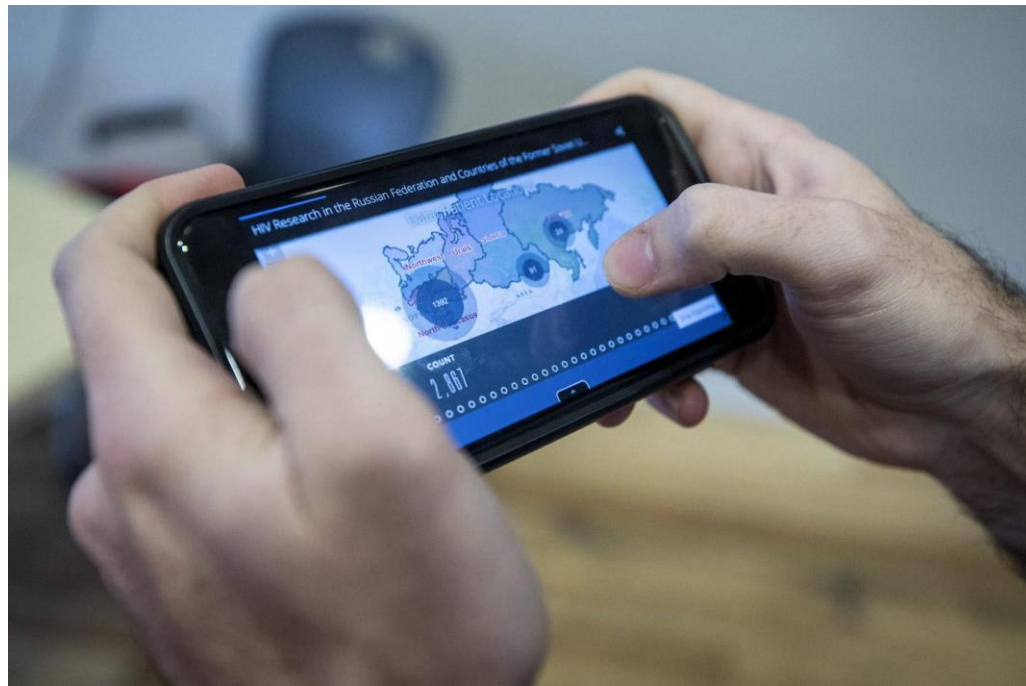
In her early career, Tanya Holland received rave reviews as the executive chef of the Delux Café in Boston and The Victory Kitchen in Brooklyn, New York. She was on the opening staff of Bobby Flay's Mesa Grill. It was here that her desire to elevate soul food – the same way that Flay was redefining Southwestern cuisine – was born. In 2001 she headed for warmer California climates, where she garnered stellar reviews in her starring role as creative director at Le Théâtre in Berkeley, California. This led to the opening of the now-famed soul food eatery Brown Sugar Kitchen in Oakland, California (2008).

Tanya Holland is an established food writer. She has contributed to *The Huffington Post*, *Food & Wine*, *Signature Bride* and *Wine Enthusiast* magazines and has been featured in articles in the *Wall Street Journal*, *Savoy*, *Travel & Leisure*, *Sunset*, and *O* magazine. She currently sits on the chef's council for the Center for Culinary Development in San Francisco. In 2010, she was inducted as a member of the San Francisco Bay Area chapter of the prestigious Les Dames d'Escoffier.

More about Tanya Holland at:
<http://tanyaholland.com/>
<http://brownsugarkitchen.com/>

[Quoted from *Heritage Harvest Festival at Monticello*,
<http://www.heritageharvestfestival.com/speakers/tanya-holland/>

Art Kulatti (BA 2015) is currently in his 3rd year at UVA School of Medicine intending to go into pediatrics. He writes that the lessons he learned from Janusz Korczak and Marek Edelman (physicians and heroic figures from the Holocaust, discussed in Professor Dariusz Tolczyk's course, *Facing Evil in the Twentieth Century*) "stay with him daily." Last year/Summer of 2017 he has been involved in a research project through the UVA Department of Global Health for the US Department of State. The project focused on a systematic review of HIV and AIDS research coming from or focusing on Russia and the Former Soviet Union countries. See the web map that was created as a result:



A project based in the UVA School of Medicine will help Russian and Eastern European researchers and policymakers get a handle on their growing HIV epidemic. (Photos by Sanjay Suchak, University Communications)

TO RUSSIA WITH LOVE: UVA RESEARCH TEAM CREATES ONE-OF-A-KIND DATABASE

With the U.S. State Department seeking its assistance, the pressure was on a team of University of Virginia researchers to complete a one-of-a-kind project that could help save lives – and potentially improve relations between the U.S. and Russia.

After combing through more than 8,000 scientific articles, the team – led by Dr. Scott Heysell, an associate professor of medicine for infectious diseases and international health – has put the finishing touches on what they believe is the only geo-located database of HIV research conducted in

Russia and former Soviet Union countries.

The nearly yearlong project will help scientists and public policymakers in Russia and other Eastern European countries shed light on why Russia is one of the few places in the world with a rising number of HIV infections.

The project, part of the U.S. Department of State's "Diplomacy Lab" program, was done at the request of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow and funded, in part, by UVA's Center for Global Health and Center for Global Inquiry and Innovation.

The researchers hope that the database, which encompasses scientific literature from 1991 to 2016, can show trends in research that will help scientists and policymakers develop new strategies for the treatment and prevention of HIV, as well as associated diseases and infections. And if it can help international relations in the process, well, all the better.

"I think these small acts of diplomacy can have a real extended reach," Heysell said.

Using a number of existing databases, Heysell's team analyzed research abstracts and articles,



At the behest of the State Department, the UVA team built a database that tracks Russian and Eastern European HIV research by time, location and medical field.

tagging them by field and mapping their geographical location.

The result is an interactive web application, which synthesizes research from Russia and former Soviet Union countries, corresponding it to the geographic area in which it occurred.

Being able to pinpoint the precise location of research allows policymakers to see what is happening at both the national and local level. “Because the country is so large and because the research is so diverse, I think this is a very powerful tool,” Heysell said.

Heysell’s team included Center of Global Health Director Dr. Rebecca Dillingham; Dr. Megan Gray and Dr.

Galina Lyles, who are both fellows in training at the UVA Medical Center; project manager Serhiy Vitko; second-year medical students Herman Pfaeffle and Art Kulatti; and Christian McMillen, associate chair of UVA’s Corcoran Department of History.

“I think it’s a really great tool,” Gray said, “because if you are looking for a very specific topic, it makes it easier to find the papers that you want to look through. This might narrow the field on certain topics that your own literature review might not catch.”

The database includes abstracts and hyperlinks to full articles, a map of the location of researchers involved in Russian HIV efforts around the globe and a timeline showing the progression of research. “There’s not

another place that we know of that has linked the research to geo-mapping,” Heysell said.

The other members of Heysell’s team were Drew Macqueen and Chris Gist of the UVA Library Scholars’ Lab; graduate student Faith Musvipwa; and undergraduate students Elizabeth Gasteiger, Paige Karp, Elizabeth Mangin, Diana Renalt and Alena Titova.

Heysell had previously collaborated with a team in Irkutsk, Russia headed by Oleg Ogarakov that researched HIV-related tuberculosis. “That team opened our eyes to the possible research gaps in HIV in Russia,” Heysell said, “so when the opportunity from the Diplomacy Lab came, we were already primed with the topics that we wanted to investigate and tag as priorities.”

Gray said pulling all the data together was, at first, a daunting task.

“We had to figure out what we needed to search for in these huge databases,” she said. “Then once we set the search terms, we had to sift through thousands of articles and read a few paragraphs from each article and pick out what subjects that article covers. That translated into the tags that would be on the website. The process took awhile.”

During labs, team members pored over spreadsheets. With the

knowledge that a single keystroke could throw everything out of whack, attention to detail was paramount.

“It had to be systematic,” Gray said. “If it wasn’t, it was just a mess and we couldn’t actually translate it.”

In essence, the team has created a one-stop shop to locate all the research completed over a 25-year span.

In October, the team traveled to Irkutsk and showed the database to public officials. The team also recently presented it to the State Department via conference call. Heysell said officials expressed their gratitude and showed an eagerness to put the database to use immediately.

“They were appropriately keen that our work is a way to have mutually beneficial exchanges between the U.S. and Russia,” Heysell said. “I think this is a truly helpful way in which we’ve been able to collaborate.

“I would call this a relative bright spot in U.S. and Russian relations.”

Whitelaw Reid

*University News Associate
Office of
University Communications*

Source: UVA Today, January 3, 2018

[Article](#)



Dr. Scott Heysell, far right, and some of the members of his research team: from left, medical student Herman Pfaeffle, undergraduate student Alena Titova, Dr. Megan Gray and medical student Art Kulatti.



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