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By Appointment [Advanced] Tatiana Denisova, Benjamin Cohen
I meet Vanya on a Thursday night, at a Couchsurfing event at a bar in St. Petersburg. At some point, he invites me to an event two days from then and says something about “роупджампинг” (ropejumping). It’s an English word, but I’ve never heard it. When I ask for clarification, he describes this mysterious activity as “sort of like bungee jumping, but the rope isn’t elastic.” This is more than a little bit out of my comfort zone, but I agree anyway. Nobody ever made friends by turning down invitations, right?

On arrival. The skeleton of an abandoned building, covered in snow. My first thought is that I’ve been transported into the setting of a post-apocalyptic movie. It feels like trespassing, which is apparently not illegal in Russia, or perhaps it’s illegal but nobody cares: the lines tend to blur here.
We climb what must be ten stories. Jumping over three-feet-wide gaps in the floor (it’s a long way down), climbing slippery, cold, shaky ladders, stepping on snow-covered stairs with no railings, crossing a 8-foot-long gap by walking across a thin wooden board. Now I am Aladdin in said post-apocalyptic movie. And I am terrified, heart pounding, out of my mind scared, from the moment I step on the first ladder to the moment I get to the top and then some.

I barely catch my breath before I look up and see a man let go of the rafters, and he falls, falls, falls down as the taut rope carefully pulls him forward so he begins to swing. 

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Vanya looks at us. “Are you going to do it?” he asks, and my heart legitimately stops beating. What? No. WHAT? No! I choke my first reaction down and instead manage a, “He знаю.” I don’t know.

“Давай, давай!” he grins, come on, come on!, and I look at the person on the rafter next to me getting suited up in a harness and feel the wheels of my brain start to set into motion.

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The next thing I know I’m being strapped into a harness with a little helmet on my head, like a helmet would actually do anything if something went wrong. A boy is clasping things on me in various places as I clench my hands to keep them from shaking. He seems much more legitimate than me, but he doesn’t judge at all. “It’s okay. It’s your first time. Everyone is scared their first time. Я тоже боялся,” I was scared too. Somehow I don’t believe him. He’s a big guy in a bigger jacket and he looks like he stepped off of the stage of Fear Factor five minutes ago; I’ve been reading The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood lately so in my head I dub him Little John for his broad shoulders. (Later I learn his name is Alyosha.) Behind him a girl with a fancy camera looks bored, balancing her feet on each side of the rails of the rafters. 

Little John lets me grip his arm tightly as I swing my legs over the rail and balance myself on the outside. I’m not sure I can let go myself — not sure my hands will actually go through with the order my brain can, in theory, send — so I take Little John’s hands and he tells me he’s going to count to three and then let go.

Праз, два... And then gravity pulls my body down.

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There’s an initial burst of absolute terror in its purest, most sudden form, which takes hold of my consciousness so completely I can hardly recall it in its fullness — although I know I screamed a bloodcurdling scream worthy of a Hollywood-horror-movie victim. But that moment quickly passes.

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I’m no longer upside down so I let my hands find the rope and hold it, sitting in the harness comfortably as my swinging begins to slow. I look out over the nothinglands of the outskirts of Petersburg and sit and swing, cold air on my face, and it almost feels like this is what I came to Russia to do.
Gay propaganda or Western propaganda?

By Jesse Vincent (PO ’14)

Gay culture is alive and well in Russia, despite what the Russian government and Western media may lead you to believe. Actually, the gay community looks much like the community that exists here in America. There is online dating, one-night stands and, yes, even long-term relationships. There is one huge difference, however. Gay culture in America is almost a commodity, a sort of pat on the back for the (perceived) social liberalization that American culture is experiencing. Gay everyday life in Russia, on the other hand, is exactly that—everyday life, without all the glitter, streamers and rainbows.

Gay life has existed for as long as humanity has, yet gay identity and cultural perception of gays can change just as often political parties. The American LGBT rights movement goes back for decades and developed from protests into a sort of new trend of liberal democrats, while the LGBT rights movement is still a relatively new concept in Russia. One reason, in my opinion, that there has been such a negative response to gay pride parades in Eastern Europe is precisely because the idea has simply been implanted from the West. What is the purpose of a gay pride parade in Moscow, Kiev or Belgrade? Is it to raise awareness and increase visibility of the LGBT community? Is it truly a demonstration of pride? If so, what exactly are we proud of? Or is it perhaps a failed concept that has done so well in the West: a place for gays to meet other gay people and for corporations to market to the gay community and their liberal-oriented friends.

Russian friends of mine ask me, “why should anyone care if I am gay?” I agree entirely: no one is owed any sort of coming out or explanation. My gay friends don’t fear fines or incarceration because they will continue to live as they always
did. To gay Americans, they are closeted, but to gays around the world, this is just life and they just happen to be LGBT. Your Russian neighbors may suspect your “gay lifestyle,” but they would never think of asking you directly, since the topic is still so taboo.

Now, while I wholly reject the anti-propaganda law and the sheer ignorance it was founded on in its entirety, I understand why it came to be. It’s an interesting time in the former Soviet Union, where politics and religion are once again meeting, where inequality is rampant and nationalism is visible everywhere. Someone had to take the blame for the slumping economy and the worsening political situation, and that someone just happens to be anyone who is not your typical straight, Russian male. Unfortunately, this is the reality my friends face. This law only the politicians, the churches and the media says you’re an abomination. Fortunately, these communities do exist and they are growing every day—you just have to look for them.

“Gay everyday life in Russia, on the other hand, is exactly that—everyday life, without all the glitter, streamers and rainbows.”

RUSSIAN/REES Courses

Spring 2014

Courses in Russian:

RUSS 02: Dwyer M/T/W/T/F 10

RUSS 04: Klioutchkine  
    M/W 11; T/R 10

RUSS 011: Intermediate Conversation  
    Lentsman T/R 3

RUSS 013: Advanced Conversation  
    Lentsman T/R 4:15

Courses in Translation:

RUST 103: Dostoevsky and Popular Culture (PO). Klioutchkine  
    T/R 1:15

RUST 185: The Novels of Vladimir Nabokov (PO). Dwyer T/R 2:45

HIST 71: Modern Europe Since 1789 (PO). Chu M/W/F 10

HIST 100T: Global Environmental Histories (PO). Chu  
    T/R 9:35

SOC 095: Contemporary Central Asia (PZ). Junisbai M 2:45
There is a joke I once heard that goes something like this: a child asks his grandfather where his great-grandfather was from. The grandfather answers, “He was born in Poland, worked in Russia, and died in Ukraine.” The child answers, “Wow! He traveled a lot!” The grandfather replies, “Actually, he never left the house his whole life.”

Changing borders and city names, along with the decimation of regional Jewish populations, have made tracing genealogical roots in Eastern Europe no small task. This is especially true when you have a dearth of oral history, as is the case with my family. My great-grandparents seldom spoke about their lives before America; experiences were left in the past, buried forever in time-capsuled towns. However, during an intrepid genealogy project in the 1990s, one of my father’s cousins discovered that my great-grandmother Fannie was born in Berdychiv, a small city west of Kyiv renowned for its pre-WWII reputation as a center of Jewish intellectualism. This information faded into the back of my mind and did not resurface until my grandfather (Fannie’s son) died and, coincidentally, I enrolled in a summer study-abroad program based in Kyiv just weeks later. After some haphazard Googling, I discovered Berdychiv was easily reachable from Kiev by elektrichka. Suddenly I realized I was being given an extraordinary opportunity: I could be the first one in my family to return. Return to what, exactly, was the question.

When I stepped off the train in Berdychiv, the feeling of isolation could not have been more intense. The comforts of the city were gone and, though small Ukrainian quirks were just as present in Kyiv as they were in Berdychiv, I didn’t feel any less unsettled. It’s not like I expected a rosy-cheeked babushka to wrap her arms around me, recognizing my face from a worn picture on her refrigerator, and ask me, “Boychik, how iz de family?” The possibility for that kind of experience evaporated over 100 years ago. Nevertheless, the stray dogs, crumbling infrastructure, and enormous red marble Lenin statue and accompanying Stalin bust were startling. THIS was home? There weren’t even records of where in the city my family had lived or what they had done to make a living. I had only my imagination to fill in the blanks as I made my way to the iconic Jewish cemetery, famous for its rows of crumbling headstones that remain as reminders of a rich Jewish past.
Jewish heritage, now nearly extinct.

Upon arriving at the cemetery, I was approached by two men who, after asking for a bribe and learning that I had a strong interest to know more about the city, called the caretaker, a man named Grisha. At 70 years old, he is one of the only remaining observant Jews in town. He stands a few inches shorter than me, with silky white hair and a raspy voice. He offered to take me around the entire city for the afternoon because, after all, I had “come all the way from America.” The way he said the word ‘America’ made me feel so far away from home. I imagined what it must have felt like for my great-grandmother to dream of America so many years ago. Grisha knew everything about Jewish life in the city and even had keys to the tomb of a revered Hasidic Rabbi, Levi Itzhak, and to one of two remaining synagogues, where it is quite possible my ancestors had once stood. Through Grisha, a man with an almost magical aura, I was able to see Berdychiv as it once was. Walking through the city market, he stopped at a butcher counter to greet one of his many friends. He introduced me as his “friend from America” whose great-grandmother was born here. The butcher looked me up and down and said, “You look like someone from Berdychiv.” A chill running over my body, I thought of my recently dead grandfather, a former butcher, and his mother, the real Berdychiver. Even though it didn’t look like it, this was home in spirit. It is a spirit that carries me across the ocean and into the souls of my ancestors so that I, too, can know where I am from.

2013 Russian and REES Events

**September**
*+Thursday, Sept. 26: “Confronting the Challenge: Foreign Language Films in America” (Vera Mijojlić, director of SEEfest, LA)--OLC

**October**
*+Thursday, Oct. 10: “Russian Utopias, Transhumanism and the Magus of Silicon Valley.” Birgit Menzel (University of Mainz)--OLC

**November**
*+Thursday, Nov. 7: “Democracy, Anyone? Support for Democratic Governance in Newly Unequal Societies: Evidence from Post-Soviet Central Asia.” Prof. A. Junisbai (PZ)--OLC

**November (cont.)**
*+Thursday, Nov. 7: Russian Tea, Coordinator: Ben Cohen
*+Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2013: Film Screening *When I Was a Boy, I Was a Girl*, an award-winning short documentary film about Goca, a Serbian transsexual. Introduction and Q&A by Vera Mijojlić, director of the South East European Film Festival (SEEfest), Los Angeles

**December**
*+Wednesday, Dec. 11, 4pm-6pm: G&R Holiday party (Seaver House)
*+Friday, Dec. 6, 1:15-3:00: Senior Thesis Presentations
Having plenty of family and friends in St. Petersburg, my parents and I travel to Russia regularly. When we go during the summer, there is one place I always insist on visiting: a gem of the city that is, in my opinion, one of the most beautiful places in the world. The palace and park at Peterhof (Russian: Пётропол), one of St. Petersburg’s most famous and popular visitor attractions, are sometimes referred to as the “Russian Versailles.” In fact, Versailles was the inspiration for Peter the Great’s desire to build an imperial palace in the suburbs of his new city.

The Peterhof that visitors can see today is a different Peterhof than the one Peter designed and had built in the 1700s. For one thing, it was greatly enhanced by a number of extra fountains that were added over the years, as well as the entirety of Alexandrine Park and the Upper Gardens. Additionally, much of the complex had to be rebuilt after invading German troops captured it during World War II, destroying parts in the process. The park, palace, and gardens were quickly restored, thanks to the hard work of military engineers and over 1,000 volunteers.

Peterhof consists of the Lower Gardens (1.02 square kilometers, the better part of the complex), the Grand Palace and the Upper Gardens behind it, and Alexandrine Park. It sports an impressive array of various fountains, some of which are decorative and spectacular, and others of which are less noticeable and furtive (such as those designed to sneakily douse visitors with water when triggered by a person’s approach). All the fountains operate without the use of pumps. The water is supplied from natural springs and collects in reserves in the Upper Gardens, and the elevation difference creates the pressure that drives most of the fountains in the Lower Gardens, including the Grand Cascade. The fountains start working around May and continue working through September.

The most famous and arguably most striking feature of Peterhof is the Grand Cascade along with Samson Fountain (pictured), depicting Samson tearing open the jaws of a lion in the middle of a semicircular pool, and the long Sea Channel that flows from it. Pictures of these are often found on calendars featuring sights of St. Petersburg.

Probably the best way to get to Peterhof is to take the hydrofoil, which can be found departing regularly from the Winter Palace, across the Gulf of Finland straight to the Sea Channel. This option is the swiftest and most picturesque (and fun) one, but it is admittedly cheaper to take the train, though it takes longer. However you get there, Peterhof is a must-see for anyone who finds themselves in the St. Petersburg area during the summer.
Vestnik: This is not your first visit to the US. Now that you’re working and residing here for a longer period, do you find that the United States differs from your previous visits? How?

ML: Everything’s even bigger, more expansive, more abundant – in short, “larger than life itself,” in the immortal words of Ms. Zoe Vekselshtein. Nature, distances, food, technology, service, everything. While traveling here before I had this feeling, this slightly giddying sensation that anything and everything is possible here. This feeling has only been intensified and more evenly distributed along all spheres of life now that I am living here – now the challenge is to make sense of all of this. I am loving it here and I do own a US-flag t-shirt – I think I’ll be fine.

Vestnik: Where is your favorite place that you’ve traveled to (in the world and the US)?

ML: New York City is equally amazing to ramble on my own and to share with some awesome people I am fortunate enough to know there. I love Rome – and can’t wait to see more of the Grand Canyon or the Pacific Coast Highway, such mind-blowing places! Needless to say, nothing beats my grandparents’ dacha in the historic Komarovo (Finn. Kellomäki) about 25 miles North-West of St. Petersburg. Represent.

Vestnik: As a former language resident, how does it feel to be back at Pomona? What made you decide to come back?

ER: As a matter of fact, as a language resident I assisted with teaching both classes I teach now. The main difference is that now I strategically plan the contents and pace of both classes – Russian 1 and Russian 33 as well as assess students’ progress by awarding grades. I am no
Vestnik: As a polyglot (Finnish - wow!, Swedish, Spanish, French, Italian, and Estonian...), which language do you like the best?

ML: Same as with places, for me, it’s always about the people rather than the linguistic systems with their phonemes, allophones, cases or the absence of such, verbs, participles, etc. etc. (and I do love all of that). Of all languages, I guess I could say I like idiolects best – each person’s unique way of speaking, their very own cadences, hesitation pauses, chuckles, and all other palatalized or non-palatalized pieces of meaning. (Now can’t you tell I spent four years in a Professor Higgins-like lab? Does this make me Eliza I wonder?)

Vestnik: Because this is a newsletter dedicated primarily to Russia and Eastern Europe, I have to ask....how much do you love sour cream?

ML: Please allow this to serve as an open love letter to sour cream. O prekrasnaya Smetana, svet moih ochei! I love you. I love you with all my heart, soul and all other sensory receptors. You and you alone are the perfect companion to borsh, schshi, blini, oladyi, tvorog, syrniki, potato draniki, carrot draniki, pumpkin draniki; the four of you – fresh cucumbers, dill, salt and your-rival Tchaikovsky’s String Quartet No.1 - and will always be synonymous with the March post-flu convalescence. When in a cake, you’re just gorgeous. You are soothing, graceful, all-embracing, and forever understanding. You make everything, everything in the whole wide world better. Best of all, I love it when there’s just you and me – and a big stolovaya lozhka.

Vestnik: Outside of the classroom, what do you like to do?

ER: Most of all I like spending time with my family: my husband and I love taking our 15 month old daughter Sasha to the park nearby for some play time and picnic. Having such a young child does not leave me with too much free time, but when I do get an occasional moment for myself, I enjoy watching foreign films and baking.

Vestnik: What is your favorite Russian food that you can’t get here?

ER: As I live in the San Fernando Valley, I am spoilt with the abundance of Russian stores and restaurants. There is really nothing Russian you can’t get here! However, certain things are just harder to find, are more expensive or not as tasty: for instance, pickled herring is always either too salty or too lean for my taste and beef tongue cold cuts is only sold at one place in the entire LA! Not that I am complaining!
#1: Always share what you have.

I say this despite the fact that one of the first things I learned when visiting a friend in Bulgaria was the snarky saying Moeto si e moe, chuzhdoto e obshto (‘What’s mine is mine, what’s everyone else’s is common’). In fact, I found this adage to be strictly false, although my reciting it was a big hit at parties in Sofia. In general, the people that I’ve met across Southeastern Europe are hospitable and generous, especially if it means they get to show you the superiority of their local cuisine (see #3).

In Pristina, Kosovo’s capital, I found this hospitality to extend beyond reasonable limits when a friend joined me at a café and paid for the coffee I had already finished. Even more absurdly, someone I struck up a conversation with on a minibus from Vushtrri, the countryside outside Pristina, insisted on paying my fare when we arrived in the capital.

Contrast this with the stories I have heard when, at an American party, someone came and left with the same bottle of whiskey. “If that happened here,” he assured me, “we would beat him up and then drink his whiskey!” In a similar albeit less-extreme vein, a Russian professor who has lived in the United States for some time told me she is still caught off guard when people leave dinner parties with their own leftovers.

#2: But remember—there are other things in life besides food.

For the amount of pride that goes into cuisine (again, see #3), there is, at the same time, a push in the opposite direction, away from a mentality that enshrines food. One afternoon in Belgrade, I attempted to practice Serbian with my host-mother, Ana, over a lunch of fresh feta cheese, market tomatoes and sausages from Zlatibor mountain.

Živim da jedam! I exclaimed (‘I live to eat!’) (I didn’t say I was proud to repeat this). Ana looked at me as though she was personally offended by what I had said, and sternly replied, Ne. Živi za LJUBOV! (‘No. Live for LOVE!’)

In Northern Albania, I, along with eight other travelers, encountered an even more severe nonchalance towards food after a three-day hike in the mountains. Having set off for our hike from the remote village where we were
staying, we only had the somewhat small ra-

tion of food that the hostess at our guest house,

Age, packed for us, thinking we would en-

counter generous shepherds on the mountain-

sides. We had no such encounters and returned

from our hike, shaking slightly from three days

de of eating bread and tomatoes exclusively to tell

Age about the experience. Her response: “Ah

yes, then you have suffered, this is good.”

#3: If you’re picking up the language (and

in general), superlatives are important.

I realized this while vacationing with a

Macedonian family who kept feeding me de-

spite the fact that my 8 euro/night room didn’t

clude meals. “Try this,” Makedonka, the ma-

riot of the house, would say, spoon-feeding

me candied plums or spicy grilled peppers, “so

you can tell everyone Macedonian food is the

best food!” (In Macedonian najvkusna kuhnja

means “most delicious cuisine”—a sufficient

language lesson for beginners).

While I’m more than happy to indulge

that line of reasoning, especially when it means

people are feeding me home-cooked cuisine,

superlatives often creep into conversations as

interrogations. “Oh you’ve traveled a lot in the

region? Which country is the most beautiful?

Who has the nicest seaside? Which city has the

best view of the Danube?”

The most nerve-wracking part of these

conversations is that people can tell when

you’re being diplomatic. A cousin of one friend

in Kosovo asked me “which capital city did

you like living in more, Belgrade or Pristina?”

I fumbled with my answer, awkwardly trying

to highlight what I had (genuinely) loved about

both cities in an attempt to avoid choosing.

“Well, if you liked Belgrade more, you should

just say so,” was the huffy response to my in-

decisiveness. If being indecisive means some-

one is still waiting to win my heart over with

local cuisine, I guess I’m alright with that.
Soviet cartoon of Winnie the Pooh; it was a joke between us. He’s shared it with me, one last time, in a shaky, printed Cyrillic.

Further down, at the bottom of the folded paper, he’s signed his note in a blocky hand: Бегемот.

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I remember—one month ago and I’m at Grischa’s house; we’re talking.

He’s telling me that his grandma taught his younger brother, born in Israel, to read Russian. It took one month for her to teach Benyamin. After, she flew home to the Western edges of Siberia.

That was several years ago. Grischa’s still proud of Benka.

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Tanya, Andrey, Grischa. Born in Russia, raised in Israel. Together, they speak a mixed dialect, half Russian, half Hebrew: the first with an Israeli accent that marks them apart in the land of their birth, and the second with a peppering of profanities in Arabic. The words come out as is easiest for each. I like to imagine that, if I could understand both languages as they do, I’d hear the personality of the speaker in their particular permutation of the two tongues. A subtle “accent” to their vocabulary.

I don’t understand, but I like to imagine.

All three are sitting around a rickety wooden table at night playing cards. They’re betting, they’re laughing, they’re drinking. I can’t play, so they teach me the rules. The game is “Durak,” and they tell me every Russian knows it. Durak? I ask; the syllables are new for me. Tanya smiles. “It means stupid,” she tells me, “because if you lose you’re stupid.” Tanya is very good at games; she’s helping me win. In time I remember the rules and their exceptions and I stop losing all my laundry money to them. I even win once or twice, but they’ve been playing since childhood and I’m running low on clean clothes.

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Last week I Skyped Grischa; it was the first time we’ve talked since I left Israel a month ago. It was good to see him again. I miss our conversations about Bulgakov and Dostoevsky; I miss him playing accordion (a vintage Belarusian make that his friends got him for his birthday) and singing Soviet nationalist songs that he’s translated into English so I can understand. I miss his impersonations of Stalin and Bibi Netanyahu; he’s partially blind so his mimics of other voices are fantastic.

Grischa’s visiting Russia next summer. He’s going with his brother and his father, and they’re going to visit Moscow, St Petersburg, and the village he grew up in. It takes thirty-six hours by train from his city to Moscow, he told me. We were quiet for a moment, imagining that distance. It takes eight hours by car to get from the Lebanese border, the northern limit of Israel, to its southernmost point on the Red Sea, and trains are usually faster.

Next summer, he’s going home to Russia for a bit. He’ll see friends and family and ease the ache that’s been in his heart since he left when he was nine. And then, after a month or two, he’ll leave Russia and go home to Israel, and soothe the soft pinch of sadness at being away for so long.

And me? I’ll still be here, seeking ways to keep hold on my memories of these people that made up my family abroad. We’ve all got several homes now.
Slavic languages are unique - they diverged from their proto-language (Proto-Slavic) more recently than any other Indo-European language group, so they are more similar in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation than other Indo-European languages. In fact, Proto-Slavic existed until 500 AD, and Common Slavic (the more recent ancestor with differentiable dialects) was still spoken as late as the 10th century AD. Slavic languages have three branches: East Slavic (Belarusian, Russian, Ukrainian; in forest green), West Slavic (Czech, Polish, Slovak; in pale green), and South Slavic (Bosnian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Macedonian, Montenegrin, Serbian, Slovenian; in Prussian blue).

Some linguists suggest that a North Slavic branch existed in some point in time as well, but if that’s true, it is now extinct or has merged with other branches. The Slavic languages are spoken in most of Eastern Europe, much of the Balkans, part of Central Europe, and the northern part of Asia. The West Slavic languages are all written with the Latin alphabet and have been influenced more by western European languages. East Slavic languages are written with the Cyrillic alphabet and have been influenced more by Greek. However, Russian, being influenced by French and German, in turn influenced Czech, which has influenced Croatian. On the other side of the coin, at least 20% of Albanian, Hungarian, and Romanian words are borrowed from Slavic languages!
**Russian**
- 8th most spoken native language in the world
- 160 million speakers total
- Official language in Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Ukraine
- Alphabet: Cyrillic

**Polish**
- 29th most spoken native language in the world
- 40 million speakers total
- Official language in Poland
- Alphabet: Latin-based with additional letters

**Ukrainian**
- 31st most spoken native language in the world
- 37 million speakers total
- Official language in Ukraine
- Alphabet: Cyrillic

**Bulgarian**
- 85th most spoken native language in the world
- 9 million speakers total
- Official language in Bulgaria
- Alphabet: Cyrillic

**Belarusian**
- 89th most spoken native language in the world
- 9 million speakers total
- Official language in Belarus and Poland
- Alphabet: Cyrillic

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**Zacharay Aaron White**

Born September 25 at 3:27 a.m., 6 lbs 7 oz.

Congratulations Anna Ivanovna!

See you next semester!
Internship/Scholarship Opportunities

Critical Language Scholarship
http://www.clscholarship.org
This is a government-run program offering full tuition and travel expenses for summer Russian study in the cities of Kazan, Ufa, or Vladimir. Our students have attended all three programs in the past years.

Russian at Middlebury
http://www.middlebury.edu/ls/finaid/fellowships/kwd
Many students find it helpful to complete the second year of Russian language instruction at the Russian Summer School of Middlebury College, the most respected Russian immersion language program in the country. Financial aid is competitive, but available.

Ulitin Travel Grant
Each Spring, the Russian Program supports the Ulitin Travel Grant, which provides up to $2000 to subsidize a Russian or REES major’s language study or research project in Russia.

Arizona State University Critical Languages Institute
http://www.cli.asu.edu
7-week, 8-week, and 11-week hybrid intensive courses available in Albanian, Armenian, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, Persian, Polish, Russian, Tatar, Ukrainian, and Uzbek in Arizona and abroad. Programs in Arizona cost $850 for 7 weeks of instruction, excluding housing and meals. Costs of programs abroad vary. More information on available scholarships and funding, go to http://cli.asu.edu/fellowships

Fulbright Scholarship
http://www.us.fulbrightonline.org
The Fulbright U.S. Student Program provides grants for individually designed study/research projects or English Teaching Assistantships. A candidate will submit a Statement of Grant Purpose defining activities to take place during one academic year in a country outside the U.S. Online application open after the Spring semester, with the deadline in the Fall. (Our students have applied and/or received Fulbright Teaching Assistantships in such places as Russia, Bulgaria, and Kazakhstan)
Noah Sneider is a Pomona alum now living, writing, and creating in Moscow. He is an intern at the New York Times Moscow bureau and attended the pro-Navalny protest that took place in July. The protest was a response to the 5-year prison sentence that the opposition leader, Alexei Navalny, received (for embezzlement) during his run as Moscow’s mayor. This collage is a glimpse of the spirit backing the blogger-cum-activist, documented by Noah in July. More information on the protest, Navalny, and this article in particular are available at NYTimes.com.
ТАКОГО КАК ПУТИН...