Association for Women in Slavic Studies

Women East-West

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☞ Renew your 2009 AWSS membership - or start a membership for a new colleague or grad student (always the perfect gift)!

Mail-in new membership / renewal forms are available in every issue of WEW.

2008 AWSS AWARDS

(AAASS National Convention, Philadelphia, November 22, 2008)

2008 Outstanding Achievement Award winner Christine Worobec and AWSS president Margaret Beissinger

The annual AWSS luncheon and business meeting took place November 22, 2008. What follows are the announcements for the annual prizes awarded at the luncheon. (Ed. note: For space reasons, the announcements for the graduate student awards will appear in the spring edition of WEW.–NM)

CHRISTINE D. WOROBEC: ***2008 AWSS Outstanding Achievement Award***

Outstanding Achievement Award committee members were Margaret Beissinger, Jill Irvine, and Janneke van de Stadt; Margaret Beissinger read the following text at the awards ceremony

I take great pleasure in offering the Outstanding Achievement Award, which recognizes superior scholarship on women's and gender issues and exceptional mentorship in the field among scholars and students, to Christine D. Worobec. Professor Worobec is a Professor of History at Northern Illinois University, where she has taught since 1999. From 2003 to 2007 she was the Presidential Research Professor there, and has also taught as an Associate Professor and Assistant Professor at Kent State University from 1992 to 1999 and 1984 to 1992 respectively. Professor Worobec was Director of the Soviet and East European Studies Program at Kent State University from 1991 to 1999 and has also taught at Harvard University Summer School.

Christine Worobec received her B.A. in History at the University of Toronto in 1977 and her Ph.D., also in History at Toronto, in 1984. She has authored numerous articles and books, all of them valuable and important contributions to the field of Russian history. Among them I would like to point out the books that she has written or edited: *Ukrainians in North America: A Select Bibliography*, compiled with Halyna Myroniuk (University of Minnesota Immigration History Research Center and Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1981); *Russia's Women: Accommodation, Resistance, Transformation*, co-edited with Barbara E. Clements and Barbara A. Engel (University of California Press, 1991); *Peasant Russia: Family and Community in the Post-Emancipation Period* (Princeton University Press, 1991), which won the 1991 AWSS Heldt Prize for the best book written by a woman; *Possessed: Women, Witches, and Demons in Imperial Russia* (Northern Illinois University Press, 2001), which won the 2001 AWSS Heldt Prize for the best book in Slavic/East European/Eurasian Women's Studies; *Women and Gender in Central and Eastern Europe, Russia, and Eurasia: A Comprehensive Bibliography*, co-edited with Mary Zirin, Irina Livezeanu, and June Pachuta-Farris (M.E. Sharpe, 2006); and forthcoming, an edited volume, *The Human Tradition in Imperial Russia* (Rowman & Littlefield 2009).

Professor Worobec is, to quote from a colleague, "renowned for her pioneering scholarship on the history of women, folklore, peasants, family, religion and social life among Russians and Ukrainians in late Imperial Russia.... Not only is Professor Worobec a fine model of thoughtful scholarship, she is also a superb model to young scholars." Another writes that "Christine Worobec is a model for all of us in the Slavic field. Her scholarship is exemplary–meticulous research, careful argumentation, and wonderful insights into the lives of Russian and Ukrainian peasants.... In addition to her scholarly contributions, Christine has worked very hard to advance Slavic women's studies. She has been one of the guiding forces behind the Association for Women in Slavic Studies, serving on the Executive Board, as President and Vice-President, and as one of the editors on the Bibliography project in Slavic women's studies . . . Christine has been unstinting as a mentor to her peers and younger women scholars, offering sage advice to help us navigate the troubled waters of American academia." Students who have worked with Professor Worobec also comment on her as a remarkable scholar, teacher, and advocate. As one recalls, "Since I first began working in Russian history, Christine has been a major force in welcoming women into the professional life of the field, through her pioneering research, her activism in organizing events in women's and gender history, and her personal concern for identifying and encouraging promising women in the field." In short, she "has been unflaggingly supportive."

Over and over as we on the committee for the Outstanding Achievement Award read what others had to say about Professor Worobec, we found the same accolades: fantastic and original scholar, quintessential teacher and mentor, and steadfast champion of women in academia. We unanimously concluded that Professor Worobec is indeed a superb scholar, a trailblazer in introducing women's studies to our profession, a demanding and sympathetic mentor, and a model for other women. We are delighted to award Christine Worobec for her extraordinary and outstanding achievements!

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HELDT AWARDS 2008

The AWSS Heldt Awards Committee announced the recipients of three Heldt prizes. Committee members were Maria Bucur, Choi Chatterjee, Helena Goscilo and Sarah Phillips; Maria Bucur read the following texts at the ceremony.

ELIOT BORENSTEIN*: Best book in Slavic/Eastern European/Eurasian women's studies*

In his new book O*verkill: Sex and Violence in Contemporary Russian Political Culture* (Cornell University Press, 2007) Eliot Borenstein, takes the reader on a dizzying journey through the many fictional sites of popular culture in post-Soviet Russia. As we read the book, we felt that we were walking down the Arbat, but instead of averting our eyes from the ubiquitous pornography and hurrying towards the Leninka, we were forced to stop and actually consider the meanings embedded in the products that were on sale. What did images of spread-eagled air-brushed nudes say about the changing norms of femininity in Russia? In a despairing nation, ruled by a decrepit and buffoonish Yelstin, could compensatory codes of violent masculinity repair the damaged narratives of nation and empire? Borenstein is intent on locating excess, the exuberant excess of sex and violence, as well the excess of despair that characterized Russian popular fiction and films after the fall of the Soviet Union. Writing with an enviable verve, Borenstein makes intriguing and insightful connections between critical theories, both Western and Russian, Russian literary traditions, and the current themes in contemporary Russian pornography, erotica, detective fiction and films. The analytic triage speaks both to his erudition, and his ability to identify the symptoms of

Russian cultural malaise. We praise him for his ironic prose and for his deep insight into post-Soviet popular culture. Finally, we commend him for his synchronic analysis of the norms of masculinity and femininity in Russian popular culture. For those of us engaged in gender studies, it is a salutary reminder that holistic studies are indeed the wave of the future.

CATHERINE WANNER*: Best book by a woman in any area of Slavic/East European/Eurasian studies*

In *Communities of the Converted: Ukrainians and Global Evangelism* (Cornell University Press, 2007) Catherine Wanner makes a major contribution to the growing body of research on communal and personal religious life, and transformations in religious practice in the Soviet and post-Soviet contexts. The committee was particularly impressed by the scope of Wanner's multi-sited study, which benefited not only from archival research, but also from extensive ethnographic field research in Ukraine and the United States over the course of nearly ten years. The writing is exceptional, and Wanner's vivid narrative draws the reader into the lives of her interviewees, people as diverse as Misha, an ethnic Sakha from Yakutia studying in Kyiv to be a Pentecostal pastor, and Tanya, a victim of domestic violence who found social and spiritual support in a Baptist church in Kharkiv. The author also introduces us to one of the most intriguing recent developments in Ukrainian religious life–the 25,000-member strong mega-church known as the "Embassy of the Blessed Kingdom of God for all Nations," founded by a Nigerian pastor, Sunday Adelaja. Wanner's deft treatment of complex issues such as changing notions of morality, and the effects of globalization on questions of identity and community, will speak to scholars interested in religion and social and personal change around the world. While the primary focus of *Communities of the Converted* is evangelicalism, Wanner covers many key phenomena for understanding the varied effects of socialist collapse and increasing globalization. These include, among others, historical legacies, new understandings of selfhood in the face of social and political change, and ongoing processes of state withdrawal and the remaking of social contracts in postsocialist states. For all of these reasons and more, the AWSS Heldt Prize Committee congratulates Catherine Wanner with the award for best book by a woman in Slavic and East European Studies published in 2007.

ABBY SCHRADER: *Best article in Slavic/Eastern European/Eurasian women's studies*

In "Unruly Felons and Civilizing Wives: Cultivating Marriage in the Siberian Exile System, 1822-1860," which appeared in *Slavic Review* (vol. 66, no. 2, 2007, pp. 230-256*),* Abby M. Schrader brings into focus a number of questions and analytical perspectives that demonstrate effectively the importance of gender analysis for understanding tsarist Russia. The process of Siberian colonization has been the subject of attention for a number of scholars, but Abby Schrader is the first to ask exactly what did the gender imbalance of this process mean for the larger project of social engineering taking place there. The author skillfully shows how gender expectations helped generate specific policies of population movement and control. She also demonstrates that this kind of biopolitics resulted in readings of the failures in Siberia through gendered lens of social (dis)order and agency. Thus, Abby Schrader shows, women served as both tools of control at the outset (enabling the state to formally settle the exiled men), and eventually as scapegoats for these policies' lack of success. What the committee considered as exemplary in this article is a combination of first rate historical research and historiographic engagement, with a commitment to making gender analysis a central tool for understanding political discourse, state building, and the deep social consequences of these gender norms in action.

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PAVLA FRÝDLOVÁ: *The 2008 Zirin Priz*e

The Zirin Prize encourages the work of independent scholars who are employed outside teaching institutions or who are employed in part-time or temporary academic positions that do not qualify for research funds. Zirin Committee members were Martha Kuchar and Irina Livezeanu.

The 2008 Zirin Prize goes to Pavla Frýdlová, an independent scholar from the Czech Republic. Frýdlová is a cofounder of the Gender Studies Center in Prague, Czech Republic, an NGO and one of the first such institutions to promote a feminist agenda in Eastern and Central Europe after 1991.

Ms. Frýdlová is also the international coordinator and director of the "Women's Memory" project (www.womensmemory.net), whose purpose is "searching for Identity under Socialism." The project involves collecting oral histories of women from three generations who were born between 1920 and 1960. The project, which takes a multi-disciplinary approach from the fields of sociology, history, linguistics, psychology, ethnography, anthropology, and journalism, focuses on the "life strategies and personal culture of survival" of the women interviewed. As coordinator of the project, Pavla Frýdlová interacts with representatives from her own

Czech Republic and from Slovakia, former East Germany, Poland, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, and Ukraine. She is also responsible for the project archives. So far, the project has yielded 500 interviews, 20,000 pages of transcription, three documentary movies, several radio programs, and 20 published books, four of which were edited by Pavla herself.

Moreover, in addition to coordinating the project and maintaining its archives, Pavla Frýdlová has herself conducted and published many of the interviews and has produced several of the project's radio and television broadcasts and documentary films. Her book on women film directors in Eastern Europe, entitled *FrauenFilme in Osteuropa*, was published in 1996 in German. She edited a book entitled *A Woman Can Survive More Than a Man: 20th Century Life Stories of 10 Women*, which was published in 2006 in Czech. She also conducts research on the methodology of social inquiry (oral history), and is the cofounder and first vice-president of the Czech Oral History Association founded in January 2007. She has held research fellowships in France, Moscow, Germany, and the United Kingdom. She holds a Master of Arts degree in Film Theory and History.

It is important to note that Ms. Frýdlová conducts her projects outside established academic settings. In the words of her nominator, Pavla Frýdlová has inexhaustible energy and outstanding managerial skills.

So, to this film historian and film producer; this independent journalist, translator, and editor; this indefatigable independent scholar of women's issues – to Pavla Frýdlová, we award the Zirin Prize for 2008.

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At the AAASS premiere of "TWENTY YEARS FORWARD?" (from left): Nadezhda Azhgikina, Mary Zirin, filmmaker Igor Sopronenko, Cynthia Rumer, and AAASS president and filmmaker Beth Holmgren

News of Members

Submissions for "News of Members" for the Spring edition should be sent to the editor (monniern@missouri.edu) by March 15th

Judith E. Kalb (Dept. of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, University of South Carolina) book, *Russia's Rome: Imperial Visions, Messianic Dreams, 1890-1940,* has recently been published by University of Wisconsin Press (2008).

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AWSS TRAVEL GRANTS COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2008

The Committee was very fortunate this year in being able to support a number of scholars to attend two major 2008 conferences, "The Legal Status of Russian Women: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow," held in St. Petersburg from March 21-23, and the annual convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, held in Philadelphia from November 20-23. In addition, we supported one independent scholar doing research in Russia.

1. AWSS travel grants supported ten scholars with modest grants of $80 each which enabled them to travel to St. Petersburg for the conference commemorating the centennial of the 1908 All-Russian Women's Congress. Scholars awarded grants were: Natalia Dosina, Elena Ivanova, Elena Kolaskina, Natalia Novikova, Natalia Pushkareva, Elena Trofimova, Olga Volkova, Angelina Volovik, and Marina Voronina.
2. AWSS travel grants supported the following scholars each with $1000 stipends to attend and speak at the AAASS convention: Oksana Kis, Marianna Muravyeva, Natalia Novikova, Natalia Pushkareva, Valentina Uspenskaia, Irina Yukina all participated in the roundtable "Women's and Gender History in the CIS: Key Issues and Concerns." Natalia Pushkareva also presented a paper entitled "Gendering Russian Historiography (Women's History in Russia: Status and Perspectives)." Additionally we were able to give Irina Bykhovskaia a $650 grant to attend and present a paper entitled "Soviet/Russian Female Athletes: Socio-Cultural Dynamics of the Phenomenon" at the convention. The presence of these scholars greatly enriched the dialogue about gender at the convention.
3. We provided a small grant of $80 to Tamara Muravitsky for research in Russia on "Gender consciousness and sexual stereotypes."

Total expenditures were $7530. We were able to be so generous this year because of the extraordinary outpouring of donations to the travel grants fund and the matching grant from an anonymous donor. It is unlikely that we will reach such a level again this year, but we strongly urge that AWSS members continue to support this worthy project. We also recommend that the AWSS allocate $1000-2000 to support the travel grants.

–Rochelle Ruthchild and Martha Kuchar

(Ed. note: See "General Announcements " on p. 20 for the 2009 call for travel grant applications.)

Travel grant recipients at AAASS (from left): Natalia Novikova, Natalia Pushkareva, Valentina Uspenskaia, Rochelle Ruthchild (travel grants committee chair), Irina Yukina, and Marianna Muravyeva.

AWSS BOARD ELECTIONS: Ballots "A" and "B"

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

There are several Board positions up for election this year: Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, Board Member at Large, and Grad Student Board member. Please read the statements below by the nominees who have graciously agreed to stand.

Due to the specifics of this election round, there are 2 separate ballots, Ballot "A" (for VP, Treasurer, and Grad Student Board member) and Ballot "B" (for Board Member at Large). This is due to the fact that current Board member, Adele Lindenmeyr, is running for Vice-President; there were no further nominations from the floor for this position at the AWSS annual meeting at AAASS.

Balloting Instructions:

- **For those who attended the AWSS annual meeting at AAASS and who voted at that time with the paper ballot provided, please return ONLY BALLOT "B" now.**
- **For those who have not voted at all, please return BALLOT "A" and BALLOT "B" now.**

Please return all ballots to Rochelle Ruthchild by **Feb. 15, 2009**. You may return the ballot by email to ruthchil@yahoo.com or by regular mail to Rochelle G. Ruthchild, 137 Coolidge St., Brookline, MA 02446

VICE-PRESIDENT

Adele Lindenmeyr is professor of History at Villanova University in Pennsylvania. A specialist on Russian social and women's history, she has published on the history of charity, social welfare, and civil society. Her 1996 book *Poverty is not a Vice: Charity, Society, and the State in Imperial Russia* (Princeton University Press) received the Heldt Prize for the Best Book Published by a Woman in Slavic Studies in 1996, and she received the 2003 Outstanding Achievement Award from the AWSS. From 1998 to 2007 Adele was the chairperson of the History Department at Villanova. Mentoring young women faculty was a particularly important part of her administrative work: under her leadership the department hired eleven new faculty, seven of whom were women, and tenured all four of its junior women faculty. In addition to serving on the Board of the AWSS she is finishing a three-year term on the Board of the AAASS. With the support of a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities, this year Adele is devoting her time to finishing a biography of liberal philanthropist Countess Sofia V. Panina.

Adele writes: "As Vice President of the Association for Women in Slavic Studies, I would like to apply my experience as both a scholar and an administrator to help AWSS continue to flourish. One the one hand, I am dedicated to strengthening AWSS's existing initiatives that support and encourage women in academic careers, and to finding new initiatives that increase the presence and influence of women in our field. I am equally committed to furthering the growth of research in gender and women's studies by female and male scholars in all disciplines in Slavic and Eurasian studies, and to supporting AWSS in its ongoing and successful effort to move gender and women from the margins to the center of scholarship and teaching. When I was a history graduate student at Princeton in the 1970s, women's history **never** made even a brief, token appearance in any seminar or on any reading list. (In fact, women themselves had only recently arrived on Princeton's previously segregated campus, and it was still hard to find the ladies' room.) Thanks to the intellectual imagination and hard work of the original founders of the AWSS and its members both past and present, women's and gender studies have (mostly) taken their rightful place in teaching and scholarship in the United States today. But in Russia and Eastern Europe women's and gender studies are often dismissed or marginalized. AWSS has already done much to support scholars of women and gender overseas. I am committed to continuing these efforts while maintaining strong support for North American scholars, especially graduate students and junior faculty. As vice president I would also like to strengthen AWSS's connections with similar organizations in other fields, and work to increase membership among both men and women in our field."

SECRETARY-TREASURER

Kristi Groberg is Professor of Art History at North Dakota State University and is currently Secretary-Treasurer of AWSS. She earned her Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota. Her academic specialty is the History of Russian Art and Architecture. Her research interests include the Iconography of the Russian Orthodox Church, Images of

Sophia in Russian Culture, the Devil in Russian Art, Russian Decadence & Symbolism and, most recently, the Study of Sacred Space (Hierotopy). Groberg has published articles and reviews in the journals *Alexandria*, *ARTMargins*, *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, *Explorations*, *Modern Greek Studies Yearbook*, *Modern Judaism*, *Russian Review*, *Society of Historians of East European & Russian Art & Architecture Bulletin, Slavic Review*, *Theosophical History*, and *Women: East-West*. She is editor of *A Missionary for History: Essays in Honor of Simon Dubnov* (University of Minnesota, 1998), and the author of the introduction, an article on the artistic relationship between Dubnov and his daughter, and a multi-lingual Dubnov bibliography in that work. Her published work includes eight bio-bibliographical essays on women writers in *Dictionary of Russian Women Writers* (1994); essays in *Modern Encyclopedia of Russian and the Soviet Union* (1992); essays in *European Women in Immigration* (1994); a multi-lingual bibliography of the works of Vladimir Solov'ev (1998), and; a chapter on Satanism in Silver Age Russia in *The Occult in Russian and Soviet Art* (Cornell, 1997). She has published in English, Hebrew, Hungarian, and Russian.

Groberg has lectured on Russian Art History at such institutions as the Duke University Museum of Art, the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, the Museum of Russian Art, the Center for Russian & East European Studies at the University of Kansas, and the Russian & East European Center at the University of Illinois and she curates or serves as a consultant for exhibitions. She has been a member of AAASS and AWSS since 1988, has served on AAASS' Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession, has worked on *Women: East-West* for several years before taking on Secretary-Treasurer duties in 2006.

Nadia Shapkina is Assistant Professor of Sociology in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work at Kansas State University. Nadia writes: "My academic career began in my home city Saratov (Russia) where I graduated from a local university with a Bachelor degree in social work. In 2000, I received my Master's degree in sociology from Central European University (Warsaw, Poland). My long-term interest in gender studies led me to complete a Ph.D. program in sociology of gender and sexuality at Georgia State University (Atlanta, USA). My dissertation research was devoted to the problem of sex trafficking of women from Russia and Ukraine and anti-trafficking campaigns in the post-Soviet region. In 2008, I started my new position as an assistant professor at Kansas State University. My current research builds on my dissertation work and examines patterns of gendered migration in the post-Soviet countries. At Kansas State University, I teach courses in sociological theory; sociology of women; and gender and development.

I am a national of the Russian Federation. I have been an AWSS member since 2006, and participated in one of its biannual conferences. I would like to volunteer for the position of Secretary-Treasurer because I would like to intensify my engagement with the association. I see my involvement into AWSS activities as beneficial for my academic career. The activities of the association are very closely related to my research interests, and I would like to establish and maintain professional contacts through the organization (and, hopefully, develop possible research collaborations)."

GRADUATE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Anastasia Kayiatos is a fifth-year doctoral candidate with a Designated Emphasis on Women, Gender and Sexuality in UC Berkeley's Slavic Literature department. Anastasia writes: "Over the past four years of coursework, I have continued to explore the issues of sexual and political dissidence in Russian literature and society. I have written papers on a range of topics clustered under this rubric, including: sexual confession in the intimate documents of nineteenth-century Realist critics and the creation of the Russian novelistic canon; melancholic masculinity in Soviet political and literary discourse of the 1930s; pushbutton technology in Cold War constructions of gender and sexual deviancy; alternative erotics in post-Stalin cinema; and shock therapy as an embodied and economic practice in late- and post-socialist Russia. I am further developing this intersectional theme in my dissertation, which draws on queer theory to contour the new human subject, and his abject partner, the monster, produced by post-Stalin literary, political, and human-rights discourse. Additionally, I run a biweekly working group, "Socialisms and Sexualities," which inquires about the ways in which political economies other than those of late capitalism intersect with and inflect the formations and deployments of sex.

"Just as I am interested in sexual and political dissidence in my research, so too do I pursue these entanglements in my extracurricular life. I have sought consistently to bridge my concerns as a member of the academy and as a participant in the queer-feminist art and activist communities of the Bay Area. I look forward to the unique opportunity

offered by the Association of Women in Slavic Studies to explicitly link my commitments to progressive sex and gender politics, social justice, and the study of alternative modernities (especially the Soviet project). At this historical moment of economic and cultural globality—which includes the flowering of a newly transnational feminist movement and its attendant theorizations—the work of AWSS strikes me as particularly urgent and important. As a junior member of the AWSS Board, I would strive to creatively encourage an ongoing conversation with women of the former Second World; and help to ensure that their voices are not eclipsed from the queer and feminist Slavic scholarship that travels in the West."

Victoria Smolkin is a Ph.D. candidate in History at the University of California-Berkeley, where she works with Professor Yuri Slezkine. She writes: "My research interests include the relationship between religion and ideology–administrative, theoretical, and practical–in the post-war Soviet period, and my dissertation (titled: "'How Gods Are Born, Live, and Die': Soviet Atheist Education, Life-Cycle Rituals and the Socialist Way of Life, 1954-1985") investigates the second wave of anti-religious propaganda and atheist education in the Soviet Union (beginning in 1954). In particular, it focuses on the Soviet project to create and inculcate Soviet life-cycle rituals to replace their religious equivalents.

"My interest in working with AWSS Board comes partly from my experiences as a student at, and then an employee of, Sarah Lawrence College. The support I received throughout my undergraduate education proved vital to my decision to pursue graduate study, and my tenure in the Office of Admissions as an admission counselor gave me an important perspective on the particular obstacles women continue to encounter in education. I hope to be able to provide a graduate student's perspective on ways in which the graduate school environment can become more responsive to, and supportive of, female graduate student scholars. Female scholars have been particularly influential in Slavic Studies; their work has provided a vital perspective on both the humanities and social sciences, and I hope to encourage women to continue to pursue professional careers in this field."

ELECTION BALLOT "A" FOR AWSS BOARD

(return this ballot if you have **not** voted previously at the AWSS meeting at AAASS)

Vice President (vote for 1 person)

Adele Lindenmeyr _____

Secretary-Treasurer (vote for 1 person)

Kristi Groberg _____ Nadia Shapkina _____

Graduate Student Representative (vote for 1 person)

Anastasia Kayiatos _____ Victoria Smolkin _____

BOARD MEMBER AT LARGE

Melissa Feinberg is Associate Professor of History at Rutgers University. She writes: "I am a historian of modern Eastern Europe at Rutgers University- New Brunswick. My research interests include gender, citizenship and democracy, the history of human rights, and emotions in politics. Finishing the research for my first book, "Elusive Equality: Gender, Citizenship and the Limits of Democracy in Czechoslovakia, 1918-1950", I found myself reading about show trials. This led to my new project, which will examine how fear shaped political culture on both sides of the Iron Curtain during the first decade of the Cold War. As a new member of the AWSS, I am excited by this opportunity to actively contribute to the organization as a Board member."

Patricia Herlihy, Professor Emeritus, History, Brown University and currently Louise Wyant Professor, Emmanuel College, Boston, and Adjunct Professor, Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University. Author of

Odessa; A History, 1795-1914 and *The Alcoholic Empire: Vodka and Politics in Late Imperial Russia*, former member of the AWSS Board and recipient of the AWSS Outstanding Achievement Award.

She writes: "Because I have benefited personally and professionally from my long association with the AWSS, I would like to serve again on the Board or 're-up.' Over the years so much progress has been made in widening the membership in the United States and in forging links abroad that I would like to help in continuing these forward movements. I am particularly eager to increase membership among younger scholars here and abroad to reflect the demographic composition of all those working in the field of Slavic studies. The achievement of being able to offer baby-sitting service for the annual conference is indicative of the progress I mentioned. The fact that the service was under-subscribed indicates the "lopsided" age composition of the Association. In a way, we are victims of our own success, having achieved important goals such as providing more gender panels in the annual AAASS conference. While we have made membership attractive through lowering dues and offering graduate student essay prizes among other measures, I believe we should mount a vigorous recruitment drive by demonstrating the relevance of our association whose goals can also be shaped and served by young women scholars."

Sarah Phillips is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Indiana University since 2003. She writes: "My research interests lie primarily in Ukraine, and I am especially interested in questions of gender and civil society; gender, health, and healing; and most recently, the cultural politics of disability. In my first book, *Women's Social Activism in the New Ukraine: Development and the Politics of Differentiation* (Indiana U Press, 2008), I examined the unexpected and ambiguous effects that social activism has produced for Ukraine's women as they take up the "housework of politics." Women activists' lives and the stories they tell reveal the NGO sector as a site for post-socialist "differentiation" of citizens, as criteria for productive citizenship are reworked, and the rights and needs of various categories of citizens redefined. I am the author of an ethnographic film on Ukrainian women folk healers, and I am currently working on a second book about intersections of disability, gender, and citizenship in post-Soviet Ukraine.

"Questions of gender in Eastern Europe also are central to my teaching. I teach undergraduate and graduate courses in medical anthropology and the anthropology of Russia and Eastern Europe in which socialist and post-socialist gender formations figure prominently. I am training some wonderful graduate students whose PhD theses center on gender and women's issues in Poland, the Czech Republic, Buryatia, and elsewhere.

"If elected to serve on the AWSS Board, I would work to sustain the momentum generated by the recent AAASS conference in Philadelphia (whose theme was "Gender") to increase the visibility of the AWSS and its members in the various Slavic and East European Studies communities. In particular, I would seek avenues for even more participation of women scholars from the region in the AWSS and our related associations. Beth Holmgren's wonderful film "Twenty Years Forward?" was a wonderful catalyst for all kinds of discussions about women's activism in Russia, and the politics and possibilities of transnational feminist scholarly and activist collaborations, and I would be interested in extending the film project to other parts of the post-socialist region. I would also seek opportunities to promote the AWSS and women's and gender scholarship in my capacity as editor of the biannual journal *The Anthropology of East Europe Review*."

ELECTION BALLOT "B" FOR AWSS BOARD
(all members should return this ballot)

Board Member at Large (vote for 1 person)

Melissa Feinberg _____

Patricia Herlihy _____

Sarah Phillips _____

❧ Book Reviews ❧

The Dictatorship of Sex: Lifestyle Advice for the Soviet Masses. By Frances Lee Bernstein. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2007. 264 pages. Illustrations. $42.00, hard bound.

The few existing studies of sexuality in the Soviet Union have focused on homosexuality and on literary depictions of sex; Frances Lee Bernstein takes the field in a new direction with this engaging work on the campaign of sex education undertaken by Soviet doctors and public health officials during the NEP era. "Sexual enlightenment," as it was called, was a concerted effort by the People's Commissariat of Public Health (*Narkomzdrav*) to halt the spread of venereal disease, address the perceived problem of "nervousness" among Russian men, and articulate a version of normal sexuality appropriate to New Soviet Men and Women. Drawing upon medical journals and records, public health propaganda, and educational materials for the masses of the Russian Soviet Republic, Bernstein places sexual enlightenment in the broader context of NEP, Soviet society, and modernization efforts. As with many studies of this kind, Bernstein's analysis of sexual enlightenment ultimately reveals much more about the Soviet doctors and public health institutions behind the campaign than it does about the sexual lives of Soviet citizens.

By "dictatorship of sex," Bernstein refers to strictly defined and biologically determined gender roles and traits in sexual enlightenment materials, drawn from theories that had already fallen out of favor in Western Europe. In what seems a radical departure from the Bolsheviks' avowed commitment to equality between the sexes, the "entire program of sexual enlightenment rested on the 'proof' provided by the sex glands…[for] the 'naturalness' of both gender difference and heterosexuality" (42). One of the consequences of this approach to sexual difference was that men who did not fulfill these gender proscriptions were pathologized. Bernstein identifies male sexual dysfunction or "nervousness" as one of the principal foci of sexual enlightenment, followed closely by the spread of venereal disease. Bernstein also examines the ways in which the principles of sexual enlightenment were communicated to the population through visual images that drew on the cultural tradition of religious iconography. Based on her reading of these images, Bernstein argues that doctors positioned men as subjects—the intended recipients of the enlighteners' message—and marginalized women, who were only directly addressed on issues of hygienic childbirth.

In her final two chapters, Bernstein examines the narratives of healthy sexuality that enlighteners promoted for youth and adults and the way in which these theories relied upon medical and scientific theories considered out-of-date elsewhere. In keeping with the Victorian idea of a spermatic economy of the body, sexual enlighteners cautioned youth not to spend their vital sexual energies carelessly or too early. They warned young men and women about the dangers of early sexual activity, promiscuity, early marriage (before twenty or twenty-one for women and twenty-five for men), and masturbation alike, leaving abstinence as the only acceptable option. Abstaining, they argued, would allow youth to sublimate their sexual urges and use them in the more worthwhile pursuit of building socialism. Adults were encouraged to make a eugenically sound match, marry, and produce healthy children for the Soviet state, before "dispens[ing] with sex altogether" (13).

The only problem with this otherwise excellent book is that Bernstein's claims occasionally outstrip her evidence. Regarding the issue of nervousness, Bernstein argues that the medical discourse on male sexual dysfunction "expressed physicians' own anxieties about the male body, the profession's authority over the realm of sexuality, and more general fears about the potential impotence of the new state" (74). Although she convincingly demonstrates the precarious position of public health physicians in Soviet society, Bernstein is unable to support her assertions about these doctors' motivations. Also troubling is Bernstein's argument that the narrow definition of acceptable sexuality articulated by sexual enlighteners in the 1920s foreshadowed or paved the way for "The Great Retreat" of the 1930s. Bernstein makes this provocative claim in her introduction and never fully takes it up again. Although she continues to allude to the Great Retreat, she is unable to demonstrate anything more than a parallel between the enlighteners' restrictive definition of normal sex and the broader recoil from the revolutionary policies of the 1920s.

On the whole, these moments of overreaching do not detract from Bernstein's compelling analysis of other aspects of sexual enlightenment. As such, this book will be of interest to a broad audience of scholars of Soviet history and revolutionary Russia. *The Dictatorship of Sex* not only contributes to our understanding of medicine and politics in the NEP era, but it also demonstrates how Soviet doctors engaged with international scientific discourse and, in some cases, adapted those ideas to meet the unique demands of Soviet ideology. By adding this ideological dimension,

Bernstein's work contributes to our understanding of the broader phenomenon of the medicalization of sexuality during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Thus, her monograph will be particularly useful to those who are interested in the history of medicine, public health, sexuality, and gender.

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The Pearl: A True Tale of Forbidden Love in Catherine the Great's Russia. By Douglas Smith. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008. xiv, 328 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Plates. Photographs. Charts. $35.00, hard bound.

This beautiful book uses the narrative backbone of a double biography to explore the rich history of a bygone era. If references to "true tales" and "forbidden love" have helped Smith to write for a public larger than what most American historians of eighteenth-century Russia have ever dreamt of, he does so without sacrificing either literary skill or fidelity to the historian's craft. Shaped by Smith's thorough knowledge of the period and his careful analysis of historical evidence, *The Pearl* is far more than the account of a scandalous romance between one of Russia's richest nobleman, Count Nicholas Sheremetev, and his serf, Praskovia Kovaleva, and no less than a valuable contribution to Russian studies.

Nicholas Sheremetev devoted much of his life to theater, expanding and improving the serf troupes that he inherited from his father until they comprised numerous companies that performed dramas, operas, and ballets on different estates. Nicholas's scripts, scores, and stage designs were Russia's finest: he hired talent from abroad, shared architects with Versailles, and gave his troupe salaries and rewards; such efforts proved fundamental to the development of theater in Russia. Nicholas's passion for the stage also shaped his private life. While remaining a confirmed bachelor in the public eye, he fell deeply in love with one of his performers, Praskovia or "Parasha", a talented soprano that he had dubbed "The Pearl" onstage. As their relationship evolved, Nicholas eventually gave Praskovia her freedom (in great secrecy) and then married her.

Our knowledge of their relationship remains necessarily one-sided: as Smith points out, "we shall likely never know Praskovia's feelings for Nicholas" (73). What we do know of her comes largely by way of Nicholas, who labored over her posthumous image and attempted to expiate his own feelings of guilt by attributing saintliness to his late wife. Nicholas's portrait of Praskovia was also designed for the benefit of their infant son (she died two months after giving birth to Dmitry, a friend of Pushkin's). Smith submits Nicholas's own writings to careful parsing, allowing us to see a startlingly full portrait of the woman, despite the paucity of traces. She clearly cherished the sacrament of marriage, for example, and found moral respite in their nuptials.

The trajectory of Nicholas's own love was affected by his ambivalent feelings about class difference and an increasingly religious outlook. Smith contextualizes these sentiments in the era's own changing ideas about social status and romantic love. He wonderfully demonstrates, for example, how the various plots of Praskovia's major roles repeatedly focus on the problem of love between unequals, a theme of interest to both Nicholas personally and the Russian nobility at large that found reflection in Sheremetev's private theater on several different levels.

Smith's book is tinged with the elegiac curiosity that strikes visitors to the Sheremetev properties—Kuskovo, Ostankino, and the Fountain House now associated with Anna Akhmatova—sites of past grandeur and of Praskovia's short-lived Cinderella story. The story of Nicholas and Praskovia achieved considerable notoriety in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Russia and Smith deftly interlaces his tale with a multitude of literary and cultural references to the couple. They were the subject of numerous portraits (a sampling of which, together with images of the Sheremetev properties and other artifacts, handsomely illustrate this book); aspects of their lives were described in the verses of writers such as Gavrila Derzhavin, Aleksandr Pushkin, and later Akhmatova; and their romance was immortalized in popular song. Smith also gives a fascinating account of the symbolic importance that Praskovia's rags-to-riches story held for the Soviet regime.

The Pearl is obligatory reading for those interested in the history of Russian theater and serf theater, estate life and noble-serf relations, evolving notions of love and of class difference, and the experiences of serfs and of serf women. It also provides much detail on life at court and in high society, as well as on the expression of religiosity (rites, prayers, favorite saints) in the conduct of daily affairs. It will appeal to specialists and non-specialists alike.

–Sara Dickinson. Università degli Studi di Genova

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GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you would like an announcement or query to be posted in the next issue of WEW, please send your text directly to the editor (monniern@missouri.edu) by March 15th.

☞Funding opportunity: Association for Women in Slavic Studies (AWSS) Travel Grants to Conferences for Scholars from the Former CIS and Soviet Block Countries

AWSS is pleased to announce that once again we will be awarding grants to scholars from the former Soviet Union and Soviet bloc countries to help support research or conference travel. Conference or research topics must be related to the mission of the AWSS, to encourage women's studies and support women scholars. If you are interested in applying, please send the following information to Rochelle Ruthchild, Committee Chair, at: ruthchil@yahoo.com:

- Name
- Address
- Phone numbers
- Email address
- Name and Dates of the conference you wish to attend
- Title and a short (no more than 300 words) abstract in English of your paper
- A budget showing the total cost of your travel and the amount you are requesting.

Deadline: May 1. Note that there is only ***one*** *round of applications being accepted in 2009.* Those receiving grants will be required to submit a brief report on their funded activities.

☞Reminder: 4th Biennial Conference of the Association for Women in Slavic Studies
GENDER, CITIZENSHIP, AND EMPIRE
The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, April 16-18, 2009

In an increasingly globalized world, the meaning of citizenship has become ever more fluid. Post-socialist countries in particular have seen great transformations in the rights individuals claim and in the obligations expected of them. The changing nature of citizenship in the post-Cold War world has also prompted those who look at the past to reconsider what it meant to be the subject (and sometimes citizen) of imperial lands (Russian, Soviet, Ottoman, or Habsburg) in Eastern Europe and Eurasia.

Gender is central to understanding definitions of citizenship and subjecthood during the imperial period(s) as well as to understanding the shifting definitions of citizenship in the post-Soviet period. While issues of gender have been visible in the arts, they have yet to be fully explored by historians and social scientists. Thus the aim of the conference is to stimulate further investigation and discussion of the relationship between gender and the overarching structures and practices (political, social, economic, and cultural) of the empires and post-imperial states of this region.

The AWSS Conference will be held in conjunction with the annual conference of the Midwest Slavic Association on the campus of The Ohio State University. For more information, contact Margaret H. Beissinger at mhbeissi@Princeton.edu.

Art exhibition: From Non-Conformism to Feminisms: Russian Women Artists from the Kolodzei Art Foundation at the Chelsea Art Museum, Highland Park, NJ

The exhibition "From Non-Conformism to Feminisms: Russian Women Artists from the Kolodzei Art Foundation" is a selection from the Kolodzei Collection of Russian and Eastern European Art, and covers three generations, from the 1960s to the present. The show includes work in many media, including painting, works on paper, photography, and video. This exhibition is arranged thematically and features the work of emerging, mid-career and established artists. Twenty-five artists, ranging in age from 30 to over 80, represent several stages in the evolution of non-conformist and independent art in Russia. The exhibition is a visual exploration of the development and accomplishments of women artists from Russia and is designed to generate public awareness of Russian women in art as well as to empower women artists to pursue their calling. List of artists: Lydia Masterkova, Valentina Kropivnitskaya, Rimma Gerlovina, Maria Elkonina, Bella Levikova, Natalia Nesterova, Tatyana Nazarenko, Olga Bulgakova, Anna Birshtein, Marina Telepneva, Tatiana Levitskaia, Nadezhda Gaiduk and Valentina Lebedeva. The latest generation is made up of artists whose works date from post-perestroika and post-Soviet period from the late 1980s to the present, including Natalia Kamenetskaia, Alla Esipovich, Marina Koldobskaya, Marina Gertsovskaia, Tatiana Antoshina, Natalia Elkonina, Marina Karpova, Irina Salnikova, Anna Frants, Anna Brochet, Elena Kallistova and Natalia Sitnikova.

Natalia Kolodzei
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Highland Park NJ 08904 USA
Kolodzei@KolodzeiArt.org
http://www.KolodzeiArt.org

CFP: 34th Annual Meeting of the Social Science History Association
Long Beach, California, 12-15 November 2009

The 2009 Program Committee seeks panel proposals that will focus on questions related to "Agency and Action". Agency – the capacity to act – is a concept central to everyday life and many academic disciplines. But quite different ideas of actors and agency abound. Constructivists celebrate agents as the autonomous springs of action. Utilitarians focus on agents as both foundational units of social structure and evasive delegates in need of monitoring. What are we to make of the relationship between these camps, each in its own way faithful to the idea of the unified social actor operating within external constraints, and others' ideas of subjects as internally riven and constituted by social, biological or discursive structures?

Turn the problem around, then, and foreground historical formations of agency, including social movements and the 'depersonalized edifices' of firms, states, families, networks, associations, schools, churches, and other forms of organized social order in whose name people act. How these edifices emerge, are designed, built, demolished and rebuilt, in continual processes of change: this is the flip side of the agency question.

As social science historians and historical social scientists, we hail from many traditions and disciplines. But we share common ground in the weight we assign to thinking historically about agency and action. In exploring the connections between agency and history, can we deploy our differences to advantage? How might our collective intellectual resources help each of us rethink our own and others' work? More broadly still, what do the streams of social science history imply for understanding action in today's world, and for the historical social science of the future? Let's embark.

Proposals for individual papers and complete sessions will be accepted at http://ssha.org, where you may also find more information about the conference. *Proposals for individual papers and complete sessions are due 1 March 2009*. Papers and Panels on themes not related to the "Agency and Action" theme are also welcome. SSHA will continue its generous support of graduate student travel, with the exciting addition of the Charles and Louise Tilly Fund, which will provide travel grants and, funds permitting, graduate student support for interdisciplinary research.

CFP: Russian Futures: Contexts, Challenges, Trends
Duke University, Durham, NC, February 19-21, 2010

Deadline for submission of proposals: March 15, 2009. Submissions should be sent *by fax* in the form of a one-page outline with title to: Russian Futures Conference Committee, Duke University, 919-660-3141.

Conference format: All papers will be circulated no later than one month prior to the conference dates. Conference proceedings will be published in a peer-review venue. The conference will consist of several panels of speakers organized on the following themes:

Semiotic Transpositions: This panel is devoted to explorations of the application and critique of structuralist, post-structuralist and non-structuralist semiotic theories with a focus on Russian cultural space. Suggested topics:

- Tartu-Moscow School of Semiotics
- Semiotics of Culture
- Semiosphere and semiotic spaces
- Mechanisms and modelling of languages and discourse
- Artistic texts and contexts
- Autocommunication
- C.S. Peirce in the Russian context

Lost in Translation? Women's Place, Women's Work in Russia Today and Tomorrow: This panel explores how women's private and professional experience and public influence are evolving in today's Russia, considering in particular how women have been affected by both the legacies of Soviet culture and the commercial juggernaut of the transition. Suggested topics:

- The life of the working woman
- Place and identity
- Women's welfare
- Family roles and their sociopolitical currency
- Public prominence = public influence?
- Religion and spirituality

Communication, Media, and Russia in the World: The media may be considered as that essential circulatory system, whose success or failure might be characterized as reception and non-reception both in terms of cognition and penetration. In addition, critical questions include: what is the shape of Russia in the international system; what and who is in the "national conversation" in the country via the media; and the strategies and methodologies of investigation. All of these may be considered in earlier eras of Russia as well as more recent ones. Suggested topics:

- What is Russia in global politics?
- Reception and non-reception
- Russian mass media within the historical/cultural, hierarchical and centrally determined "value" of cultural products

Towards the Rule of Law in Russia: This panel will consider law and legality in Russia. We invite proposals from different disciplines to examine any aspect of the following topics: Suggested topics:

- Current state of law
- Legal institutions
- Legal culture in Russia

New Perspectives on the History of Political Violence in Russia: This panel will look at the phenomenon of political violence in Russian history in a fresh manner in which the panelists will be asked to try to integrate the separate discourses of state and insurgent terrorism. Suggested topics:

- Violence from the Insurgent Right: the Black Hundreds and Jewish Defense Organizations
- Violence from the Insurgent Left: Socialist Revolutionaries and Anarchists
- Violence from the State: Who Gave the Orders to Fire and What were the Justifications?
- Toward an Integrated Theory of Political Violence in Late Imperial Russia

Demographic Change: Will Health and Social Stability Follow Sustained Economic Growth?: This panel is devoted to analysis of the changes in demographic behaviors–health, life expectancy, marriage, divorce, fertility, migration (and possibly educational attainment)–in Russia. The panel will seek to identify what has happened in the recovery decade (1999-2008) relative to the Soviet era and post-Soviet shock, and will examine the likely impact of continued economic growth on future outcomes. Suggested topics:

- Life expectancy recovery 1999-2008; their determinants and forecasts
- Patterns of disease-related mortality: declining infectious diseases and persistent degenerative mortality
- External cause mortality: accidents, homicide, and suicide
- Disability and health status: is Russian health improving even in the absence of life expectancy gains?
- Marriage and its consequences (births and divorces)–response to economic boom
- Is Russia undergoing a transition to Western European patterns of cohabitation and non-marital fertility?
- Internal migration within Russia: will the remote areas cease depopulating?
- When will the Russian population stop shrinking?

Visual and Information Literacy in Contemporary Russia: This panel discusses the proliferation of information, and its consequences, for scholars of Russia, as well as for the Russians themselves. We plan to discuss the need for visual and information literacy, that is, for a systematic approach to understanding the post-Soviet structure of information and the nature of Russian visuality itself. Suggested topics:

- The Role of Visual Culture in Post-Soviet Political Discourse and Identity-Formation
- Information Overload: How researchers and Russians themselves deal with the proliferation of resources (in analog and digital formats) both inside and about Russia
- The Goals of Slavic Information Literacy
- New Copyright Regimes, Old Problems
- The End of the Archival Gold Rush: The dilemmas of access to archival materials in Post-Soviet Russia

CFP: *ERAS*

Eras is an online journal edited and produced by postgraduate students from the School of Historical Studies at Monash University. As a fully refereed journal with DEST status, *Eras* is intended as an international forum for current or recently completed Masters and PhD students to publish original research, comment and reviews in the following fields covered by the School's teaching and research: History, Archaeology and Ancient History, Religion and Theology and Jewish Civilisation.

We are seeking papers from postgraduate students working in any of the fields listed above. Papers are also strongly encouraged from students in other disciplines, such as Cultural Studies, Indigenous Studies, Gender Studies, Philosophy, Sociology and Politics, provided such manuscripts are relevant to the journal's primary fields of interest. We are also interested in papers relating to the history of women.

Papers of 5000 words and a short abstract should be submitted to eras@arts.monash.edu.au by 31st March 2009. Detailed notes and editorial guidelines for individual contributors are available on our web site (listed below).

It is anticipated that the eleventh edition of *Eras* will appear in November 2009. Look for our tenth edition online at: http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/eras. You may also contact us at eras@arts.monash.edu.au

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WEW is a newsletter sponsored by the AAASS-affiliated Association for Women in Slavic Studies (AWSS) as a net-working resource for people concerned with the problems, status, and achievements of women in the profession. It also attempts to cover research and teaching in women's studies and questions of gender and family life in Central/Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

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