

Departmental Awards and Grants

German Program Grant Recipients:

Liza Gallant – 2011-2012 Fulbright Grant. Liza will teach English at a Gymnasium (academic high school) in Germany.

Andrea Gottstein – 2011-2012 Fulbright Research Grant (declined)

Edie Harris – SURP Grant (German). Edie will investigate the logic of truth and fiction in modern philosophical and literary texts.

Carly Hite – SURP Grant (German). Carly will study third-language acquisition by Turkish-German children in Berlin.

Mattie Johnson – SURP Grant (Linguistics). Mattie will conduct research with Professor Mary Paster on the phonology of an African language.

Sarah Noll – DAAD Summer Grant. Sarah will conduct chemical research at the Johannes-Gutenberg-Universität Mainz.

Jennifer Schmidt – Brueckner Grant. Jennifer will study environmentalism in German culture, with a focus on waste management and environmental education.

Benjie Smith – DAAD Summer Grant. Benjie will conduct biochemical research at Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg

German Program Award Recipients:

Liza Gallant – German and Russian Department Prize in German (\$50).

Outstanding academic performance and service to the German Program.

Andrea Gottstein – German and Russian Department Prize in German (\$50).

Outstanding academic performance and service to the German Program.



Russian Program Grant Recipients:

Kelsey O'Neal – Ulitin Grant recipient. Kelsey will work for the Danish Refugee Council in Kiev, Ukraine.

Jessica Noblet – Ulitin Grant recipient. Jessica will work for the Danish Refugee Council in Kiev, Ukraine.

Tommy Meyer– Oldenborg Travel Grant. Tommy will travel to Almaty and Astana to do research on Kazakh sports.

Russian Program Award Recipients:

Maria Whittle – Post-Secondary Russian Scholar Laureate (awarded by the Board of Directors of the American Council of Teachers of Russian). 47 laureates in the US.

Nina Vertlib – German and Russian Department Prize in Russian (\$100). Outstanding academic performance and service to the Russian Program.

*The Pomona College Department of German
and Russian proudly presents*

A Celebration of Senior Theses and Student Awards



Friday, April 29, 2011

1:15 PM

Mason Hall

Presentations of Senior Theses:

“Creative Writing in a Foreign Language”

Liza Gallant (PO) Major: German, Linguistics/Cognitive Science

This thesis is comprised of three parts: a theoretical examination of creative writing in a foreign language by known authors, including quotes and patterns and motivations to write in a non-native language; a collection of short stories, in German, of some of the funniest or most prominent tales of my life and those in it, ranging from being about my family, who has been said to put the “fun” in “dysfunctional” to my naive travels through rural Colombia; and a reflection on the process and linguistic problems I experienced while writing the second part, my short stories.

“Ostalgie: Negotiating Identity in the New Germany”

Andrea Gottstein (PO) Major: German, Linguistics/Cognitive Science

A portmanteau on the German words Ost (‘East’) and Nostalgie (‘Nostalgia’), the term Ostalgie can be used to characterize nostalgia for ordinary aspects of life in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR). In that representations of the past are constructed from within the context of the contemporary environment, Ostalgie is less of an attempt at replicating the GDR politically and economically but more a tool for navigating the new landscape. Moreover, because it promotes collective cultural discourse, Ostalgie can be used as a productive social and psychological measure that can inform the struggle to forge a distinct identity in a new united Germany.

“Sharing Expectations: Sexual, Social, and Familial Companionship in the Culture of Young Educated Russians”

Zev Gurman (PO) Major: REES

Funded by a SURP grant and the Vladimir and Sophie Ulitin Russian Studies Travel and Research Grant, this study focuses on forms of companionship discussed in interviews with young educated Russians during the summer of 2010. Participant responses categorize sexual companionship habits into three distinct patterns for sexual behavior within intimate relationships. Two forms of social companionship – intellectual and emotional – emerge from this discourse to further characterize intimate relationship behavior. Subsequently, responses to questions of participants’ expectations for the future link discourse on sexual and social companionship behavior to projected familial companionship behavior, particularly reproductive intent and family ideals.

“A Bolshevik for Capitalism: Ayn Rand and Soviet Socialist Realism”

Peter Jebson (CMC) Major: REES

Since the late 1950s, Russian-American novelist and pseudo-philosopher Ayn Rand has been “the ultimate gateway drug to life on the right.” Her philosophy – “Objectivism” – combined militant atheism, libertarian natural rights, and a philosophical commitment to what she called “the virtue of selfishness.” What is

less-often observed is that Rand’s work, especially her mature novels *The Fountainhead* (1943) and *Atlas Shrugged* (1957), bear a close resemblance, both stylistically and philosophically, to the Socialist Realist novel. This thesis identifies those similarities and attempts to answer the question of why a heavily Soviet-inflected writer was able to reach such cultural and political prominence in, of all places, America.

“Fixing History: Translation and Analysis of Three Science-Fiction Stories from Spanish, Chinese, and Russian”

Rebecca Lent (PO) Major: Comparative Literature

This thesis centers on my own original translations of three works of science fiction: “The Day We Did the Transition” by Pedro Jorge Romero and Ricard de la Casa, “Heaven and Fire” by Yan Leisheng, and “The Emperor’s Shade” by Aleksandr and Sergei Abramov. All three depict novel means of interaction with (and amendment to) history. The accompanying analysis section addresses nationalistic and ethical implications of using science fiction to hypothetically reshape the past, as observed in these stories.

“Armenian Economic Concessions and the Cost of Physical Security: How Much Is Too Much?”

Ian McGinnity (CMC) Major: REES

The Armenian geopolitical story since its independence from the Soviet Union has largely been one of unwitting economic and security concessions to Russia, which now controls all of the Armenian energy sector and holds dominance in its banking, transportation, construction, and telecommunications sectors. On the surface, these concessions on behalf of the Armenian government seem largely in conflict with Armenian long-term interests. However, they can be better understood when viewed with a historical perspective of Armenian physical security. This paper first addresses recent and major concessions made by the Armenian government, attempts to explain the logic behind them using Armenia’s current geopolitical positioning, and discusses whether or not these concessions to Russia are a price too dear to pay for Russia’s assurance of security.

“Moloch - An Essay on the Historical Ramifications of Lenin’s Philosophy of History”

Tristan Roberts (PO) Major: Philosophy

Abstract: This thesis examines the dialectical theory of history elaborated by Hegel and Marx, and the influence this idea had on Lenin’s political philosophy and practice during the Russian Revolution and its aftermath. I critique this theory of history on both theoretical and practical grounds, asserting that the elevation of history to an absolute value (in the establishment of international communism) shaped the strategies of the Bolsheviks, and gave them a justification for committing a series of atrocities. I draw on a number of histories of the Russian Revolution and some firsthand accounts/critiques given by Anarchists.