

Fall 9-1-2009

## Journalist 2009

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### Recommended Citation

University of Washington - Tacoma Campus and Moscow State University, "Journalist 2009" (2009). *Journalist*. 3.  
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# Journalist

Joint project of Moscow State University  
and University of Washington Tacoma





Editorial



Marisa Petrich | Pavel Koshkin

It's no secret that the Russian-American relationship has been full of friction — if you don't believe us, just stop by and observe our newsroom. But this summer, our leaders decided to hit the reset button and begin again. In our sixth year collaborating on *The Journalist*, a joint publication of Moscow State University and the University of Washington Tacoma, we have chosen to use the Reset Button as our primary theme.

In this magazine, we will present articles exploring this idea from a broad range of topics. Whether we are questioning Mr. Medvedev and Mr. Obama's attempt to reassess our partnership or commenting on our changing world, we have found that this concept can be applied in many ways.

We begin with discussing this reset directly, featuring predictions on what's ahead for our two countries from American and Russian authorities, articles on how the change has been perceived by our peers, and a discussion of American journalism in terms of the economic crisis and Barack Obama's presidency.

But the idea of a reset exists beyond our changing relationship. Today we are experiencing changes in the global economy, world political power, the environment, and more. Our magazine reflects these other "resets."

Finally, in the interest of becoming more aware of each other's cultures and way of life, we will present a series of articles on Russian and American music, theater, and film.

Throughout the magazine, we hope to further understanding between our two countries and contribute to the reset in our relationship. We feel political conflict must not prevent people from communicating. Before we can truly change world policy, we must change the way we regard one another.

# Reset button: will they succeed

by Pavel Koshkin | Anna Leonova |  
Darya Chernysheva

**T**here were signs of improvement in Russian-American relations when Mr. Putin and Mr. Bush came into office in 2000, but they eventually failed to build up multilateral collaboration because of political frictions. Now there are similar trends.

Recently elected presidents Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev are making efforts to "reset" Russian-American relations. But they have already faced some unexpected problems. American Vice-President Joe Biden's dubious rhetoric toward Russia this summer, his August visit to Ukraine and Georgia, and his description of Russia as a "junior partner" of the United States in the *Wall Street Journal* can seriously affect the Russian-American relationship. The U.S.'s attempt to deliver arms and other defense equipment to Georgia has already caused concern at the Kremlin and could be described as a serious obstacle for reassessment of inter-relations. On the other hand, last week, Mr. Obama refused to deploy a U.S. missile system in Eastern Europe, which obviously can be described as a positive sign.

So, will Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev succeed? Global stability depends on the answer. The following is a collection of experts' responses to this question.



Nicolay Zlobin,  
World Security  
Institute fellow

"Russia and the U.S. are obviously not going to be strategic partners in the near future, which Mr. Bush and Mr. Putin tried to do

in 2000. The domestic and foreign policies of both countries are very different, so the two are hardly likely to be engaged in multilateral collaboration. But it is not ruled out that the countries could succeed in building up a close partnership on concrete problems. If American politicians would not describe Russia as "the major headache" of U.S. foreign policy and the U.S. stops ignoring Russia's interests in Eurasia, the relations between the two will be significantly improved. Besides, now Moscow has a good opportunity to participate in the multilateral dialogue providing reassessment of U.S. Foreign policy. There seems no reason to avoid this dialogue; it would be rather foolish and might affect Russia's international heft and authority. If one doesn't participate in international debate and doesn't work out the policy that is useful for him, somebody else will do it.

I can describe Russian-American frictions as imminent; the problem is hardly

## Journalist

Joint project of the MSU department of Journalism, Moscow and University of Washington Tacoma.

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**Photo:** Kommersant Photo, TASS Photo, Eugenia Bobkova, Julia Gilichinskaya, Anna Laletina, Anna Leonova, Elena Shvetsova, Alex Newman, Jill Carnell Danscco, (*UWT*)  
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likely to be resolved during two presidential tenures. If we improve our relations a little bit, it will be an achievement. But it sounds naïve [to say] that Russia and the U.S. will become close ideological allies and strategic, political partners. We have to avoid exaggerated expectations and figure out the fact that Russia and the U.S. are still very different countries with different points of view on international events, which might prevent us from close collaboration.”



**Vsevolod Ovchinnikov, journalist and writer.**

“The Russian word ‘perestroika’ raised as many hopes and expectations as the new term ‘perezagruska’ (reset). I’m sure there is a potential to

improve our relations and I hope both sides will make it possible at least to repeat what Gorbachev and Reagan did in 1985.”



**Eric Rubin, Deputy chief of the U.S. Mission in Moscow, Embassy of the United States of America in Moscow**

“The agreements reached at the summit end a period of

dangerous drift in U.S.-Russia relations. While there are many areas where the United States and Russia disagree and will continue to disagree, there are many more areas where our interests coincide. We seek to broaden these areas of cooperation in a way that is mutually beneficial and serves the national interests of both countries. The reset in our bilateral relationship will not come at the expense of our friends and allies in the region. It is time to leave this zero-sum thinking behind. A better U.S.-Russia relationship will increase trust and cooperation and ultimately enhance European security.

The two Presidents agreed to create a Bilateral Presidential Commission, which they will chair, and which Secretary of State

Clinton and Foreign Minister Lavrov will coordinate. The Commission will include working with groups on nuclear energy and nuclear security; arms control and international security; foreign policy and fighting terrorism; drug trafficking; business development and economic relations; energy and the environment; agriculture; and civil society.”



**Andrew Braddel, the head of Associated Press Television News, Russia.**

“I think that Mr. Obama and Mr. Medvedev are already taking steps to improve relations that under Bush/Pu-

tin had sunk to an all-time low. Obama’s readiness to come to Moscow in July shows that the young U.S. president is eager to build the new relations with the Kremlin that he called for back in April. Now the Kremlin needs to make similar gestures, over Iran and a new nuclear arms reduction treaty to replace START.”



**Gregory Feifer, the former Moscow correspondent for National Public Radio (American counterpart of BBC) and the current correspondent for Radio Free Europe**

“I don’t think that in 2000 and 2003 Russia was really interested in establishing better relations with the U.S. On the other hand, Russia has tried to create confrontation with America and other European countries in order to amplify its role on the world stage. The Bush administration failed Russian policy, if it had any policy at all, and hoped Russia would go away and not be a problem. So, essentially our relations were really dysfunctional. What’s happening now? Well, the Obama administration is trying to restart relations. I think it’s a term of public consumption. In fact, the Obama administration is changing the relations as a long-term strategy that is

plotted out and it will pursue over months and years to come. The summer American-Russian summit is just the beginning. We cannot see any kind of real reset. If Obama’s strategy is ultimately successful it will be long arduous process. I mean it would be a little step. As the new presidential administration says itself Obama’s goal and task during this visit is to state American national interests to the Russians.”



**Yassen Zassoursky, President of the Faculty of Journalism (MSU), famous researcher of American literature and media**

“In my opinion, basically it’s possible to have strong subsequent collaboration

with the U.S. A. The necessity to make this step towards a normal partnership was concerned with a willingness of U.S. administration to reduce all those misunderstandings of the past. Besides, they have certainly had some economical reasons to launch this “reset.” But the major point of further collaboration should not be only in the political sector, but also contain aspects of cultural contacts and education. For instance, here, at the Faculty of Journalism, we have The Society of American Culture Research which has existed for the period of 60 years and will have its anniversary meeting this December. It means that we will continue to work together with our American colleagues in different fields of social life.”



**Mikhail Margelov, the head of the International Affairs Committee in the Russian Federation Council.**

“There is no spirit of animosity to Americans in us. We are not going to build confrontational relations with them. We want to help them to reset our relations.”





Gregory Feifer is a prominent American international journalist. He studied Russia and Russian Language at Harvard University. From 1998 to 2003, he and his family lived in Moscow. He reported on Russian politics for a number of publications including *The Moscow Times*, *World Policy Journal* and *Agency France Press*. He has been the Moscow correspondent for *Radio Free Europe* and worked as a journalist for *National Public Radio*. He currently lives in New York.

Feifer is the author of *"Spy Handler: Memoirs of a KGB Officer,"* published in October, 2005, and *"The Great Gamble: the Soviet War in Afghanistan,"* published in January, 2009. *The Great Gamble* examines the history of the Soviet war in Afghanistan. Feifer decided to write the book after he came into contact with several war veterans. "It was simply an amazing tale that's of course very relevant to what's going on now."

## Gregory Feifer: Russian TV news is unwatchable

by Pavel Koshkin

I got in touch with Gregory Feifer, the former Moscow correspondent of *National Public Radio* (NPR) and the current reporter for *Radio Free Europe*, in April, 2009 during the BBC debate at the Foreign literature library. He agreed to answer some of my questions. The second meeting with Mr. Feifer fell on the day when the U.S. President Barack Obama was paying a visit to Moscow. I sent him a message hoping to get him to agree to an e-mail interview. Fortunately, he agreed to meet me in person during a trip to Moscow. The result of that interview follows.

Please, briefly describe your journalism experience? What about your first journalism steps?

After graduating Harvard University I came to Russia in 1994. A lot of people were coming to Russia because it was the end of communism and the building of a new system. It was a great place to start a journalism career. Actually, it took me longer than I thought it would. I came here expecting get a job right away and didn't find one. I came back to the United States to get a Master's degree. Then I came back to Russia and started working for *The Moscow Times* and *Radio Free Europe*. I started writing a book and after I left Russia again, I came here to be the Moscow correspondent for *National Public Radio*.

How has the world financial crisis affected American journalism? Have you felt the consequences of the downturn?

Absolutely. I mean journalism in the States was already suffering. There was already a crisis in journalism before the financial crisis. The economic turmoil has really sped it up. Some of the biggest and oldest newspapers are now facing collapse. Newspaper readership is dropping. I can tell you that *National Public Radio* is doing quite well in terms of listenership: there are about 30 millions listeners. It's good, but because *NPR* depends on many corporate sponsors who now are giving us almost nothing; *NPR* had to fire 7 percent of its staff. I think it will face bigger problems as the crisis continues.

Do you think that American journalism

has changed since Mr. Obama has taken office?

I don't know if it changed immediately after he took office. Certainly under the Bush administration and after the first year of his presidency, especially after September 11, there were real problems in American journalism. A lot of news outlets were afraid to conduct serious investigative reporting or to raise questions connected with the government's official position on the war in Iraq. I think American journalism failed the American people and the world in general. That slowly started to change as Bush's presidency continued, certainly by the time of the 2008 presidential elections. Before the primaries, journalists were again doing serious investigative work and that has continued. U.S. journalism has been in a slow process of recovering from the dark years of the Bush administration and I hope it will continue doing so during Mr. Obama's presidency.

Why and when did you decide to become an international radio journalist? I mean, why didn't you choose TV journalism or newspaper journalism?

I thought I would be a print journalist. But, in the United States, *National Public Radio* is one of a very few serious news outlets that's truly national. It's a real institution. So when the opportunity came to work at *NPR*, I took it. I enjoy working in radio. Each media has its own pluses and minuses. Certainly, radio journalism is good. It allows you to combine descriptive language along with recorded interviews to bring the listener into your story. You also can use descriptive language in television to illustrate what you're showing. In TV, video images are the most important elements. For radio, it's the use of sound.

What major problems is American international journalism faced with? Do you think the coverage of international events is unbiased and objective?

I think the biggest problem in American international journalism is the failure to provide adequate context, particularly when covering issues in Russia. Often, journalists focus on only the latest developments. Because it can be difficult to get information from inside of the Kremlin, the journalist



will focus on speculation and rumors. In the process, he will disregard the broader context of the political issues and the history behind those policies. Russian history is not only the recent past. It spans hundreds of years and should be taken into account.

**If you would like to find first-hand, objective information about Russia, what sources of information would you choose?**

I would get in touch with the people who carry out decisions and actions about which I wish to report on. Unfortunately, that's often impossible in Russia. That's why one relies on former insiders, people who know how the system works, people who recently left their positions of employment, and very good analysts who have connections to the government and can offer insight into what is going on. However, it's increasingly difficult to do serious investigative reporting in Russia.

**V** "U.S. journalism has been in a slow process of recovering from dark years of Bush administration and I hope it will be so during Mr. Obama's presidency."

**What Russian newspapers do you think provide unbiased information? Is it possible for Russian journalism to cover events objectively within the country?**

Russia is often said to have no free press. Certainly, it doesn't really have a national free press through the medium of television. I find television news unwatchable. But, there are certainly good newspapers in Russia. I very much like *Kommersant*, *Novaya Gazeta*, *Vedomosti*, *Kommersant* magazines and also *Russian Newsweek*. There also are

several excellent web-sites, such as *Gazeta.ru*, which I try to read every day.

**What are the principles and approaches of a good reporter?**

I can tell you the principles that are very important for me. Always keep your attention focused on two aspects and that is the service to listeners, the readers, the viewers and also the story itself. When something is happening the journalists' duty is to convey that to the listening or reading public. Sometimes one knows the subject well, but finds it difficult to present it to the audience in an understandable and interesting way. Very often, especially in the States now, an opposite problem is occurring. Some journalists want to entertain the public and keep the reader, the listener and the viewer interested and in the process, the actual news information becomes secondary. For me, the biggest principle is keeping the balance between the two approaches.

## Realities behind Russian-American perceptions

by Julia Shamporova | Alex Newman

**R**ussian-American perceptions of each other have been consistently statistically negative and the reasons for this are complex and diverse.

A recent survey by the Levada Center showed a distinct trend in Russian-American perceptions of each country's policies. In this study, a striking 80 percent of the Russian public thinks that the policies of the United States have had a negative influence on the world, while a just as striking 53 percent of Americans said that of Russian policy. These perceptions, however, are not all grounded in current reality. Negative sentiments leftover from the Cold War are major contributing factors in the creation of these mutual negative images.

The negative opinions of the public in the United States are largely concerned with what happened during the Cold War, whereas the Russian public is concerned with the United States' policy-making at present. Additional strain from the Bush administration made present relations with Russia more difficult. In his video blog, President Dmitry Medvedev said that the Bush administration's bilateral policies had caused Russian-American relations to deteriorate.

A common assumption among the Russian public is that the Russian government would like to see a more multipolar world (one with multiple, equal world leaders) and is concerned that American policy towards other countries is too unipolar, with the United States playing the dominant role in constructing international policies. The United States has supported post-soviet countries, separating them from Russia and emphasizing its own pro-Western policies in those territories (i. e. Georgia and the Ukraine).

President Barak Obama repeatedly promised to make efforts towards a better relationship with Russia, which would mean a more multipolar world. However, his recent visit to Moscow was not as productive as expected. During the meeting, President Obama suggested changes in Russian policies with an emphasis on the reduction of Russia's nuclear armaments. Russians could interpret this directive from Obama as disempowering to the country that should be seen as an equal partner with the United States. President Medvedev will be visiting the United States as a response to Obama's visit to Moscow.

Despite the continuing negative perceptions, these presidential visits illustrate an attempt at "resetting" relations between the two countries. Nevertheless, the future is un-

certain due to differing beliefs on how those relations should develop.

One example of how the two countries are working together to develop a better relationship occurred recently in relation to weapon defense systems. The United States had an agreement with Poland and the Czech Republic to put an American weapon defense system on its territories. However, the United States also needed Russia's help in convincing Iran to cease its nuclear programs, and this system was seen as a threat to the Russian military because it was positioned so closely to the border of Russia. Consequently, the American government recently decided not to go through with this agreement at present, perhaps in order to gain Russia's support regarding Iran.

It is difficult to predict the temperature of future relations between Russia and the United States, especially considering that the countries have no past standard for successful, positive relations. Russia and the United States also seem to have different views of what it means to have successful relations. But, it is clear that efforts are being made by the governments of both countries to establish a new relationship and change our present perceptions of each other.



# Indebted to dollar

by Elena Shvetsova

**T**he dollar today has become the de facto world currency. Most countries keep their gold and foreign currency reserves in U.S. dollars, and the U.S. external debt has been growing at an increasing speed over the past 50 years.

Pavel Fedorov, an advisor with Morgan Stanley, says that it is necessary to understand that "the financial well-being of the USA is not so much a cunning plan by the U.S. government as it is a free choice of other countries. Trust in the United States as the most stable democracy is a determining factor in why other countries keep their savings in dollars. If Russia survives 50 to 70 years without defaults and devaluation of the national currency, then, after this, global corporations will start using the rouble as an accounting currency. For Russia to become a rich country, it is necessary to work more and with a greater efficiency to integrate Russia into the world community and develop the innovative sector of the economy."

Why don't we pay for goods with the rouble? What should be done to ensure Russia's prosperity? Ilya Kolosov, host of the *Sobytiya.25chas* news program on Centre TV, answers these questions in his film *Bet\$ennyi Dollar*.

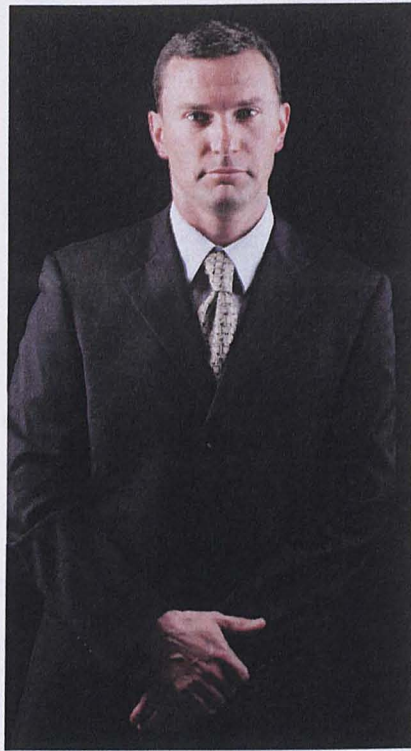
The film discusses the reasons for the success of the American economy and its impact on global finances. Following, Kolosov discusses his film in an interview with Moscow State University journalism student Elena Shvetsova.

**My first feeling after watching your film was that you have revealed the great secret of the dollar. Has your film changed anything in the financial and economic sector in our country?**

I have revealed nothing. I have just retold what clever people told me. Professionals who understand something about the economy and finances, who value their country, know about it and are taking all the necessary measures. Has anything changed? No.

**Do you think that the information in the film was not convincing enough?**

The information is clear; it is just an account of what is actually happening. Unfortunately,



our film has not made much difference yet. I think we should not overestimate our possibilities and influence. It is good that our channel TV Centre has made such film at all. I am very happy about it.

**People who deal with this subject in America might have seen this film. Did you have any problems because you revealed all secrets of their dollar?**

My film is not unique on this subject. There are some similar films — *The Money Masters*, *Money As Debt*, and *Zeitgeist*. I took a different slant, though. I showed how the influence of the U.S. dollar has been applied in our country, how it is being applied in other countries, and what we might expect in the future.

**Can our government take any measures to avoid being enslaved by the dollar?**

Yes, it can. But, there are influential people who make good money on it. What we are dealing with here is direct or indirect mercenary interest. The Central Bank, the banking financial system, industrialists, that is everybody who is involved in selling raw materials for foreign currency, they profit by it and it is impossible to break them now. They are very strong.

**However, at the end of the film you conclude: "There will be somebody in finance, too, who will play hard with America." Who will that be and when will it happen?**

There are not enough chances for Russia now.

China has nothing to gain from it, but theoretically, it can. It has enough resources. In Russia, it depends exclusively on the political will.

**You said in one interview that you were pleased by President Dmitry Medvedev's intention to make the rouble a reserve currency. Why hasn't the rouble become a reserve currency yet?**

See the second part of the film. There are answers to all of these questions.

**When will the second part go out?**

I doubt that it will be broadcast because the ready-made film was given to the management of a broadcasting company one and a half months ago. This film is very serious, and I perfectly understand them.

**So we won't be able to see it on TV?**

I think that it is impossible, at least now, because as the management of our channel told me, this film has to be approved by the government. And, as there is a lot of criticism of the government in the film, it will likely won't get approval. But, it has somehow appeared on the internet, and not its final version, but a preliminary, pre-edited one. As a result, the final version is a little bit different.

**It is a pity that such difficulties emerged with the release of the second part of your film.**

One should assess the situation we are in correctly. One should not build castles in the air. I repeat, such a film could not have been broadcast on any other channel. So, many thanks to TV Centre. And, it is not surprising that instant approval was not given this time. The film is stronger than the first one. The management said that film is a success as a TV-product. In the film, I work for the benefit of the channel, communicate with the audience, and appear on screen. It is not an easy job but it is much easier than that of the management, who must make the right decisions so that the channel can continue to operate. Nobody wants problems after the film is broadcast.

**Why did you make this film at all? So much effort and time was spent.**

It was interesting for me.

**Do you enjoy it?**

I enjoy it greatly. When I finished the second film and gave copies to the guys who worked on it, they watched it and said: "Cool film!" This is a great pleasure, and it is great that I have a possibility to do what I want.



## All eyes on China: moving toward a multipolar world

by Marisa Petrich

**O**nce upon a time, the major powers of the world existed only in the West.

Today, this sounds more and more like a fairytale. The emerging markets of the world continue to grow, and with a massive economy comes massive political power.

In a 2007 presentation at United Nations Headquarters, Antoine van Agtmael, author of *The Emerging Markets Century*, argued that over the next half century, the economically dominant Western countries would become increasingly dependent on emerging markets.

"This is a trend that will define our age," he said.

Van Agtmael's prediction seems increasingly relevant, even in the face of the current economic crisis. Take, for example, China.

Showing an average growth of nine percent annually, China's economy is now the third largest in the world, according to NATO. Not only that, the country has replaced the U.S. as the largest trading partner

of Brazil, Japan, and India, is the largest importer of goods from the U.S., and in 2008 became the proud owner of more American government debt than any other country in the world.

If that doesn't impress you, consider this: Also according to NATO, China is said to have about \$2 trillion in foreign currency reserves. By contrast, the United States budget deficit is expected to exceed \$2 trillion dollars this year.

China's upward trend has encouraged the suggestion that the role of the United States in the world economy is declining, and that newer markets will soon overtake it. For instance, the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China) countries held their first summit this year.

While the NATO Review report "Will the financial crisis make China a superpower?" identifies China as the most influential of the BRIC countries, it does not envision the country surpassing the U.S. as a superpower anytime soon.

"Both the cost and risk are too high for

Beijing to commit itself to so many international issues as the U.S., from Iraq to Afghanistan, from Iran to North Korea," the report states.

Others have suggested that the world political climate is shifting to a multipolar model, in which many countries have influence in world politics.

According to Fareed Zakaria's *Post-American World*, the new world order, more so than ever before, includes non-state actors (the World Trade Organization, European Union, and Al Qaeda, etc.) that play a major role in shaping global policy.

This, and the continual rise in power of other states, draws influence away from the United States. As a result, the world will move from a unipolar system controlled by the U.S. to one "defined and directed from many places and by many people."

Zakaria identifies China as "the challenger" to U.S. dominance. And while some may feel this challenge is distant, China remains the one to watch.

## New media transforming the world

by Julia Shamporova | Marisa Petrich

**W**hat do Iran, India, and Bhutan have in common? Each of these countries has seen major changes as the result of media technology.

These changes were the focus of Pat Mitchell's lecture "The Media Effect: The Role of Media as a Change Agent in Life, Work, and Global Relations" at the American Center at the Library of Foreign Language in Moscow on September 23. Mitchell, President and CEO of the Paley Center for Media, discussed how new technologies influence the lives of everyday people and the mass media.

"This is the most transformative technology that has ever come," Mitchell said.

Throughout her lecture, Mitchell used examples of Twitter (a social networking service that sends updates directly to mobile phones) being used to organize political change, as in Iran, and a series of text messages that helped a trapped colleague to find her way to safety during the attack on the Taj Palace Hotel in Mumbai.

Mitchell also used the example of a traditional society in Bhutan that, until quite recently, had no access to mass media. After the introduc-

tion of television, their situation changed: fashion now follows global trends, anorexia appeared, and women began to work toward equality after seeing images of their counterparts from other countries.

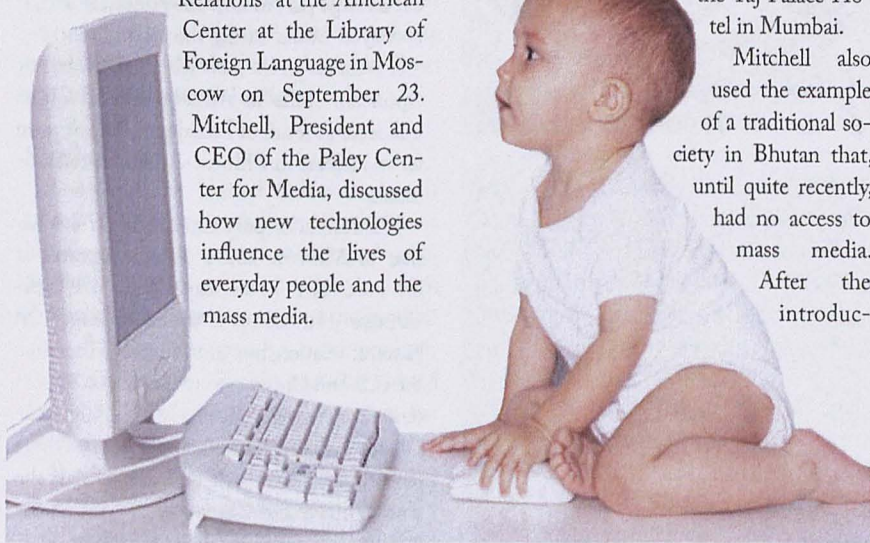
While the lecture and following discussion identified many challenges regarding the spread of media across the world, Mitchell felt that those who want to live in a global world should have that opportunity and shouldn't be prohibited from using media by traditionalists.

"There's a huge opportunity with new media and technology to make a huge positive effect," Mitchell said.

These technologies have had an enormous impact on society, but they also are changing journalism. Citizen journalists are replacing trained, major newspapers are going out of business, and surviving media outlets are catering to niche markets more and more.

"This media effect is in high gear, but it has nowhere near reached top gear," Mitchell said.

Mitchell seemed confident that journalism would evolve to incorporate new technologies, making journalism faster, smarter, and more efficient.





## The U.S.A. and China: partners or competitors

by Pavel Koshkin

**A**ccording to the 2008 U.S. National Security Strategy signed by American Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, China is seen by American officials as one of the United States most major strategic and economic partners.

The strategy calls for increased collaboration with China; however, it also clearly states that the United States still regards China as the major economic and geopolitical rival. Although the current military doctrine is controversial, it can be seen as a positive sign in building up American-Chinese collaboration.

Previously, some American military leaders and politicians were reluctant to admit the so-called "peaceful" development of China because of its history of global disputes and human rights violations. Moreover, the United States has included China in the list of the major American opponents such as North Korea, Venezuela and even Al-Qaida.

Now President Barack Obama is trying to establish close economic and political ties with China. Yet some journalists regard this trend as a threat to the U.S. economy and, moreover, to the very foundation of democracy.

For example, James R. Barth, a scholar in Finance for Auburn University, explained that American markets are overflowing with Chinese goods that are competing for American ones. That is one major reason why the United States should not ignore the Chinese economy.

"Everything I'm wearing is made in China. We have to be sensible about this. If Chinese cloth is cheap, convenient and of good quality, I will buy it. I don't care that it was made in China. Demand is what we have to take into account," he said.

Former National Public Radio journalist Gregory Feifer believes that the mutual distrust between the United States and China might cause a huge problem for both because "Chinese and American economies function almost as one."

Many products come to the United States chiefly from China and this helps to prop up the American economy which is heavily invested in it. Feifer claims that because of this symbiotic system, "both sides are interested in keeping their relationship going."

The image of China created by the journalists from the major U.S. newspapers is con-

troversial. While *The Washington Post* generally describes China as a dangerous competitor, journalists from *The New York Times* and *The Los Angeles Times* see this emerging power as a partner. All of those media outlets, however, are critical of China in regard to human rights abuses, political censorship, corruption, and policies aimed at Taiwan and Tibet.

The 2008 Beijing Olympics has caused a significant shift in American-Chinese relations and softened the image of China in the minds of some Americans. At the same time, the Olympic Games brought about some uncertainty among journalistic communities.

For example, Nicholas D. Kristof, a columnist for the *The New York Times*, said that he is "a great fan of China's achievements" and he has "often defended Beijing from unfair protectionist rhetoric spouted by American politicians, because China deserves an international celebration to mark its historic re-emergence as a major power." He cautions, though, that "so long as China insists on providing arms to sustain a slaughter [in Darfur,

in Sudan] based on tribe and skin color, this will remain, sadly, The Genocide Olympics."

*Los Angeles Times* reporter Ian Buruma suggests that the Olympic Game "will almost certainly bolster China's global prestige." He appreciates Chinese achievements, but also takes into account the drawbacks and the danger an authoritarian regime poses to democratic values.

*The Washington Post* regards the 2008 Olympics as a serious threat to liberal democracy in general and the United States, specifically. John Pomfret, a blogger for the *Post* and vocal opponent of the Chinese Communist party, is deeply concerned with the current economic and political growth of China. He sees the Olympics as a "clash of Civilizations," a great competition of two political systems.

Harold Meyerson, another *Post* columnist, compares the Beijing Olympics with the Russian invasion into Georgia and regards the Olympic ceremony as a great challenge for democratic values Meyerson.

"The summer of '08, historians will most likely tell us, signaled the rise of a multi-power, non-Western-dominated planet. It also was the time when it became clear that the control America exhibited in the global arena in the twentieth century would not lap over into the 21st," Meyerson said.

Has the image of China changed in the minds of Americans since the 2008 Olympics? Yes, indeed. On the one hand, more Americans have begun studying Chinese culture, custom and cinema, according to Lisa Liao, a Chinese-American and a U.S. Embassy officer. On the other hand, according to Feifer, the Olympics have caused an increase of anti-Chinese sentiment within the United States due in large part to how the American media portrayed China during the Olympics.

It remains to be seen whether or not any significant shifts in attitudes toward China will occur as result of President Obama's push for an increase in Chinese-American collaboration.

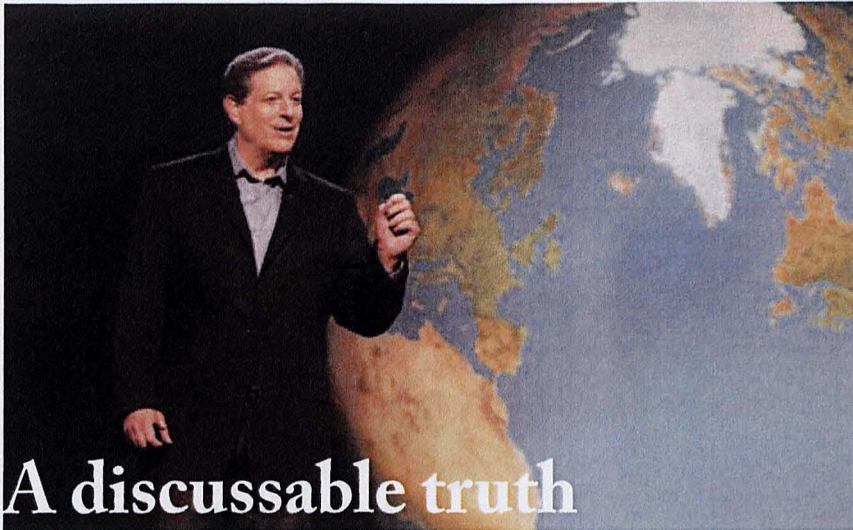
Eric Rubin, Deputy Chief of the U.S. Mission in Moscow and a former reporter at the *New York Times*, explained "The U.S.-Chinese relationship is the most important bilateral relationship in the world. Together, the U.S. and China account for about 30 percent of the world's GDP." He added that "the Obama Administration's approach to China has a simple premise: it is essential that the United States and China have a positive, cooperative relationship."



✓ "For those who may still harbored images of China as a poor third-world country, the Olympics demonstrated the astonishing strides that China has made in its economic reform for the past thirty years."

Eric Rubin





## A discussable truth

by Julia Gilchinskaya

**A**n *Inconvenient Truth* is a documentary directed by Davis Guggenheim and starring Al Gore. The film has earned almost \$50 million worldwide, won two Academy Awards, one Grammy Award, and won Al Gore the Nobel Peace Prize. These reasons alone make the movie worth paying attention to.

The film is based on research regarding climate change, CO<sub>2</sub> levels, and the condition of Arctic ice. Research shows that ocean temperatures have risen, glaciers are disappearing, and the poles are melting. The movie states that these cataclysms are the environment's revenge for the damage that has been done and that if global warming continues at the current rate, it will increase the strength and frequency of tornadoes,

killing a lot of animals and birds. If glaciers melt away, some areas will be flooded and others will experience drought.

Gore does not offer any new information; he simply presents current research and forms conclusions about it. Many people have criticized the film because of this. Creators of the *South Park* series even made a satiric cartoon about Gore and his environmental research. Gore's struggle appears there in the image of a fabricated monster, "Manbearpig."

There is the opinion that *An Inconvenient Truth* was made to be a "Gore advertisement," because the film is not just about the environment, it's also about Gore and his Macintosh (Gore is a member of the Apple Inc Board of Directors). In the movie, Gore frequently shows his Macbook and talks about his life, his friends and his family. It really looks like product placement.

It is a film about an approaching doomsday and even Superman cannot save the Earth — but together, we can. The problem of global warming does exist and it is impossible to deny it, but Gore explains what to do to protect our world from disaster, and offers ways to reverse the effects of global warming.

## Greenpeace tackles multiple environmental concerns

by Elena Kornilova  
Alexander Solomonov  
Diana Kulchitskaya

**T**he reset idea isn't limited to international and domestic policy; it includes environmental issues. We asked Vladimir Chuprov, a Russian Greenpeace officer and specialist in energy problems, about global warming, Arctic regional issues, and the possibility of collaboration between Russian and American scientists.

### Similarities

"Russia and the United States don't collaborate directly on environmental issues. Yet, they have the same problems and goals. Specifically, both countries must deal with the problem of waste created in the production of nuclear energy. One common environmental goal for Russia and the United States is to find sustainable alternative energy sources.

The United States is trying to solve the problem of energy conservation with the help of the Waxman-Markey Bill, which re-

quires entities to pay for their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions instead of reducing them. The current situation in Russia is similar. One of the main topics of Russian-American environmental collaboration concerns the problem of international nuclear burial sites on Russian territory. These burial sites are still not effective, but potential sites have been chosen. There are government lobbies supporting the idea of transporting nuclear waste to Russia."

### Demilitarized Arctic

"There is an ongoing battle for the energy resources of the Arctic, although the solution seems obvious and simple. It would be wise for our countries just to agree that the Arctic be treated as a demilitarized territory and that it be closed for commercial development, instead of fighting for oil and gas resources. It would be the best solution to avoid military confrontation, but unfortunately, it seems unlikely."

### Copenhagen agreement

"The U.S. refused to ratify the Kyoto protocol, and it seems that the American administration has no intention of ever signing it.

While the U.S. is a member of the International Convention on Climate Change, it is a very declarative body and doesn't act like its member countries have any environmental obligations. Now the United Nations is discussing the next agreement, which will be signed in Copenhagen and would replace the Kyoto protocol. The American administration would like the new agreement to determine a set reduction for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Russians and Americans agree on that point. If the new agreement does not offer a set reduction, the U.S. will block all the efforts to reduce greenhouse emissions, and also our chances to survive in future."

### Global Warming

"What we can see in Moscow leads us to believe, anecdotally, that global warming does, in fact, exist. It is especially noticeable in the northern part of Russia... Although, some scientists claim that this global warming is just a stage of a climate cycle and that by 2015 the process will go the other way around, it is foolish to bet our future on scientists who are hardly credible. As they say, it's better to be safe than sorry."



# Resetting the system

With the declaration of the “reset” Russia and the United States seem to be opening a new chapter in their relationship. The first official meetings of Presidents Obama and Medvedev should mark the beginning of this ongoing process. However, only time will tell whether the “reset button” will result in any substantial changes in policies.



Kommersant



The recently scrapped plan for a missile defense system in Poland was a major issue in U.S. foreign policy.

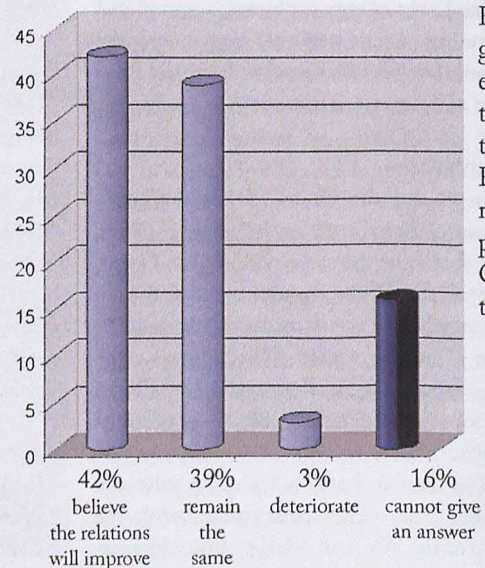
## Moscow summit outcome

- Nuclear missile deal
- Treaty allowing U.S. military to fly troops and weapons across Russian territory to Afghanistan
- Joint commission aimed to enhance cooperation between the two countries

## Missile reduction

- Each country to cut deployed nuclear warheads to 1,500-1,675 (currently 1,700-2,200)
- Delivery systems to be within 500-1,000 range (currently 1,600)
- Reductions to be achieved within seven years of new treaty
- Treaty to be signed before Start I expires in December and include effective verification measures

## Vox Populi—Russian perspective



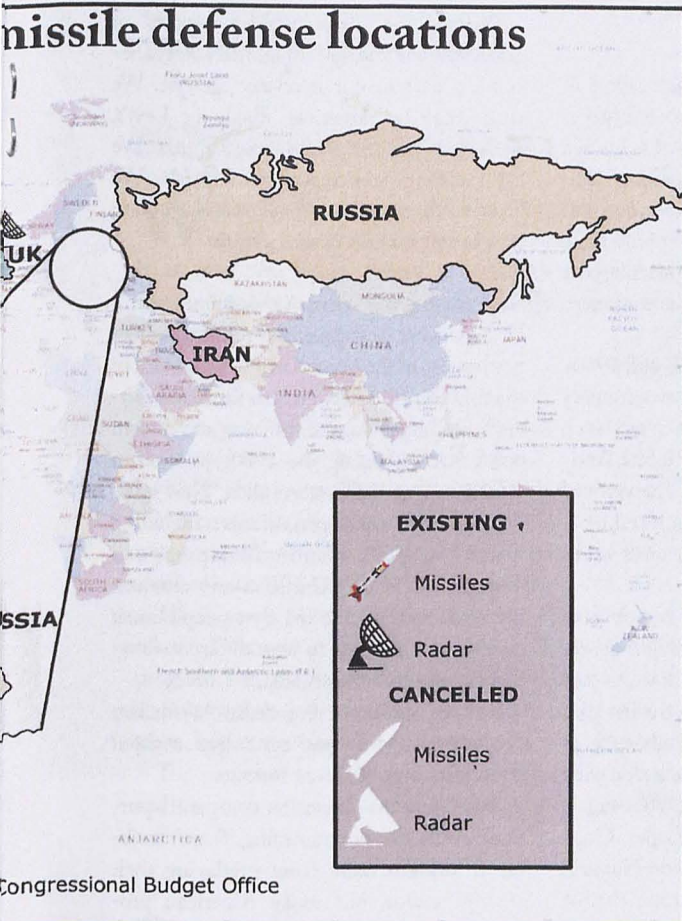
Russians give different answers to the question: “Will Russia—U.S. relations improve after Mr. Obama’s visit to Moscow?”

SOURCE: Levada Center



Idea: Diana Kulchitskaya

Graphic Design: Aleksey Spodineyko



and the Czech Republic proved there has been a serious shift

## New York talks highlights

The negotiations between the two world leaders were focused on Iran and further sanctions towards the Iranian administration.

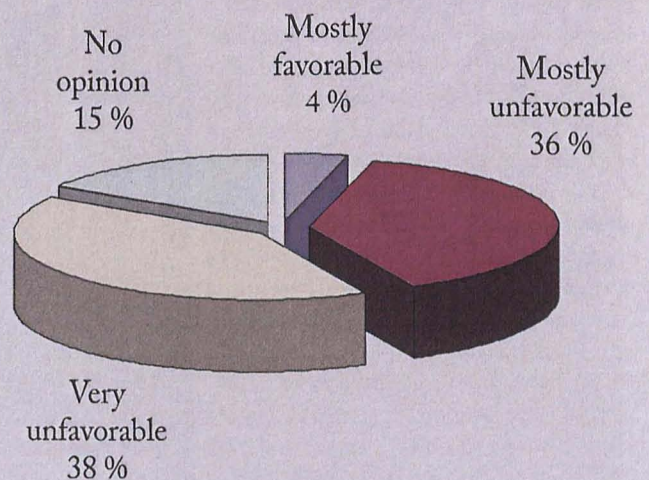
*"Russia's position is quite simple: sanctions rarely produce a positive result, but sometimes they are inevitable."*

President Medvedev

*"This should be resolved diplomatically and I am on record as being committed to negotiate with Iran in a serious fashion to resolve this issue."*

President Obama

## American views on Russia and its policies



SOURCE: Gallup Poll



# American thoughts: a view from the inside

by Amina Sheikhova

**T**he United States of America allowed me to see another side of everyday life when I was a student there. Don't think that I radically changed my views. But, I did notice that Americans feel more empowered to communicate freely and honestly; they assume they have the freedom to do what they want until they are told otherwise. It's not my interest here, though, to discuss Russian stereotypes of America. I am more interested in dispelling a common Russian idea that our country does not need any relationship with the United States; that we would be better off without any American influence. Let's play with our imagination.

Close your eyes and look at the world without the United States. Don't worry. It's not a nuclear war or natural disaster. Simply, our world has never known about this country. It doesn't exist and that's all. What things would we be missing out on:

## American food

The first thought that comes to most people minds is that it is unhealthy: ingredients are high-calorie and meat includes GMO and other harmful products. Yes, sometimes this is true, but do you think that students from different countries have enough money to eat organic food every day? As usual they are not financially well off and they haven't got the time to eat in a sit-down restaurant. Also, much of this unhealthy American food is delicious. Let me straighten out some facts.

One hundred and eighteen countries all over the world have McDonalds, with a total of 32,060 restaurants, according to findings recently published in *Vedomosti*. This is a great empire where billions of people are able to find jobs. While some people compare working in McDonalds to slavery, we can't forget that sometimes people haven't got any other choice.

Starbucks is another example of America's influence on food. Starbucks is the largest American coffeehouse company in the world. The quality of the coffee is good and in many places it has become habit to stop at Starbucks for coffee on the way to work.

Coca Cola is perhaps the most controversial American food product. When I was living in New York City, my mum would not allow me to drink coke. This is the normal

situation for most people in the world, but who can prove that it has a negative influence on our health if we only drink one cup a day?

## American culture

It is impossible to discuss every aspect of American culture, even in just one city. For argument's sake, let's say that the United States has several hundred museums consisting of some of the most expensive collections in the world. Given this point, there can be no doubt that America has played a leading role in both traditional and modern culture.

For example, during the 1950s and 1960s, the United States became a revolutionary leader in the art world through artists such as Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, Andy Warhol, and Roy Lichtenstein. They proved that one can focus on the common and trivial in everyday life and still create great works of art.

American music rendered the same level of influence on the world. It offered new genres of music ranging from jazz and rock, to soul and pop, to R&B and rap. And, the list goes on. There are famous jazz legends such as Miles Davis and Louis Armstrong alongside popular rock bands including Aerosmith, Bon Jovi, The Connells, The Eagles, Guns N' Roses, Metallica, Pearl Jam, and Nirvana, just to name a few. We can continue the list of singers from the United States: Michael Jackson, Mary J. Blidge, Alishia Keys, 2Pac, R. Kelly, Missy Elliot, etc. The list is seemingly endless. You may like or dislike their music, but, of course, you know them.

The United States also has had an influence in the arena of theater. We have known

about the existence of amazing Broadway shows. Now, we have the opportunity to see many of them in our cities and throughout the world.

Perhaps the most invasive aspects of American culture are those that have become a part of our everyday lifestyle. We wear jeans by American Eagle or Levi's, Keds by Converse, Adidas and Puma. We eat Hershey's chocolate and M&Ms. We listen to the music on our iPods. These have now become a part of our culture.

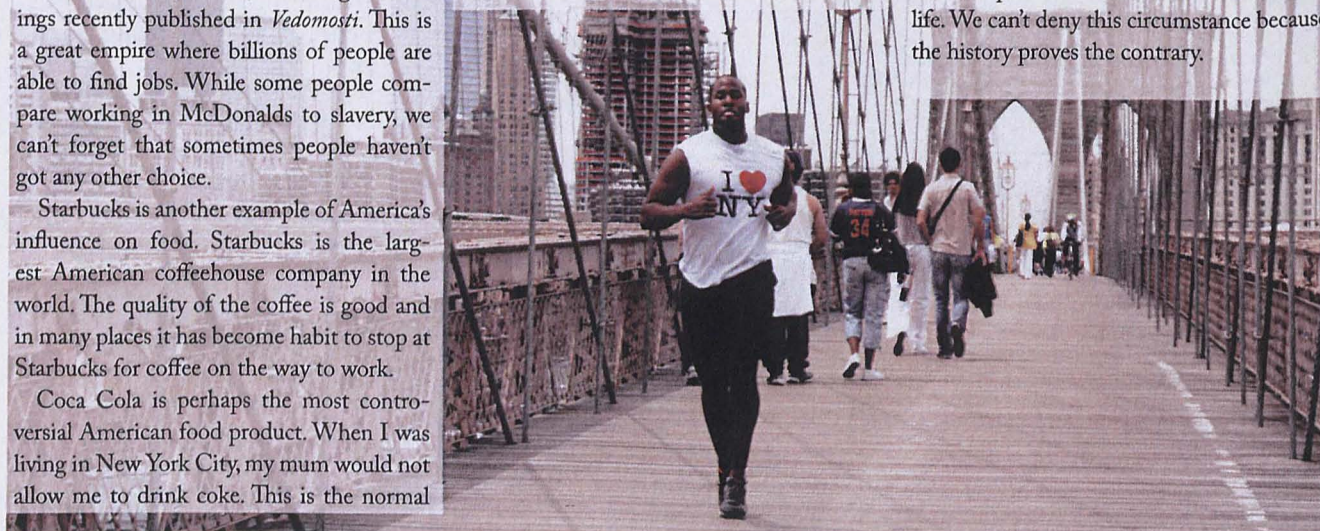
## American Literature and Journalism

U. S. writers and journalists have opened new spaces in the human mind. Literature in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries ushered in original ways of thinking about form and content. During the 1970s, journalism went into a new direction called "New Journalism," with early practitioners including Truman Capote, Hunter Thompson, and Thomas Wolfe. The United States also was the country that decided that people must have an opportunity to hear different viewpoints from the mass media.

Russian modern broadcast journalism demonstrates that we can't live without American entertainment formats.

Every year our television companies purchase American programming. There's nothing to prevent them from producing their own programs, but today American programming is in higher demand.

Now, we have to wake up and stop playing with our imagination. Are you sure that you are able to throw all of these facts out? My answer is definite — no. As I have demonstrated, American culture has had a great and complicated influence on our modern life. We can't deny this circumstance because the history proves the contrary.







## Ready to reset

by Anna Laletina

**When you hit the reset button what do you expect? In computer games, it restarts the game, losing the player's unsaved progress. What happens in life though?**

It's obvious that in reality we can't just leave our "progress" behind. Even if we start things anew, we have some baggage from the past. So did I when I was about to fly to America this summer. In my case, my "baggage" was my previous experience of being an exchange student in the United States three years ago.

Here's some history. While still in high school, I became a finalist in a scholarship program, Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX), and through my involvement in that program, I spent an exceptional year overseas.

The program was designed 17 years ago, and the major goal of it was, according to

former senator Bill Bradley, to enable young people from the countries of the former Soviet Union "to learn about democracy firsthand through experiencing it," thus to "ensure long-lasting peace and understanding between the U.S. and Eurasia."

So, does it prepare future leaders who would be able to press the reset button in whatever relations when necessary?

I would say yes, and most FLEX alumni I talked to would say the same. Youth exchange teaches open-mindedness and develops tolerance for differences and positive regard for others. This seems simple, but we do need those basic things in any kind of relationship.

I lived with an American family, was enrolled in a public school, and took part in activities in the local community, just to name a few things. As a result, I became a fan of exchange programs, and practically as soon as I got back home I started thinking of getting involved in another one.

This summer I took part in a popular program Work&Travel, and that was my second

long-term visit to America. I had three different jobs over the summer, and experienced yet another part of American daily life. My previous experience really helped me to feel at home while being abroad.

By now I have been a participant of two exchange programs, and clearly there is no better way to learn about the country than by getting involved in its daily life. It's crucial. The perception of a country really changes, and the media, for instance, can't influence your opinion as much as it used to, because you know for sure there is another side of the story, and so you don't make bizarre judgments on the spot.

If we go back to the start, we'll see that the concept of exchange programs grew out of a desire for nations to build bridges of understanding after World War II, and that's what it is still about today.

If you feel a strong need for some kind of a reset button in your life, it may be a good idea to get enrolled in an exchange program. As for me, I am ready to hit the reset button anytime.

## Promoting education

by Anna Leonova

**During the Cold War, some American organizations, such as the Fund for American Studies (TFAS), sponsored by the U.S. Congress, were considered to be propaganda tools whose missions were to popularize American values and ideas. Has the perception of these groups changed during the past 10 to 15 years?**

Being an alumna of the European Journalism Institute organized by TFAS, I can say that the public interest in different educational projects for journalists, politicians, and social sector collaborators now is extremely high.

It is obvious that in today's global world there is not only one player in the field of

international policy. Now Europe is also included in a process of global experience exchange. For example, in 1999 media-specialists of the Czech Republic launched a web project called Transitions Online (TOL).

Taking into account all this information, we should consider the relevance of the term "propaganda." Michelle Jeffreys Lee, coordinator of The Fund for American Studies based in Washington, D. C., is convinced that this organization isn't a propaganda tool.

"The Fund for American Studies allows students to intellectually focus on issues of freedom and liberty," says Lee. "Free markets and free societies do not just belong to America or to Western societies. Liberty is the right of all people everywhere. And the struggle to promote and protect freedom takes place every day in every society, even though some societies are more free than others. Propaganda is used by authoritarian regimes to attempt to control citizens; propaganda is advertisement, not education."

Rhea Penafior, a journalist from the Philippines and active participant in educational programs all over the world, suggests that "anywhere you go or whatever you read or see can be propaganda. This is just everywhere. However, we can make a conscious effort to resist it or not. But what is important is being able to know its underlying principle. Propaganda is not a bad thing. It still gives people the opportunity to choose what their ideologies are. In the end, they will be the judge."

Ayman Elsherbiny, collaborator of Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Egypt and a TFAS alumnus, echoed Penafior's position: "Nowadays, I don't believe that this kind of propaganda still has a great impact on people. We live in a 'global village' thanks to internet, new media, and new technologies in communication. People are no longer recipients. Instead, they are active consumers of information; it is like a two way communication process."



# The Types of rock

by Julia Gilichinskaya

**T**he Types is a Russian rock band that plays American rock in English. I cannot reveal the exact recipe of their music, but some components are evident. The majority of the songs are garage rock (the music played by MC5 and The Stooges in the late sixties). Other components are the glam rock elements of Sweet, T-Rex, and David Bowie; the classic punk of the Dead Kennedy's and The Ramones; a little of Elvis; and some disco. As a whole, it's proletarian glam and bourgeois punk at best. Only a few can transform such a mix into art and The Types' are among them. The Types live are a combination of rock music and fashion — the initial idea of true rock 'n' roll. The Types shining suits and tidy ties offset the grungy punk that the band plays. These guys know how to rock. Be sure to keep an eye out for The Types' nearest gig. Following is an interview with the lead vocalist of The Types, Dmitry Astakhov.

**Why does the Russian band sing in English? Why did you stop singing songs in Russian?**

We think the English language fits the music we play more harmoniously. This music was born in the English language and the phonetics of this language mean a lot for rock. For us, the vocals are the also an instrument, like, for example, a guitar. It's strange that nobody questions why we don't use a balalaika instead of a guitar, but everybody gets excited over the language. We use the English language as one of the paints in the musical palette. We like this shade, that's all.

We had a period of Russian-speaking creativity, now we sing in English. By the way, there is a song in Spanish on our last album.

So the choice of the language is just a question of our mood.

**What music creatively inspires you?**

The heart of our creativity is the garage rock of the 1960s with surf elements. It is The Kinks, The Stooges, The Sonics, The Milkshakes, and other bands who comprised the 1960s fare — wild, primitive, but melodic and mad rock.

**Is Russian and American rock different? What is American rock for you?**

Rock is a wide concept. It does not matter to us if it is Russian, American or somewhere else. It's still rock. There are bands whose creativity is pleasant to us and we don't care about their nationality. But, at the same time, there are great Americans whose contributions to the development and birth of rock music are invaluable — like Chuck Berry, Bill Haley, Elvis Presley, etc. Unfortunately, there are no similar figures in Russian rock.

**How do the Russian public and people from other countries react to your music?**

Great! It does not depend on the place of our performance or the social status of the listener. All people have a party at our concert. Everyone cares about our music. We play in absolutely different places — in underground rock clubs, in posh restaurants for oligarchs, in the largest Russian stadiums where absolutely different people gather together. We play fairly, professionally, with love. People love it.

The European and Russian public are a little different. People in Europe are less zombie-like because of the mass media; they make their own choices, have their own tastes, and don't listen to the crowd's opinion. There are few such people in Russia.

During our last European tour, people sang with us and it was extremely difficult to leave the scene — we had six encores. So we had a real success there.

**Do you think The Types would be popular in America?**

I'm sure they would. We know that there are a lot of cool domestic rock bands in America.

But a true rock musician is impossible without ambitions and we are sure our music is awesome. Americans were the first who offered us help, shot a photo session for us, and recorded the first video. Our album got awards for good design in Chicago in 2008. We wrote music for the Russian movie "Syndrome" and it won The Hollywood News Award in July 2009. Americans chose us several times to be an opening band in their concerts in Moscow. Iggy Pop is among them. And we trust his taste.

**How did you become an opening band in Iggy Pop's and The Offspring's concerts? Did you enjoy talking with the musicians?**

Everything happened absolutely unexpectedly. Stars usually listen to several bands for the opening of their concerts. Iggy listened and chose us. The same happened with The Offspring.

Our communication was very natural, despite that he is extremely popular — Iggy Pop is the legend, the father. There were no problems in conversing with any of the musicians. It was like a dialogue with any of our musician friends — we discussed sound, instruments, impressions after the concert. We were just colleagues, and for us it was a great occasion.

**Can Russian rock be popular in America?**

Like a mass phenomenon? I think not. At the same time, there were and there are great musicians in Russia who can be popular all over the world. This culture was forbidden in the Soviet Union, and such a band could not have been famous. Now we live in another country and I think we will see Russian rock's introduction into worldwide culture. If it was possible for a lot of Russian classical music performers, it could be possible for such gallant guys as us. ;)

**How do you see the future of rock music in Russia?**

It is difficult to tell. I do not reflect on the future of phenomena, even of rock music. The future of my family and friends is much more important to me.





## Cultural Odyssey rejects boundaries

by Alex Newman

*"... I believe an artist is supposed to 'afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted.'"*

*Rhodessa Jones, actress*

**Cultural Odyssey**, an avant-garde entertainment group, is a non-profit traveling show with a social-political twist. The theatrical group, founded in 1979, includes storytellers, singers, saxophone players, and actors. *Cultural Odyssey* landed in Moscow on Tuesday, September 21, 2009, to perform for Russian students and answer questions about art and social concerns.

Reality is like a wound. It stings when touched even slightly, but if ignored, it inevitably festers. The essence of avant-garde theatre is the rejection of cultural boundaries (sometimes venturing into the realm of taboo) in order to clean out the wound, to address these societal realities, despite how it may hurt. The prob-

lem with the socially-conscious performance of Cultural Odyssey, however, is that there is no transition from the pain of the problems to how we can help heal them.

Idris Ackamoor, founder of Cultural Odyssey and main speaker, began the evening with a lecture on using art as social commentary. This preceded a medley that employed experimental percussion (beads on drums, for example), the chorus of "The Lion Sleeps Tonight," and the vocals of actress Rhodessa Jones.

Jones played multiple parts in a monologue of pseudo-melodic, wailing improvisation that, however artistic and raw, was disturbing, afflicted, and near to ulcer-producing. The characters represented in the dialogue were in turn victims and perpetrators of everything from sexism to abuse.

The lines, "CPS took my kids, bitch/You gave CPS your kids," reproduced the conversation of a drug-using mother and her neighbor against a haunting, percussion only

backdrop. The lyrics, "Dad, I need a gun to be a man/Shut up, bitch, or I'll blow your head off," asserted with harsh reality the torment of young men drawn into gangs by violence, poverty, and racism.

"This [performance] is the epitome of art as social activism," Ackamoor said.

But this wandering into the dark folds of human injustice fails to produce anything but a heavy heart and the need for an Advil.

At the conclusion of the performance, Jones said, "Let us go home and feel grateful and be blessed..." which is probably the exact response this Picasso of experimental music, acting, and social commentary will receive. Though the message is honorable, the medium leaves one feeling deflated and demoralized. Realistic and well-done, perhaps. Revolutionary? Not quite.

Art is indeed a precursor to action, but any revolution (reset anyone?) needs more than outrage. It needs direction and, at the risk of sounding cliché, it needs hope.

## The Types: C'Mon and press play

by Kimberly Wynn

**The true testament of an iconic band is the ability to record an album that a consumer can play and listen to in its entirety repeatedly. This is completely plausible when it comes to indulging oneself in the up-beat, foot-tapping, head-bobbing, ecstatically exploding audio of the musical phenomenon known as The Types. The Types, a Russian rock band, is the epitome of rock 'n' roll.**

For American music connoisseurs, The Types' superlative sound could be described as a fusion of The Offspring, Blink 182, Weezer, and Elvis. This blend of musical deliciousness along with the harsh vibrato of Dimitry Astakhov, the lead singer and keen keyboardist, compliments the lyrics of The Types exponentially. Accompanying Astakhov in the group are the skillfully intense guitarist and back up vocalist Alexander Troshin, the mastermind of the bass guitar Leo Maloletnev, and the dynamic drummer Constantine Ignatenko.

According to The Types' MySpace profile, they were the opening

performance for the popular American band The Offspring when they visited Moscow on December 3, 2008, at the Olympiysky Stadium.

The Types may be a Russian band, but their most popular songs "C'Mon" and "Radio," as well as their entire album, *The Types*, is played exclusively in English. This cross-cultural blend of a Russian band performing in English adds a critical piece to the complex puzzle in reconnecting Russian and American relations with just the press of a button — play. The splendid music of The Types has the capability to unite two countries whose relationship is at a point of reset. By pushing play, our countries move forward toward a common goal of unity through the universal love of music. The Types are an exquisite connection between Russia and America in a union of musical glory — simply brilliant.

For more information on *The Types*, please go to [www.thetypes.ru](http://www.thetypes.ru) or visit [www.myspace.com/thetypesru](http://www.myspace.com/thetypesru).





## Public or private, first ladies mirror culture

by Daria Chernysheva | Kathleen Burdo



**T**he role of a country's first lady and the expectations that come with it differ from country to country. In many Western countries, the role is highly public; in others, such as Russia, the first lady continues to live her life as a private citizen.

In Russia, "the institute of the first lady is still quite young, so there are no huge expectations on the part of the Russian public," said Alena Doletskaya, the editor-in-chief of Russian *Vogue* magazine.

Starting in the Soviet era, the mission of the first lady was to raise children, keep house, and support her husband in his quest for a more perfect communist state. Russian people saw their first lady only at grand state events or at certain international meetings.

Mikhail Gorbachev's wife, Raisa Gorbacheva, was more public than her predecessors and took the social duties of her role seriously. A lot of Russian people didn't like her because she was fashionable and charismatic, and they felt she should be less public.

The balance between publicity and isolation was difficult for Ludmila Putina, the wife of Vladimir Putin, the former president and current prime minister of the Russian Federation. During Putin's presidency, she remained in her husband's shadow.

Little is known about the new Russian first lady, Svetlana Medvedeva, or her family. It seems that Medvedeva is eager to appear publicly, but after the inactivity of the previous first lady, she doesn't want to push the traditional boundaries of her role too much.

The role of the first lady in the United States, unlike in Russia, has a history as long as the country itself. Since Martha Washington, the position of the first lady has evolved

and expanded. Although she has no official role or salary, the first lady is a highly visible and significant position in the U.S. government, and the American public has many expectations of their president's wife.

The first lady is first and foremost the hostess of the White House. Beyond her job of appearing with her husband publicly, the first lady can serve her nation according to her own interests. Whether this is taking an active role in policy-making, devoting herself to charitable causes, or focusing on family responsibilities, she remains in the public eye.

Dolley Madison was the first to popularize the first ladyship. She attracted news coverage by working to assist orphans and women, dressing in elegant fashions, and undertaking daring risks to save important historical memorabilia. Until Eleanor Roosevelt, Madison was the model for first ladies.

Eleanor Roosevelt was an extremely public first lady. She traveled for her husband, Franklin D. Roosevelt, because he had polio and could not travel himself. Additionally, she hosted a radio show and authored a weekly newspaper column.

While Madison and Roosevelt each contributed to the development of the role of the American first lady, the most iconic first lady was undoubtedly Jacqueline Kennedy. The epitome of what the public wants from the wife of the president, Kennedy's charisma matched her husband's and her wardrobe set fashions for decades to come. She is not particularly remembered for her policy or charitable efforts other than patronizing the arts, but instead for how she presented herself and how well she fit into the role as the hostess of the White House.

Regardless of Americans' preference for

an elegant first lady, those who work hard to promote causes — usually ones which are not politically divisive — are respected in their own right. In recent years, Nancy Reagan founded the drug awareness campaign "Just Say No;" Hillary Rodham Clinton focused her efforts on trying to reform the American healthcare system; and Laura Bush supported childhood literacy groups.

Current first lady, Michelle Obama, is a seemingly perfect combination of the fashion icon and the caring, concerned citizen. Her issue of choice is supporting military families, and a close eye is being kept on her fashion choices. She also has decided to focus on supporting her family, leaving a successful career to do so.

Obama is hailed as a Jackie Kennedy, but her decision to play an active political and social role, pursuing an agenda of her own, makes her more controversial. Many Americans believe that she should take a less active role in politics during her first ladyship, and expect her to focus more on charitable causes and her family.

The differences between the expectations for the first ladies in the United States and Russia can be explained by a difference in culture. No matter what the American first lady chooses to do, she is expected to remain visible while she takes care of her husband and family, serves her nation through charitable acts, and acts as a role model for, and a visible representation of, American women.

But for many Russian people, it is acceptable and expected that the first lady will remain in the shadow of her great husband. In either case, the first lady must fulfill the expectations of the public and support her husband in order to reflect positively on the president and her country.



by Oksana Andrienko | Kathleen Burdo

**H**ailed as Russia's first blockbuster, Timur Bekmambetov's *Night Watch* is considered to have marked Russia's entry into the world of 21st century film.

The film, which focuses on the ancient struggle between Light and Dark, capitalized on special effects and action sequences. It was so popular with American audiences that Bekmambetov was hired to direct the Hollywood film *Wanted*.

*Night Watch* is a low-budget (ringing in at \$4.2 million), Russian action-fantasy film based on novels by Russian author Sergei Lukyanenko. *Wanted* is a high-budget (at \$30 million) American action movie about a secret society of assassins. Both films fit right in with the Hollywood summer blockbuster crowd.

Both of the films relied heavily on special effects, stunts, and action scenes to entertain audiences without forcing them to think too much. Both scripts and plots were considered uninspiring by critics, with Entertainment Weekly's Lisa Schwarzbaum going so far as to call *Wanted* "unintelligible and idiotic." Despite this, critics found the film entertaining.

"[*Wanted* is] made for fans of films that really just want to see some great visuals, some amazing sequences, and some terrific performances," said Richard Roeper of *Ebert & Roeper*.



## Russians respond to Hollywood

The response to *Night Watch* was similar. Although the films lack substance, they were well-received by audiences. In Russia, *Night Watch* was heavily promoted, and the unofficial slogan for the film was "Our Answer to Hollywood." This appeal to patriotism allowed Russian audiences to feel that, by supporting the film, they were helping Russia compete with Hollywood.

"I always felt a little embarrassed for Russian movies.... It was like the Stone Age in terms of special effects and editing. This one? You can love it or not, but it's a very high-quality film," said Russian film critic Aleksei V. Prostyakov.

Many people felt that *Night Watch* was a

complete departure from Soviet-era films. Instead of taking pride in Russian-style filmmaking and continuing the tradition, the film seemed to be an attempt to copy Hollywood films.

"*Night Watch*, in my opinion, was shit... I didn't understand anything. The plot is not understandable... Everything flashes, shoots, blows up, and it is bad, stupid, inartistic," said well-known Russian director Alexey Balabanov. "Even my little son, who visits all the premieres, said, 'Daddy, this movie is very bad.'"

Hollywoodization may not be appreciated by Russian film purists, but this tactic never fails to entertain American audiences. Though the film was popular in the United States, the fact that the film was in Russian and required audiences to read subtitles made it less competitive.

20th Century Fox, capitalizing on the success of *Night Watch* and taking advantage of the linguistic barriers presented by the original film, announced plans for a Westernized remake — "Westernized" meaning "with American actors speaking English."

In the United States, audiences loved *Night Watch* for being Hollywoodesque. In Russia, audiences only loved it because of advertising and propaganda. As Balabanov said, "There is no advantage neither for art, nor for our industry."

## Barbucks: Starbucks' transformation to European café

by Kimberly Wynn

**S**tarbucks, the Goliath of coffee corporations, has felt tremendous pressure recently in the United States from rival companies McDonalds and Dunkin' Donuts. Since many Americans have felt the impact of the economic crisis, they have been inclined to purchase their coffee drinks from the cheaper establishments.

The increase in American consumption of lower priced coffee drinks has leveled the playing field. But the masterminds at Starbucks have developed a new game plan that includes serving alcohol to increase profit margins.

According to *New York Times* journalist Brad Stone, the executives at Starbucks are going back to their roots by re-hiring chief executive Howard D. Shultz. Shultz founded

the Starbucks empire. In 1971, he and the also re-hired Arthur Rubinfeld, president of global development opened the first Starbucks store in Pike's Place Market in Seattle, Wash.

This year Starbucks introduced a European inspired café called the 15th Ave Coffee and Tea on Capitol Hill in Seattle. The café does not display the signature Starbucks symbol normally featured above the entrance. However, Starbucks whole bean coffee and Tazo tea will be served.

According to a press release from Starbucks, the development of 15th Ave Coffee and Tea is an attempt to increase evening business by serving alcohol.

"This coffeehouse design is reminiscent of a European mercantile and draws inspiration from the original Starbucks location opened

in Seattle's Pike Place Market 38 years ago. It's eclectic and raw, featuring locally sourced and reused materials that are one-of-a-kind," said the press release.

At cafés in other parts of the world, including Russia, a full bar is usually present containing hard alcohol, wines, and beers. 15th Ave Coffee and Tea will not carry hard alcohol, but will serve wine and beer, according to *USA Today*.

Starbucks may continue this growth of Europeanized style cafés if there is a strong response from consumers.







## Jazz concert captivates audiences

by Eugenia Bobkova

**O**n the 17th of September, Nicole Henry, a popular American Jazz singer, gave a concert at the Durov Art Cafe in Moscow, and later played another one in the town of Zvenigorod.

Henry played with prominent Russian Jazz musicians Oleg Butman, Natalya Smirnova, and Anton Davidyants, all of whom who are involved in the Jazz Passion Project.

Henry is often compared with prominent American singers such as Whitney Houston and Patty Smith because of her vocals and style. Being interested in different artistic fields since her childhood, including painting, cello, piano, and choir, Henry could not imagine that as an adult she would be performing jazz in different countries throughout the world.

She became famous first in Japan, where her albums made the Top 10 and she was dubbed the “Newcomer of 2004.” She later achieved popularity in her homeland, the United States.

Henry’s Moscow performance brought together a lot of Russian people. Women in evening dresses and men in suits and ties sat around the tablecloth and candle-covered tables. On the stage, the musical instruments were prepped and waiting.

The show began when the lights dimmed. Suddenly, there was a beautiful female voice singing smooth and sensitive music. The audience was impressed and quieted immediately, and Henry received flowers and a standing ovation at the end of her first song.

The concert didn’t finish until well after 11 p. m., but everyone stayed until the end. The atmosphere was perfect for people to enjoy the evening with friends.

## From the Cold War to the big screen

by Oksana Andrienko

**N**owadays some Russian actors have made quite a successful career in Hollywood. It’s hard to imagine, but, in counterbalance, Hollywood stars take part in different Russian movies. Has the reset begun earlier than we thought?

It all began in the USSR. During the Cold War, it was very hard to leave the country, almost forbidden for most of citizens. Despite this difficulty, Savelii Kramarov, one of the greatest Russian actors, succeeded. When Russian directors stopped inviting him to produce films in Russia, he decided to ask the government if he could move from the Soviet Union. He was rejected.

In 1981, he wrote a letter to American President Ronald Reagan, which was full of complaints concerning his destiny. This letter was read on the radio station The Voice of America several times. That same year, he immigrated to the United States. There he took part in different movies, such as *Moscow on the Hudson*, a bittersweet story set against the backdrop of the Cold War, pre-perestroika years of the early 1980s. He also acted with Arnold Schwarzenegger in the movie *Red Heat*.

After the Soviet era, when the Iron Curtain was removed, the political crisis had begun, so there was no work for actors in the new Russia. Those who had fortitude went to the United States to pursue their dreams — people like Vladimir Mashkov, Oleg Menshikov, Valeriy Nikolaev and others. Mashkov was even offered a part as the boyfriend of Lara Croft (Angelina Jolie) in *Tomb Raider*, but he refused because he was occupied with his own Russian project.

Former boxer Oleg Taktarov had decided to move to the United States after seeing success in Russia. After some roles in low-budget American movies, he acted in some

famous ones such as *Air Force*, *15 Minutes*, *Rollerball*, and *Miami Vice*. He also acted with Vladimir Mashkov in the TV show “Alias” — both were given “bad guy” roles, appealing to the stereotype of Russian villains shown since the Cold War.

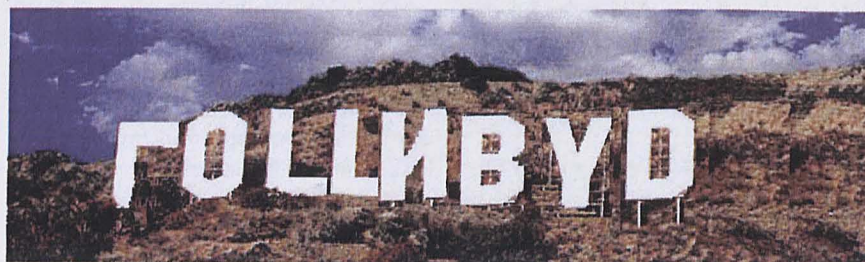
Recently, American audiences have started to watch modern Russian movies. One of the first films was *Night Watch* by Timur Bekmambetov. He definitely knows what he is doing, because after his two Russian movies had been so well-received by American audiences, he was invited to the United States as a guest director of the new blockbuster film, *Wanted*.

There is one actor who wants to break the stereotype of the Russian person who drinks vodka and plays a balalaika. His name is Dolf Lundgren. After he visited Russia several times, he decided to make a movie about a true, strong-spirited Russian person.

In the last few years, some American actors have taken part in different Russian movies. The most constant American member of the Russian film industry is Michael Madsen. He acted in *Smatyovay udochki* (*Clear Out*), *Muzhskoy sezon*. *Barkhatnaya revolyutsiya* (*A man’s season — velvet revolution*) and *Put* (*The way*). He admitted that he likes to return to Russia because he is lost in admiration of it.

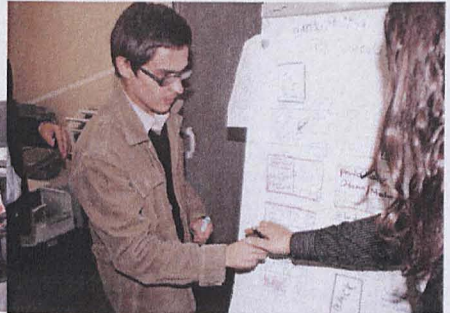
“America is a child in comparison with Russia. What a culture, what architecture,” he said.

Part of the film *The Bourne Supremacy* was shot in Russia. Oxana Akinshina, a young and successful Russian actress, took part in the movie. Now American directors choose Russian actors or actresses for Russian roles, rather than following their former methods: “Do you speak Russian?” — “A little bit” — “Ok, you’re hired.” This is the way of the so-called reset as it develops in Russian-American film industry.



Alex Newman





**Oksana Andrienko** is a fourth year student at Moscow State University (MSU) in the faculty of journalism. She hopes to become a public relations manager and she is interested in foreign languages, classical music, as well as playing and composing music.

**Eugenia Bobkova** is a third year student at MSU in the faculty of journalism with a focus in radio broadcasting. She hates working under pressure, but loves a challenge and she has developed a life principle to never lose her individuality in her work because her journalistic work comes from the heart.

A senior at University of Washington Tacoma (UWT) studying international affairs, **Kathleen Burdo** has spent basically the entire time in Moscow trying to convince Chris to let her smuggle home a kitten. One day, she will have a career negotiating backroom deals between countries, but until then she will pretend to be a journalism student because that is where all the cool kids are at.

**Daria Chernysheva** is a fourth year student at MSU in the faculty of journalism. She hopes to become a television journalist with a focus on entertainment, as well as a proud owner of a dachshund.

**Dr. Chris Demaske** is an Associate professor of communication at UWT. She teaches a variety of communication and journalism courses, and her research focus is on issues pertaining to First Amendment law.

**Julia Gilichinskaya** is a fifth year student at MSU in the faculty of journalism. She enjoys watching all cartoons, especially Donald Duck, aspires to be a helicopter pilot, and she'll write her graduate work about the flying phenomenon known as Superman.

**Adrienne Ione** is the director of the Math +Science+Leadership=The MSL Program with the Institute of Technology at UWT. She enjoys participating (but no one knows why) in Ironman Triatholons.

## Behind the scenes

**Elena Kornilova** is a fourth year student at MSU in the faculty of journalism. She aspires to become a professional singer.

**Pavel Koshkin** is a fourth year student at MSU in the faculty of journalism. He enjoys American and British journalism, international relations, playing guitar, sports, and the Disney characters Timon and Pumba.

**Diana Kulchitskaya** is a first year PhD student in the faculty of journalism at MSU. She enjoys international journalism and languages, and she would like to be a foreign correspondent one day.

**Galina Kuznetsova** is an alumnus to the faculty of journalism of MSU. She enjoys listening to music, especially Diana Ross' "I Will Survive," while she works.

**Anna Laletina** is a third year student at MSU in the faculty of journalism. She wants to have the ability to never sleep so she can meet as many people and engage in as many activities as possible.

**Anna Leonova** is a fourth year student in the international department of the faculty of journalism at MSU. She is one of the



co-founders of the International League of Young Journalists, and she enjoys studying multiple foreign languages.

**Dr. Maria Lukina** is an Associate professor and the deputy dean at MSU's faculty of journalism. She teaches classes on basic journalism, reporting, and interviewing, and her research focus is on internet journalism.

**Alex Newman** is a senior at UWT majoring in communication. Her passions include writing, poetry, directing, and acting.

**Marisa Petrich** is a senior at UWT majoring in communication. She has a habit of taking on far too many activities, and hopes to one day experience "free time."

**Julia Shamporova** is a fourth year student at MSU in the faculty of journalism. She is specializing in American and British journalism, she would like to work as a foreign journalist, as well as become a news anchor and an internationally acclaimed actress.

**Amina Sheikova** is a fourth year student at MSU in the faculty of journalism. Her ambition in life is to become a director of documentary films.

**Elena Shvetsova** is a third year student at MSU in the faculty of journalism. She enjoys traveling and meeting new people, is very interested in photography, and hopes to become a photo journalist one day.

**Alexander Solomonov** is a second year student at MSU in the faculty of journalism. His dream in life is to design and live in a modest home located in Spain.

**Aleksey Spodineyko** is a third year student at MSU in the faculty of journalism. He enjoys being a DJ at nightclubs and his passion lies in photography and graphic design.

**Kimberly Wynn** is a senior at UWT majoring in communication. She enjoys watching and playing sports, spending quality time with family, friends and her beloved boyfriend Danny Lewandowski Jr., and hopes to one day work for ESPN.



