Fall 2018

Syllabus: “Until It Was No More:” The Cold War and the Fall of the USSR in Literature and Film (Russian 221)

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RUSS 225: Fall 2018: MWF 1010-1100 ASC126
“Until It Was No More:” The Cold War and the Fall of the USSR in Literature and Film
Instructor: Anna Aydinyan
Office Hours: Tuesdays 9:10 - 11:00 am and 12:10 - 3:00 pm
CEL Community Partner: Noel McHardy (MVHS)

Until the mid-1980s, it never even occurred to anyone that in our country anything could change. Neither to children nor to adults. There was a complete impression that everything was forever.  

Songwriter Andrei Makarevich

Course description:
How was it possible that the last Soviet generation did not foresee the “collapse” of its country, and yet when it happened was not surprised by it? Did the workers of the last two decades before perestroika “trade social security for political compliance?” What role did nationalism and the process of decolonization play in the country’s disintegration? Did the Cold War rivalry precipitate its fall? How successful was someone who came of age during perestroika in embracing market relations? While examining the answers to these questions as provided by anthropologists, political scientists and historians, we will also search for insights from Soviet and Post-Soviet literature and film. The grades will be based on participation in class discussions, the questions posted by students on our online forum before each class, two presentations of scholarly articles, and CEL portfolio.

CEL COMPONENT: This course has a Community Engaged Learning component. We will explore the film Hipsters dedicated to the Soviet youth culture during the Cold War in collaboration with the Mount Vernon High School class in World History?

Grading:
Participation in class discussions - 25%
Questions posted on the forum - 20%
Presentations - 30% (15% each)
CEL Portfolio - 25%

Kenyon Students’ CEL Portfolio Will Include:
1 Essay
2 Critical reflections
1 Discussion plan
1 Presentation slide
Photos documenting the event
CEL Project: **Imagining Each Other**

1. KC students give a 10 minute group presentation for the MVHS students in order to put the film into its historical context.

2. KC students work in pairs and lead a discussion among a group of 4-5 MVHS students. To start up the discussion they pose 10 questions that they prepare in advance after which they encourage the students from MVHS to come up with their own questions. While leading the discussion they encourage MVHS students to think of the representations of foreigners in American film. Do the villains often speak with a foreign accent? Is this tendency changing in the recent films? Do these representations influence the way the students see other cultures?

3. Homework assignment for both the KC students and the MVHS students: Ask your parents, grandparents, or other relatives, who lived during the Cold War, to tell you how they felt about the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries at that time. Do they think about their Cold War adversaries differently now? What is your own opinion on the subject? What do you think about the current relations between the US and Russia? Summarize your ideas in a short essay.

4. MVHS students email their drafts to the KC student that led the discussion in their group. KC student email them their suggestions on how to improve their essays. This will make KC student to also reassess and improve their own essays.

5. During a follow up meeting the students share and discuss their essays with the entire class.

6. After completing the CEL project Kenyon students will participate in Critical Reflection Activities, according to the **D.E.A.L** Model:

- **Describe** – Objective description of experience
- **Examine** – Analyze experience through academic/disciplinary lens
- **Articulate Learning** – What was learned, how it was learned, why it matters, what it means for my future behavior

**Kenyon Critical Reflection Assignments:**

**Describe your CEL experience:**
- How did you prepare for your visit to the MVHS and interactions with MVHS students? What materials did you use for your research? What class activities did you do in anticipation of your interactions with the MVHS students?
- Describe your visit to the MVHS. What did you see? What did you do? What did you say? Whom did you meet? What did they do or say?

**Examine – Analyze experience through academic/disciplinary lens (academic learning):**
- Which new facts and concepts from the journal articles and book chapters that we read during this course prepared you best for the presentation that you gave to the MVHS students?
- Which of the course materials were you able to use spontaneously during the follow up discussion with the MVHS students?
• What skills acquired in this class were the most useful during the different stages of this project?
• Which areas of preparation was most relevant during your interactions with the MVHS students?
• What specific collaborative activities, group discussion and personal interactions made you aware of your own values, views and possible biases?

**Articulate Learning:**
• How did your interactions change your understanding of the reading material? Did it become deeper; did you gain a new perspective?
• Did your collaborative project give you a better understanding of the ideological confrontation during the Cold War, and the role of cinema in articulating it?
• Why this learning matters? Will it change your future behavior? Did this collaboration result in your personal growth? Did it make you a better citizen of your country and the world?

**Learning goals for Kenyon and Mount Vernon High School students:**
• Analyzing the cinematic representation of the Soviet youth culture in the Cold War era vis-à-vis Western influences, together with the Mount Vernon High School students, Kenyon students will achieve a more nuanced understanding of the ideological opposition between the two systems and its representation in cinema.
• Cinema is a mediated representation of historical events and cultural identities. The students will grasp ideological and artistic mediation discussing the reasons behind different ways the Cold War adversaries were represented in film throughout the twentieth and twenty first centuries.
• The discussion of the film Hipsters will lead to a more general discussion of the Cold War anxieties. Both Kenyon students and MVHS students will be encouraged to interview their family members, who remember how film and media presented the confrontation to the public, and how their feelings about their Cold War adversary changes throughout their lives.
• One of the desired outcomes of these reflections is to prepare citizens who are aware of the destructive nature of war, especially one between two nuclear powers, and the importance of resolving political conflicts through professional and popular diplomacy instead of military confrontations.
• Another equally important outcome is the students’ development as independent thinkers and critical consumers of cultural production.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Unexcused absences will lower your attendance and participation grade.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Kenyon College is, at the core, an intellectual community of scholars – students and faculty – engaged in the free and open exchange of ideas. Critical to this lively exchange and deep engagement with ideas is the academic integrity of our work, both inside and outside the classroom.
At Kenyon we expect all students, at all times, to submit work that represents these standards of academic integrity. It is the responsibility of each student to learn and practice the proper ways of documenting and acknowledging those whose ideas and words you have drawn upon (see Academic Honesty and Questions of Plagiarism in the Course Catalog). Ignorance and carelessness are not excuses for academic dishonesty. If you are uncertain about the expectations for academic honesty in this class, please ask for clarification.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION SYLLABI INFORMATION: Students who anticipate they may need accommodations in this course because of the impact of a learning, physical, or psychological disability are encouraged to meet with me privately early in the semester to discuss their concerns. In addition, students must contact Erin Salva, Director of Student Accessibility and Support Services (740-427-5453 or salvae@kenyon.edu), as soon as possible, to verify their eligibility for reasonable academic accommodations. Early contact will help to avoid unnecessary inconvenience and delays.

Week 1
Arkady and Boris Strugatsky, Monday Begins on Saturday

MONDAY: Timeline of Soviet History
WEDNESDAY: Monday Begins on Saturday, pages 1-32
FRIDAY: Monday Begins on Saturday, pages 32-61

Week 2
Arkady and Boris Strugatsky, Monday Begins on Saturday

Film: I am Twenty Years Old - view on Kanopy through Kenyon library

MONDAY: Monday Begins on Saturday, pages 61-132
WEDNESDAY: I am Twenty Years Old
FRIDAY: Monday Begins on Saturday, pages 132-187

Presentations:
The Office of Community Partnerships and the Career Development Office will be hosting an orientation session for all students in a CEL tagged class. At this session we will be discussing what CEL is, methods for entering the community, and professionalism. It will be held on January 27 (Sunday) from 3-4 in Cheever Seminar Room. Please consider adding this event to your syllabus.

Week 3

Film Screening: Solaris - view on Amazon

Victor Pelevin, Omon Ra

MONDAY: Omon Ra, pages 1-44
WEDNESDAY: Solaris
FRIDAY: Omon Ra, pages 45-100

Presentations:


Week 4

Film Screening: Hipsters

Monday Begins on Saturday


Week 5
Ludmila Ulitskaya, *The Big Green Tent*

**MONDAY:** NO CLASS  
**WEDNESDAY:** *The Big Green Tent*, pages 3-109  
**FRIDAY:** *The Big Green Tent*, pages 110-155

**Presentations:**


**Week 6**

**Film:** *Hipsters*  
Ludmila Ulitskaya, *The Big Green Tent*

**MONDAY:** *Hipsters*  
**WEDNESDAY:** *The Big Green Tent*, pages 155-200  
**FRIDAY:** *The Big Green Tent*, pages 201-234

**Presentations:**


Week 7

Film: Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears - view on Amazon

Ludmila Ulitskaya, The Big Green Tent

MONDAY: The Big Green Tent, pages 235-305
WEDNESDAY: Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears
FRIDAY: The Big Green Tent, pages 306-345

Presentations:

Week 8

Ludmila Ulitskaya, The Big Green Tent

MONDAY: The Big Green Tent, pages 345-487
WEDNESDAY: The Big Green Tent, pages 488-527
FRIDAY: The Big Green Tent, pages 528-576
Presentations:


Chiou-Ling Yeh, “A Saga of Democracy”: Toy Len Goon, American Mother of the Year, and the Cultural Cold War,” *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 81, No. 3 (August 2012), pp. 432-461


Week 9

Vladimir Kozlov, *USSR: Diary of a Perestroika Kid*

**MONDAY:** *USSR: Diary of a Perestroika Kid*, pages 1-61

**WEDNESDAY:** *USSR: Diary of a Perestroika Kid*, pages 61-83

**FRIDAY:** *USSR: Diary of a Perestroika Kid*, pages 83-106

Presentations:

Reagan’s address to the National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando, Florida

The Gorbachev Visit: Excerpts from Speech to U.N.


Week 10

Vladimir Kozlov, *USSR: Diary of a Perestroika Kid*
MONDAY: USSR: Diary of a Perestroika Kid, pages 106-165

WEDNESDAY: USSR: Diary of a Perestroika Kid, pages 165-186

FRIDAY: USSR: Diary of a Perestroika Kid, pages 187-208

Presentations:


Barry Buzan, “Will the 'Global War on Terrorism' Be the New Cold War?” International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-), Vol. 82, No. 6 (Nov., 2006), pp. 1101-1118

Raj M. Desai and Itzhak Goldberg, “Perestroika Cubana,” The National Interest, No. 91 (Sep./Oct. 2007), pp. 71-76


Week 11

Film: From Russia with Love

Viktor Suvorov, Inside the Aquarium

MONDAY: Inside the Aquarium, pages 103-175

WEDNESDAY: From Russia with Love Inside the Aquarium, pages 176-207

FRIDAY: Inside the Aquarium, pages 208-245

Presentations:


**Week 12**

**Film Screening: I am Cuba**

Clarence Adams, *An American Dream*

**MONDAY: An American Dream, pages xi-22**

**WEDNESDAY: An American Dream, pages 23-45**

**FRIDAY: An American Dream, pages 46-72**

**Presentations:**


**Week 13**

Clarence Adams, *An American Dream*

**MONDAY: An American Dream, pages 73-104**

**WEDNESDAY: An American Dream, pages 105-128**
FRIDAY: An American Dream, pages 129-145

Presentations:


Week 14

Film: *Prisoner of the Mountains*
Vladimir Makanin, “The Captive of the Caucasus”

MONDAY: “The Captive of the Caucasus”
WEDNESDAY: *Prisoner of the Mountains*
FRIDAY: *Final Reflections*