

ScholarForum

Number 4 • Winter 2001

The Journal of the Open Society Institute's Network Scholarship Programs



Gender and Sexuality

Essays and creative works by NSP Grantees and Alumni

Also inside...

Stories from Central Asia and Mongolia
Personal Accounts of Grantees

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Welcome to Scholar Forum!

Twice a year we go to press with articles, essays, anecdotes and creative works by grantees and alumni of the Open Society Institute's Network Scholarship Programs (NSP). Scholar Forum is the voice of NSP participants, a space for sharing opinions and experiences, and for learning about the accomplishments of friends and colleagues from NSP programs. It is also a method of communicating to all of our readers—grantees and alumni, educational institutions, libraries and individuals—the diversity of perspectives and experiences of NSP scholars.

At the heart of the concept of open societies is the free and dynamic exchange of ideas. Each issue of Scholar Forum acknowledges this through soliciting papers on a cover topic focusing on a subject relevant to NSP participants and the regions they represent. For this issue, grantees and alumni were asked to write about gender and sexuality. Submissions focused on subjects such as the shifting in perspectives towards traditional gender roles, contraception and abortion, women in the workforce, changing sexual mores, and the rights of gays and lesbians. We regret that due to space limitations we were only able to include a sampling of the many wonderful works we received.

Scholar Forum now has an exciting new design and structure, which includes two new on-going sections: a regional focus, this time devoted to Central Asia and Mongolia, and a section devoted to the personal experiences of scholarship participants. The alumni section remains a place to investigate and reconnect with friends from NSP programs.

If you are just beginning your scholarship then welcome to the NSP family! We hope all of you enjoy this issue of Scholar Forum and invite all readers to contact us with comments and suggestions at scholar@sorosny.org.

The Open Society Institute's **Network Scholarship Programs** fund the participation of students, scholars, and professionals from Eastern and Central Europe, the former Soviet Union, Mongolia, and Burma in rigorous, competitive academic programs outside of their home countries. The goals of these programs are: to revitalize and reform the teaching of the social sciences and humanities at higher education institutions; to provide professional training in fields unavail-

able or underrepresented at institutions in the countries served; and to assist outstanding students from a range of backgrounds to pursue their studies in alternative academic and cultural environments.

The **Open Society Institute** is a private operating and grantmaking foundation that seeks to promote the development and maintenance of open societies around the world by supporting a range of programs in the areas of edu-

cational, social, and legal reform, and by encouraging alternative approaches to complex and often controversial issues. The Open Society Institute is part of the Soros foundation network, an informal network of organizations created by George Soros that operate in over 30 countries around the world, principally in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, as well as in Guatemala, Haiti, Mongolia, Burma, Southern Africa, and the United States.

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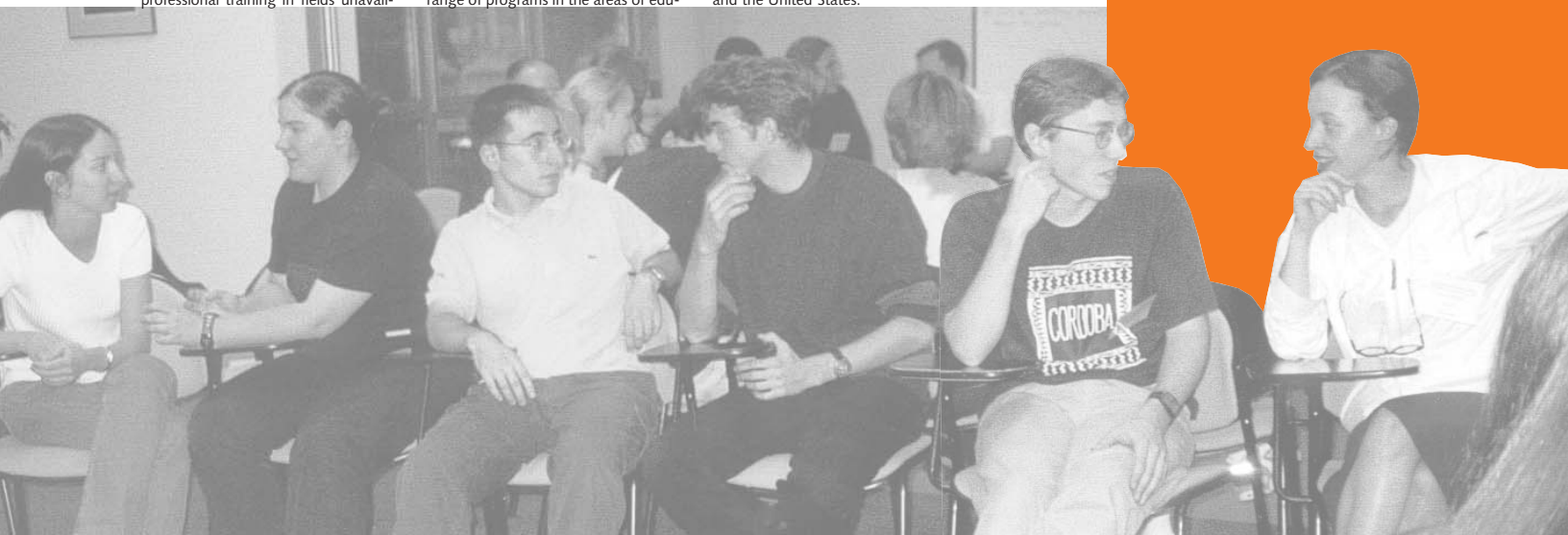
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Gender and Sexuality

There can be no open society without respect for gender equality, the rights of sexual minorities and open dialogue on issues of sexuality. The essays in this section reflect these sentiments while approaching the broad subject of gender and sexuality from a diversity of perspectives. One of the realities that permeates these social and political commentaries is that the fight for rights and open discussion can itself be subversive. It is subversive to speak of equal rights for women when no inequality is acknowledged, and for gays and lesbians when their very existence is denied. The struggle to be heard links many of these works, whether as an artist celebrating female sexuality in the face of official condemnation, a journalist exploring sexuality in the media, or a young woman hoping for a future that includes true independence for women.



Alicja ZEBROWSKA, Poland
Original Sin: Catalog cover for Alicja Zebrowska's controversial art exhibit

Gender and Sexuality in Poland: the Abortion Debate in Society and Art

Pawel LESZKOWICZ and Tomasz KITLINSKI, Poland

Pawel and Tomasz studied and researched art history and political philosophy in Britain with the support of the Stefan Batory Foundation. They also participated in the OSI-supported Democracy and

Diversity Graduate Institute, organized by the New School University. Presently, Tomasz teaches at Curie University, Lublin, and Pawel at Mickiewicz University, Poznan. Both are Eastern Scholars with the Civic Education Project. Tompaul11@yahoo.com

In 1994 at Zderzak, a private gallery in Krakow, artist Alicja Zebrowska exhibited her video installation titled "Original Sin". Even now, the work carries a powerful message against the back-

ground of Poland's conservative artistic and political scene: it is feminist and committed, raising questions of women's sexuality, reproduction and religion-turned-ideology. The artist explores the problems of the law passed in March 1993 which made abortion illegal in a country in the midst of a difficult democratization.

Since 1989 the question of abortion has sparked social conflict involving political parties, the Catholic Church,

the mass media and emerging NGOs. The debate over abortion between 1989 and 1993 was part of a political struggle for shaping a new state - a democratic and secular one versus a theocratic one. The latter has won; in 1990, through a decision of the Ministry of Education, religious instruction was introduced in schools and in 1992 parliament passed the Respect for Christian Values in Mass

ues recognized as beneficial after communism. As it turned out, the canon of sexual identity inherited from communism was continuously supported by official Catholicism: it is closed, repressive and

experience she had while playing with a sister.

Zebrowska punctuates the symbolic sequences of the video with stills. "Barbie's Birth" is a series of photographs

"Original Sin operates within the sphere of **disgust** that is subversive to mainstream Catholic rhetoric."



Alicja ZEBROWSKA, Poland
AUTPNEKROPHAGOS,
from the exhibit *Original Sin*

based on intolerance. There is no deviating from the 'norm', as doing so equals illegality and social ostracism. This sexual authoritarianism is justified by a biological perception of sexual differences: nature determines gender and sexuality and thus they are not subject to any public deliberation.

"Original Sin" by Alicja Zebrowska gets to the core of the anti-abortion policy by unmasking its anti-sexual rationale and by celebrating criminalized coreality.

What we witness are scenes of sexual activity: the movement of a penis inside a vagina, the masturbation-penetration of a vagina with a vibrator. The "correct" heterosexual act is confronted with auto-erotic pleasure. The video begins with an allusion to lesbian love, a reminiscence of the artist's first erotic

which show the birth of a Barbie doll, taken out by a hand in a rubber glove from a womb. Another series of photographs called "The Mystery Is Looking" expose a button emerging from a zoomed-in vagina. Yet a chiaroscuro makes this image unrealistic and reveals its spirituality and transgression. In harmony with the title, "Original Sin", the work goes back to Genesis. As the biblical tale recounts Eve picking the apple from the forbidden tree of knowledge, so the artist's installation is flavored with the scents and sounds of biting a fruit.

Zebrowska's biblical and obscene imagery pertain to the abortion debate in Poland and to its broad social consequences. It embraces the sexual diversity against which the Church's actions are directed and confronts it with the symbolic language of sin and guilt so abused by politicians. In "Original Sin" the artist opposes the symbolic exclusion of female sexuality with counter-narratives, breaking the taboo and restoring reality in place of the ideological fiction of politicized religion. As a woman, she creates her own vision of sexuality, replacing elevated metaphors of fertility with the drastic physiology of the sexual act. She replaces the sacred with a picture of the penetrated vagina; which evokes both castration fears and disgust.

"Original Sin" is then impolite and abject. It operates within the sphere of disgust that is subversive to mainstream Catholic rhetoric. The aesthetics subversively used by the artist represent a literal transfer of the psychological results of the anti-abortion law. Polish psychia-

Media Act.

These laws encapsulated a political struggle for power disguised under the concept of "Christian values", which served as effective electoral rhetoric in a society deeply rooted in Catholicism. The introduction of an anti-abortion law was eased by the return of traditional val-

trists and sexologists have observed the harmful effects on women caused by the de-legalization of abortion. The fear of unwanted pregnancy, with its irrevocable effects, combined with the feelings of guilt caused by the stigmatization of one's sexual life lead to emotional disorders and a disgust for women's gender and body.

The introduction of the anti-abortion law was caused by pressure from Church authorities and the political parties representing them. This was connected to the political right's program aimed at restoring the status quo that was in existence before World War II, when the Church performed the role of national guide. The desire for this rebirth has turned into a masculine crusade. As a leading feminist intellectual, Maria Janion, puts it: "Democracy in Poland is male-gendered". "Original Sin" is both a

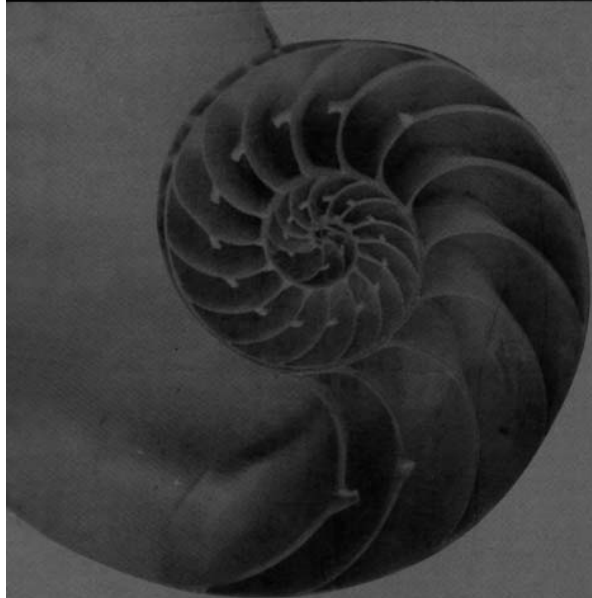
blunt illustration of this and a stripping of the misogynist-cum-nationalist rhetoric which perversely suits the traditional model of gender and sexuality in Poland. The work is ambiguous; just as hypocrisy lurks everywhere in Poland's supposedly Catholic society where the Church's rules of sexual restraint are not obeyed, but are tools used to stop social liberalization.

In her work Zebrowska embraces both morally subversive bodily images and an abject perception of sexuality supported by the Church's propaganda of sin. The exclusion of sexuality is practiced in the institutional artistic world in Poland where "Original Sin" is often censored by state galleries. The sexual sequences and photographic recordings of Barbie's birth epitomize the visceral unconscious and a representation of femininity beyond traditional images. Alicja

Zebrowska wants to escape from the convention of the nude, an object of male desire; instead, she uncovers the body for itself to arrive at a corporeality beyond ideological norm and form.

A subversive vision of women and a crude imitation of giving birth, colored with the irony of the plastic Barbie reach the core of subjectivity, the place where real miracles happen. Alicja Zebrowska's art is not only a wonderland of fertility, but also of joy and desire. The shots of "Barbie's Birth" have a unique beauty; they are sensuous and radiating with pleasure. The artist affirms being a woman and restores the cultural significance of women. At the same time, she confronts the disguised, manipulated and supplanted place of sexuality in the religion-turned-political discourse in which gender and sex have become taboo. ■

Open Society Institute — Network Women's Program



Gender Studies & Women's Studies Directory

Countries of Central & Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union & Mongolia

Gender Studies & Women's Studies Directory

The Gender Studies & Women's Studies Directory is a comprehensive guide to the growing number of university programs, courses, research projects, and individuals dedicated to gender and women's studies in Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and Mongolia. The Guide is a joint effort of the Open Society Institute's Network Women's Program and the Central European University Program on Gender and Culture.

For more information please contact women@sorosny.org.

Sexuality in Mongolia

Oyun LKHAGVASUREN, Mongolia

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Mongolia is a young country in terms of its population - there are 562,753 adolescents aged 10-19 in Mongolia, who represent 25% of the population. The latest surveys and research conducted on adolescents has shown an increase in sexual activity in this particular age group, which has in turn led to an increase in the rates of sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies and risk for HIV transmission. There are many factors that affect young people's sexual behavior, including a lack of sexual education and knowledge, rapid social change and an increase in international travel both into and out of Mongolia.

In 1995, a study found that 26% of adolescents aged 17-18 were sexually active (HMIEC, 1995), while in 1999, another study found that the number had increased to 35% (MSF, 1999). Among those adolescents having sex, risk behaviors for pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are high. The same study found that, among 15-25 year olds, only 32% of those who were sexually active had used contraception the most recent time they had intercourse. Of those who reported multiple sex partners over the previous six months, only 19% had used a condom the last time they had sex (MSF, 1999). In 1999, a study found that only 13% of students had a high level of knowledge of reproductive health and sexuality; while 79% were found to have low life skills (PTRC/MSCI, 1999).

Consequently, there has been an increase in adolescent childbearing and rates of STIs in this age group. As is true elsewhere, these consequences affect females the most, in terms of

friends, peers and unofficial sources of information, such as books and journals. However, the Mongolian government together with international organizations has begun to develop a health education curriculum for school children, and reproductive health is one of the topics of this curriculum. Even with this progress, there is a chronic shortage of well-educated teachers who can teach sexuality education to students. Teachers from the countryside have been known to open a textbook to the pages with pictures of human sexual organs, and then leave the classroom so that the students are left by themselves to figure out the subject. This happens because teachers are not ready to teach and talk openly with their students about sexuality.

Another factor is rapid social change. Since 1990, Mongolia has been in transition from a centrally planned economy to a market economy. Previously everyone had a job, relatively similar incomes, and there was a system of collective ownership. Now a more market economy approach has led to privatization and greater individualization. These changes have resulted in increased wealth for some but a greater vulnerability to poverty for many. Now each individual and family must largely fend for himself or herself. Greater poverty has also led more young people to turn to commercial sex work. Some of them do it because the need to support a family but some, especially young women, do it because it's the only way to have their own income.

The increase in international travel both into and out of Mongolia has been one of the major factors in the increase in risk for STIs and HIV among young people. Prior to 1990, there was very little possibility for Mongolians to travel outside of the Soviet socialist system and few foreigners came to Mongolia from outside of that system. Anecdotal evidence suggests that foreigners often feel "safe" from HIV in Mongolia and may neglect to practice safer sex, even with groups considered to pose

a greater risk, such as sex workers. Young people find it attractive to be in the company of foreigners and don't perceive him/her as a potential STI/HIV infected person, and therefore don't use any protec-

tion during intercourse. As more and more Mongolians travel to other countries and study or work abroad, the likelihood that they will bring HIV and/or STIs back with them has also increased.

The Government of Mongolia is having to consider the frightening issues facing adolescents in Mongolia today, including an increase in the rates of sexually transmitted diseases, an increase in unwanted pregnancies and the increased risk of HIV transmission. Consequently it has taken a number of measures to tackle these problems. One of the main steps taken has been the development of a new health education curriculum for the school system. ■

In Mongolia the issue of **sexual health** is not taught as a serious subject at secondary schools, nor is it talked about in the **family**."

health and life choices. By the age of 19, one fifth of Mongolian girls are mothers and another 5% are pregnant with their first child. While the number of women who gave birth before the age of 20 had declined from 1983 to 1993, it proceeded to increase from 1993 to 1998 (NSO, 1998). Among young people aged 15-24, rates of gonorrhea increased by a factor of 2.6, and rates of trichomonas by a factor of 4, between 1983 and 1995.

In Mongolia the issue of sexual health is not taught as a serious subject at secondary schools, nor is it talked about in the family. Mongols generally explain nothing to their children about sexuality. Historically and culturally it has been a closed subject, and children tend to learn about sexual issues from their

Gender-Related Websites and Organizations

Comprehensive

NIS Womens' Organizations by Country:
www.friends-partners.org/~ccsi/nisorgs/niswomen.htm

Women's Internet Resource Guide Eastern Europe:
www.isp.msu.edu/WID/wwwresources/wwweeurope.html

Albania

Family in Focus Center:
spino@km.dap.tirana.al

Armenia

Center for Gender Studies of Democracy Union:
gulnara@iom.arminco.com

Azerbaijan

Women and Development Center:
elmira@awdc.baku.az

Belarus

European Humanities University, Center for Gender Studies:
gender@ehu.unibel.by

Bulgaria

Women's History Group:
krasi@ns.sclg.uni-sofia.bg

Burma

Mon Women Organization:
www.geocities.com/Athens/Bridge/1256/monwomen.htm
The Burma Project:
www.soros.org/burma/

Croatia

Zenska Infoteka (Women's Information and Documentation Center):

www.zamir.net~zinfo

Czech Republic

Centrum pro Gender Studies (Prague Gender Studies Center):
www.ecn.cz/gender/

Estonia

University of Tartu, Unit of Gender Studies:
www.psych.ut.ee/stk/gender/index.htm

Georgia

WomenAid Georgia:
www.itic.org.ge/wageorgia

Hungary

Central European University, Program on Gender and Culture:
www.ceu.hu/gend/gendir.html

Kazakhstan

League of Feminists:
feminist@online.ru

Kyrgyzstan

Forum of Women's NGOs of Kyrgyzstan:
forum@freenet.bishkek.su

Latvia

University of Latvia, Center for Gender Studies:
iranovi@lanet.lv

Lithuania

Women's Issues Information Center:
www.undp.lt/wiic

Macedonia

Women's Studies Center:
kolozova@soros.org.mk

Moldova

Gender in Development:
www.un.md

Mongolia

Women's Information and Research Center:
www.wirc.mn

Poland

National Information Center on Women's Initiatives:
oska@pol.pl

Romania

Society for Feminist Analysis:
<http://ana.org.ro>

Russia

Moscow Center of Gender Studies:
mccgs@glas.apc.org
Center for Women, Family and Gender Studies, The Youth Institute:
wcsgr@com2com.ru
St. Petersburg Center for Gender Issues:
pcgi@mail.dux.ru
FEMINA, Women's Association Tartarstan:
elena@femina.kazan.su
Gender Club of Novosibirsk University:
www.prometeus.nsc.ru/partner/center

Slovakia

Club of Feminist Philosophers, Comenius University:
szapuova@fphil.uniba.sk

Slovenia

List of Non-Governmental Women's Groups:
www.uzp-rs.si/eng/non.html

Tajikistan

Directory of Women's Organizations in Tajikistan:
www.undp.uz/GID/eng/tajikistan/NGO/ngo_99.html

Ukraine

Feminist Organizations in Ukraine:
www.cddc.vt.edu/feminism/ukr.html

United States

National Organization for Women:
<http://63.111.42.146/home/>

Uzbekistan

Women's Resource Center:
naliya@napvt.silk.org

Yugoslavia

Belgrade Women's Studies Center:
zenskestudie@sezampro.yu

Discourse of Sexual Representations in the Ukrainian Press: an Upward Curve of Permissibility and a Consensus of Freedom

Lyudmyla PAVLYUK, Ukraine

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In the beginning of the 1990s there was a wonderful post-official, post-authoritarian renaissance period in Ukraine, when the outburst of political information was perceived with a kind of passionate excitement and the wave of "sexual" literature looked revolutionary. But the law of the social pendulum does not allow for these peaks of revolutionary eros to last forever, and over the past decade we have reached a stage of stabilized transformativity (or stagnated? Or not dynamic enough?) with its necessity of slow-paced routine work instead of debates and demonstrations in streets and squares. In the domain of sexual representations we have also passed from the first agitated acquaintances with a wide

range of gender and sexuality themes to a situation of stability in regards to sexual representations and images.

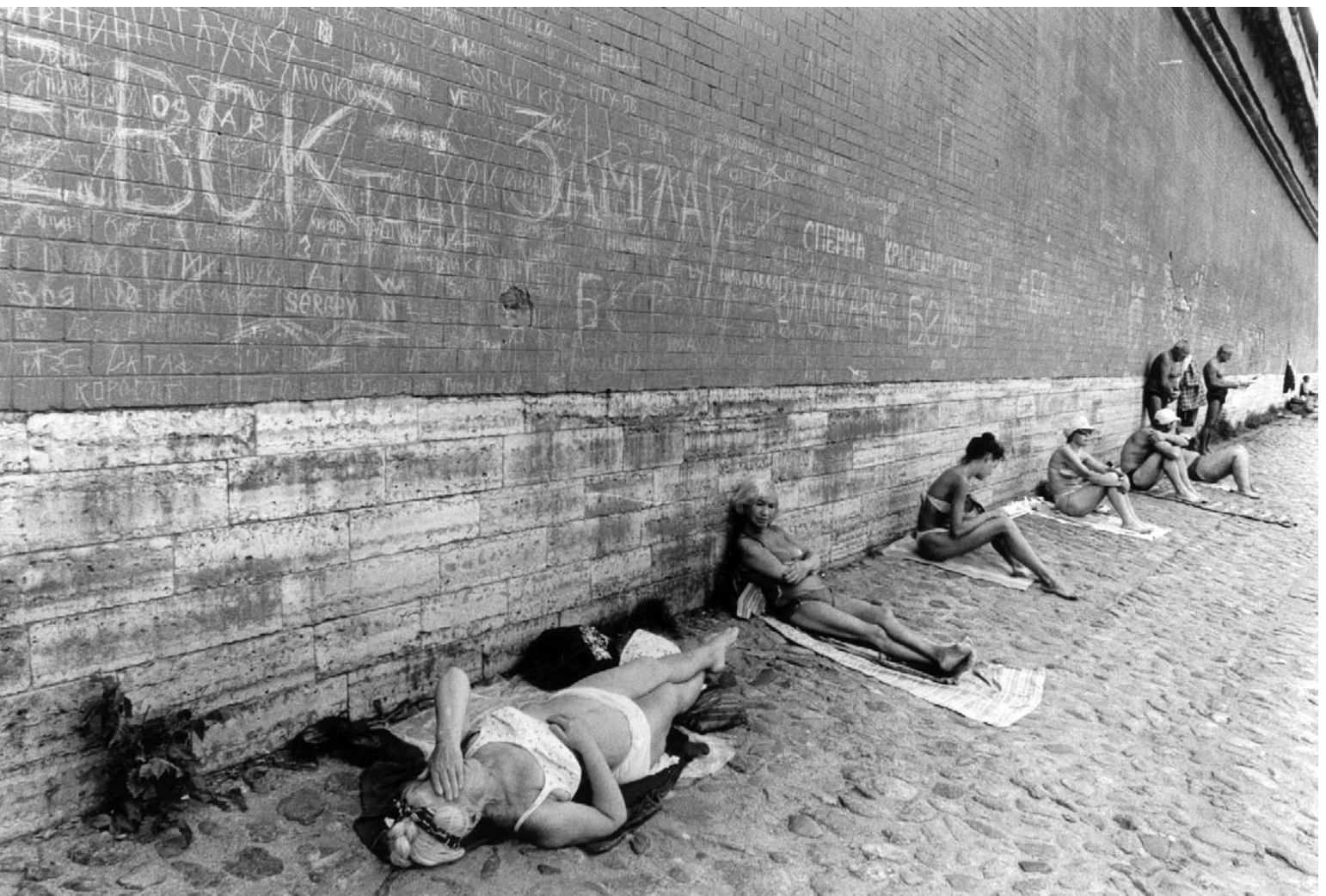
Over the past decade, specialized periodicals for adults have been on an upward curve of permissibility concerning the types and extremes of sexual behavior depicted. They went from erotic images of women's bodies to erotic images of men's bodies, from heterosexual intercourse to homosexual intercourse, from implied sexual acts to detailed descriptions, from hints to scenarios. Introducing formerly abandoned themes, erotic communication supplied enormous material for conservative criticism but also some reasons for liberal approval: at least to the extent that

entertainment periodicals initiate such things as anti-AIDS condom campaigns.

There was a period of seeming naivete and romanticism with Ukrainian entertainment periodicals, when many of them appeared to be more literary than commercial. But these kinds of publications have almost died out, and instead we have a wave of commercial editions, most of which promote "techno", or "hard", sex, and most of which are in the Russian language. Ukrainian culturalists treat this Russian informational expansion as a threat to the full realization of Ukrainian culture. The famous Ukrainian feminist writer Oxana Zabuzhko in her novel "Field Studies in

Ukrainian Sex" stressed with a dash of humor and much satisfaction that her love affairs with Russian-speaking men led to their (the men's) Ukrainization. It is one of the rare non-typical cases of Ukrainian dominance, from the situation of a national neurosis of submissiveness.

The entertainment press may not be explicit enough in its sense of responsibility, but it can be provocative enough to serve as the catalyst for a nation-wide discussion about legal and illegal, moral and immoral, healthy and unhealthy in the most intimate spheres. Provocativeness can play a very positive role – it helps us to see our real unhidden wishes and our real unmasked images.



Antonin KRATOCHVIL, Russia

Have we become more cynical? No, we have become less hypocritical and much more ready and open to thinking

University of Arizona campus. At first I didn't understand what was going on. Long-legged blond girls with beautiful

events, and their intelligent comments in the U of A newspaper the next day.

Events on the U of A campus were an important lesson for me on the subject of entering the complicated world and remaining wise and pure. Yes, it is possible in a mature society. So the phenomenology of sexual images in the Ukrainian press can also be considered in the scope of the larger phenomenon of individual choice - which is about freedom. One's own sense of inner correctness in a situation of uninhibited choices and unoppressed decisions has a much greater value than the false puritanism caused by social limitations and a system of legal punishments. ■

I didn't understand. Long-legged blond girls with beautiful bodies—why did they have men's names?"

about differences. One of my most colorful reminiscences from the first semester I spent in Arizona occurred during Sex Minority Awareness Week on the

bodies...why do they have men's names? These were transsexuals and transvestites. But most of all I was impressed by the students' moderate reactions to the

Gender and Work in Georgia

Nino TAVADZE, Republic of Georgia

Edmund S. Muskie/Freedom Support Act Graduate Fellowship Program
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In my country, the Republic of Georgia, a woman's main responsibility in the past was to look after her kids and husband, to cook for them, do the chores at home, take the kids to school and back etc. It was even strange to see a woman driving. The main source for the family budget was the man. When there was a situation that made a husband unemployed, and a woman was forced to support the family financially, it became a shameful situation for that man in society.

Today it seems that the responsibilities between men and women are being distributed more fairly than they were before. There are now many women in Georgia working and supporting their families. I think that there are some specific reasons for this, other than a respect for women's skills and strengths. The economy in Georgia is very bad. The government, newly democratic and capitalist, cannot provide as much work as it used to during socialism. The free enterprise system is just getting a foothold in the country. In short, there is a shortage of jobs in Georgia. So women, not being used to working because of public opinion, have started to expand their outlook. Some of them have even started their own businesses - and very successfully. In the new economic situation, women have started to use their skills, while men have had to compromise.

The older generation still insists on women fitting the role model of a "housekeeper". However, a new generation, more open-minded, does not even discuss the issue the same way.

There is no argument over whether a woman should or should not work, or be involved in the same activities as men. Men and women are considered people, not as feminine and masculine creatures. Of course, this is a new generation's opinion and still represents only a small portion of the population.

To illustrate the above point, I spoke with 100 people about the issue and got very interesting results. The age range of the people was between 17 and 65. Of these, 99% of people between ages 17 and 35 said that a woman should work (actually most of them replied with the question: "why shouldn't she?"), while 60% of people between ages 35 and 65 felt that a woman should be at home and bring up the children. What was ironic and surprising for me was that women aged 50 and up also felt that women should stay at home. It has become a tradition for an older generation that a woman should not be as active as a man, that they should sacrifice themselves to their families. Not one person I interviewed mentioned the same thing about fathers. I think that both parents are responsible for their kids. In my inquiry I had a related question: "Do you think responsibilities and duties between men and women are shared equally in family and general life today in Georgia?" Of those I interviewed, 68% said no, while 50% said men had more duties and responsibilities, such as supporting the families financially.

There is a strong historical background to these opinions. Georgia has existed for more than 2000 years, and has had many enemies throughout its history. This meant that often the men had to fight and the women stay at home. Women became a symbol of purity and of the future of the country, and they had to bring up heroes. Probably, that is when the traditional ideology about women's responsibilities started to be formed. ■

A Sampling of Gender-Related Activities at OSI

Network Women's Program (NWP)

The mission of the NWP is to promote the advancement of women's human rights, equality and empowerment as an integral part of the process of democratization. Open societies cannot exist without measurable and accountable respect for gender equity and diversity. NWP seeks to:

- Create effective and sustainable women's movements in OSI network countries
- Influence international policy makers and other funders to develop and adopt gender-sensitive policies and activities at international, regional, national and local levels
- Raise awareness of issues of gender and diversity through education, advocacy, and research
- Promote local, national, regional, and international cooperation and linkages among women's organizations that oppose gender discrimination and work for women's empowerment
- Encourage access of the regions' women to international women's activities and to resources available to countries in transition
- Support women's contributions to advancing alternative solutions to social and political crises
- Eradicate violations of women's rights

Program on Reproductive Health and Rights

OSI's Reproductive Rights grantmaking activities were launched in October 1996 with a priority on improving women's access to comprehensive reproductive health care in the United States. While all women are entitled to this access, poor and minority women are often disproportionately affected by restrictive policies. OSI focuses its reproductive rights grantmaking on organizations that serve diverse communities at the grassroots level. The Program also works with the Soros foundations network in other countries to promote and protect comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care for women.

International Harm Reduction Development (IHRD)

Responding to increasing rates of drug use and HIV infection in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, the Open Society Institute began the IHRD in 1995. The purpose of IHRD is to support local, national and regional initiatives in Central and Eastern Europe, Russia and Central

Asia that address drug problems through innovative measures based upon the philosophy of 'harm reduction.

IHRD recently issued two calls for proposals: the first targeted organizations that already provide a broad range of health and social care services for sex workers to implement harm reduction activities, and the second enabled existing IHRD-funded harm reduction projects to expand or begin activities targeting sex workers.

Understanding the necessity of creating culturally and gender-sensitive services, IHRD is sponsoring a series of trainings for the 150+ projects that it helps support. One of these trainings is entitled "Needs of Drug-Using Women" and is being delivered by the International Harm Reduction Association Network on Women and Drugs.

Central Eurasia Project

In response to growing concern about the failure of protection of women's rights in Central Asia, OSI's national foundations in Central Asia and the New York-based Central Eurasia Project have begun taking a more pro-active role in addressing issues of women's rights in the region.

The Central Eurasia Project has moved to raise awareness of the widespread and largely unacknowledged problem of domestic violence in Uzbekistan. In December 2000, it hosted an Open Forum on the subject, at which leading international experts presented their findings and recommendations to the international community for addressing the problem and giving women access to legal remedies, currently denied them by culture and a weak and unenforced legal system.

The Central European University (CEU) Program on Gender and Culture

The Program promotes gender studies in Central and Eastern Europe and former Soviet countries through institutes of higher education by encouraging scholarship, by developing courses, training faculty, and teaching gender studies.

Joint Activities

The Network Scholarship Programs and the Central Eurasia Project have created a program at the University of Essex to train human rights activists from the Caucasus and Central Asia. A number of these have chosen specializations in women's rights promising that a new generation of advocates will address these issues in the years to come.

Last year, the CEP broke the story on its website, EurasiaNet, of widespread invasive bodily searches of women in Tajikistan, which are conducted in the name of routine drug trafficking control. These searches, and other unintended consequences of the western-supported drug interdiction policies in Central Asia, will be the subject of a policy paper analyzing the implications for women of

international drug policy in the region. The paper, which is co-sponsored by the Central Eurasia Project and the Women's Network Program, will be presented at a Eurasia Policy Forum in Washington in March.

Together with the Network Women's Program and the International Harm Reduction Program, the Central Eurasia Project is sponsoring a series of meetings through its Eurasia Policy Forum that will explore the connections between public health, drug trafficking, and women's rights in Central Asia. As part of the process, in 2000, OSI's national foundation in Tajikistan released "Women and Drugs," an unprecedented report analyzing the effect of narcotics trafficking through that country on women, including rising addiction and incarceration on drug-related charges, and the impact these problems have on youth and the population as a whole. The foundation and the Central Eurasia Project will collaborate to present the report to policy-makers in Washington at the CEP's Eurasia Policy Forum in February.



Bride-Napping in Kyrgyzstan

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At first sight Kyrgyzstan may seem quite civilized in regards to gender and sexuality issues. Islam and other religions are separated from the state and may not dictate strict rules and regulations to limit women's rights. But the attentive observer would find a lot of examples of discrimination against women in daily life, which are so apparent that they go almost unnoticed.

I will take a small example. The custom of bride-napping is barbaric and cruel to every person with a little common sense, but a lot of Kyrgyz people see

absolutely nothing wrong with it. When you talk to people about it, some of them respond smiling: "Oh, you see, this is just a romantic custom, when two people love each other and wish to get married despite their parents' will."

In reality the situation is often more serious. My friend at medical school was napped in full daylight on her way home. She cried for three days in the home of her future husband, since she hardly knew him. And in the presence of all the neighbors and relatives her head was covered with a head-scarf. It meant a loss of virginity and so she stopped resisting. She has lived with her husband for seven years now, still hates him and can do nothing because divorce would only make her situation worse.

I think the roots of the problem are economic. If women were financially

independent in Kyrgyzstan, then they could be freer in decision making. My schoolmate would never stay with her husband if she had a chance to develop herself in a career and earn enough to make a living. The best proof of this is the growing role of women in small businesses, like the shuttle-trade, which is typical to all post-communist countries. When the boundaries of the former Soviet Union became more transparent, a lot of women began to explore the markets of neighboring and not-so-neighboring countries to import merchandise. A large percentage of goods and necessities to Kyrgyzstan are now being supplied by the shuttle traders, who are mostly women. Despite all the obstacles they are successful, and this gives me hope when I think about gender roles and the future in my country. ■



Nic DUNLOP, Burma

Sexuality and Burmese Culture

Saw Myat SANDY, Burma

Supplementary Grant Program – Burma

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Sexuality is the most profound meeting place of nature and culture. At its best, sexuality allows us to give ourselves over to feeling, to other people, to the world, to say yes to ourselves and to our bodies.

However, sexuality is also where we experience most intensely the demands of religion, morality, and culture. Cultural images are all the more powerful because they are not arbitrary inventions of the media. They reflect the changing times out of which they emerge.

When I was growing up in Burma, I was not living in a culture that put X-rated movies in the homes of every family. Television was not a 24 hour a day operation, churning out highly sexualized images of women and men's bodies. Sexual ecstasy, pursuit, danger and violence were not available with a touch on the remote control. In Burma, the family and community we live in is the most important thing. The message they communicate concerning sex is "wait, wait, wait". Yet after hearing that, the world around suggests that the last thing you should do is wait, that your hormones won't let you wait.

So kids are getting very mixed messages about whether abstinence is a cornball and ridiculous response, used to avoid losing one's virginity or contracting AIDS, or whether it is the

most enlightened, intelligent and forward thinking approach. Sex was seen as something that the wild kids do during my school days. Talking about menstruation was taboo. When I got my first period, I thought that something was wrong with my urine and was terrified because I was never informed about it.

We have whole religious and philosophical traditions in Burma that center on achieving control over the body, denying the bodies needs and repressing its desires. The fact is that all of this obsession with control only leads to things being more out of control. Just as harsh dieting almost inevitably leads to bingeing, the suppression of sexuality makes us all the more obsessed with sex, all the more hungry and insatiable for its forbidden delights. Many young people in Burma find their religious identities and religious teachings to be an important part of their upbringing and carry what they've learned into their sexual decision-making. So it kept gays in the closet. It sent women to back-alley abortionists. Some little girls and little boys grew never being able to say that their uncle or their father or some relative had raped them or molested them.

So I think that there are real physical, psychological dangers to keeping sex in the closet. There are thousands of very religious people who strive to insulate themselves from this culture, who live in a world of very different values. Then there are others who get wet from both sides, who know that they have values and teachings and beliefs, but are seduced as well, are struggling and pulled between two worlds. Sex is not something which when exercised appropriately we have to be guilty about. It's not the result of a Fall. Ultimately, it is most important to give ourselves the opportunity to hear and to learn from the world around us. ■

A Sampling of OSI Lesbian and Gay Rights Initiatives

Law and Human Rights Sub-board: Human Rights Fund

The Fund has provided institutional support to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) organizations in Central and Eastern Europe and the NIS for work focussing on rights-related issues. Current activities include support for LGBT organizations in Lithuania, Hungary, Romania and Ukraine. Other activities include support for the publication of a status report by the Brussels-based International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) on gay and lesbian issues in the European Union accession countries, and the co-funding of a library core collection development program with the Network Library Program.

Center for Publishing Development

The Center operates the Translation Project, a major initiative designed to meet the need for key texts in the social sciences and humanities in the local languages of its target region of Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The project has run specialized competitions focused on both gender issues and issues related to LGBT.

OSI Policy Fellow

OSI Policy Fellow Miriam Molnar recently issued a groundbreaking report on lesbian and gay issues in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. In her report, she assesses the climates of the countries examined in relation to lesbians and gays by revealing: law and governmental policy, including initiatives of and resistance to domestic partnership; the presence or absence of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) non-governmental organizations; the level of activity of the LGBT movement, using lesbian and gay publications, radio programs, meeting places, film festivals, Internet and other cultural activities as indicators; and positive and negative (chiefly the latter) perceptions of lesbians and gays in mainstream media.

Molnar proposes a variety of strategic solutions to the problems facing LGBT individuals and organizations in the region. She has also collaborated with the Center for Publishing Development in Budapest to create the 1999 Lesbian & Gay Issues Translation Project Competition, aimed at translating books into local languages to raise awareness of lesbian and gay issues.

A Queer Quandary

Kyaw Swa Win, Burma
Supplementary Grant Program
Burma, Trinity College
Spotlit@hotmail.com

It is now the second time that a dog decided to bite me in Thailand.

In 1999 the US Immigration and Naturalization Service seemed to be going too Republican, and my H-1 visa was denied again. I realized that I, a writer of color from Burma, was unwanted in the land of democracy and human rights. And so I flew to Minneapolis seeking solace and familiar love from my rainbow coalition: John, Gil, Mike, Paul, Patrick, Dan, Khoi, Mark, Barb, Pete, Jeffrey and James. I told them I was going back to Asia. A few hoped to stop me from leaving the American dream. My homeland, the paragon of human rights abuses, was incomparable to this new republic of George Michael and Madonna's silhouettes. In contrast, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's Burma was a political labyrinth devouring its citizens' lives.

So I, the poetic terrorist of amour fou, arrived in Burma wearing the Stonewall25 cap John got for me at the Gay and Lesbian March on Washington. The country had changed its skin at the command of the rulers. There were new banks with ATMs, international schools run by the power elite, the Japanese Sedona Hotel and horrible caricatures of Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy in the propaganda newspapers. There were hookers available and ready to get hooked up in this isolated nation's beer garden hotels, just like Thailand 30 years ago. The universities had been relocated strategically and were still closed. The people were com-

Gay and Lesbian Websites

Comprehensive

The International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) has information about any country not listed below:

www.ilga.org/index.html

East European Gay Culture:

www.middlebury.edu/~moss/EEGC.html

Albania

mailing list - gay_albania@hotmail.com

Armenia

Gay and Lesbian Armenian Society:

<http://galas.freesevers.com/>

Azerbaijan

<http://home6.swipnet.se/~w-66936/q-e.htm>

Belarus

www.irex.minsk.by/~gayforum/

Bulgaria

Gemini:

<http://people.bulgaria.com/gemini/>

Burma

Sangat, support group:

<http://hometown.aol.com/youngal/sangat.html>

Bosnia and Herzegovina

www.gaybih.com/

Croatia

www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/1824/

Czech Republic

www.gay.cz/

Hungary

www.gay.hu/

Kazakhstan

<http://members.nbc.com/gaykz>

Latvia

www.gay.lv

Lithuania

www.gayline.lt/

www.is.lt/sappho

Macedonia

www.gaymacedonia.com/

Moldova

Information about GenderDoc-M:

www.gaywired.com/storydetail.cfm?Section=12&ID=2327

Mongolia

lgbt organization, Talivan:

idre9@hotmail.com

Poland

<http://qrd.tcp.com/qrd/www/world/europe/poland/wolfi/>

Romania

Group Accept:

<http://accept.org.ro/>

Campaign for equal rights in Romania:

www.raglb.org.uk

Russia

www.gay.ru

Northern Russia:

www.rfsl.se/pitea/murmansk/

Slovakia

www.gay.cz/sk/main.html

Slovenia

<http://www.kud-fp.si/~siqrd/>

Ukraine

Our World:

www.gay.org.ua/

United States

Human Rights Campaign:

www.hrc.org/

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force:

www.nglftf.org

Yugoslavia

www.gay-serbia.com/index_eng.html

plaining about governance, commerce and education.

How could Aung San Suu Kyi's conscience and fierce love for Burma possibly affect the feelings of insecurity, envy and fear that the military junta has for western men, whom they view with envy as the keepers of indestructible power and technology? The Yin and Yang are out of balance. The junta men have created a group of terrorized and desperate refugees out of the Burmese race. We are now stereotyped as homeless and cheap, doing farm jobs that even poor Thai northeasterners would not do. In her Letters from Burma, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi coined a concept called Moral Aesthetics, yet it is just impossible to moralize Burma or to reinstall beauty in

the land from which a million have run away.

A boy kissed me on the last Thingyan night of April when the Burmese souls purify each other by throwing water. That was when I lost my Stonewall25 cap. His friendliness and inebriated sincerity calmed down my internal-homophobia. I remember 1993 when father asked me, "What about you? Are you gay?" I said firmly, "Yes...I am attracted to men." I have always been. His was a voice of despair: "Oh this is sick!" My friends in America and of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender liberation movement assured me that I am not sick, never was, no way. Mother cried when I came out to her two years later. Being gay in Burma means shame, and

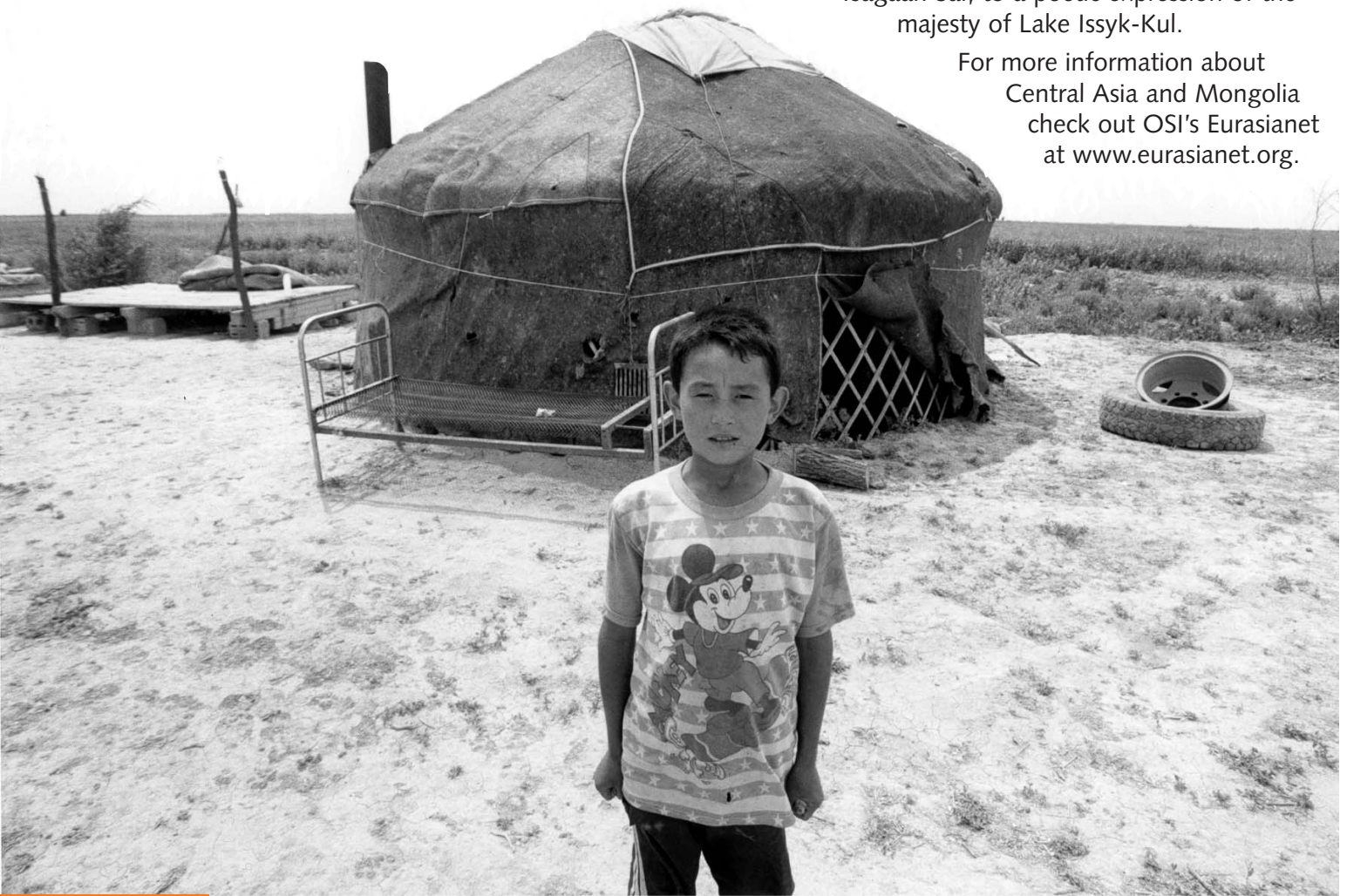
there are many derogatory words for male homosexuality. Then one early morn, in a voice of loving mischief, she cooed, "So! How do you guys really do it?"

Jan, from Frankfurt, had unsafe sex with me and did not care to mention that he was HIV positive. Luckily I tested negative later. This year, a bisexual Thai man I fell in love with took off one day with a no-soul consumer boy who owns a black Mercedes Benz, so popular in smiling Thailand. Mother once told me that Buddhas are countless like sand particles on a dune. Perhaps it was to wake me up from this Asian chaos that Aeh shot his gun into the night sky. And very close to the statue of Trimurti, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva stand tall as if everything is fine with them. ■

Regional Focus: Central Asia and Mongolia

The vast region known as Central Asia stretches from the Caspian Sea to the Eastern-most tip of China, and onto the deserts and mountains of Mongolia. Long considered a meeting ground and crossroads between cultures of the east and west, the land of the Silk Road celebrates a rich history of diverse cultures and traditions. The importance of ritual and a profound love of the land characterize the works in this section, from a description of the Kazak nomadic tradition of Amanat and the ancient Mongolian festival of Tsagaan Sar, to a poetic expression of the majesty of Lake Issyk-Kul.

For more information about
Central Asia and Mongolia
check out OSI's Eurasianet
at www.eurasianet.org.



Michael SAMOJEDEN, Kazakhstan

A boy and his yurt. The nomadic peoples of the steppe have long relied on the flexibility and convenience of the collapsible yurt. Completely detachable, it fits easily onto the backs of a few camels yet is warm and comfortable during the harsh winter months.

Amanat

Malik SHUKAYEV, Kazakhstan

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For hundreds of years nomadic tribes of Kazak people have populated vast areas of Central Asia. One of the most interesting and unusual customs among these tribes, called Amanat, helped to preserve peace and to promote cooperation among them. Amanat was a law that required the chiefs of two would-be enemy tribes to exchange their youngest children. These children were then

raised in the chief's families, and were treated with respect and care. Usually they were exchanged at a very early age. These "hostages" grew up in a new family, and naturally accepted all the customs and habits of the "host" tribe, and developed love and respect for their new parents, friends, neighbors and new culture. Upon attaining maturity, they often returned to their native tribes, sometimes to become a chief. Nothing else could deter tribes from wars and conflicts as

effectively as Amanat. It promoted mutual understanding and respect among tribes.

In the modern world, I think little else is as effective in improving mutual understanding and cooperation as student exchange programs. While studying in another country we make friendships with people of different nations, learn their culture and break stereotypes and prejudices. Perhaps to some extent we are the successors of those Ambassadors of Goodwill from Central Asia. ■

“The chiefs of would-be enemy tribes were required to exchange their youngest children.”

How Mongols Celebrate Tsagaan Sar

Saruul BULGAN, Mongolia

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For more than two thousand years Mongols have been celebrating Tsagaan Sar, the Lunar New Year, which is celebrated as a welcoming of the end of the severe winter and the beginning of spring, when nature and people are awoken and inspired to new life and new deeds.

After a month of preparation Mongols celebrate Tsagaan Sar with three days of feasting with their families. Tables literally groan under the weight of the food. Families traditionally kill the fattest sheep in the flock and then display the boiled lower back throughout the holiday. Also every family makes at least thirty 'ul boov', which means 'footstep cake', and makes a tower with them. The

tower should have an odd number of levels as we count 'happiness grief, happiness grief, happiness grief,' and so on, with the final level always stopping on happiness.

The day before Tsagaan Sar we get up early in the morning and prepare

many different dishes, such as boiled beef and mutton, different kinds of milk products, deserts and different kinds of salads. Then at six o'clock the family gathers together. We all sit around the table and eat until we are more than full, which symbolizes the successful overcoming of



the severe winter and the greeting of the New Year with happiness and prosperity. I think this is the same as Thanksgiving Day for Americans, when families gather and give thanks and have a huge meal.

On the day of the New Year we get up before sunrise and have tea and a slice of a beef. Then we all go out to 'step on the earth', which means that we go out with sheet of paper with a prayer written on it, a different one for each of us, given to us by a priest or a monk. This prayer is supposed to erase all the bad things that might wait for us in the coming year, and bring us luck and happiness.

Mongols are very hospitable people. Visitors during Tsagaan Sar are expected to try every dish and have at least a few drinks with the host. Toasts are usually made with mare's milk wine, called airag

or arkhi, which is distilled vodka made with fermented cow's milk. In each house visitors should also eat at least 3 buuz, otherwise it might be considered disrespectful to the host, and then take their presents and go to another house. I go to all my relatives' houses, and every night is a night of excitement for me.

After three days of going to different houses, including friends' and parents' friends', you are so tired and you also have a stomachache after eating so many different dishes, especially as everyone prepares the dishes in their own way using different spices. For me it's a really exciting holiday, and one that I always wait for, both because we don't have many holidays in the winter and because you get so many presents. I like Tsagaan Sar very much. ■

Issyk-Kul at Night Svetlana GUBINA, Kyrgyzstan

The ribbon of the moonlight
On moving mirror trembles
In the darkness of the moonlight
Stars shine like fired candles

The sand is hot like cat's hair
It keeps the warmth of sunrays
But cutting gusts of cold air
Push up its heat to lake's bays

The lake is full of secrets
At night. And nobody
Can guess what kinds of spirits
Make rough its face, disturb it

And nobody knows
Why winds in canes crisping
Calmed down, what is cause
Of their merry whisper

We are walking near water
It wipes off our footprints
The lake without borders
Connects our hearts with gold rings



Martha LOERKE, *Welcome to Mongolia*



The pearl of Central Asia

Svetlana GUBINA, Kyrgyzstan
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In the middle of the Asian continent lies the wonderful land of the Great Silk Road. This passage, used by ancient travelers, runs through the burning deserts of Mongolia, the ice-bound mountain passes of Kyrgyzia, the faded steppes of Kazakhstan and finally disappears into Europe. One branch of the Silk Road winds around Issyk-Kul, one of

the deepest high-mountain lakes in the world. Over the centuries both the mighty and the humble have passed by this place in the search for trade and riches. The Sakes and the Usunis, the Oirats and the Dinlins, all of these tribes left tracks in the history of cities now hidden below the surface of the lake. The descendants of these people, still strongly connected with this land by carefully preserved memories,

believe that the Mother-Deer brought people to this sacred lake, and filled it with bitter tears, to give birth to the

“The **Mother-Deer** brought people to the lake and filled it with **bitter tears** to give birth to the Kyrgyz nation.”

Kyrgyz nation. Issyk-Kul has thus become the symbol of unity for a new country; a strength of the past on which we build our hopes for a better future. ■

Uzbekistan

Andrey ADILOV, Uzbekistan

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Uzbekistan has a history stretching back more than 2000 years. The official religion is Islam, but today there exist many other religions, such as Christianity, Buddhism, and others that are mostly represented in the capital city of Tashkent. The way of life of Uzbek people is closely connected with their customs and traditions, and many aspects of their social life depend on that entirely. For example, each person living in Uzbekistan is considered first as a member of his/her family, and each family is

headed by the oldest and therefore the most respected person. There are many other old traditions, such as large, wonderful marriage ceremonies that last up to 3 days and include a great number of people. In my opinion, the two strongest traditions for Uzbek people are having wonderful celebrations and making trade. I suppose one reason for this is that Uzbekistan had long been a central transition point on the Great Silk Road, when horses and camels were the main means of conveyance and a great number of caravans loaded with goods from different parts of the world traveled through it. Today people have invented new, more convenient kinds of transportation, and this country has become somewhat lost in the center of a vast continent. ■



Zinta GULENS-GRAVA, Mongolia

Mounds of rocks, known as ovoos, are frequently placed on top of a hill or in a mountain pass and serve as a traditional place to offer thanks to nature and god, and to seek safety for one's journey.

Central Asia and Mongolia Websites

Central Asian Studies Worldwide:

www.fas.harvard.edu/~casww/

The Pushkin East-Kazakhstan Library:

www.pushkinlibrary.kz/

Almaty information site:

www.almaty-city.com/

The American University in Kyrgyzstan:

www.auk.kg

Kyrgyzstan Free-net:

<http://freenet.kg/db/>

Mongolian Student Association of America:

www.expage.com/page/msaa

Mongolian Student Network:

<http://monstudnet.mongol.net/>

Mongolia on-line:

www.mol.mn/

Asia Plus Tajikistan (private media site):

www.internews.ru/ASIA-PLUS/

Tajikistan information:

www.angelfire.com/sd/tajikistanupdate/

Internews Uzbekistan (independent media site):

www.internews.uz/

Uzbekistan; Samarkand information:

www.samarkand.uz/

Personal Accounts



Alex IRWIN, Hungary
Undergraduate Exchange students at pre-departure orientation in
Budapest, July 2000.

Participants in the Network Scholarship Programs come from an enormous diversity of countries and cultures, but they all share the experience of living and studying in a foreign culture. The submissions in this section express the often profound nature of opening oneself to another culture and the effect this can have on one's sense of self. Many of them are also an expression of the humor that is needed to cope with adapting to a strange environment, whether one is lost on a highway in St. Louis, dealing with strange and exotic new foods in the UK, or committing linguistic faux-pas in Illinois.

On the Road to St. Louis...

Gulnara ISMANKULOVA,
Kazakhstan

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My acquaintance with America began with a big line in front of the American Embassy in Almaty to get a US visa. I was surprised by the number of people traveling to a country that used to be the symbol par excellence of the cruel capitalistic world. There were represen-

tatives of all social strata in the line: businessmen, students, tourists, and nobody seemed to be stressed out about going to the US - as if it was just a short jaunt to one of our neighboring countries! For me this was a sign of the increasing democratization and liberalization of my society, well known for its "closed-mindedness". By this I mean not so much Kazakhstan as the former Soviet Union. Under that system, "closed-mindedness" was necessary for survival.

When I arrived in the US it was a

great honor for me to be met at the airport by the Director of Admissions, who personally welcomed all of us, the first OSI Social Work Fellows to come to Washington University in St. Louis. In the morning I woke up to find that the streets in America were not actually made of gold, and in fact my dormitory room must have been designed with a dwarf in mind, but oh well, I had survived! We all had survived. In fact our group of Social Work students from Central Asia and Mongolia got along

amazingly well. Although we didn't know each other before we came to the US, being exposed to a different culture united us very quickly.

We discovered very quickly that St. Louis was very spread out. Things were so far apart that it felt as though you

passing cars must have thought we were refugees from a particularly serious conflict. Of course we soon became quite lost and one member of our group, a Doctor from Uzbekistan, tried to flag down some passing cars to ask for directions, but they all swerved and accelerated away. Were we that frightening?

Finally we reached a place where we could sit and rest for a bit, at a gas station. Here, unbelieving, we

watched a bright new shiny American car, something big and luxurious, pull up next to us as it paused before pulling out onto the street. Sitting in the front passenger seat was a dog. The dog turned and looked at us, seemingly with an expression of pity, and maybe even a little disdain on its doggy face, and then the car drove away. The Georgian member of our group, a trained Psychologist back home, turned to us with a big sigh and a shrug and said, "Oh, how wonderful to be an American dog!" ■

It seems Americans are born with cars the way turtles are born with shells."

needed a car just to cross the street. It seems that Americans are born with cars the way turtles are born with shells. But one morning my brave troop of fellow students had a mission to accomplish – which was to go shopping! It was many miles on foot to the store that was our target, and after a few miles in the heat and humidity our proud young group began to look more like Napoleon's decimated army retreating in defeat from Moscow - but this time through the Gobi Desert! We were not a pretty sight. The

Rediscovering Self in America

Olha Datskiv, Ukraine

Edmund S. Muskie/Freedom Support Act
Graduate Fellowship Program
Rutgers University
odatskiv@hotmail.com.

Lost and not found
In a maze of an airport,
Cut again
From the routine of everyday chores
For better or for worse?

Alone in a crowd,
Creating false impressions,
Twining new bonds,
Starting new friendships
Again!

This is me!
A woman, a teacher, a Ukrainian
Searching again for Universal Truth
In this beehive of a University.



Muskie/FSA Fellows and Mongolian Professional Fellowship grantees participating in the ESL program at Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia, summer 2000.

Magic Roots

Yuliya Volkhonovych, Ukraine

Edmund S. Muskie/Freedom Support Act Graduate Fellowship Program, 1999
Ohio University
volkhonov@hotmail.com

There was a time in my country when it was fashionable to look like a foreigner. I wanted so much at that time to be different from my compatriots. I had never believed in a special attachment to the place where you were born, nor to the people among whom you spend most of your life. I did not believe in one's so called roots as a way to define one's personal history. Moreover, I was far from patriotic about my country. I dreamed about leaving this place, where the corrupt government humiliates people, the economy is hopelessly declining and nobody seems to care about the future. In some way I reached that goal. In my native country I achieved the desirable image of a foreigner. My friends noted that I looked different and people on the streets addressed me in English. Because of my "western look", people abroad considered me to be, if not an American, then German, French or Dutch. And I was so proud of it.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union my family automatically became citizens of the newly independent state of Ukraine. Since my parents moved to Kiev, the capital of Ukraine, from Russia, they always considered themselves Russian and barely spoke Ukrainian. The same was true of me. Yet within a few months the situation changed dramatically. Everything connected with Russian culture, language or nation

would never experience a better life. American tourists who came to visit our country at this time were the first foreigners I had ever met. They fascinated me with their idea of 'working hard to reach a goal'. They were open and kind; had nice clothes and smiled a lot. I felt like I had found my identity - I wanted to be like Americans. So I smiled, and people said 'what an American smile'. I wore T-shirts and people began to say that I dressed like a typical American. I traveled around Europe, and I always regretted that I had to come back to Ukraine.

The pinnacle of my desires was to visit the United States. I

"I dreamed about leaving this place where nobody seems to care about the future..."

hoped finally to find a country that I could consider my own and feel proud of. I won a scholarship and got the chance to come to the US, and I have found the country to be very nice. I have met nice people. But it became clear to me that I was not part of the culture. What really struck me was the realization that I also came from a nice country where nice people live. At the Harvard University Summer school, during lectures on Ukrainian history and nationalism, I suddenly wrestled with the process of self-identification. That was how I discovered my Ukrainian roots. For the first time in my life I was happy to go back to Ukraine. I had finally found my country and my destiny. I did not expect that these roots – invisible connections with one's native land, people and culture – could be ingrained so strongly.

Living between or within a new culture is a great challenge and takes a lot of effort. The process of national or self-identity is the result of a conscious conversion.

My own identity presently lies somewhere between a fear of being like my compatriots and a desire to be associated with the image of my country. There is an awareness of otherness and a feeling of being an isolated outsider. I had to experience this to realize that having an identity does not mean being like somebody else. Being unique, you can still have roots. Being unique allows you to belong to the community where you were born or spent most of your life. Only after being isolated from my roots, "being a foreigner", have I discovered my own identity. My appearance is deceptive. People may consider me if not an American, then German, French, or Dutch. But in fact, I am Ukrainian. My magic roots remind me of this. ■

"I did not expect that these roots could be ingrained so strongly."

was put aside. They became strangers in their own country. Still identifying themselves as Russians, or often simply Soviets, people received new passports with a new nationality. The years following balanced out many of the extremes and the Ukrainian and Russian cultures came to coexist more or less peacefully in my country. My parents continued to speak Russian, but Ukrainian became my second language in which I was able to express myself clearly. Yet I still did not identify myself as Ukrainian.

With stubbornness I turned to improving my English. "If you don't speak English, you will never be able to cross the border of this country", my mother used to say. She meant that I

US Supreme Court Justice visits Mongolia

Ganzorig GOMBOSUREN, Mongolia

Mongolian Professional Fellowship Program
gganzorig@hotmail.com

At the beginning of September the Honorable Sandra Day O' Connor, one of the nine Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States, visited Mongolia. The United States Embassy in Mongolia coordinated her visit and she met with the President, members of Parliament, Government officials and judges of the supreme and local courts. I assisted the Supreme Court of Mongolia in hosting Justice O'Connor's visit to Mongolia and was fortunate to attend many of her meetings. It was a wonderful opportunity for me to communicate and exchange ideas with her.

Together we visited the Tev Aimag court, which is about 50 kilometers from the capital city of Ulanbatar. The local

judges were very excited by the opportunity to meet a Justice of the United States Supreme Court and to have a free discussion with her as colleagues. On the way back to the Capital we met a herdsman, who brought his camels close to the road to show them to us. Justice O'Connor and her husband were excited to see a two-humped camel, as they exist only in Mongolia and China.

Justice O'Connor's last meeting was at the Supreme Court of Mongolia, attended by all the Justices of the Supreme Court. At this meeting she emphasized the importance of a strong independent judiciary and also of a free media. Ironically, a few days

later I read in the news about the government's latest Action Plan, which involves establishing public control over the discipline and ethics of judges, and creates a mechanism for their removal and recall.

Justice O'Connor's visit was a great success. Every meeting was mutually beneficial and provided a real opportunity for Mongolian judges to express their opinions, and to exchange ideas with a Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. Her visit was extensively covered by the national media and echoed for all Mongolians as a call for greater social justice and human rights in our country. ■



My Experience Living in a Different Country

Victoria Izmailova, Kyrgyzstan.
Social Work Fellowship Program,
Washington University in St. Louis
vii1@gwbssw.wustl.edu

Prior to coming to the US I studied the International Students' Guidebook that was given to me during our orientation, and it made a very strong impression on me. I was under such stress after reading it that I had nightmares for many nights. America was a terrible country in my imagination, where you have to do awful things, for example take a shower and wash your socks every day and even shave under your arms. Immediately upon arrival you will experience a profound "culture shock" which will involve a "honey-moon" period followed by depression and then anger and hostility.

"America was a terrible country in my imagination, where you have to take a shower every day."

And what happened after I came here? Nothing. I believe that today's world has become smaller. The integration and spread of technology has led to similarities in our environment, and in ways of thinking and personal values. That is why I did not experience any cultural shock here and really have few funny stories about adjusting to a new country. I had no great expectations and found life here not so bad. I maintain my contacts with family and friends. I live and study here. I cook and eat, go to the library and to the swimming pool. Sometimes I skip my daily shower and nobody notices. I will tell you about my socks later. ■

Cultural Confusions

Ngyan Linn Aung, Burma

Supplementary Grant Program – Burma
University of Illinois
hlunceu@uiuc.edu

Once while choosing food in a cafeteria I offered a woman some potatoes, asking, "Do you want some too?" She said, "That's okay." So I put one with her meal. But I was surprised when she said she didn't like it. "I thought you said 'That's okay'," I asked. But she explained that she meant that she did not want any. I considered this. I thought that "Okay" was a positive answer - how come it was a negative this time? What was okay, then? It was a puzzle.

The manager in the same restaurant told me the story of a Burmese employee who was trying to give a compliment to a young lady. In Burma, it is normal and nice to compliment a young woman by saying that she is nicely round and pretty. But the phrase literally translates 'fat and pretty'. The young Burmese man translated the phrase into English and said, "Hi, Ma'm, how are you doing? You sure are fat and pretty! Then the young lady barked at him, "You think I'm fat?!", and left. ■

Adjusting to a New Environment

Yimon Aye, Burma

Supplementary Grant Program - Burma
yimon@yahoo.com

I've been here in the United Kingdom for nearly two years. When I think now about my first few months here, I'm quite surprised at how easily I managed to adapt to western food. I remember so well my first dinner on my very day in the UK - mashed potatoes and lamb-steaks. I'd never had lamb before, indeed I had never even seen a sheep in my life as they can't survive in the very hot weather in Burma! I found that I couldn't

**"I'd never had lamb before;
indeed I had never seen a
sheep in my life."**

eat much in the beginning. But as the college term started, I was much more concerned about my studies and I ate what was given to fill me – which I suppose should be the main purpose of eating!

My other adaptation, and still a problem for me, is the weather. Back in Burma we have only two main seasons: sunny or rainy. We never wear more than one layer of clothing (I mean above under-clothes) and no socks or shoes, but slippers to go everywhere. Here I have to sleep with two thick duvets (in the morning my hostess can't find me!), with thick socks, long trousers and long-sleeve pajamas - even in April or May. In December two years ago I saw snow for the first time - I opened the curtains and thought that I was dreaming!

As time has passed I've managed to get used to my new environment but I do miss home a lot - the sunshine and the clear blue sky. I try not to complain, as my purpose here is to work hard and get the sort of education that we can't have at home. I now know something about the culture and customs here and have made a lot of friends. I've been doing volunteer work around the country this summer. But I still wear at least two layers of clothing, otherwise I get an immediate reaction – goose-bumps and cold, pale-bluish fingertips.

My mum told me before I came here, "wherever you go just extend your hand to help others in any way you can and you will always meet people who are willing to help you. Love and kindness are reciprocal, and they will keep you warm at all times even when you are among strangers". I have come to realize how true her words are! ■



Alex IRWIN, Hungary
Undergraduate Exchange students at pre-departure
orientation in Budapest, July 2000.

NSP Alumni: Where are they Now?

IF you want to be included in the next alumni list, e-mail us at airwin@sorosny.org with your name, program and year, host institute and what you've been up to since finishing your program – please put "alumni" as the subject of your message.

Edmund S. Muskie/ Freedom Support Act (FSA) Graduate Fellowship Program

1993

Eduard MOURADIAN (Armenia, Law, Capital University) Eduard works as Attorney at Law with International Legal Consulting, LLC.

1994

Dinara BERSUGUROVA (Kazakhstan, Education, University of Minnesota) Dinara is a Human Resources Manager at Arthur Anderson.

1995

Baurzhan KONISBAEV (Kazakhstan, Law, John Marshall Law School) Baurzhan is an Associate at LeBoeuf, Lamb, Greene & MacRae.

1996

David SARGSYAN (Armenia, Law, University of Georgia Athens) David is Senior Lawyer at Price Waterhouse Coopers, working on a Capital Markets Development Project in Armenia.

David SHAHZADEYAN (Armenia, Law, Notre Dame) David is Operations Officer for the Public Sector at the World Bank.

1997

Gayane GHUKASYAN (Armenia, Education,

University of Nebraska Omaha) Gayane works as an Educational Consultant to the Armenian School Connectivity Program in the ACCELS Office in Yerevan.

Lilit MARTIROSYAN (Armenia, Law, University of California Los Angeles) Lilit is Staff Attorney at Chemonics, working on Armenian Rule of Law, Commercial Law Activity Project.

Narine MATINYAN (Armenia, Journalism, Louisiana State University Baton Rouge) Narine is Communications Manager at Sibley International. She has also established one of the first private PR/communications companies in Armenia named MMDP Communication Center.

Aset SHYNGYSSOV (Kazakhstan, Law, Indiana University) Aset is an Associate at LeBoeuf, Lamb, Greene & MacRae.

Nurbek TELESALIEV (Kyrgyzstan, Education, University of Pennsylvania) Nurbek is Director of the educational NGO «Center of Democratic Education» and continues to work on an educational project supported by the Soros Foundation.

Shakirat TOKTOSUNOVA (Kyrgyzstan, Education, Drake University) Shakirat is Country Director at Eurasia Foundation (Kyrgyzstan).

Gulnara YAKUBOVA (Kazakhstan, Education, Hofstra University) Gulnara is a master teacher at the Step-by-Step center.

1998

Guerman ABAEV (Russia, Journalism, University of South Carolina) Guerman is a writer with Russia Journal, an English language newspaper in Moscow.

Ali BUZURUKOV (Tajikistan, Public Health, Boston University) Ali has been appointed Russian Country Director for Doctors of the World. Ali will oversee the Project for At-Risk Children and Youth

in Saint Petersburg and other initiatives to improve health care access for vulnerable groups in the former Soviet Union.

Diana HAKOBYAN (Armenia, Education, Rutgers University) Diana works as Program Coordinator/Assistant to the External Affairs Officer at the World Bank.

Artak KHACHATRYAN (Armenia, Law, University of the Pacific) Artak is Partner at International Legal Consulting, LLC.

Yelena KHROMOVA (Belarus, Public Health, Emory University) Yelena is working as an epidemiologist in the Moscow office of the Public Health Research Institute (PHRI) on the Russian TB Project funded by the Soros Foundation/Open Society Institute.

Denis LI (Kazakhstan, Public Administration, New York University). Denis is Deputy Director in the Academy for Educational Development (AED).

Lauri MALKSOO (Estonia, Law, Georgetown University) Lauri is working on his doctoral dissertation and is teaching a course about the continuity of the Baltic countries and international law at Tartu University.

Yulia MITROFANSKAYA (Kazakhstan, Law, American University) Yulia is an Associate at Salans Hertzfeld & Heilbronn.

Viktor MOKROUSOV (Kazakhstan, Law, University of Minnesota) Viktor is a lawyer with Couderet Brothers.

1999

Aliya SARSEMBINOVA (Kazakhstan, Library/Information Science, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign) Aliya is Head of the International Resource Center at the A.S.Pushkin East-Kazakhstan State Library.

Mongolian Professional Fellowship Program

1998

Enkhbat BATSUKH (Mongolia, Wake Forest University) Enkhbat is now a Soros Foundation staff member in Mongolia and runs law reform related projects. enkhuush@hotmail.com

Soyoltuya BAYAREE (Mongolia, SUNY Albany) Soyoltuya is working as a Program Officer at the UNFPA Mongolia Field Office. She works in areas such as Reproductive Health, Population and Development Strategies, and Advocacy.

ention OSI Alumni from Mongolia!
eral OSI NSP alumni are working
establishing an alumni association.
more information contact Bekhbat
behbat@hotmail.com.

UK Scholarship Program

1997

Nigina ZARIPOVA (Tajikistan, University of Essex) Nigina lives in Australia. Sherali.kari-mov@proxima-tech.com

1998

Theresa KHOROZIAN (Armenia, University of Essex) Theresa works as an adviser to the Human Rights and Democratization Section of the OSCE in Yerevan. tkhor@arminco.com

Azer KURBANOV (Azerbaijan, London School Of Economics and Political Science) Azer works as an ABS assistant at Price Waterhouse Coopers. azer.kurbanov@az.pwcglobal.com

Safkhan SHAHMAMMADLI (Azerbaijan, London School Of Economics and Political Science) Safkhan works as a Tax Manager at KPMG in Aberdeen. Safkhan.Shahmammadli@kpmg.co.uk

1999

Rashad ABBASOV (Azerbaijan, London School Of Economics and Political Science) Rashad graduated from LSE and plans to continue his education

in Cambridge. abbasovrt@yahoo.com

Elita ASANKULOVA (Kyrgyzstan, MSc in Sociology, University of Edinburgh) Elita completed her dissertation: "The Usefulness of the Concept of Civil Society for Kyrgyzstan. Case study: Parliamentary Elections in 1995 and 2000". She has continued working for Siar-Bishkek, a social and marketing research company. elita_a@yahoo.com

Undergraduate Exchange Program

1995

Ivars APINIS (Latvia, Montana State University) Ivars feels that his year in the US gave him a different direction in life. His career has developed in the field of political science since being introduced to it by an excellent professor, David Schrupp. He worked in the diplomatic service at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and completed a Master's degree in European Law and Political Science in France. Since April he has been at his first posting abroad as Third Secretary at the Latvian Mission to NATO in Brussels, Belgium. ivarsa@mfa.gov.lv

Zsuzanna CSELENYI (Slovakia, University of Arkansas) Zsuzanna is in her first year of a Ph.D. program at the Folklore Institute of Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana; with a focus on Ethnic Hungarian/Hungarian-American culture, and Native Americans. Since the UEP she

also completed an MA in English from the University of Arkansas in 1999; and worked as an Export Coordinator. She got married in July 1999. csecso@hotmail.com

Zdenka IVKOVCIC (Croatia, Florida Atlantic University) Zdenka works as a Cultural Orientation Trainer for The International Catholic Migration Commission in Zagreb. The job involves teaching and training, as well as preparing Bosnian refugees for resettlement in the US. She hopes to soon return to the US to start a Master's degree in communications or International Relations. zdenkaivkovic@hotmail.com

1996

Inga AUSEKLE (Latvia, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire) Inga currently works for KPMG as a Local Coordinator on the project: "Latvia State Revenue Service Modernisation Project: Improving Tax and Customs Operations". She is also completing her MA in International Economics and Business at the University of Latvia. She also worked for ten months for the OECD in Paris as a Project Coordinator for the Baltic Forum for Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Development. auseklei@yahoo.com

Volodymyr ZDOROVTSOV (Ukraine, University of Arkansas) After finishing the UEP, Volodymyr completed his undergraduate studies and simultaneously worked for Kraft Jacobs Suchard in Kiev first as an IS Analyst and then as the Indirect Materials and Services Purchasing agent. In 1998, he returned to the US to complete an MBA at the University of Arkansas. He is now in a PhD program in corporate finance at the University of South Carolina. zdorovtsov@yahoo.com

Alumni Projects

From September 1999 to May 2000 UEP 98/99 alumni Zhivko Stoyanov, Camelia Isaic, Lennart Sundja, Kadri Randmae and Taavi Tatsi worked on an international student project together. The Campaign for a Truly International Higher Education, funded by the Open Society Institute - New York, was aimed at promoting student mobility programs. The alumni compiled information and held presentations in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Bulgaria on the opportunities for academic exchange for students from Central and Eastern Europe.

If you are an NSP alum and have an idea for an alumni project, contact your Program Manager at scholar@sorosny.org.

1997

Alexander KUKSA (Belarus, University of Arizona) Alexander works as an interpreter at the local Translation Bureau. Last summer he worked for UNESCO's Bridges for Education group in Minsk. ak_real@hotmail.com

Mirel PALADA (Romania, University of Kalamazoo) Mirel will very soon become a father.

Marcin PIATKOWSKI (Poland, Roosevelt University) Marcin recently graduated with an MA in Finance and Banking from the Warsaw School of Economics. In September he started his PhD in Economics. He works as a Research Assistant at a new economic think-tank named TIGER (Transition, Integration, Globalization Economic Research) and has also established an Internet company specializing in e-commerce and the development of local real estate (www.lokal.com.pl). mpiatek@hotmail.com

Maria STOIAN (Romania, Bard University) Maria is completing an MA in New Media at Columbia University in New York.

Burul USMANALIEVA (Kyrgyzstan, Randolph-Macon Woman's College) Burul transferred to the

American University in Kyrgyzstan and majored in International Relations. She also worked as an assistant-editor for the magazine "Meerim", and worked for the National Democratic Institute to help train local observers for elections, as well as for the OSCE during Parliamentary elections. She is presently doing her MA at the Central European University in Hungary. She is excited to be in school there with several other UEP alumni: Petr Kafka, Emurla Essyn-Levent, and Alla Nastich. i00usb01@student.ceu.hu

1998

Camelia ISAIC (Romania, Bard University) Camelia returned to the University of Bucharest and graduated with a BA in Communications and Public Relations in July 2000. Since September she has been interning at the Worldwide Media Department of Coty Inc., a multinational company in London, UK. Camilea_Isaic@cotyinc.com

Vilma GEDGAUDAITE (Lithuania, University of Arkansas) Vilma graduated from Vilnius University with a BA in English Philology and is now studying for an MA at the Lithuanian Law Academy in Public Administration. vilmag@takas.lt

Veronika HLADISOVA (Czech Republic, Randolph-Macon Woman's College) Veronika has published several articles in history scholarly journals on the theme "Euro-American Coexistence" with the help of a former professor of hers, Professor d'Entremont, from RMWC. In her free time she volunteers for a charitable organization called Charitas where she teaches English. vhladisoVA@hotmail.com

Lela LOMINA (Georgia, University of Montana) is living in Tbilisi.

Ilyas ORAZBAYEV (Kazakhstan, Roosevelt University) After returning home from the UEP, Ilyas completed a summer internship at Karazhanbasmunai, an oil producing/exporting company. He graduated from Kazakh State National University in June 2000, and since August has been working as Assistant to the Director in the marketing department of Nations Energy Calgary in Almaty. iloraz@hotmail.com

Nikolay SLAVKOV (Bulgaria, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire) Nikolay is working as an English teacher in China.

Zhivko STOYANOV (Bulgaria, Bard University) Zhiyko transferred last year from Veliko Turnovo University to Sofia University and is now in his senior year. zhivko1@yahoo.com

1999

Rusiev RAMZES (Tajikistan, University of Montana) Rusiev is a fourth year student at Tajik Russian Slavic University.

Abdulkhamedov ZOKIR (Tajikistan, Kalamazoo University) Abdulkhamedov is a fourth year student at the Tajik Institute of Taxes and Law.

Call for Articles:

If you have recently done research or worked for a Soros foundation network program in the Caucasus or Central Asia, the *Open Society News* would like to hear from you. We are looking for journalistic articles that deal with ethnic relations, drugs, media, youth, and women's issues in the region.

Please contact William Kramer (wkramer@sorosny.org) by February 9 for more details.

Contribute to the next Scholar Forum!

The next issue of Scholar Forum will be published in summer 2001 and submissions are needed from all OSI NSP scholars and alumni. Research papers, personal accounts, photographs, poems, stories, cartoons and drawings are all welcome.

Cover Story – Alcohol, Drugs and HIV/AIDS in transition countries: social, economic and personal costs (max. 750 words)

1. **Alcoholism:** can have devastating consequences, affecting individuals, families and communities. What changes have you observed in your country in terms of alcohol use? How does your culture respond to the problems associated with alcoholism? Should alcoholism be considered a disease?

2. **Drug use:** has there been an increase in the use of recreational drugs among young people? Are some drugs acceptable and others not? Should society's emphasis be on criminalizing drug use or on treatment for drug users, or can drug use be acceptable

under any circumstances?

3. **HIV/AIDS:** the sharing of needles among intravenous drug users is the main method of HIV transmission in many transition countries. What response has there been to the spread of HIV/AIDS? What HIV/AIDS prevention strategies should there be and how can young people be reached with these strategies? How have governments, social policies and NGOs responded to substance use and the spread of HIV/AIDS? Have you been affected personally by these issues?

4. **Harm reduction** is a pragmatic and humanistic approach to diminishing the individual and social harms associated with drug use, especially the risk of HIV infection. The approach entails a wide range of drug user services including needle exchange, methadone treatment, health education, medical referrals and support services. What harm reduction strategies are you aware of in your country? What do you think about the harm reduction approach to drug use and HIV/AIDS?

Personal Accounts – essays and creative works (Max. 300 words): A short personal account of your experiences living and studying in a different country - poems, photographs, drawings and cartoons are also welcome.

Regional Focus - BURMA: Fellows from Burma, as well as those who are familiar with it, are encouraged to submit stories, poems, photographs, drawings, cartoons, or recipes that are representative of the area.

Alumni: Send us information about your current activities to be printed in the Alumni Section.

Submissions are due in New York by May 1, 2001

Send submissions by e-mail to airwin@sorosny.org (please put "Scholar Forum" in the subject area) or by mail to the attention of Alex Irwin, Open Society Institute, 400 West 59th St., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10019. If you have any questions, please contact Alex at 212-548-0175.

Muskie/FSA Alumni Opportunities

Support for Community Outreach and University Teaching (SCOUT)

The SCOUT Full Time Teaching, Part Time Teaching and Special Projects Grant Programs offer financial, methodological, institutional and informational support to Muskie/FSA alumni who are interested in teaching in institutions of higher education and professional training, or in local communities; in developing projects that promote learning and exchange among students, faculty, and communities; or in facilitating exchange between higher education and professional public and private sector, government, NGOs and other academic and community organizations.

Applications are currently being accepted for the 2000-2001 Special Projects grant program (on a rolling basis) and for Full Time Teaching (deadline 1 March 2001) and Part Time Teaching (deadline 1 April 2001) grant programs for academic year 2001-2002.

Detailed information, application forms and contact information for field offices are available from the Civic Education Project web site <http://www.cep.org.hu/scout>, email scout@osi.hu, or from the CEP offices:

Civic Education Project
Nádor u. 9
Budapest 1051 Hungary
Tel: 36-1-327-3219
Fax: 36-1-327-3221
Email: cep@osi.hu

Civic Education Project
1140 Chapel Street, St 2A
New Haven, CT 06520-5445, USA
Tel: 1-203-781-0263
Fax: 1-203-781-0265
Email: cep@cep.yale.edu

Civic Education Project

Be a part of the reform and development of higher education in your country.

The Civic Education Project (CEP) is a not-for-profit organization promoting reform of higher education in the countries of Central-Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. CEP provides support for promising scholars from Eastern Europe who have graduate training from a Western university and who teach or will be teaching in politics, law, economics, education, sociology, history, political science, international relations, public administration, and policy studies.

Information and applications:

Civic Education Project
H-1051 Budapest
Nador u. 9.
Hungary
Fax: (36-1) 327-3221
E-mail: cep@osi.hu
<http://www.cep.org.hu>

Scholarships and Fellowships with NSP

The Network Scholarship Programs Department offers a variety of scholarships and fellowship opportunities. Programs are offered only in certain countries; please visit the NSP website for details and for application information.

www.soros.org/netprog.html

American University in Bulgaria:

Each year, NSP funds scholarships for four years of undergraduate liberal arts study at the American University in Bulgaria (AUBG), located in Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria.

DAAD-OSI Program:

A joint scholarship program in Germany for graduate students and junior faculty from the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Edmund S. Muskie/Freedom Support Act (FSA) Graduate Fellowship Program:

Approximately 375 Muskie/FSA fellowships are awarded annually, with fellows from the former Soviet Union placed in one to two-year Master's level professional degree (and non-degree) programs at selected US universities in a variety of fields.

Faculty Development Program:

Each year for up to three years, faculty fellows in the social sciences and humanities spend one semester at a

US university and one semester teaching at their home universities.

Global Supplementary Grant Program:

This program offers supplementary grants to students from selected countries of Eastern and Central Europe and the former Soviet Union to pursue Doctoral studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences at accredited universities in Western Europe, Asia, Australia, and North America.

Mongolian Professional Fellowship Program:

This program is designed to provide training in education, environmental management, law, public administration, and public health for students from Mongolia.

Soros Supplementary Grant Program:

The program awards grants for one academic year for undergraduate and post-graduate studies at recog-

nized institutes of higher education outside students' home countries or permanent residence.

Social Work Fellowship Program:

This Program is designed to provide graduate training in social work to implement reform, create policy, and foster the development of social work in the participating countries.

Supplementary Grant Program—Burma:

Partial scholarships awarded to Burmese students worldwide who cannot pursue their studies in Burma due to their current or previous participation in the pro-democracy movement.

UK Scholarship Program:

UK Scholarship programs include one-year scholarships, generally in the social sciences and humanities, for students and scholars to study at various graduate institutions in the United Kingdom.

Undergraduate Exchange Program:

The Undergraduate Exchange is a one-year, non-degree program for students enrolled in a university in Eastern and Central Europe, parts of the former Soviet Union, and Mongolia.

ScholarForum

Open Society Institute
Network Scholarship Programs
400 West 59th Street
New York, NY 10019 USA