

Alumni & Postdoc Notes

I have spent my entire professional career dealing with the U.S.-Soviet, and now the U.S.-Russian, relationship. Currently, I'm a member of the Board of Directors of PJSC "LUKOIL." I'm also president of TTG Global LLC, an international strategic advisory company.

From June 1997 to April 2016 I served as senior international advisor at Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP, an international law firm, where I focused primarily on Russian foreign and economic policy, U.S. foreign policy, U.S.-Russian relations, and the global challenges facing both countries in an increasingly turbulent international system.

I served as special assistant to President Clinton and senior director for Russia, Ukraine and the Eurasian States at the National Security Council in the White House in 1993, and then as assistant secretary of state for intelligence and research (INR) until May 1997.

Before joining government, I was senior vice president for policy studies at the United Nations Association of the United States of America (UNA-USA), where I worked for many years.

I'm a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, a Board member of the U.S.-Russia Business Council (USRBC), and also participate actively in the Valdai International Discussion Club and the Astana Club.

I have frequently provided commentary for major networks and newspapers in both the United States and the Russian Federation on American foreign policy and U.S.-Russian relations.

—**Toby Gati** (Russian Institute, 1970; M.A., Slavic Languages, 1970; M.I.A., SIPA, 1972)



Toby Gati



Eagle Glassheim

I am an associate professor of history at the University of British Columbia, where I teach Central European and environmental history. I recently published my second book, *Cleansing the Czechoslovak Borderlands: Migration, Environment, and Health in the Former Sudetenland* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2016).

—**Eagle Glassheim** (Harriman Certificate, 1998; Ph.D., History, 2000)

After graduating from Salem College in North Carolina with a degree in international relations and economics, I arrived at the Harriman Institute to study democratization in post-Soviet states. While there I learned a great deal more about the challenges of effecting change in any given society (I also met my husband, David!). Following graduation from Columbia, I wanted to build some experience in nonprofit management. I spent about eight months as a program officer and then became executive director of the Sunflower County Freedom Project, a college-prep program based on the Freedom Schools model of the 1960s.

In 2011, I made the move to my current position. Now I live in East Africa and work for One Acre Fund, a leading social entrepreneurship organization that helps



Sarah Hylden

subsistence farmers grow their way out of poverty. One Acre Fund serves about 400,000 farm families in sub-Saharan Africa. Part of our “market bundle” approach to addressing the issue of poverty among the world’s smallholder farmers is to deliver high-quality inputs to within walking distance of their homes. I am the logistics director of my team, which focuses on that piece of the bundle (the other pieces being access to credit, training, and a market at the end of the growing season). David and I are currently based in rural Tanzania and just welcomed our first son, Arthur.

—**Sarah Hylden** (née Hoftiezer) (MARS-REERS, 2009; Harriman Certificate, 2009)



Casey Michel

Originally from Portland, Oregon, I’m a freelance researcher and journalist who has written for *The Atlantic*, *The New Republic*, *Foreign Policy*, and *Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project*, among other platforms. I have also worked on post-Soviet-related projects with International Crisis Group, Nuclear Threat Initiative, and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Prior to receiving my master’s degree from the Harriman Institute, I was a Peace Corps Volunteer in northern Kazakhstan and completed my undergraduate degree at Rice University—where I also taught a course on the history of Batman.

—**Casey Michel** (MARS-REERS, 2015)



Emily O'Dell

I am an assistant professor in the Department of English Language and Literature at Sultan Qaboos University. Previously I held the Whittlesey Chair of History & Archaeology at the American University of Beirut, and taught at Columbia University, Brown University, and Harvard University—where I received an award for excellence in teaching. In addition to my master’s in Russian, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies from Columbia University, I also have a Ph.D., M.A., and M.F.A. from Brown University.

I completed my postdoctoral fellowship at Harvard University under the direction of Homi Bhabha. My writing has appeared in the *New York Times*, the *New York Times Magazine*, *Salon*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *NPR*, and *Huffington Post*. My most recent academic publication is “Subversives & Saints: Sufism and the State in Central Asia” in Pauline Jones Luong’s *Islam, Society, and Politics in Central Asia* (University of Pittsburgh Press). For my field research on Sufism, Islamic law, and cultural heritage in Central Asia, Eastern Europe, and Southeast Asia (made possible by my proficiency in Russian, Czech, Persian, Arabic, Mongolian, and Uzbek), I have been chosen as a Fulbright-Hays Scholar (Indonesia); an Edward A. Hewett Policy Fellow (Tajikistan and Afghanistan); a Columbia University Pepsico Fellow (Uzbekistan); an IREX Fellow (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, and Hungary); an American Council Fellow (Turkmenistan); an NEH Summer Fellow (American Center of Mongolian Studies); and a State Department Fellow in Critical Languages (Persian and Tajiki) in Dushanbe. I have also excavated medieval Islamic archaeology and preserved Sufi shrines on the Silk Road in Turkmenistan.

—**Emily O'Dell** (MARS-REERS, 2010; Harriman Certificate, 2010)

At the Russian Institute my certificate essay dealt with the Czech Legion and the Bolsheviks. I was fortunate to have studied with remarkable teachers like Philip Mosely (political science), who awarded me a modest grant to study and compile a bibliography and summary of Yiddish-language materials composed before and during the Bolshevik Revolution, and Ernest Simmons (literature), who introduced me to the magisterial nineteenth-century Russian novelists. Both of these gifted teachers added to the knowledge I had inherited from my Ukrainian-born Jewish family who survived World War I, the Revolution, and the Civil War. My student years were interrupted by military service. I served as a military intelligence analyst and later as chief of the USSR desk at the Far East Command Psychological Warfare branch of the U.S. Army.

Back home, when a college dean asked why it had taken me so long to complete my studies, I responded, “the military, marriage, and three kids.” I wrote here and there about Russian and Soviet history and American life, but after teaching in colleges in the U.S. and Canada I changed direction and became a longtime editor of books and magazines. I also wrote many books, including three related to the Vietnam War (*No Victory Parades: The Return of the Vietnam Veteran*, another on the men who refused to serve in Vietnam, and coauthored a dual biography of Daniel and Philip Berrigan, two antiwar Catholic priests), plus others dealing with foreign policy, religion, and sports, including a biography of Branch Rickey, the Brooklyn Dodger executive who brought Jackie Robinson into baseball and thus desegregated the game. I’m currently the book review editor, and a blogger, for the History News Network, and write for several other websites.

—**Murray Polner** (Russian Institute Certificate, 1967)



Murray Polner



Marilyn Schuman Wertheimer

The first person to receive a B.A. in Russian language from Stanford University, I attended the Russian Institute. I spent a summer studying Russian at Middlebury College, and then in 1953 I received a certificate from the Russian Institute and a Columbia University M.A. in public law and government. After further graduate work in political science at the University of California, Berkeley, and earning a master’s degree in library science at UCLA, I became a reference librarian and political science bibliographer at the University of Colorado, Boulder, for twenty-five years and taught a general honors seminar on Soviet civilization there for sixteen.

My first visit to the Soviet Union was in 1960, during which I met a young Russian woman who wanted to correspond with me; we carried on an innocent correspondence for twelve years. I visited the Soviet Union again in 1973, traveling to Siberia and Central Asia. In 1988 I was a member of a delegation of librarians visiting the Soviet Union; we were the first U.S. librarians to visit Odessa. I was also a member of a delegation of librarians to China in 1985. In 1998, I participated in a Waterways of Russia tour led by Professor Mark von Hagen of the Harriman Institute. On this excursion I met two young Russian girls in Goritsy who were delighted to meet an American who could speak some Russian; they took me by my arms and proudly escorted me around their tiny village.

—**Marilyn Schuman Wertheimer** (Russian Institute Certificate, 1953; M.A., Political Science, GSAS, 1953)