



COURSE:	EURR 4202B/5202B & HIST 4201A Everyday Life in the Soviet Union
TERM:	Winter 2020
PROFESSOR:	Dr. Erica Fraser
CLASS:	Day & Time: Mondays, 11:35am–2:25pm Room: Check with Carleton Central for room location
CONTACT:	Office: Paterson Hall 447 Office Hours: Mondays, 3:00–4:30pm; Thursdays, 4:45–6:00pm or by appointment Email: erica.fraser@carleton.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION



In Soviet ideology, the isolation, complacency, or ennui of the oppressed proletariat's everyday life was supposed to have been conquered by the new access all workers had to a meaningful revolutionary community. This utopian vision sounded good, but how did people *actually* live? How did they negotiate their daily lives and personal spaces under such ideological and state control? We will examine the blurred boundaries between public and private, and the collective and the individual, over the course of the 20th century and at different moments in Soviet history. We will also discuss the parameters of choice in Soviet life, challenging the totalitarianism narrative that persists in western minds that Soviet citizens could live only how they were told to live.

Topics will include: city life and rural life (housing, transportation, work, childcare, leisure), life in the non-Russian republics, soldier life and the home front in World War II, prison life in the Gulag, religious life in an atheist state, shopping and bartering in a command economy,

disability and ableism in a state founded to privilege physical labour, and courtship and sex in a progressive society turned puritan. Overall, we will consider the broad themes of everyday resistance, everyday violence, and everyday hope.

REQUIRED READINGS

All readings will be available electronically via ARES and cuLearn.

GRADING & EVALUATIONUndergraduate students (EURR 4202B & HIST 4201A)

Seminar Participation:	20%	every class
Presentation & Discussion Leading	10%	your choice
3 Reading Response Papers (4-5 pages; 10% each)	30%	your choice: Mondays, 11:55pm
Proposal & Bibliography for Research Essay	10%	due Feb. 24
Research Source Show-and-Tell & Peer Review	10%	due March 9 & 16
Final Research Essay (15-18 pages)	20%	due April 7

Graduate students (EURR 5202B)

Seminar Participation:	20%	every class
Presentation & Discussion Leading	10%	your choice
4 Reading Response Papers (4-6 pages; 10% each)	40%	your choice: Mondays, 11:55pm
Proposal & Bibliography for Research Essay	5%	due March 2
Research Source Show-and-Tell & Peer Review	optional +3%	due March 9 & 16
Final Research Essay (18-22 pages)	25%	due April 7

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students (who pass) will be able to:

- Identify historiographical trends that have generated histories of everyday life and comfortably explain why those histories matter.
- Compare (in writing and discussion) different eras and themes in Soviet history in terms of history “from below.”
- Conduct independent research using primary evidence and secondary scholarship and synthesize different arguments and perspectives.
- Present arguments orally to the class about a given topic and facilitate group discussion of it.

BACKGROUND REQUIRED

This is a fourth year and M.A. joint seminar that discusses the history of the Soviet Union at an advanced level. Students should have taken at least one previous course in Russian or Soviet history in the History Department or a post-Soviet studies course through EURUS. Students without this background should come see me before continuing in this course.

If you do not have a background course and need further context for our topics, you should take the initiative to consult a textbook on Soviet history. Recommended: Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Soviet Experiment: Russia, the USSR, and the Successor States*, 2nd edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. (ISBN: 978-0195340556). This book is on reserve in the Library for our class and may be used for consultation, or used copies are widely available for purchase online.

ASSIGNMENTS

For each assignment, detailed instructions will be posted separately to cuLearn. These are only brief descriptions:

- Seminar participation
See below regarding class format.
- Presentation & Discussion Leading:
At least once during the semester, students will give presentations of about 10 minutes each that will give some background and offer a way to frame the issues of the week. No extra readings are required, but students should think more broadly about connecting the week’s themes, rather than

only summarizing the assigned reading. The presenter will then lead the rest of the class discussion (60-90 minutes). This assignment will likely be done in pairs or threes, to be determined during our first class.

- Reading Response Papers:

These discussion papers will compare and analyze the readings for the week, discussing the authors' arguments and pinpointing major issues within the selected theme. Undergraduate students must submit at least one of their three papers by the end of January (ie: for class on Jan. 27). Graduate students must submit at least two of their four papers before the Winter Break (for Feb. 10). Papers are due (via cuLearn) by Mondays at 11:55pm for the readings discussed in class that day. That does not mean you only have a few hours to write them, of course; this is just an extra window of time in which to polish what you will have already written before we meet in class on Mondays. See the separate assignment sheet for details on how to structure and time these papers.

- Proposal & Bibliography for Research Essay

It is in your best interests to begin thinking about possible essay topics early in the semester. To help with that, you will submit a 1-2 page proposal outlining your major research question(s) and a preliminary bibliography that includes material you have already consulted as well as material you intend to consult as you continue working on the project. You don't have to have all the answers at this stage, but the assignment will be graded on how much effort you have put into developing a feasible and analytically compelling topic at this point in the course.

- Research Source Show-and-Tell & Peer Review

This assignment has two parts. We will discuss it in more detail in class before it is due. It is mandatory for undergraduate students and optional (for bonus credit on your research essay) for graduate students.

Once you have identified your final essay topic (see below) and begun your research, you will choose one of your sources to "Show-and-Tell" to the rest of the class – be it a primary source like a cartoon, a newspaper article, a speech, etc. or a secondary source like a particularly intriguing excerpt from a historical work. Post your source to the Discussion Board on cuLearn with a short write-up about it. Once everyone has posted their Show-and-Tells, you will read through them and choose one for Peer Review, where you will engage with the other student's source and offer constructive advice.

- Final Research Essay:

The essay will take one of three forms. #1 and 2 are designed for history students, and #3 is for political science or post-Soviet studies students, but you may pick any option:

Option 1: Focus on primary sources: the student will rely mainly on a body of primary sources to write an essay. Some primary source ideas include: memoirs, novels or films, newspapers, advice manuals, posters, political cartoons, television or radio broadcasts, advertisements, pamphlets, diaries, government documents, music performances, documentary or newsreel footage, museum exhibits, etc. More guidance on finding primary sources will be posted to cuLearn and we will discuss this more in class.

Option 2: Focus on historiography (historical secondary sources): the student will select a group of scholarly books and/or articles about an everyday life theme and write an essay

considering historiographical trends. How have historians written *about* your theme? How have views of it changed over time, or not? Why are these historians' arguments significant?

Option 3: Focus on historicizing a contemporary issue: the student will identify an issue in Russian, Ukrainian, or any post-Soviet society of particular interest to them and explore the historical roots of the issue in Soviet everyday life. Topics might include: housing or transportation issues, architecture and urban planning, education, sports and leisure, censorship, youth protests, the arts, shopping and consumerism, marriage or dating, diary-writing (VKontakte?), labour, prisons, women's rights, LGBT+ rights, etc.

CLASS FORMAT & SEMINAR PARTICIPATION

- As you likely already know, seminars are not lecture-based classes. The readings are intensive, but you are expected to participate and contribute much more than simply “doing” the reading. As you prepare for class each week, think *actively* rather than passively, ie: rather than waiting for the discussion leaders or me to set the agenda, what do *you* want to discuss?
- Read carefully, critically, and identify questions, problems, contradictions, critiques, etc. about what you have read. Bring those issues to the group when we meet, and be prepared to respond to the questions, problems, contradictions, critiques, etc. your classmates have also brought forth for the day. With that kind of active reading and participation from everyone in the group, we will have productive discussions that will help you not only to come to terms with the topics we are discussing, but in a broader way to develop your own voice as a scholar.
- A big component of active learning is also active listening. For shy students who are often careful listeners, I would advise you to challenge yourself to come out of your shell at least once per class and engage with a question or problem that I or another student has posed. For the more gregarious students, however, I would coach you to practice active listening, and to engage directly with comments that other students have made, in order to make sure you are not dominating the discussion with all your own ideas.
- I take note of your participation grade out of 3 after each class (roughly, A, B, or C-level). A-level involves actively listening, contributing ideas to move the discussion forward or draw on previous comments, and demonstrating advanced engagement with the readings. B-level does the same but less often, perhaps only one or two comments per class, or less rigorously, not moving the discussion forward to the same extent. C-level and below is silence throughout the class, or participation that only derails the discussion or does not demonstrate any engagement with the required texts. These grades are not written in stone, however, and I look for improvement throughout the course.
- I am not interested in embarrassing shy students or making you uncomfortable in class. However, if you are not used to this sort of format, this is a perfect opportunity to work on your oral argument skills – which will serve you well in any career path! Come see me for more pointers if you are having trouble venturing into our discussions.
- Your participation grade will also take your attendance record into account (ie: if you aren't in class, you can't participate). Absences may be excused due to emergencies, serious illness, or religious holidays only; please see me about discussing excused absences.

- I expect all students to arrive on time and stay for the entire class. Barring an emergency, you may not come and go as you please during class time. We will take a 15-minute coffee break in the middle of the 3 hours, so please wait until then to leave the room.

** We are all responsible for cultivating a productive and comfortable class environment and demonstrating respect for each other and for diverse perspectives. If there is anything I can do (or not do) to be more inclusive of your perspective in our discussions, please do let me know.

CLASSROOM TECHNOLOGY

- Please turn your phone off during class. Come talk to me if you have a legitimate reason for keeping it on, ie: childcare concerns, waiting for urgent news, etc. In general, however, calls and texts can and should wait until class is over.
- **I strongly recommend using a pen and paper to take notes during class and leaving your laptops out of it.** Studies have shown that if you think you are efficiently multi-tasking by working on other things during class, you are in fact not doing either thing very well. And if you *are* focused on the class and taking notes, you are far more likely to retain material written by hand than typed.¹ Moreover, this class is not so much about taking notes as it is about being present in the conversation each week.
- That said, I don't ban laptops or tablets, so long as you use them *only* to focus on the course material or pull up the readings. If it becomes obvious in class that you are distracted or are distracting others with non-course material, I will ask you to put the tech away and use a pen and paper for the rest of the semester.
- From my point of view, my role is not to ban you from using the technology that has become a crucial part of our daily lives, but rather to help you practice using it for professional reasons in the classroom, rather than personal reasons. Learning and practicing that distinction now will serve you well in your life and career after university.
- The “Eyeball check”: Even if you are engaged with the readings on your screen, be sure to take some time during the class to lower or close your laptop or tablet and look up! Are you truly engaging with your classmates and with me, or are you using your screen to hide?
- I invite students with disabilities or accessibility concerns to please let me know if you require specific technology to fully participate in this class, and I am happy to do what I can to help you succeed. See the additional information at the end of this Course Outline about the Paul Menton Centre.

How I Use cuLearn

I like cuLearn, and I use it in every aspect of the course. You should ensure you are familiar with the system as a whole and our course site in particular. There you will find our weekly readings and assignment instructions. **You will also submit all your written work electronically via cuLearn.** This allows me to return feedback to you more quickly than paper versions. I will also post your grades to cuLearn. Make sure you have regular access to a computer and internet connection.

¹ For example, see Cindy May, “A Learning Secret: Don’t Take Notes with a Laptop,” *The Scientific American*, June 3, 2014 (<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/>); Carol E. Holstead, “The Benefits of No-Tech Note Taking,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 4, 2015 (<http://www.chronicle.com/article/The-Benefits-of-No-Tech-Note/228089>).

DEADLINES

- Your work must be submitted on time (or earlier) according to the dates on the Course Outline and assignment instructions.
- Late work will be deducted 5% per day to a maximum of 7 days (including weekends). After that, unless you have spoken with me, your assignments will not be accepted. (Exception: see the Reading Responses Instruction sheet on cuLearn for specific rules for how you can roll one week's Response over to the following week, incorporating new readings, if you miss the Monday evening deadline).

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS

University-level work can be very stressful, especially at this advanced level. Whether you have just arrived at Carleton for your M.A. or have been here for several years as an advanced undergraduate, I encourage you to familiarize yourself with the many resources we have available to help you manage your workload and maintain your health in the middle of a busy semester, starting with the Well-being Resources listed here: <https://carleton.ca/thrive/well-being-resources/>.

In addition to considering outside resources, please come see me if you are struggling in this class. I enforce deadlines for your benefit, to help you avoid too much work piling up at the end of the semester. But that said, if you need some breathing room with an assignment or help managing the reading schedule, it is better for you to come talk to me about it than to avoid me, or cause yourself undue stress trying to manage the situation alone. I am open to negotiating due dates for your work (within reason and at my discretion) as long as I see that you are committed to the class.

TOPICS & READING SCHEDULE**January 6 – Introduction**

No reading

What is “everyday life”? Why does it deserve its own topic in Soviet history?

January 13 – Methodology, Historiography, & Revolution: How Should We Study Everyday Life?

- Alf Lüdtke, “Introduction: What Is the History of Everyday Life and Who Are Its Practitioners?” in Lüdtke, ed, *The History of Everyday Life: Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 3-40.
- David L. Ransel, “The Scholarship of Everyday Life,” in Choi Chatterjee et al, eds, *Everyday Life in Russia Past and Present* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015), 17-34.
- Mark D. Steinberg, Ch. 1, “Springtime of Freedom: Walking the Past,” in Steinberg, *The Russian Revolution, 1905-1921* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 13-43.

January 20 – Building a New Society

- Diane P. Koenker, “Class and Consciousness in a Socialist Society: Workers in the Printing Trades during NEP,” in Sheila Fitzpatrick et al, eds, *Russia in the Era of NEP: Explorations in Soviet Society and Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 34-57.
- Catriona Kelly, “Shaping the ‘Future Race’: Regulating the Daily Life of Children in Early Soviet Russia,” in Christina Kiaer and Eric Naiman, eds, *Everyday Life in Early Soviet Russia: Taking the Revolution Inside* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 256-81.
- Ethan Pollock, Ch. 6, “Either Socialism Will Defeat the Louse or the Louse Will Defeat Socialism,” in Pollock, *Without the Banya We Would Perish: A History of the Russian Bathhouse* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 129-56.

January 27 – Peasant Life in the 1920s and 1930s

*** Undergrads: Last day to have submitted at least one Reading Response Paper ***

- Régine Robin, “Popular Literature of the 1920s: Russian Peasants as Readers,” in Sheila Fitzpatrick et al, eds, *Russia in the Era of NEP: Explorations in Soviet Society and Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 253-67.
- Sheila Fitzpatrick, Ch. 8, “Culture,” in Fitzpatrick, *Stalin’s Peasants: Resistance & Survival in the Russian Village after Collectivization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 204-32.
- Lynne Viola, Ch. 2, “The Mark of Antichrist: Rumors and the Ideology of Peasant Resistance,” in Viola, *Peasant Rebels Under Stalin: Collectivization and the Culture of Peasant Resistance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 45-66.
- Marianne Kamp, “The Wedding Feast: Living the New Uzbek Life in the 1930s,” in Jeff Sahadeo and Russell Zanca, eds, *Everyday Life in Central Asia: Past and Present* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 103-14.

February 3 – Stalinism: “Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times”

- Sheila Fitzpatrick, Ch. 2, “Hard Times,” Ch. 4, “The Magic Tablecloth,” and Ch. 6, “Family Problems,” in Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 40-66, 89-114, 139-63.
- Jochen Hellbeck, “Working, Struggling, Becoming: Stalin-Era Autobiographical Texts,” *Russian Review*, Vol. 60, no. 3 (July 2001), 340-59.

February 10 – Stalinism: Everyday Violence

*** Grads: Last day to have submitted at least two Reading Response Papers ***

- Sheila Fitzpatrick, Ch. 11, “Denunciations: Signals from Below,” in Fitzpatrick, *Tear off the Masks! Identity and Imposture in Twentieth-Century Russia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 203-39.
- Maria A. Blackwood, “Fatima Gabitova: Repression, Subjectivity and Historical Memory in Soviet Kazakhstan,” *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 36, no. 1 (2017), 113-30.
- Dan Healey, “Homosexual Existence and Existing Socialism: New Light on the Repression of Male Homosexuality in Stalin’s Russia,” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, Vol. 8, no. 3 (June 2002), 349-78.

February 17 – No class (Winter Break)**February 24 – Religious Life**

*** Undergrads: Proposal & Bibliography due ***

- Marianne Kamp, “Where Did the Mullahs Go? Oral Histories from Rural Uzbekistan,” *Die Welt des Islams*, Vol. 50, nos. 3/4 (2010), 503-31.
- Anna Shternshis, Ch. 1, “Antireligious Propaganda and the Transformation of Jewish Institutions and Traditions,” in Shternshis, *Soviet and Kosher: Jewish Popular Culture in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 1-43.
- Irina Korovushkina Paert, “Memory and Survival in Stalin’s Russia: Old Believers in the Urals during the 1930s-50s,” in Daniel Bertaux et al, eds, *On Living Through Soviet Russia* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 195-213.

March 2 – The Great Fatherland War

*** Grads: Proposal & Bibliography due ***

- Catherine Merridale, *Ivan’s War: The Red Army, 1939-1945* (New York: Faber and Faber, 2010), excerpts.

- Lisa Kirschenbaum, “‘The Alienated Body’: Gender Identity and the Memory of the Siege of Leningrad,” in Nancy Wingfield and Maria Bucur, eds, *Gender and War in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 220-35.
- Brandon Schechter, Ch. 6, “The Thing-Bag: A Public-Private Place,” in Schechter, *The Stuff of Soldiers: A History of the Red Army in World War II Through Objects* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2019), 183-211.

March 9 – Gender, Living Spaces, and “Culturedness”

*** *Research Source Show-and-Tell post due (on cuLearn)* ***

- Lynne Attwood, Ch. 7, “Communal Living by Default,” in Attwood, *Gender and Housing in Soviet Russia: Private Life in a Public Space* (Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 2010), 123-39.
- Susan E. Reid, “Women in the Home,” in Melanie Ilič et al, eds, *Women in the Khrushchev Era* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 149-76.
- Miriam Dobson, Ch. 4, “Returnees, Crime, and the Gulag Subculture,” in Dobson, *Khrushchev’s Cold Summer: Gulag Returnees, Crime, and the Fate of Reform after Stalin* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2009), 109-32.

March 16 – Entertainment

*** *Peer Review of Show-and-Tell posts due* ***

- Kristin Roth-Ey, Ch. 2, “The New Soviet Movie Culture,” in Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time: How the Soviet Union Built the Media Empire That Lost the Cultural Cold War* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2011), 71-130.
- Manfred Zeller, Ch. 4, “Soviet Couch Potatoes: Football Fans in Front of the Television, 1960s–1980s,” in Zeller, *Sport and Society in the Soviet Union: The Politics of Football after Stalin*, trans. Nicki Challinger (London: I.B. Tauris, 2018), 110-42.

March 23 – Everyday Life on the Margins

- Dan Healey, Ch. 4, “From Stalinist Pariahs to Subjects of ‘Managed Democracy’: Queers in Moscow, 1945 to the Present,” in Healey, *Russian Homophobia from Stalin to Sochi* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 93-110.
- Claire L. Shaw, “Introduction: The Soviet People of Silence,” in *Deaf in the USSR: Marginality, Community, and Soviet Identity, 1917-1991* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2017).
- Jeff Sahadeo, Ch. 4, “Race and Racism,” in Sahadeo, *Voices from the Soviet Edge: Southern Migrants in Leningrad and Moscow* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2019), 93-115.

March 30 – Late Soviet Life

- Donald Raleigh, Ch. 5, “Living Soviet During the Brezhnev Era Stagnation,” in *Soviet Baby Boomers: An Oral History of Russia’s Cold War Generation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 228-42.
- Anna Rotkirch, “‘What Kind of Sex Can You Talk About?’: Acquiring Sexual Knowledge in Three Soviet Generations,” in Daniel Bertaux et al, eds, *On Living Through Soviet Russia* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 93-119.

April 6 – Wrap-Up

- Sheila Fitzpatrick, “Afterword,” in Choi Chatterjee et al, eds, *Everyday Life in Russia, Past and Present* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015), 390-406.

Final Research Paper due via cuLearn by April 7 at 11:55pm.