

Russian and Slavic Studies presents
a graduate mini-seminar

Pushkin's Blackness and its Repercussions

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Wednesday, April 11, 2-3:30pm
EDUC 208

How Black was the Russian national poet Alexander Pushkin, and does it matter?

Pushkin's great-grandfather Abram Hannibal was an African who rose to prominence in eighteenth-century Russian courtly and military life. But, according to a new set of articles published by Northwestern UP, Pushkin's peers might never have known this had Pushkin not mentioned his black ancestry and his own blackness time and again in poetry and prose.

Pushkin came to be seen by African-Americans as a great Black writer who was also appreciated by whites. Growing attention to Pushkin during the Harlem Renaissance, combined with Soviet rhetoric on colorblindness, inspired several in the 1930s to journey to the USSR to witness the Soviet experiment firsthand.

The mini-seminar will be conducted in English; those with an interest in Africana studies, politics of identity or diaspora studies are encouraged to attend. For a copy of the reading packet (introductory article and two poems) or more information, please contact the Russian Department at 621-7341.