

Topic: Russia: Friend or Foe?
Facilitator: Luc Beaudoin
Sessions: Thursdays, February 19, 26, 2009
Time: 7-9 p.m.
Cost: \$55 per person for both sessions

Many Americans continue to have a sense that Russia might, at any moment, revert to the strategic enemy that it was for most of a century. Yet, after the peaceful breakup of the Soviet Union, there was great hope that Russia would at last join the West. Before long, though, the West lost interest in all things Russian, only to be reawakened by Putin's increasing authoritarianism. So, what does Russia's future hold, and why should we be interested or concerned? To better understand Russia today, we must first understand ourselves and what it means to be "Western." This Salon will discuss the West, and how it is perceived by average Russians. Discussion will include a look at the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church, and the impact of historical events such as the Mongol rule, World War II, and the Stalin Terrors, each of which provides a framework for better understanding Russia's current economic and social development. Find out why Russia matters!

Luc Beaudoin, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Russian in the Department of Languages and Literatures. He has taught at DU since 1993, and has traveled to Russia frequently for research and teaching. The author of numerous publications on Russian literature and culture, he is currently working on a book about contemporary Russian self-portrayal in the media.