

Media censoring continues in Belarus

BRITNEY MOORE
Staff Writer

Government censoring of news in the United States today only happens under rare circumstances, but in scholar Oleg Manaev's home country of Belarus, citizens working in media are under constant government scrutiny.

Manaev, a visiting professor in the School of Journalism, spoke Wednesday about his struggle with the Belarusian government as a journalist. The Baker Center organized and sponsored the event.

Publishing public polls sparked the chain of events that lead to Manaev's emigration. The polls were conducted by Manaev and the Independent Institute of Socio-Economic and Political Studies, an institute promoting a civil society and better economy in Belarus.

Results of one exit poll conducted during the 2006 presidential election showed less than half of voters were in favor of the current president, Alexander Lukashenko, while government results showed 79 percent of voters were in favor of the incumbent, said Manaev.

The data collected from these polls caught the government's attention, but Manaev's repression had already begun in March 2002 when a letter from Lukashenko demanded IISEPS leave the building that they rented, Manaev said. In October 2004, Manaev and IISEPS received warnings and subpoenas for violating press laws. Later in December, the KGB, Belarus' intelligence agency, carried out a midnight raid at the IISEPS office for filed copies of the institute's public polls.

The situation escalated and continued until June 2006 when the Belarusian government informed Manaev and IISEPS



Katie Yantis • The Daily Beacon

Oleg Manaev speaks to students Wednesday afternoon in the Shiloh room. Manaev, a visiting professor in Journalism and electronic media, spoke on how scholars are still being censored and arrested for their work in Belarus.

that if they were to continue polling and publishing results, they would face prison for up to two years.

well as published books on several topics like what to do if one ends up in jail. "The authoritarian regime is not totalitarian," said Manaev. "(We're) under very strict control.

Despite the censorship on their speech, Manaev and IISEPS continued to conduct opinion polls in the Lithuanian Republic, as "It's in my blood to be careful of how I write and act."

Manaev also screened a film documenting citizen reaction to the last presidential election in Belarus, in which some citizens were beaten by police.

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Dairy farm to be relocated

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In the meantime, the dairy animals will be moved by summer to Spring

"The students, particularly the undergraduates, will not have as

