

Title: Constructions of the Self in Nadezhda Durova's *Kavalerist-devitsa*.

Author: Ona Renner-Fahey, University of Montana

Nadezhda Durova (1783-1866) is famous for having masqueraded as a young man for about nine years in the Russian cavalry. Often referred to as "memoirs," her *Kavalerist-devitsa* actually consists both of journal entries revised by Durova herself and of introductory memoirs about her childhood. This paper considers whom exactly Durova envisioned as reading her journal entries and memoirs and how this possible audience may have shaped her self-construction. Margo Culley's writing on intended audience and self-construction in private writing serve as a general theoretical framework for this paper

Durova seems to have had two entirely separate intended audiences. As is well-known, there is an intended young female audience present in the text. It is likely, however, that this female audience was envisioned by Durova only once she began editing and preparing her memoirs for publication. Was there, then, an intended audience of some other sort in her original journal entries? Surprisingly little attention in Durova scholarship has been paid to the numerous emotional addresses in the text to the author's father. It was through her journal entries that Durova was able to explain the motivation behind her desperate actions to the one person whom she revered most and to whom she owed an explanation. This paper will suggest that, while in her polished memoirs she may have presented herself as a liberated woman to a young female audience, Durova's original diaries were an attempt to construct herself as an ideal son for her father.