In her novel in verse Sufler, Katia Kapovich uses both direct references to the text of Evgenii Onegin and similar formal devices found in Pushkin, but does not use the Onegin stanza. However, as Pushkin does in Evgenii Onegin, Kapovich creates a very stringent pattern, which allows her to imbue with significance any departures from it. In the first nine stanzas of Sufler, she bombards the reader with references, in terms of both form and content, to Evgenii Onegin, thereby establishing a basis for playing with reader expectations for a modern Pushkinian “roman v stikhakh.” In a significant example of this playfulness, Kapovich includes poems written by her heroine, Olga, within the text. These asides are marked by a change in meter, like the Maidens’ Song in Evgenii Onegin, but they recur frequently. Excerpts from Olga's dissertation, which are also included, suggest a certain discomfort with trusting a narrator and the need for another source of truth. I would like to suggest that this is the significance of Olga’s poems; they provide an alternative truth from that of the narrator. In this way, Kapovich uses formal devices both to advance the plot of Sufler and to suggest directions for interpretation.