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BOOK NEWS

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A Russian Duke Encounters America

LSU Press to Publish History of Crucial Moment in US-Russia Relations

*Most noble Prince Alexis!
Our people of both sexes,
From Michigan to Texas,
Extend a welcome hand (1871)*

Baton Rouge—To be published in December by LSU Press, **Lee Farrow**'s new book ***Alexis in America*** recounts the historic tour of Duke Alexis Romanov, fourth son of Tsar Alexander II of Russia, through the United States and Canada. A milestone in U.S.–Russia relations, the tour was also intended to extricate Duke Alexis from an unsuitable romantic entanglement with the daughter of a poet. *Alexis in America* follows the duke's progress through the major American cities—New York, Washington, Boston, Detroit, Chicago, New Orleans—and western territories, detailing his meetings with celebrated figures such as Samuel Morse and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

The first Russian royal ever to visit the United States, Alexis received a tour through post–Civil War America that emphasized the nation's cultural unity. While the enthusiastic American media breathlessly reported every detail of his itinerary and entourage, Alexis visited Niagara Falls, participated in a bison hunt with Buffalo Bill Cody, and attended the Krewe of Rex's first Mardi Gras parade in New Orleans. As word of the royal visitor spread, the public flocked to train depots and events across the nation to catch a glimpse of the grand duke.

The tour was not without incident: many city officials balked at spending public funds on Alexis's reception, and there were rumors of an assassination plot by Polish nationals in New York City. More broadly, the visit highlighted problems on the national level, such as political corruption and persistent racism, as well as the emerging cultural and political power of ethnic minorities and the continuing sectionalism between the North and the South. Lee Farrow joins her examination of these cultural underpinnings to a lively narrative of the grand duke's tour, creating an engaging record of a unique moment in international relations.

Lee A. Farrow is professor of history and distinguished teaching professor at Auburn University–Montgomery.

December 2014
288 pages, 6 x 9, 8 halftones, 1 map
978-0-8071-5839-5
Cloth \$45.00s, ebook available
U.S. History / Russian History

To request a review copy or set up an interview with the author,
please contact Jenny Keegan at jenniferkeegan@lsu.edu.

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