

Michael Friedman

I first met Grisha at dinner during one my recruitment visits to Stanford, probably in 2000. We immediately developed a warm rapport, due to our shared interests in logic and the foundations of mathematics—and in the relationship of these subjects to the history of analytic philosophy. Although I am not myself a logician, I am certainly a friend of logic, and, after I arrived at Stanford in 2002, Grisha and I had many conversations about how best to continue the great Stanford tradition in logic and foundations into the future.

In 2004-5 I chaired a departmental search committee in logic, and Grisha played a prominent role as the only real logician on the committee. We spent many hours together interviewing candidates at the Eastern APA meetings in Boston, and then some further hours at on-campus interviews and job talks. Grisha's contributions were fundamental to the process. He designed for the interviews the one technical question in logic that candidates were asked to answer: to give the statement of Gödel's incompleteness theorems. It was surprising how many able candidates were not able to do this entirely correctly. Even more importantly, Grisha's insightful questions were also indispensable in getting a reasonable estimation of the promise of candidates in applying their technical knowledge to more general questions in the philosophy of logic and mathematics. This search was successful, in so far as we identified an extremely promising candidate whom the entire department agreed upon, and who was also eager to come to Stanford at the time. Yet, ironically, the finances in the Deans office collapsed just as the offer was about to be made, and the candidate accepted another offer instead.

In the year 2013-14 Grisha and I had another occasion to work closely together. One of my graduate students was working on a second-year qualifying paper comparing Gödel's and Carnap's approaches to the foundations of mathematics—the idea was to bring out the extensive overlap between their approaches despite the appearance of stark opposition. I was directing the project, but we needed a second reader—someone with more knowledge of the technical issues involved. Grisha agreed to take on this role on in the Winter and Spring of 2014, principally because he was intrigued by the idea of looking for what was common between apparently incompatible philosophical positions. And he made indispensable contributions by indicating developments in the technical literature that explained how those positions could be bridged. I was especially excited by this unexpectedly fruitful confluence of interests, which was then cruelly interrupted by Grisha's untimely passing.

Grisha, I will always remember you fondly and miss you terribly.