

All the Election Slang That's Fit to Print

By [Michele A. Berdy](#)

March 06, 2012

The  Moscow Times

Путинг: a rally in support of Putin

Why, oh why, do I read readers' comments on online articles about the presidential election? They make me crazy and depressed. What ignorance, stupidity and bad grammar!

Jeez, don't Americans know anything?

Russian comments on articles about the election make me crazy, too. But they also scare the pants off me. Man, they are nasty. The name-calling is over the top on both sides. But oddly, it's the winning team that utters the most threats.

If you want to follow grassroots post-election analysis, you may need a short guide to the vocabulary — or at least the vocabulary that's fit to print.

Oppositional terminology. The opposition calls their rallies митинги. They call the rallies organized in support of Putin путинги. Все обсуждают прошедшие в субботу по всей

стране митинги и путинги (Everyone is talking about the rallies for and against Putin that were held all around the country on Saturday). Sometimes they call their own rallies антипутинги (anti-Putin rallies).

Opposition-minded activists call ardent Putin supporters путиноиды (Putinoids): Около 10 утра пришла в участок наблюдательница-путиноидка (About 10 a.m. a Putinoid lady observer came to the polling station). Most commonly, the opposition calls the Putin activists either быдло (cattle, sheep), or a coined word like быдломасса, a combination of biomass and livestock, or быдлицо, a combination of cattle (быдло) and scoundrel (подлец) with a bit of лицо (person) thrown in.

More insulting is the term гопота (singular: гопник, гоп, гопарь), which means a crowd of lowlifes, street thugs or scumbags. The word is fairly old, although etymologists squabble over its origins. It is either derived from the word гоп (a jump or blow) or from the abbreviation of Городское Общежитие Пролетариата (Municipal Proletarian Dormitory), a place where uneducated, criminally minded plebes lived after the 1917 Revolution. Today it often used to describe the demonstrators bused in to attend Putin rallies.

In these circles, Putin is called Пу (Pu) or sometimes the very rude Пуй, which sounds like a very nasty three-letter word.

Putin-supporter terminology. A good deal of this vocabulary falls into the not-fit-to-print category, but their most common nonobscene name-calling is wordplay with либерал (liberal) — already a swear word in this crowd — and a variety of insulting suffixes. For example, they use либераст, a combination of либерал and педераст, a nasty term for a homosexual.

You might also come across либеросрач, which combines либерал with срач (mess, filth) in its slang meaning of verbal diarrhea. Лузерам ничего не остаётся другого как затеять либеросрач. (Those losers can't do anything about it. All they can do is spew their liberal crap.)

You might also find the curious phrase Тагил рулит! (Tagil rules!) in Putin-supporter posts. The phrase comes from a series of sketches on the television show "Наша Russia" (Our Russia) about Gena and Vovan, two tourists in Turkey from Nizhny Tagil. Drunk, boorish and spouting obscenities, they are the personification of the ugly Russian tourist.

Рулить means to drive in standard Russian, but has come to mean "rule" in slang, probably from the sound similarity with the English word. Тагил рулит! is the proud assertion of Vovan and Gena on the show. But one poster comments darkly: Ну чё, бандерлоги. Тагил рулит. Тагил реально рулит. (How do you like that, you monkeys? Tagil rules. Tagil truly rules.)

Fasten your seat belts. We're in for a bumpy ride.

Michele A. Berdy, a Moscow-based translator and interpreter, is author of "The Russian Word's Worth" (Glas), a collection of her columns.

The views expressed in opinion pieces do not necessarily reflect the position of The Moscow Times.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2012/03/06/all-the-election-slang-thats-fit-to-print-a13102>