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Zwischen Dallas und New York: A West German's Encounter with the United States Before Moving to East Germany

Ingrid Deich, an immigrant from West Germany, was a sociology professor at the University of Missouri-Rolla when she suddenly departed the United States in 1979 under mysterious circumstances only to reappear in Leipzig, East Germany that same year. She published her impressions of the university, the city of Rolla, and the country as a whole in *Zwischen Dallas und New York: Wie ich die USA erlebte, Notizen eines Aufenthaltes* (Between Dallas and New York: How I Experienced the USA, Notes from a Residency) in 1986 while she was a professor at the Karl Marx University in Leipzig. When reading the book title and gazing upon the images of city streets, rodeo, and marching band on the cover and inside front page, one would think that this was a modern-day version of the travel narratives or guidebooks that German visitors to the United States published in Germany during the nineteenth century.[1] The reader, however, will quickly realize that this collection of essays, or reflections on American society, is not a book to convince Germans to come to the United States, but a critique of American society through a socialist lens. Although Deich focused her academic research on industrial sociology, specifically the relationship between universities, national laboratories, and large industrial complexes in West Germany, *Zwischen Dallas und New York* concentrates on ordinary Americans, their daily lives, the complex relationship between freedom and racial as well as gender limitations, television's place in America culture, and the role of politics in society. She viewed the country as having missed several opportunities for

economic, social, and political improvements despite the recent civil rights and feminist movements. *Zwischen Dallas und New York* thus provides a rare glimpse into the *Amerikabild* that a West German developed while living in the United States during the 1970s before defecting to East Germany. This study of Deich, her disappearance and her book not only offers a deeper understanding of how Germans viewed the United States but also adds to the little studied history of East German agents working in North America.

The disappearance, or defection is interesting because Ingrid Deich lived what most Americans would call the American Dream. Deich was born in 1938 in Berlin and earned an undergraduate and master's degree at the *Freie Universität* (Free University) in West Berlin.[2] She followed her husband Werner Deich[3] to the University of Missouri-Columbia (UMC) in 1970 to pursue her doctorate while he taught in the institution's history department. She received her Ph.D. in Sociology in May 1976 but since she had completed her dissertation the previous December, she was able to begin her position as an assistant professor in Sociology in the Department of Social Sciences at the University of Missouri-Rolla (UMR) in January 1976.[4] Her classes, including the introductory "General Sociology" and upper level "Society and its Research and Development Institutions," "Industrial Sociology," and "Intro to Social Factors in Technology: Energy and Society" courses, were in high demand.[5] Attendance at several conferences, an accepted article with the highly respected *Minerva* journal, a successful summer research appointment, "above average" service on campus, "somewhat below average" student evaluation numbers, and the successful application for a major National Science Foundation (NSF) research grant placed her on track for a positive third-year review evaluation, a crucial step toward achieving tenure at UMR.[6] But then everything changed, quite mysteriously.

On Monday January 29, 1979, just after Deich had begun teaching her 1:30 pm class, a man (some suspected it was her husband) came to her classroom and motioned her outside. She returned after a short while, seemed somewhat distracted to several students, but completed the lecture. Deich also taught her next course at 2:30 pm. Thereafter, she went to department chair Erwin Epstein to notify him that she would not attend that afternoon's faculty meeting, stating that she felt ill. Epstein thought her excuse was not very convincing but let her go home. One of her colleagues saw her departing the Humanities and Social Science Building carrying "a large bundle."[7]

The following day, January 30, no one saw Deich, but that was not unusual since she had a Monday, Wednesday, and Friday teaching schedule. Faculty, however, became alarmed on Wednesday, January 31, when she did not show up for her classes. As Epstein noted in an interview, "she was very meticulous about meeting her classes. This is why we are very concerned."

Efforts to contact her husband failed as well and calls to the Phelps County Hospital revealed that she was not there, either. Contact with a close neighbor indicated that there were no signs of anyone having been at the house for a day or two. A colleague went to the Deich residence and reported that mail had accumulated, that newspapers lay uncollected on the porch, that one of their two cars was missing, and that there were no tire tracks in the freshly fallen snow. A student worker, who attempted to deliver a typed-up document that Ingrid Deich had wanted "urgently" also did not receive an answer. When Deich failed to come to work on Friday, February 2, Epstein contacted Deich's thesis advisor at UMC and another close friend of the Deich family in Columbia, but neither of them knew anything about the couple's whereabouts. Epstein contacted the Rolla Police Department, filed a missing person's report, and with police supervision entered the Deich residence. The apartment was in order, nothing was disturbed, and the refrigerator was well stocked.[8] Then the mystery deepened.

On February 9, Epstein received a telegram from Deich, sent from Mexico City on February 8. It stated in all caps: "Very sorry for my disappearance had to choose between work and marriage followed Werner to his new york place in Mexico formal letter of resignation will follow." Epstein believed it was indeed from Deich, took "york" to mean work, but was baffled that she would give up her promising career and NSF grant to follow her husband. Friends in Columbia who described Werner and Ingrid as "'extremely committed and conscientious professionals'" were "confounded" over the "'bizarre and totally uncharacteristic' behavior of the couple." Deich's dissertation advisor James McCartney thought the disappearance "'puzzling, just puzzling,'" especially considering the opportunity to work for the National Science Foundation in Washington, D.C., because "'that's the kind of thing she does not walk away from.'"[9]

Additional investigations only muddled the picture further. Contact with Deich's sister in Hamburg and Werner's brother in Braunschweig, indicated that friends and relatives from West Germany were making plans to come to Rolla later in the year. Conversations with friends in Columbia, however, revealed that the Deich marriage had become strained in recent weeks with Deich publicly criticizing her husband for not working and passing his time by conducting research that seemed to go nowhere. Werner, who had not achieved tenure at the University of Missouri, seemed to have become more reclusive and confided to a friend that he "hadn't spent all his energy on his education just to sell shoes."[10] Such information seemed to suggest that Deich may have really decided to save her marriage.

Deich's Letter of Resignation mailed from Mexico on February 8, 1979, did not reveal much more. It reads:

> Dear Erwin,
> Please consider this my formal resignation effective immediately. I want once more to express my great regrets for my sudden exit. Seeing myself in your shoes probably no excusation [*sic*] would satisfy me. But let me tell you that these are difficult times for many marriages of two professionals. My professional satisfaction did not compensate Werner for a lack of demand for his qualifications. I tell myself and you know that nobody is indispensable in a formal organization but individuals are irreplicable in a primary relationship. I am including the two UMR keys. My best wishes to you and the department.[11]

Epstein was not satisfied with this explanation and the sudden disappearance still puzzled him because "'to give up a career and job with which you are satisfied, a person just shouldn't do that.'"[12]

Additional details came to the fore when a graduate student from UMC, with whom Deich had shared an office for three years while a student herself, appeared at the door of the Deich residence, ready to take over possession of their belongings. He had received a letter from Deich, also mailed from Mexico City. The missive including a check for $500, a statement signed by Werner and Ingrid giving him authority to take possession of identified items or sell them, mail some belongings to family in West Germany, pay bills that were due on their behalf, and a lengthy detailed list of where to find specific items and what to do with them. The instructions also noted items that should be mailed to a soon-to-be-revealed address in Mexico and noted that Deich's car was parked in the short-term parking lot at Lambert International Airport in St. Louis. The letter also offered additional explanations for their disappearance. Deich stated that "the years of Werner's unemployment brought us to a breaking point." When he received an offer as a consultant "in agricultural and population policy in Mexico," he wanted to take it "by all means." "I did not want to give up my job. When he left after much quarreling I just followed quitting my job." Even this explanation was not enough to satisfy the curiosity of a number of friends and colleagues.[13] They did not have to wait much longer because their inquiries and mistrust in the entire situation would soon have a curious but also revealing resolution.

Newspaper headlines in late January, early February 1979 exposed that Werner Stiller, famed double agent from East Germany, had defected to the West on January 19, just ten days prior to the Deich couple leaving Missouri and the United States. Stiller's defection resulted in the arrest, escape, or disappearance of dozens of people identified as agents or spies in the foreign intelligence service of the East German Ministry of State Security, or Stasi.[14] Stiller's files and later his book, *Der Agent: Mein Leben in drei Geheimdiensten*

(*The Agent: My Life in Three Secret Agencies)* revealed that both Werner and Ingrid Deich had been members of the SED (East German Unity Party) since 1965 and 1966, respectively, and that they had worked for sixteen years as "unofficial collaborators" under the code names "Scholz" and "Isabell" for the Stasi, collecting information about current scientific research in both West Germany and the United States. They were recalled from the field of operation because Stiller's defection revealed the identities of their contacts in Germany, sociologist Erich Spiegel—codename *Chor* (choir)—and his wife, a courier by codename *Kapelle* (orchestra). The Deichs were compensated for their service to the country by receiving a new life in the GDR which included appointment as professors at the Karl-Marx University in Leipzig on March 15, 1979.[15]

Konrad Jarausch, a professor of European history at the University of Missouri-Columbia in the 1970s and 1980s, who knew the Deichs then and met them again in Leipzig in 1991, thought that they "had been idealistic members of the student movement" that sympathized with socialism at the Free University of Berlin "but were shocked by the reality of socialism in the GDR."[16] Scholarship indicates that the SED was recruiting individuals through the GDR's Unity Party's counterpart in West Berlin (SEW) and it is possible that after their attendance of FU Berlin, Werner and Ingrid joined the foreign division of the Stasi under the leadership of notorious spymaster, Markus Wolf.[17] Wolf asserted in his autobiography that the Stasi recruited educated individuals, including university students, to gain access to industrial secrets. East Germany was far behind the West in technological innovation and "a little unofficial access to state-of-the-art Western research could go a long way" in bridging the gap between East and West. He believed that "many of these agents were West Germans who served us purely out of conviction" to improve East Germany's society.[18]

When Werner and Ingrid Deich arrived in East Germany, they resumed their academic lives, conducted research, and shared their findings at conferences.[19] While the story of Ingrid and Werner Deich's defection to East Germany in itself is fascinating and remains a topic much talked about in Rolla, Missouri, Ingrid Deich's 1986 publication, *Zwischen Dallas und New York* provides the reader with a German's unique perception of the United States, or *Amerikabild*, that also helps us to better understand why Ingrid Deich used the excuse of following her husband despite a promising career.

Although novelists, travelers, and historians from every German speaking region in Europe have lauded the United States, they have also been writing about the contradictions between the perception of America as a land of opportunity and the reality of inequalities in the actual country.[20] Swiss novelist Max Frisch observed racial divides during his travels in the early

1950s. West German poet and critic Hans Magnus Enzensberger visited the US several times and viewed American democracy as eroding without the public becoming aware of it.[21]

East German scholars have also contributed to a complex and evolving *Amerikabild*. One may argue that the East German view of the United States differs from other published accounts by degree of personal opinion and experience versus the perceived (or encouraged) need to present government policy. As one study of the *Amerikabild* argues, the image of the United States evolved over time, influenced by wars, Cold War tensions, racial issues, and reforms. Consequently, by the 1980s, most East Germans had a negative impression of American politics and military but a positive view of American society and culture.[22]

German historians Uta Balbier and Christiane Rösch agree, arguing that in addition to the official *Amerikabild* that portrayed the United States as a dangerous imperialist enemy, East Germans also held a social-cultural and an intellectual *Amerikabild*. Many East Germans were fascinated by America's broad freedoms and its diversity but were also concerned about the socio-economic insecurities and preoccupation with materialism that came in tandem with these factors.[23]

Dorothee Wierling, a history professor at the University of Hamburg, divides the East German *Amerikabild* into several categories that were often in opposition to each other. State officials attempted to lessen the bad reputation of the occupying Russian forces by portraying the US as the worse imperialist arch enemy during the Cold War. After all, it occupied West Germany and, by 1950, had become an aggressor on the Korean peninsula. East German leaders also associated American capitalism with inconsiderate exploitation, lacking social security, scandalous poverty, and racism. Official depiction constantly focused on the crass difference in wages and living standards, especially in conjunction with the weak America labor movement, racist practices in southern states, and the foregone conclusion that everyone had to accept such differences. This official picture of the United States served to support the East German argument that only a superpower based on socialist principles could establish an egalitarian society through all-encompassing social policies.[24]

This rhetoric, however, differed from the information most East Germans received from television; that is, West German television. One study found that "70 percent of East Germany's population received West German television" and they watched it "enthusiastically." Allegedly, "members of the East German Communist youth organization used to clamber onto rooftops, pulling down antennas aimed West" to stop the practice, but "in 1973, Erich Honecker, the East German leader, gave up the battle" and attempts to jam

western broadcasts ended. A survey of East German youth in 1985 by the East German Institute for Youth Research revealed that participants watched on average two hours of West German programs per workday. Only regions in the northeastern (Neubrandenburg) and southeastern (Dresden) GDR had lower rates because signal strength was weak.[25]

By the 1970s, televised stories that East Germans accessed depicted ordinary people in western countries as achieving success, rising in social status, as well as owning a car and house. At the same time, keeping up with modern technological developments required that one looked westward for scientific inspiration, especially in the realm of engineering and computing. Interestingly, advancements in technology, such as transistor radios and television contributed to access and reproduction of western culture. Jazz, Blues, and Rock and Roll, for example, was played by underground bands and performed and listened to in underground clubs. The SED used a campaign to trash this music by declaring consumers *Gammler* (bums, deadbeats), *Rowdies*, and *Langhaarige* (long-haired people, i.e. hippies) and enticing parents used to German cleanliness, decency, and discipline to side with the party against this kind of youth culture. This attempt utterly failed because it also associated American youth culture with imperialism and the effort to curb western influence became a weapon in the Cold War by turning the older generation against the younger one. Young East Germans might have opposed the war in Vietnam, but they still longed for aspects of culture that the Rolling Stones or Bob Dylan represented.[26]

In contrast to these dichotomies between the government sponsored *Amerikabild* and the public's understanding of the United States, Ingrid Deich uses her sociologist's lens to evaluate the daily life of American individuals whom she personally encountered during her nearly decade long residency. Her perception of America is one of missed opportunities in a country filled with great potential.

The resulting *Zwischen Dallas und New York* is quite unique in its layout. The publication lacks the traditional part of a scholarly monograph, such as an introduction, a clearly defined thesis, and a conclusion. The lack of an introduction, a place where authors usually explain why they researched a particular subject, leaves the reader wondering why Deich published her analysis. Did she have to prove that she as a former West German was a good socialist? She wrote within the context of the 1980s as a decade of growing economic crisis, political polarization, and resistance to reform that ultimately resulted in unrest and the demise of the GDR. [27] Of course, she could not foresee the eventual outcome. The book, however, portrays the United States as an example of missed opportunities to improve society and perhaps she attempted to outline mistakes that East German reformers should avoid.

The study also offers several photographs. As the copyright page indicates, two of the photos were by Ingrid Deich and thirty-five were by Hans-Joachim Heintze, a colleague of Deich's at the Karl Marx University in Leipzig.[28] The images are often not related to the subject under study in a chapter and tell a story of their own. Several pictures are snapshots of residential areas, streets filled with traffic, and fast food restaurants and the majority portray the United States from a negative or critical view point. For example, one photo, entitled as *Glanz und Elend dicht beieinander* (Splendor and Misery close together) juxtaposes a rundown area in Brooklyn with the suggestive opulence of skyscrapers in southern Manhattan. The photo entitled *Quellen alles Reichtums durch verschärfte Ausbeutung* (Source of all wealth through intensified exploitation) portrays the smokestacks of a factory in Pennsylvania. And, *Schwarz und behindert: doppeltes Stigma in 'Gottes eigenem Lande'* (Black and Disabled: Bearing a Double Stigma in "God's Own Country') depicts a black man in a wheelchair holding a poster that demands collective bargaining rights during the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization strike in 1981.[29]

In addition to individual chapters that make up the major text, the book offers several short chapters toward the end. *Amerikana* explains basic concepts such as "Assistant Professor," "Conservatism," "Liberalism," and "Soap Opera."[30] The tabulated appendix clearly evidences the work of a sociologist including tables that track employment numbers by professions; unemployment rates; number and size of strikes; wages in USA, Germany, and Japan; income per households; number of persons living below the poverty level; crime rates; government expenditures; and distribution of gains and losses based on real income four years into the Reagan administration. The last chapter cites by chapter a scant number of sources used, including publications Deich may have read for her doctoral studies, the *International Herald Tribune* published in Paris during the 1980s, her own research about soap operas in the early 1980s, and several West-German publications, including *Stern* magazine.[31] While the study of these notes offers insight to the access that this East German professor had to western sources, it does not clarify whether Deich wrote primarily from memory, whether she had kept a journal during her years in the United States, or to what degree she was "inventing truthfully on the basis of [her] own experience."[32]

Deich divides her study of American society into four major parts that address "Earning money through work," "Schools and Universities," "Women, Family, Television," and "Politicians and Power." Each of these parts are subdivided into two or three smaller sub chapters that address the lives of individuals, including disillusioned workers who could not rely on support from unions because they were frowned upon in the individualistic

society of the United States. Other subjects include the competitive work life of a customer service representative, the inherent inequalities in the American public school system that favored the bourgeoisie, and the isolation American children born to immigrants felt in the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant dominated society. Two chapters provide examples from her students at UMR as they navigated through this American society. Morris, a non-traditional student who worked at the local employment agency, allegedly wrote an essay in her "Sociology of Trades and Professions" course expressing his dissatisfaction with his job. He argued that in order to remain employed he had to follow a quota system of sending a minimum number of job seekers to interviews. He believed that this requirement did not serve customers well and wasted tax payer funds.[33] Jeremy, a black army veteran who had been falsely convicted of rape, may have benefitted from changes owing to the recent Civil Rights Movement, such as being able to attend public university, but pervasive racial discrimination continued to limit his opportunities and almost contributed to his failing her course.[34] This social history or sociological study of ordinary people uses the analytical concepts of class, gender, and race but also the critical lens of socialism. The general theme of the book is one of promise but lost opportunity to develop an equitable society.

Deich's view of women is especially pessimistic. She saw inescapable paternalistic gender norms that defined all aspects of daily family life despite the feminist movement of the late 1960s, early 1970s. Deich, for example, describes in "Emily – The Fate of a Woman," the difficulties her friend and fellow doctoral student at UMC encountered pursuing a career as a psychologist while also being married to the professor. Emily had to make the difficult decision to delay childbirth because as a mother she would have been able to work only parttime, if at all, owing to lack of childcare. Furthermore, in a society based on male breadwinners, her husband could not be expected to take on child rearing responsibilities. Deich lamented that Emily's marriage ultimately broke apart because she had to subordinate her career ambitions to her husband's.[35]

This view of women and gender norms may have also inspired the excuse for her sudden disappearance meant to discourage further investigation into why she left so abruptly. She believed that women, especially those living in rural Rolla, Missouri were not considered truly equal to men and would have to make sacrifices for their spouses' careers rather than advance themselves. Thus, she crafted the excuse of her husband having finally found employment after several years of being out of work and dependent on his wife. Consequently, she had to give up her own promising career to support his dreams. This was her *Amerikabild*, or perception of American society and its gender roles, and in this instance, it served her purpose well. One can

only imagine the panic and fear of discovery the Deich's must have felt after Werner Stiller defected. If they had been discovered as agents, they surely would have been arrested and extradited back to West Germany to stand trial for treason. If they had remained hidden in Rolla, the search for them would have likely continued and the stress of constantly looking over their shoulders would have become unbearable. They must have thought that the only way to discourage attention was to send the telegram and letter of resignation with an excuse that would have been plausible to many.

Deich's understanding of conservative ideals in the US also informed her most fascinating chapters in *Zwischen Dallas und New York* that address Dallas and Ronald Reagan's election as president of the United States. These chapters are particularly interesting because the events discussed occurred in the 1980s, after Deich had settled in East Germany, and her research required the use of Western sources to which most ordinary East Germans would have had very limited access.

The chapter on Dallas begins with a brief analysis of the exploitation of female cheerleaders by the Dallas Cowboy football team but the remainder focuses on the Ewing family featured in the television show *Dallas*. As Deich explained, she was not interested in the series, watched only one episode in 1978, and preferred to watch shows like *Rhoda* and *Bob Newhart* during her stay in the US. Once the West-German network, ARD, began to offer *Dallas* in 1981, she began to wonder: Why did ARD show *Dallas*, an American television series, for several years during prime viewing time? Why did people in over eighty countries watch the series? And what was the relationship between *Dallas* and real life in America? These are the questions a sociologist might indeed raise but her answers would also be influenced by an anti-capitalistic society ideology.[36]

Deich attributes the show's success across continents to American "media imperialism" but does not explain the international aspect in further detail. Instead, the chapter initially focuses on the business structure of American television companies, including a detailed explanation of the local station as an affiliate of the three national networks (ABC, CBS, NBC). She then addresses how these companies make money through advertising. As Deich correctly points out, profit drives everything in media, including the selection of shows slated for particular times of the day, statistical analysis of who is watching what, the price of advertisements per second during specific viewing periods, and the selection of advertisements that aim to confirm the social expectations and desires of viewers tuning in during these time slots. Deich concludes that the CBS network continued to show the series because it was profitable, and viewers, even those who may have been critical of the story portrayed, continued to watch because it was so well written.[37]

Deich then takes her analysis into a different direction, evaluating types of programs that producers offered that allowed the viewer, primarily wage dependent workers, to find relief from the everyday routine. These were not political or intellectual stimulating programs, or dramas like *Dallas*, but quiz shows, soap operas, and situation comedies. Family-oriented series seemed to entice and capture the attention of the majority of American viewers during the 1970s. These television families appeared to have experiences that challenged traditional habits and values, including divorce, difficulties with adoptions, infertility, child abuse, and violence. According to Deich, the second highest rated shows were those related to workplace relationships because, in her opinion, they demonstrated the teamwork and shared identities among workers in opposition to their employers. While many Americans were preoccupied with subjects like cults, brainwashing, psychiatry, worship of the famous, and new technologies, most US citizens in her opinion were not interested in and cynical about domestic or foreign politics. According to Deich, mass media techniques and lack of general education kept correct grasp of capitalism to a minimum. Series, sitcoms, and soap operas often meshed real life experiences with fictitious lives to ease the feelings of confusion and helplessness that viewers experienced in their own lives.[38]

Citing an article in *Stern* magazine, Deich points out, that until the late 1970s, successful television series dramatized or mocked lower- and middle-class urban families in the East, Midwest, and West. By contrast, CBS executives decided to place their drama in Dallas, the site of a president's assassination and home to a renowned football team. The Ewing family's success in ranching and oil production also appealed to people who had recently moved to the sunbelt in search for prosperity. Men, who doubted their masculinity because they had lost their jobs during the 1970s in the declining industrial areas of the Northeast and Midwest, hoped for economic improvement in a region where manhood was still represented by "guys wearing boots and Stetson hats."[39]

While evaluating the place of or fascination with "cowboy" culture in American society, Deich focuses on the anti-monopolistic attitudes of the "common man" who preferred a puritanical hard work ethic to gain or maintain his independence in an equal society. The South and Southwest thus represented a populist ideology that reflected the resentment by ordinary people of the well-educated agents of capital (eggheads), who used book learning rather than common sense, thinking instead of hard working, to advance. Deich draws a connection between that mindset or culture to the 1980 presidential election where Western wear, including boots, hats, shirts, bolo ties, and belt buckles exemplified conservatism. Deich even sees a parallel development in German political ideology, specifically the preferred

dress by members and supporters of the Christian Social Union (CSU) in Bavaria. She asserts that when Republicans and the Ewings in Dallas wear Western outfits, they reflect right-wing populist ideology. At the core of this ideology is the individual whose small world is in constant conflict with the dangerous world of anonymous big organizations. Adherents of this ideology appeal to people to protect themselves from "nationalization," "legalization," "bureaucratization," and "anonymousness." Deich concludes that Bavarians represented that mindset by wearing their traditional outfits and Americans by wearing the Cowboy outfit.[40]

Although viewers saw ranchers, bankers, and oil millionaires wearing the cowboy regalia on "Dallas," male wage earners who desired their personal independence and authority over animals, men, and objects during a time of economic upheaval, could not only escape from their daily troubles by watching the series, but they could also fixate their resentment toward the rich and powerful on one person, J. R. Ewing. According to Deich, *Dallas* viewers could only conclude that the US economy was in such bad shape during the 1970s because of the habits of the wealthy. In that context, J.R. represented the evil capitalist and invited every male viewer who encountered a similar character in his own place of employment or family to stand up against the "great predatory fish." Deich, however, lamented that despite the fascination with the series, most Americans remained blind to the power structure of right-wing populism.[41]

Deich concludes the chapter by arguing that all members of the Ewing family aimed to protect capitalism in their own unique contextualized ways, even the female characters who struggled to make themselves heard and achieve self-realization. In the process, viewers saw all the ills of a capitalist society including the dependence of political authorities on monopolies, the undemocratic machinations by police on behalf of the rich and powerful, and the undermining of expert objectivity in which so many Americans believed. And while some viewers may have realized that American capitalism was morally fraught, they also understood that political activism to change it was pointless because it is an unbeatable system. Deich suggests that others may have accepted the morally corrupt upper middle-class lifestyle because *Dallas* gave them a sense of self-righteousness.[42]

This chapter also offers insight to the access that East Germans had to western information, including television programs. As the United Press International (UPI) noted in April 1984, *Dallas* "had a loyal following in communist East Germany."[43] In other words, even Deich was most likely watching it.

Deich reveals her socialist lens at its most obvious in the chapter entitled, *Die Medien-Horror-Show: Amerikaner als Geiseln* (The Media Horror Show:

Americans as Hostages). As she discusses the Iran Hostage Crisis she asserts that Americans were shocked by the events in Teheran because their "limited political horizons" and "everyday thinking" kept them from seeing the long history or series of illegal activities by the US in Iran that contributed to the tragedy.[44]

Her discussion of the event's connection to the 1980 presidential campaign includes a public forum conducted by Peter Hart, an opinion pollster, in Independence, Missouri; a state that was still considered undecided at the time. All participants agreed that bringing inflation under control was the most important problem concerning voters, but all were also pessimistic about the outcome. Participants pointed to Congress' spending habits, congressmen's dependence on special interest groups for election victories, inefficient bureaucracy, and social spending programs as reasons for inflation as well as unlikelihood of getting inflation under control.[45]

Deich agrees that these sentiments contained kernels of truth but then asserts that what she considered to be the three primary factors for inflation had remained "obviously hidden" from the participants. She names extreme parasitism in government expressed through horrendous military spending, the exploitation of workers through prices set by monopolies, and balance-of-payments difficulties as the real reasons for high inflation rates during the 1970s, but does not go into further detail or cite any sources to substantiate her allegation.

Instead, she very briefly addresses Reagan's approach to reducing inflation before she returns to foreign policy and the 1980s presidential campaign. She argues that despite the preoccupation by voters over inflation, the hostage crisis in Iran was the primary factor that contributed to Reagan's victory. She argues that media companies and monopolies not only reminded Americans of the continuing crisis in Iran on its one-year anniversary, but also blamed President Carter for the events, thus turning a neck-to-neck race into a surprising but also decisive victory for Reagan.[46]

Of particular interest is the foot note Deich placed at the end of this paragraph. The text in the note points out that Reagan received 51 percent of votes cast but that only 26.5 percent of Americans actually voted for him because election participation had been only 52.6 percent. She than asserts without any further explanation that a popular or people's front against Reaganomics was a real possibility for the Communist Party of the United States. She simply cites her own research about the creation of a people's front against Reaganomics and the economic, political and social requirements for its realization in 1982 America that she contributed in the form as an article to a journal for high school and technical college instructors published by the Karl-Marx University in Leipzig in 1984.[47]

As this contribution to the Marxist-Leninist *Beiträge zum marxistisch-leninistischen Grundlagenstudium für Hoch-u. Fachschullehrer*, as well as her book *Zwischen Dallas und New York*, indicate, Ingrid Deich published material from a socialist viewpoint. This must have defined her as a good East German among her coworkers. It remains unclear, however, to what degree she and Werner believed the GDR was in need of economic and political reform or whether they reacted positively to the demonstrations in 1989, including those in Leipzig, that brought the Erich Honecker government to its knees.[48] No matter their opinions on the events, the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 and reunification of the two Germanies in October 1990 had negative impact on their lives. According to Werner's personnel file at the University of Leipzig, he went into early retirement effective January 1, 1992. It is most likely that Ingrid experienced the same because many East German public service employees who had been members of the Stasi were either forced to resign or pushed into early retirement. With the exception of a few high-ranking officials, few were prosecuted for their actions.[49] Sources consulted for this study indicate that the Deichs did not reveal any sensitive information that could have landed them in prison, but attempts by one acquaintance to talk about their experiences resulted in refusal to share information[50] and a written request by this author for an interview received no answer.

Both Ingrid and Werner Deich remained professionally active after their retirement. Werner was an independent historian, member of the German Society for Demography and published an article in an online magazine in 2006.[51] Ingrid worked as a consultant and coauthored a book on the social relationships in the workplace.[52] She was also active in the Louise Otto Peters Gesellschaft in Leipzig, presenting at the annual Louise-Otto-Peters-Tag and publishing several essays in the organization's yearbook.[53] One final publication in 2004 outlined how she and her husband renovated a half-timbered house in Buchhain, Saxony and how the family adjusted to life with a cat and two kittens.[54]

In conclusion, Ingrid Deich is a fascinating person who seemed to live the American Dream in Rolla, Missouri before suddenly disappearing only to reappear in East Germany. Her book, *Zwischen Dallas und New York* is an example of how Germans were/are both fascinated by the American lifestyle but also critical of it. The individual chapters suggest that Americans had great potential to fulfill ideologies like economic and social equality during the 1960s and 1970s, but that the reality of entrenched capitalism and conservative power structures prevented that from happening. Her view of women was especially dim, seeing them as subordinate to men despite

all the gains made through the feminist movement. This perception of gender norms in 1979 Rolla, Missouri also explains why she covered up her sudden disappearance with the excuse of following her husband rather than maintaining a budding career. This constructed excuse based on her *Amerikabild* of the United States was intended to receive quick acceptance among her colleagues, discourage acquaintances from looking for her, and keep the real reason for leaving, being an East German agent, a secret.

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Notes

[1] See for example: Gottfried Duden, *Bericht über eine Reisen nach den westliches Staaten Nordamerika's (Report of a journey to the Western States of North America)*, James W. Goodrich, ed. (Columbia: State Historical Society of Missouri, 1980); Ludwig Carl Wilhelm von Baumbach, *Briefe aus den Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika in die Heimath: mit besonderer Rücksicht auf deutsche Auswanderer* (Cassel: Druck und Verlag von Theodor Fischer, 1851); George M. V. Ross, *Des Auswanderers Handbuch: Getreue Schilderung der Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika und Zuverlässiger Rathgeber* (Eberrfeld u. Iserlohn: J. Badeker, 1851).

[2] Jaques Cattell Press, ed., *American Men and Women of Science: Social and Behavioral Sciences* (New York: R. R. Bowker Company, 1978), 267.

[3] He had received his Ph.D. from the Free University in Berlin in 1970. Jaques Cattell Press, ed., *Directory of American Scholars*, vol. I, *History*, 7th ed. (New York: R. R. Bowker Company, 1978), 161.

[4] Ingrid Deich to Erwin H. Epstein, June 8, 1975, folder 1, Ingrid Deich Personnel File, R5/54/5, box 46, College of Arts and Social Science Collection, University Archives, Curtis Laws Wilson Library, Missouri University of Science and Technology, Rolla, Missouri (hereafter cited as Deich Personnel Files, Archives, MST).

[5] Schedule of Classes, Fall 1976, Fall 1977, and Fall 1978, folder 4, R:/1/9, Schedule of Courses, 1909-2010, University Archives, Curtis Laws Wilson Library, Missouri University of Science and Technology, Rolla, Missouri (hereafter cited as Schedule of Classes, Archives, MST).

[6] Ingrid Deich, "Three Semester Report on Activities, Accomplishments, and Problems," with comments by department chair in margins, August 27, 1977, folder 1; Social Science Department Faculty Evaluations, Spring 1976, Fall 1976, Spring 1977, Fall 1977, Spring 1978, folder 2; all in Deich Personnel Files, Archives, MST. Ingrid Deich, "The Redistribution of Authority in National Laboratories in Western Germany," *Minerva* 17, no. 3 (Autumn, 1979): 413-44.

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Kansas City Times, February 7, 1979. "Observations of Erwin Epstein, Chairman, Department of Social Science on the Mysterious Disappearance of Dr. Ingrid Deich, Assistant Professor of Sociology," February 6, 1979, folder 2, Deich Personnel Files, Archives, MST. "Disappearance Baffles UMR Professor's Friends," *Rolla Daily News,* February 7, 1979.

[9] Telegram, Mexico City, February 8, 1979, Ingrid Deich to Erwin Epstein; Memorandum to Social Science Faculty, February 9, 1979; folder 1, Deich Personnel Files, Archives, MST. "Missing UMR Teacher Sends School Telegram," *Rolla Daily News*, February 11, 1979; "Case of Missing Rolla, Mo., Couple Muddled by Telegram," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch,* February 11, 1979; John Schueller, "Mystery Surrounds Search for Missing Scholars," *Columbia Tribune*, February 28, 1979.

[10] Dorit Wieckmann, Hamburg, to Gerold Cohen, March 15, 1979; "Sue Tillema Conversation," February 9, 1979; both in folder 2; Deich Personnel Files, Archives, MST.

[11] Ingrid Deich to Erwin Epstein, February 8, 1979, folder 2, Deich Personnel Files, Archives, MST.

[12] "UMR Gets Letter from Deich," *Rolla Daily News*, March 1, 1979.

[13] Letter, copy, Mr. John Cross, 807 Again, Columbia, Missouri, folder 2, Deich Personnel Files, Archives, MST. John Schueller, "Mystery Surrounds Search for Missing Scholars," *Columbia Tribune*, February 28, 1979. "UMR Gets Letter From Deich," *Rolla Daily News*, March 1, 1979.

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[29] *Zwischen Dallas und New York*, 11, 25, 35, 43, 85, 101. Translation by the author.

[30] Conservatism, Liberalism, Soap Opera. *Zwischen Dallas und New York*, 121-25.

[31] *Zwischen Dallas und New York*, 138-43.

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[33] *Zwischen Dallas und New York*, 12-19.

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[45] *Zwischend Dallas und New York*, 104-6.

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