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## **Film Review: *Do Communists Have Better Sex?***

A Film by André Meier  
First Run/Icarus Films  
[www.frif.com](http://www.frif.com) 2006  
(718-488-8900 or 800-876-1710)

DVD, 52 minutes, color, in German with English subtitles

Reviewed by David S. Hall, PhD



This very interesting video is a history and analysis of sex in East and West Germany from the time of the division of the country until the Wall came down in 1989. Postwar Germans shared a common culture, but the country was divided after WWII, and the Wall was built in 1961. They grew separately under two very different governments. When the country was reunited, the differences were very clear. Sex researchers, as well as those from other disciplines, had a great experiment to examine. This entertaining and informative video is one of the results.

Using film from the time and current interviews, the story line is knitted together with comments by experts on German history, culture and sexology, and with some interesting cartoon characters who seem to be having a lot of sex themselves.

There are grainy newsreel clips, sex education films, interviews, and what seems to be candid shots ranging from working in the factory, having naked fun on the beach, and spending time in bed. Some explicit sexual behavior is shown but what is discussed is more interesting than what is shown. The subtitles could use a spell checker, but that does not seriously distract from the content.

The observation is that during the Cold War, the Communist East became much more sexually liberal and advanced than the West, and led the way to greater equality for women in both economic and domestic environments. East and West are compared in areas such as sex education, dating, abortion, the pill, and marriage/divorce. As a sex educator, I have to say that the East looks better in this film. In my view, their willingness to provide sex education at an appropriate age, and the absence of religious dogma in their political life, gave the young people of East Germany a clearer view of what sex is about. One can use this video as a discussion starter in a variety of classes.

This video is a valuable addition to the history of sexuality, covering the post WWII period in two very different societies in a divided Germany.

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