



A Generation Divided: German Children and the Berlin Wall

Thomas A. Davey

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An inquiry into the lives of children of similar, if not identical, historical an cultural heritage who today find themselves in radically opposed ideological worlds, regarding one another across the concrete manifestation of their considerable differences, the Berlin Wall. Under these circumstances, what are the significant factors that contribute to the development in children of feelings of loyalty to or alienation from their nation? How do they view not only themselves, but the "other" Germans as well? How do they come to terms, emotionally and cognitively, with a unique, frequently painful, and frustrating reality? What are the lessons intended for them by their societies, and what lessons do they in fact learn? How do these children persist as Germans while at the same time becoming something else -- "communists? or "capitalists"?

Thomas Davey conducted interviews with children both sides of the Wall, participated in their daily lives, collected their drawings, talked with their teachers and families and grew aware of just how attentive children can be to moral and political subtleties of national life. The result is a revealing and dramatic portrait of a young generation coming to terms with complex national and historical circumstances of the two cites of East and West Berlin.



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