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Claudia Dittmar,
"Television and Politics in the Former East Germany"
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Abstract: In her paper, "Television and Politics in the Former East Germany," Claudia Dittmar analyzes how in the former East Germany (GDR) while television audience was restricted severely by government, at the same time West German broadcasts acquired a substantial audience and what the impact of these broadcasts had on the audience. West German television programs enjoyed a high level of popularity with the East German population, thereby posing the greatest competition to the GDR's own television stations. As a result, GDR television was forced to counteract the impact of West German television. Dittmar discusses how the West German media were accused of attempting to influence the East German audience ideologically and how the leadership of the GDR sought this to prevent by all means. The resulting competition on the airwaves forced the television stations of the GDR to adapt to the wishes of its audience, even if this meant that entertainment won the upper hand over the mediation of socialist politics and policies: Popular programs of West German television were countered with programs of mass appeal produced in the GDR.

Claudia DITTMAR

Television and Politics in the Former East Germany

Translated from the German by Benjamin Kraft

In the former East Germany (GDR), television encompassed more than just "television." What held true for its audience also applied to those in charge of the television channels and their programs, namely one eye always peering towards West German television and its programs. The "enemy" on the airwaves -- radio and television -- did not just seduce viewers away from GDR television, it also impacted on the design and content of its programs and was always seen as the measure of reference of the merits and quality of GDR television. Even today, when analysing GDR television more than ten years after its dissolution, it is important to pay attention to the the impact of the competition between the two German television systems. Thus, the research project of the program history of GDR television -- a project conducted by scholars in media and communication studies at the University of Halle-Wittenberg <<http://www.ddd-fernsehen.de>> -- is executed with the comparative approach. In the present paper, I discuss selected aspects of the concrete circumstances of this power struggle at the managerial levels of GDR television and I begin with the question: If it is true that East German television reacted to West German television in many respects, then there must be evidence of this on an institutional level. Based on this hypothesis it should then also be possible to analyse the history of GDR television as the history of a continuous battle to retain its audience, as a history of conflicts with an "enemy" that the GDR was unable to prevent from infiltrating its territory. In fact, not only have individual program types have referenced their West German counterparts as a result, the entire program development was influenced by this fact. In the research project at hand, following the project's methodology of studying individual time periods, these analyses were conducted for the timeframe between 1968 and 1974. This period represents a watershed for GDR television, the phase of consolidation (since 1962) and the phase of differentiation of GDR television (until 1982). At its center lies political and cultural upheaval, namely the changeover of the country's leadership from Walter Ulbricht to Erich Honecker in 1971. The said political reorientation included a large impact on television and cultural liberalization as well as a movement towards internationalization occurred. In turn, this resulted in a stronger emphasis on the entertainment function of television programs. Beyond this, television was reorganized radically in the first year of the change in power: This took the shape of a newly founded state committee of television at the Council of Ministers of the GDR. This had an organizational dissociation from the state's radio stations as a consequence. The changes in the wake of the catalyst of the changes, namely the 8th Convention of the Communist Party of the GDR, also led to revolutionary changes in television programming, realized in the first program reform of GDR television in 1971-72 (the introduction of a second television channel and of color television also fall into this period).

The period of 1968 to 1974 represents, also, an especially interesting history of the competition with West German television. Since the political relations between the two German states changed decisively during this time, these years also witnessed revolutionary developments in the competition between their media. Even as late as the mid-1960s, GDR television was fighting with great self-confidence to reach viewers in West Germany, as the following quote from the terms of cooperation between the Deutsche Post and the Deutscher Fernsehfunk from the year 1968 suggests: "By aggressively exerting influence on millions of viewers in West Germany and West Berlin, in the conflict with the class enemy, the historic mission of our Republic shall be depicted vividly, the peaceful democratic forces in West Germany and West Berlin shall be supported in their struggle, and proof shall be given in word and image that the GDR is at least one historical era ahead of West Germany" (Bundesarchiv Berlin DR 8-79 1a; unless indicated otherwise, all translations are by Benjamin Kraft). This kind of attempted influence on the "enemy" nation was at and parcel of the self-perception of GDR television from its inception (see Vollberg). However, this directive and attitude changed towards the end of the 1960s, when strategies and

goals were switched to the audience of GDR television. This brings up the question what changed for the GDR and for those in charge of television and television programming. Simply put, both the way the GDR's self-perception and its view of other nations had developed and changed to a great degree. The GDR found itself in a new phase of national sovereignty, one that meant simultaneously that it was following a strategy of distancing itself from the other German state. The party leadership concentrated its efforts on having the GDR recognized as a nation having equal rights under international law. Of course, this objective was hindered by West Germany and it was only thanks to the policy of *détente* between the United States and the Soviet Union that allowed a normalization of the tense relations between the two German states. The leadership of the GDR had thus reached an important milestone in its foreign policy while at the same time had to fend off the negative effects of this development in the form of a policy of *détente*. A harmonization with West Germany held risks that the party leadership sought to defuse by a dual strategy. On the one hand, it intensified its close ties with its "brother land," the Soviet Union; on the other hand, it emphasized the dissociation from its class enemy, West Germany. As a result, these developments by no means meant a de-escalation of the media rivalry between the two German states but instead an intensified battle against the "enemy's invading TV program." Finally, the GDR accused West Germany of trying to influence the citizens of the GDR by means of the media: "It must be taken into account that we are faced with an enemy in the form of a very well-equipped machinery of ideological diversion, an enemy whom we have indeed been able to expel from our territory but not from the field of ideological conflict, and who is adept building on any ideological backwardness and any lapses in socialist societal education by utilizing all available means of mass seduction" (Glatzer 321-22).

The directors of the GDR's television also had to deal with the changed situation and its consequences for its program following the -- previously mentioned -- 8th party convention of the GDR Communist Party of 1971. At a consultation of the party's working group employed at the Deutscher Fernsehfunk, the then head of GDR television, Heinz Adameck, summed this up as follows: "The party convention has shown us that we should expect to see a further intensification of the ideological class struggle. It emphasized once again the basic duty of the mass media to contribute to the ideological dissociation by immunizing our population against the poison of anti-communism. ... The fight against an anti-communist diversion therefore means developing an understanding for the following questions: peaceful coexistence means a difficult class struggle and does not result in rapprochement with but in demarcation against the imperialistic Federal Republic of Germany" (Bundesarchiv Berlin DY 30-478 II/10-II/11). Adameck emphasized that a clear mission for GDR television could be derived from this statement, namely "to create primarily a socialist television program that is so attractive and so effective that fewer citizens will wish to satisfy their needs of entertainment and information with the help of West-TV" (Bundesarchiv Berlin DY 30-478 II/11). Seen in this context, it becomes clear why the agitation aimed at the West had lost its momentum and the concept that the program had a mandate to reach all of Germany was abandoned in the course of this political re-orientation. An outward sign of this change was the renaming of the "Deutscher Fernsehfunk" to "Fernsehen der DDR" in 1972. From this point on, television as a mass medium was strengthened as an instrument of propaganda used on the country's own population and audience. This was achieved by offering two channels, by increasing continuously the number of hours that programs were broadcast and by developing the programs in accordance with the audience's needs.

In the years after the dissolution of the East German state, most scholars of media assumed that the population of the former East Germany "turned their eyes and ears towards the West" collectively (see, e.g., Dohlus 80). A (first) analysis of television audience in the former East Germany in 1991 seemed to support what (West) German media scholars had suspected, namely that the population of the GDR preferred West German television and had abandoned GDR television in the last decade of its existence increasingly (see Dohlus; Braumann). However, ten years after the disbandment of GDR television new studies pertaining to GDR audiences' reception patterns and behavior indicate a high popularity of GDR television. For example, Michael Meyen counters the theory of the collective departure of the population that supposedly occurred every

evening. His analysis suggests that the importance of Western media and especially of West German television has been overrated. Meyen is not surprised that the idea of "virtual desertion" was not met with disagreement for many years. After all, it "flattered the West German journalists and legitimized their Germany-wide mandate, or maybe because it just did not seem conceivable that GDR citizens could not be interested in information from the 'free world'" (Meyen 228). Yet, it is this very disinterest that Meyen was able to establish in his study. By re-analyzing the findings of audience reception and behavior and by drawing on additional media-biographical interviews he comes to the conclusion that the GDR television audience expected the programs to supply them with entertainment and relaxation, both of which they found in their "own" media. The interviews with contemporary witnesses showed that especially women, who did not have much free time owing to their multiple burdens of family, employment, and household work, showed very little interest in news broadcasts from West German television stations. It is especially important to mention Meyen's findings on the higher number of viewers: He determines that, on a yearly average, the two channels of GDR television reached more East German viewers with their 8 p.m. programs than the competing West German stations. Studies on the viewers' time budgets showed that no more than 55-60% of viewers in the GDR who owned a television actually watched it during prime time. Assuming that the two GDR stations held a share of 35-40% of the viewers, this leaves the West German stations with a maximum viewer share of 20-25% (see Meyen 222). Meyen sees this audience behavior as a constant value which changed only after the political changes of 1989. This also refutes the frequently discussed decline in viewership in the 1980s (on this, see Hoff; Hickethier; Schwarzkopf). What is certain now is that GDR television reached its audience with programs of entertainment produced not in West Germany but in the GDR. The two program reforms of 1971-72 and 1982-83, through which the entertainment aspect was strengthened, suggest that the directors in charge of the programs must have been aware of this development and audience preference. This is emphasized by the fact that the success of the entertainment formats was accompanied by a pronounced rejection of information and journalism formats. Shows of these formats were more likely to cause the audience to change the channel (see Meyen 217). Focusing on entertainment shows, on the other hand, we can come to the conclusion that audiences did not find GDR television programs boring – "at least no more so than West German TV" (Meyen 225). As motivations for watching programs of GDR television Meyen argues that viewers were able to recognize stars, people, places, and their own everyday life in the shows (225). Thus, the West German media was no alternative to this "processing of the own identity," because "most advisory (how-to) shows were not applicable to life in the East and news shows and political shows were only of limited value in helping with the viewer's orientation in everyday life" (226).

As suggested previously, the 8th Communist Party Convention had given television the clear task of orienting its program in accordance with the wishes of its audience. For his colleagues, Adameck summarized this mission as follows: "The principles of overall program design as well as the conception of the individual sectors, the suggested topics for the individual programs, and lastly the methods of the journalistic or artistic approach of a topic need to meet the requirements that the party convention has identified as the basis for our work: the growing material and cultural needs of the public, which also includes an improved fulfillment of the audience's expectations, as well as the improvement of the working and living conditions" (Bundesarchiv Berlin DY 30-478 1/7). At the same time, Adameck called for a critical view of the GDR's own television program: "Self-delusion and illusions will not help us affect the necessary changes to our program, because they make us close our eyes to the real societal expectations and the requirements of the viewers" (Bundesarchiv Berlin DY 30-478 1/20). On the whole, the television ideologists did not relinquish the concept that they would be able to practice "impact politics" with their program. Using the entire spectrum of their program, they aimed to tackle their societal mission "to strengthen the socialist consciousness and for the intellectual and cultural good of the people of the GDR" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Thesen zur Funktion" 2). Those in charge did not only assume that television as a medium satisfied the goals of their "impact politics" especially well because of its pervasiveness: All efforts that were aimed at

establishing the television program "with its numerous prospects for impact" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Thesen zur Funktion" 2) can be explained with the knowledge of the special power of persuasion of this medium. Because of its effect of authenticity and its emotional impact, the moving image, which could be received and viewed in the privacy of the home, television was considered to be superior to any other medium. Owing to this potential, it would be "an unpardonable sin of omission ... in the work of the mass media of the GDR to lead the battle for the awareness of millions by utilizing only the daily press" (Glatzer 21-22). However, according to the perception of the Central Committee's Department of Propaganda (Abteilung Agitation des Zentralkomitees der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands), television's specific mode of operation was also tied in with its own dilemma which was not to be underestimated: "Socialist television is simultaneously an instrument of political information and orientation, of ideological education, of intellectual and cultural enrichment, of relaxation, and of entertainment. The overall program design must therefore always bear all of these factors in mind. ... It is just as wrong to yield to demands that are detrimental to the fulfillment of socialist television's political-ideological function as it is unjustifiable to ignore the viewers' legitimate and distinct need for relaxation and entertainment. Television is to a great extent responsible for making every citizen feel good in [a socialist system]" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Thesen zur Funktion" 6).

"For the Bonn republic, the existing three television stations are highly important tools in the class struggle. With the imperialists' own methods of misrepresentation, untruth, fabrication, and agitation they are anxious to influence ideologically viewers in both German states every day." This quote, taken from "Bericht der Intendanz und der Zentralen Parteileitung des Deutschen Fernsehfunks über den Stand der Durchführung der Beschlüsse des 11. Plenums des ZK der SED Beilage 4, S.1" ("Report of the Intendants and the Central Party Leadership of the Deutscher Fernsehfunk on the Status of the Execution of the Resolutions of the 11th Plenum of the SED's Central Committee, Addendum 4, p.1") of 1966, demonstrates what a decidedly hostile image West German television was given. The report is especially noteworthy for its detailed listing of facts about West German television. The collected information pertains to its program, the number of viewers, personnel, technical equipment, and the economic principles on which the program stations ARD, ZDF, and the third programs operated. Within these categories, data on the Deutscher Fernsehfunk are also listed for comparison and these suggest the inferiority of GDR television. For example, while ARD and ZDF could boast a total of twenty studios, the DFF had only one and while the West German television stations had 10,775 full-time employees, there were only 2,354 working for the East's sole counterpart at the time. Also, the financial situation of the television institutions in East and West Germany were hardly comparable: Where the West German stations had access to funds totaling about one billion and 110 million West German Marks in 1965, the GDR's stations had to make do with 127 million East German Marks [while at the time the two German Marks were taken to be 1:1 officially, in reality the value of the West German Mark was about 1:4,4 re the East German Mark; thus, East German television's funding was 1:38 when compared with that of the West German funding for its television]). Further, for the East German television station, an extension of this was the sobering comparison of technical equipment: "The ... equipment of the West German studios is state-of-the-art: some will be modernized in regard to color television capabilities over the next years. ... West German studios have seventy magnetic image storage systems and ca. forty outside broadcasting vans at their disposal" (Berlin DY 30-481, Addendum 4 2-3). In contrast, there were "five magnetic image-storage systems, two of which are completely new developments and not yet completely serviceable" and "ten outside broadcasting vans, of which ... seven have been in service for up to ten years and are technologically obsolete" (Bundesarchiv Berlin DY 30-481, Addendum 4 4). There is no trace of over-estimating the GDR television station's capabilities in these documents, there was no doubt about the West Germans' economic, manpower-related, and technological superiority. This state of affairs persisted over the following years and was repeatedly a topic in the correspondence of GDR television functionaries, always supported by new figures. Further, it was insinuated that West German television was demanding that the socialist states (the Soviet block of Central and East Europe) lessen their ideological influence on society while at the same

time aiming "for a greater development, propagation, and exploitation of middle-class moral and middle-class political ethics with the goal of implementing the strategic concepts of imperialism" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Einige Tendenzen" 2). Supposedly, the state employed the medium television "to replace the thinking of the citizens ... with ... central political-moral principles and to polarize the existing, diffuse intellectual, cultural, and moral concepts in the interest of an emergence of an awareness shared by society as a whole. The passive behavioral pattern of the masses that has been stimulated for years is to be overcome and transformed into a political activity that affirms the imperialistic state and serves reactionary goals" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Einige Tendenzen" 2). A concrete example of what such a political (ab)use would look like is not supplied, however.

In addition to the supposed attempts at manipulation of their own population and television audience, the authors of the report were especially interested in the media-based realization of the state doctrine of "anti-communism" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Einige Tendenzen" 3). This doctrine is portrayed as a great danger to the GDR, since "ideological diversion as the principal component of psychological warfare is currently the most important form in the achievement of anticommunist goals and intentions" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Einige Tendenzen" 3). Here, the report suggests that the "cold war" was conducted in a "hot" manner to all intents and purposes, as it accuses West German television of "attempted ideological infiltration" of the GDR. Employing all genres of television, it was believed that on the one hand, the West German population was to be "immunized against progressive ideas" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Einige Tendenzen" 5) and on the other that "a permanent fomenting of reformist and revisionist endeavors" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Einige Tendenzen" 6) in the East-bloc countries was being conducted. These "attempts at interference" by West German television specifically aimed at its East German neighbor are described in a concept paper in 1970 by the research group for planning of the journalism section at Karl Marx University: "The ideological diversion of the Bonn republic and the organizations and institutions cooperating with it will continue to be aimed at pitting the citizens and the state of the GDR against each other, to maneuver them apart, and – since a schism can not be achieved – to at least create and nurture partial differences" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Ideologische Leitlinie" 12). More specifically, West German television is accused of "the attempt to depict the party of the working class as an obstacle to societal progress" and of practicing "the rapprochement of the two systems" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Ideologische Leitlinie" 13). This was to be reached by the "attempt to reduce the behavior of the citizens of the GDR to making demands," while at the same time spurring on "consumer desires" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Ideologische Leitlinie" 13). The authors of the paper "Einige Tendenzen der politisch-ideologischen Manipulierung im westdeutschen Fernsehen" even went so far as to accuse television of conducting the mobilization for an armed conflict through entertainment offerings: "In 1968, the subliminal exertion of influence in the service of psychological preparation for war was most notably heightened in serials and crime movies. According to sociological studies, men between the age of 16 to 36 make up the majority of the potential viewers. ... In this manner, the exact part of the population is reached that constitutes a special focal point in the framework of psychological warfare" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Einige Tendenzen" 7). And the harshest allegations were aimed at the ARD where the report surmises that this station "is following a special agenda in the overall process of psychological warfare against the GDR compared to the ZDF" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Einige Tendenzen" 6-7). Furthermore, this was considered especially true of the WDR (Cologne) and the SFB (Berlin), whose broadcasts were "to be characterized as especially aggressive" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Einige Tendenzen" 6).

These "observations" in the said reports seem to have roused further interest. In the paper "Information -- Rolle und Stellung des Senders Freies Berlin" of March 1972, this ARD institute is analyzed extensively as "an ideological 'stake in the flesh of the GDR'" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Information" 2). In addition to presenting the collected information on the institute's history, equipment, and its integration into the ARD, the report also argues the "exceptional

position" of the SFB: "Normally, it would only have a 5% share (700.000 paying viewers in West Berlin) of the overall program. Owing to its exceptional geographic location at the center of the GDR's territory and the resulting mission of ideological diversion, it has been tasked with a higher program share" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Information" 2). After the paper has exposed the SFB as the main enemy of the GDR, it continues to pull the institute to pieces: "In the years after its establishment (1953), the SFB has confirmed itself to be one of the worst anticommunist and most revanchist organizations of imperialist reaction" (2). According to the report, the institute recruited its employees "from the Goebbels ministry, the former 'Reichs'rundfunk and the SA ... complemented ... by notorious communist haters and enemies of any form of detente" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Information" 2; it is known today, however, that the employment of former Nazis at West German radio, television, and newspapers has been standard practice, see, e.g., Hachmeister and Siering). The paper goes on to identify the SFB's reports belonging to the series "Mitteldeutsches Tagebuch," "Diesseits und jenseits der Zonengrenzen," as well as the coverage on the events of 17 July 1953 (the uprising in East Berlin) as "agitation serials" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Information" 4). Yet, the SFB was not only harshly attacked because of its program, it was even accused of assaults on the GDR itself. In this context, it seemed like a harmless allegation that the SFB took "a leading role in seducing GDR citizens into illegally leaving their homeland" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Information" 4). The accusations relating to events that were purported to have occurred after the Berlin Wall was built became increasingly absurd: "After 13 August 1961, the SFB operated as an organizer of armed provocation against the national border of the GDR in cooperation with the Springer corporate group (with which it maintains close ties). For example, the SFB financed the provocateur who killed corporal Reinhold Huhn of the GDR border guard of on 18 June 1962 and positioned an outside broadcast van in the immediate vicinity of the location where the murder would later take place" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Information" 4-5). At this point, the coverage surrounding the state committee has departed from a "factual" listing of the information about its Western rival. The defamatory statements quoted here seem to read like they were taken from a bad spy novel. They do not, however, offer those employed at the GDR's television stations any assistance in the day-to-day battle for the viewers. In sum, on the one hand, the directorial and managerial bodies of GDR television had objective and factual information available to them that had been collected through meticulous research in West German sources. On the other hand, the ideologically colored assessment of the "intentions" of West German television can only be judged as very speculative and outright lurid. Today, we can only speculate whether the authors of the report to the committee actually believed that West German television was preparing the population for a war or that the SFB employed "criminal elements" to perpetrate "crimes along the national border" (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv Babelsberg, "Information" 5). We can assume that it is more likely that this was propaganda directed inward -- not least to motivate GDR television's own employees to do their best "in the daily confrontation of the classes with the enemy" (Bundesarchiv Berlin DY 30-478 II/9).

By the mid 1970s, the predominant concern about the GDR audience's migration to West German television channels was no longer speculation only. It had become a hard fact supported by information on audience ratings and audience participation, all available to the television committee. This data and a freer discussion of the impact of West German television in East Germany led to the development that GDR television used its own program to take a more aggressive role against the competition. Also, considerations of program planning were now more openly discussed against the background of West German program structures. As the most significant up-to-date news show of GDR television, "Aktuelle Kamera" (a program of evening news), obviously enjoyed a special status. However, beyond its ideological role it also marked the beginning of "prime time" within the program. Its time slot and duration dictated to some extent the evening program, while from an ideological perspective the selection of its time slot was decided primarily by "the increasingly difficult fight to be the first television channel to inform viewers and to interpret news" (Bundesarchiv Berlin DR 8-141, "Stand und Tendenzen" 23). In later plans, the fact that this concept was not implemented is explained with the results of polls of

viewers. Interestingly, it were crime and humor series that achieved the most positive audience response and Sunday evening as a rule enjoyed relatively stable audience ratings (Bundesarchiv Berlin DY 30 IV 2-2.033-43 20-21). A different kind of program on this most important day of the week as far as the number of viewers is concerned, for example a journalistic program, would obviously have been more desirable from an ideological viewpoint, but was just as obviously unthinkable in the face of the competition from West Germany: "If good audience response is to be preserved and our adversary is to remain switched off for the most part ... then the basic tendencies of the audience's expectations of entertainment, suspense, and cheeriness for the Sunday evening program need to be met" (Bundesarchiv Berlin DY 30 IV 2-2.033-43 22). And similar lines of reasoning can be found about the entire daily program, the late-afternoon program as well as the late-night program. Apparently, the influence of West German entertainment did not only extend to the distribution of the program blocks to the weekdays but began to put the individual formats under pressure as well. This can be seen in the criticism of East German television's journalistic broadcasts, which had great acceptance problems with the audience, as was stated above. Additionally, their West German counterparts began to integrate elements of entertainment into their journalistically-oriented shows, thus attempting to make it attractive to their audience and this development appeared threatening to the directors of GDR television. The developments of GDR television programming between 1968 and 1974 can be summarized as follows: Under government directives as well as based on evidence of research data, television programming intensifies its orientation towards the wishes of GDR audience and as a result of this audience orientation and the competition with West German television, the entertainment profile of programming increases significantly. On the political and ideological side within GDR television programming and program management, West German television is criticized for trying to poach East German viewers with the goal of influencing them ideologically; in turn, this gives rise to attempting to keep the audience tuned to East German television, mainly by the aforesaid increase of entertainment programs and orientation. This combined effort of politico-ideological consideration and entertainment orientation is to a large extent a reaction to the impact of West German television in the GDR with the result of GDR television turning to entertainment to a much a higher extent than previously. In turn, the "home-grown" output of entertainment in GDR television results in a higher level of audience and a specific GDR television culture. It is an area of further research to analyse the move towards entertainment comparatively, namely the history of the move towards more entertainment in West Germany as compared with the same in East Germany as well as in other television systems of the time.

Note: The above paper is an updated version of Claudia Dittmar, "Das 'feindliche Fernsehen' - das DDR-Fernsehen und der ständige Krieg im Äther." *Die Überwindung der Langeweile? Zur Programmentwicklung des DDR-Fernsehens 1968 bis 1974*. Ed. Claudia Dittmar and Susanne Vollberg. Leipzig: Universitätsverlag, 2002. 99-146.

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Fernsehens 1968 bis 1974*. Ed. Claudia Dittmar and Susanne Vollberg. Leipzig:
Universitätsverlag, 2002. 147-82.

Author's profile: Claudia Dittmar is working towards her doctorate in media and communication studies at the University of Halle-Wittenberg. In her research, Dittmar is participating in a group project, *Programmggeschichte des DDR-Fernsehens komparativ* <<http://www.ddr-fernsehen.de>> (A Comparative History of Television Programming in the GDR) and she has published "Das 'feindliche Fernsehen.' Das DDR-Fernsehen und der ständige Krieg im Äther" in *Die Überwindung der Langeweile? Zur Programmentwicklung des DDR-Fernsehens 1968 bis 1974* (Ed. Claudia Dittmar and Susanne Vollberg, 2002) and "GDR Television in Competition with West German Programming" in *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* (2004). Dittmar also published, with Susanne Vollberg, the edited volume *Alternativen im DDR-Fernsehen? Die*

Programmentwicklung 1981 bis 1985 (2004). E-Mail: <claudia.dittmar@medienkomm.uni-halle.de>.

Translator's profile: Of US-American and German parentage, Benjamin Kraft is working towards his *Magister* (M.A.) in media and communication studies at the University of Halle-Wittenberg. Concurrently, he works as a freelance translator in Berlin and elsewhere. He translated several papers for the thematic issue *Media and Communication Studies at the University of Halle-Wittenberg* of *CLCWeb Comparative Literature and Culture* as part of his *practicum*, a requirement for his diploma. E-mail: <ben.kraft@gmx.de>.