

3. MIDTERM

Choose one (1) of the two fictionalized characters below (both are eastern Germans) and use the skeletal biographical sketch provided to put yourself in the person's shoes and tell his or her story before, during, and after 1989-90. (The readings you might refer to for each sketch are indicated.) While I encourage you to be creative in writing the person's story, this is not a creative writing assignment per se. Rather, what I am looking for is your careful and accurate use of the materials you have read in this course. Make substantial use of at least five (5) different textbook chapters and/or articles in writing this essay. Your *substantive and relevant* use of additional course readings and information from the eyewitness video testimonials, facts from quizzes, and/or information you have gleaned from the class lectures and discussions/debates may earn you extra points, but your generous use of five (5) course readings is most important. (My grading criteria are indicated at the bottom of the Course Materials screen in Blackboard.) Depending on your character's biographical sketch below, explain your character's story *in the first person* in a way that utilizes the relevant themes of the course. That is, explain to the reader:

- What the person's economic, political, and social position was in the GDR and has been since (i.e., were they victimized by the System, collaborators in it, or privately and publicly as detached as possible, and what were and have been the consequences of these actions?);
- What factors shape the way they feel about the *Wende*, its aftermath, and West Germany/Germans today;
- What factors have shaped their sense of identity and their level of personal

satisfaction as eastern Germans today;

- What have been their experiences with, or feelings about, right-wing radicalism, the *Stasi* and its legacy, and the communist successor party, the PDS?

Note: while you are not expected to necessarily address each of these areas, you should elaborate on those that are applicable and appropriate to the biographical sketch of the character you decide to select, below.

Annette Kubina

Female, today 40 years old, from Leipzig. Was raised in a party-loyal household, though was often at odds with her parents on political issues. Her father worked for the *Stasi* (she learned this only after 1989). In the GDR she worked in a machine parts factory. In the spring-summer of 1989 she took part in meetings in the protestant church and later in the fall marched for reforms. In March of 1990 she voted for the CDU. She had two children in the early 1980s, one of whom joined the right-wing scene in the mid-1990s. Today she works as a librarian.

Josef Pietsch

Male, today in his early 50s, from Berlin. Was raised in a household of non-party members, had relatives in the West, but was never allowed to visit them. Worked as a hotel bellboy in *Hohenschonenhausen* (a heavily party-dominated eastern district of Berlin). He left the GDR to cross the Hungarian border to the West in early 1989. However, he returned to eastern Berlin in early 1992. Today he runs the "Trabant Café" in *Mitte* (central Berlin), where he dishes up GDR specialties

and sometimes permits the PDS to hang its campaign posters on his bulletin board.

Important: Please be sure to cite (in parentheses) specifically where information you are using in your essays originated. If you use a direct quote, you must also provide the page number or, if you use eyewitness videos, the segment title.