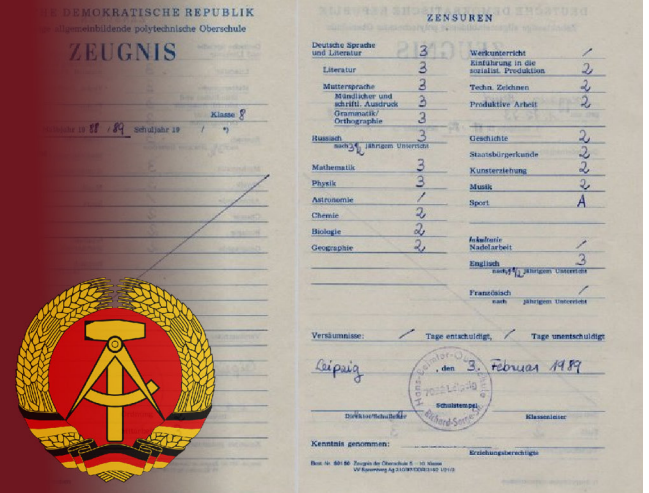


POLYTECHNICAL (UN)LESSONS: REPORT CARD FROM EAST GERMANY

John Rodden



WHEN September 28, 2009 - 12:00 PM

WHERE LB - 540

SUMMARY

What kind of educational system had the now-defunct German Democratic Republic (GDR), the communist nation better known throughout the decades of the Cold War as East Germany (1949-89)? Relatively little-known in the West, the GDR was chiefly recognized (and often reviled) for erecting the Berlin Wall and topping the Olympic medal standings. But the GDR educational system possesses interest beyond its fabled sports machine. The system was rooted in communist ideology—and East German Communists had a much more difficult ideological task than socialists and communists elsewhere in Europe. As we shall see, East German leftists had to “win the minds” of the populace and cope with the poisonous pedagogy and deep psychosocial legacy of Nazism.



John Rodden has taught at the University of Virginia and the University of Texas at Austin. He is the author of four books devoted to modern Germany, including *Repainting the Little Red Schoolhouse: A History of East German Education, 1945-95* (2002), *The Walls That Remain: Eastern and Western Germans Since Reunification* (2008), *Textbook Reds: Schoolbooks, Ideology, and Eastern German Identity* (2006). His forthcoming book is *Dialectics, Dogmas, and Dissent: Crimes Against Human Rights Under East German Communism*.