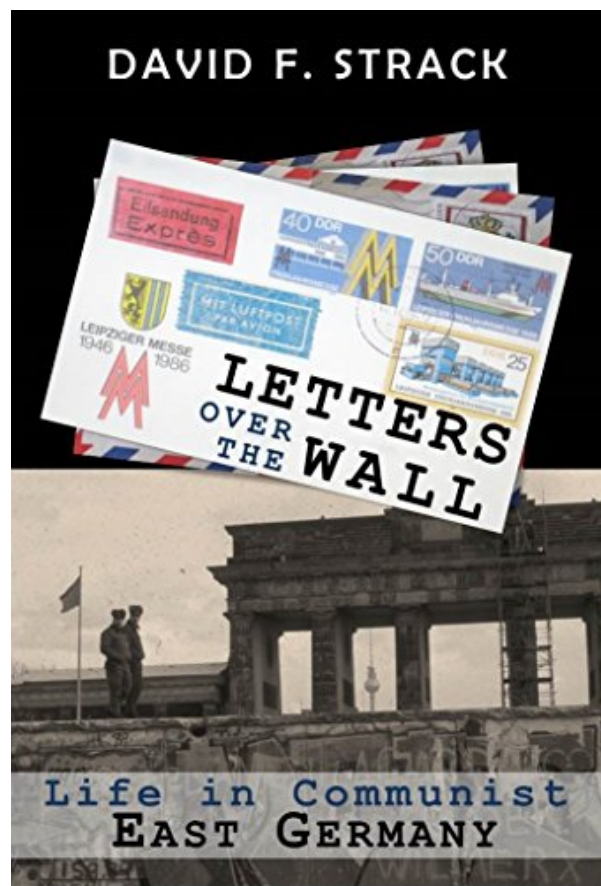


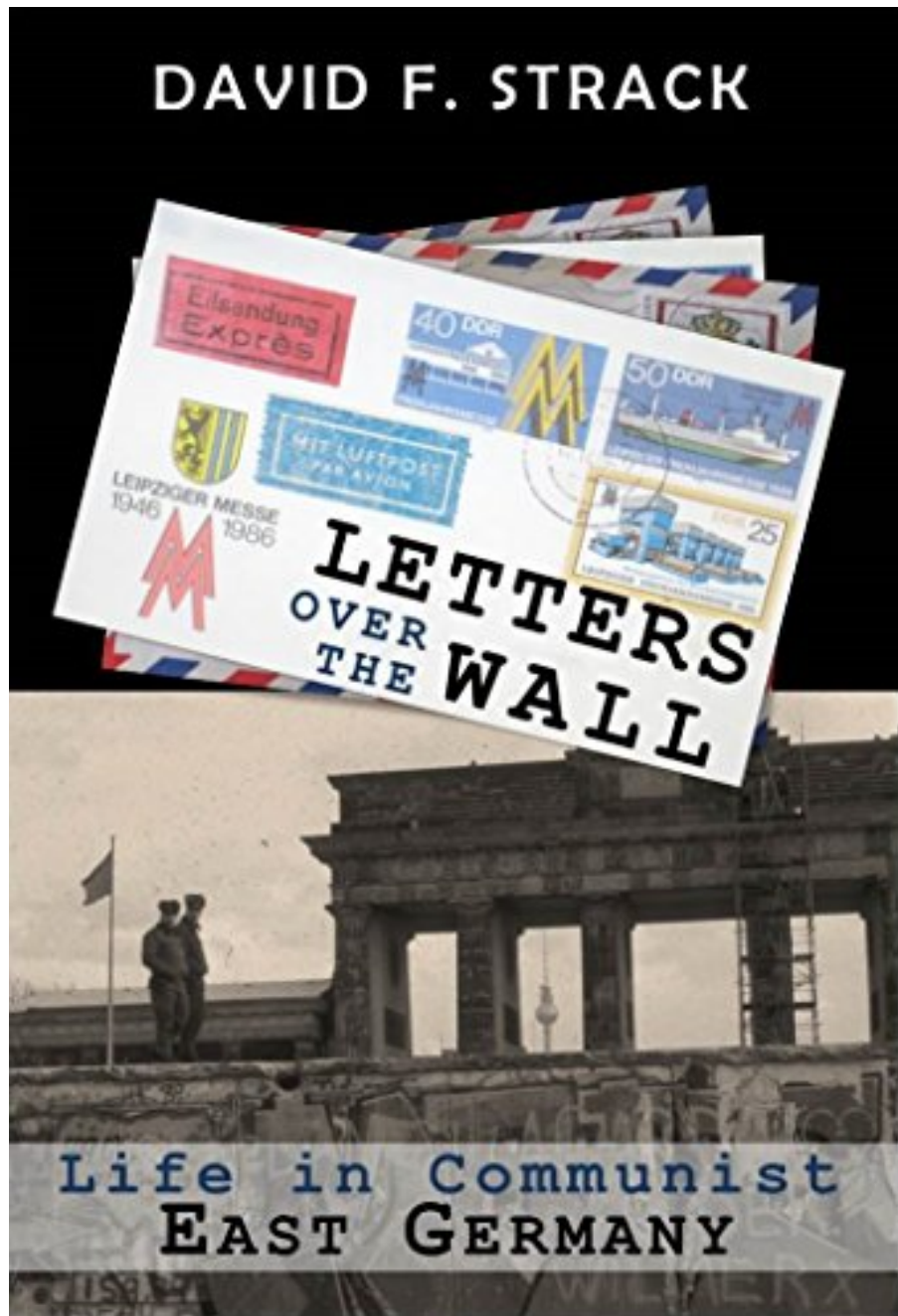
LETTERS OVER THE WALL: LIFE IN COMMUNIST EAST GERMANY BY DAVID STRACK



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About the Author

For over 45 years, David F. Strack taught German at both the high school and college level, finishing his career as an adjunct professor of German at the University of Redlands. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in history and German from the University of Redlands and his Master's degree in German from Middlebury College. As part of his love of the language and culture, David traveled extensively in Europe, including several times to East Germany, the German Democratic Republic. There he became friends with four individuals who were striving to live normal lives in the communist state. For decades these friends exchanged letters with David, sharing their dreams and frustrations. His first book, **LETTERS OVER THE WALL**, brings you into the personal lives of everyday East Germans. In addition to leading many student and adult tour groups to Germany and Austria, David also taught English in Germany as a Fulbright Exchange Teacher. He is now retired from teaching and is living in Yucaipa, California. He still corresponds with his friends in Germany, and visits them whenever possible.

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LETTERS OVER THE WALL: LIFE IN COMMUNIST EAST GERMANY BY DAVID STRACK PDF

Four East Germans corresponded for decades with an American teacher, openly sharing about their frustrations, joys, and challenges of living in a communist country.

Author David F. Strack kept those personal letters and has now distilled them into a riveting memoir about what life was like behind the Iron Curtain.

Read about the lives of Gerhard, Jutta, Jürgen, and Barbara in their own words, as they share about their jobs, families, and political opinions. Learn how the fall of the Wall and the reuniting of Ost und West affected their lives, bringing wonderful freedoms to all of them, yet also economic disappointment to one.

LETTERS OVER THE WALL is an enthralling memoir, chronicling four lives over a span of forty years, during a time of political upheaval and great societal change.

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3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Interesting and enlightening read!

By Sean's Mom

I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book. In the early 1970's, the author met a number of East German citizens while at a conference in that country. What followed were years of correspondence between these friends from East Germany and the United States. Scattered among the early years were visits by the author to his friends in East Germany since they were not allowed to come visit him. Now, after more than 40 years of

friendship and correspondence comes this book that shares the contemporaneous feelings and views of people on both sides of the wall. The author does a great job of putting the information shared in these letters in the historical context of life in East Germany and what was happening in the world on the other side of the wall.

Through these letters, ordinary East Germans described their dreams for their lives over the course of many years of correspondence. Many of those hopes and dreams seem quite mundane to us in the West: the ability to purchase or build a home, the ability to take a vacation when and where you want and the ability to get out and see the world beyond the wall. The book then describes the author's and the East Germans' excitement following the fall of the Berlin Wall and follows each of their lives after they were finally allowed to live out their dreams. As will be seen in this book, the dream was realized by some, while others were left bitterly disappointed.

Kudos to the author for realizing the history and the very interesting story contained in all those old letters on his shelf.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

A unique perspective of the German Democratic Republic

By Jeff Burnett

An excellent read, the correspondence with four citizens of the German Democratic Republic tells of warm friendships that crossed international and philosophical boundaries. The book covers the lives of four people living in a society that is often thought of as "bleak and gray." It is not a book about the Stasi or political intrigue but is rather about the ordinary and yet often unique events that lie outside the political realm. However, what might seem as ordinary in the United States is often seen very differently from inside the GDR.

The personal comments by the author are well placed and appropriate in providing historical clarity to the events described in the letters and are often sprinkled with dry humor. Mr. Strack's personal travels to the two Germanys give the book a sense of authenticity that goes beyond the letters.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Very informative and compelling read! A unique perspective on the Cold War.

By richard morriss

Letters Over The Wall is a history book. This book is about the aftermath of WWII. It covers a time line from 1949 to 2015, including the aftermath of the fall of the "Wall." The correspondence between the author and four east Germans who all became life-long friends reflected the sentiments of those friends on the east side of the wall (i.e.,the GDR) during the cold war. Their "freedom of speech" was expressed only through their letters translated by Strack in California.

Strack tells a fascinating story from beginning to end of his relationship with those four very articulate (English & German) individuals. The text represents a unique historical perspective of east Germany during the cold war and its aftermath.

One of those friends, Gerhard, made a statement that hit home with me: "As I'm taught, Americans are very poorly informed about world politics and most don't have any interest." That's me: ignorant and apathetic. I still have very little interest in politics at any level anywhere. This text, for the first time, peaked my interest in the politics of the cold war. I do believe that politics are interesting from an historical perspective as demonstrated in this book. The letters were a very interesting way to understand the zeitgeist changes over the past 45 years.

Strack created an easy to read and understandable text. I think it would be very suitable for secondary educators who teach world or European history to use this book to supplement a broader history text. Strack captured a lot of facts and history of the cold war through the letters of those four restless individuals trapped for 28 years in East Germany. Their letters reflected their individual personal reality that could not have been presented in a better way.

Rich Morriss

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