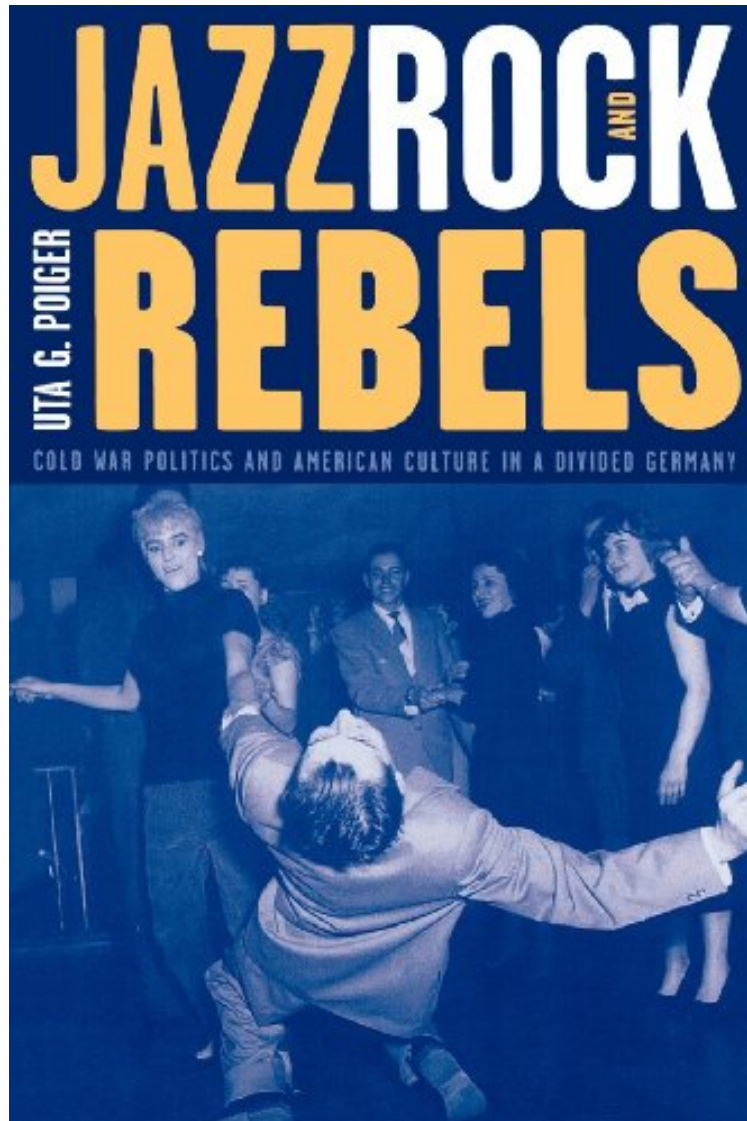


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(Studies on the History of Society and Culture)

## **Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany (Studies on the History of Society and Culture)**

*Uta G. Poiger*

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**Uta G. Poiger : Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany (Studies on the History of Society and Culture)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany (Studies on the History of Society and Culture):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Great BookBy BrettIt is truly amazing what Uta Poiger attempts

to do in this monograph. However, I personally do not agree with her perspective and conclusion of Americanization. It is also very repetitive at times, as if the multiplicity of her conclusions gave it more validity. It is a consistent narrative to say the least. A wonderful addition to the significantly ignored area in German youth culture. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars By T.A.S. Excellent book. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Interesting Interpretation of Cold War Culture in East/West Blocs By Roy E. Cloudburst Breaking new historical ground, Uta Poiger explores the American cultural mediums that influenced Post-War East and West Germany in *Jazz, Rock and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany*. Insightful and exhaustively researched, Poiger links the divided German states by a "discourse" bridge which seeks to manipulate American cultural influences to German prerogatives. The work is topically arraigned into five chapters, which collectively, link the popular culture of America in the 1950's to social injustices such as fascism and racism. Jazz music, for instance, was articulately utilized by the author to illustrate subtle differences and evolutions by the two Germanys. Initially, there was a social rejection of American Jazz music in the German states. According to Poiger, they "invoked antiblack . . . sentiments" as a method of reducing U.S. legitimacy. Over time, as Poiger noted, this stigma for jazz evaporated and became more of an accepted norm in German culture. And reviewer, Katrin Sieg, Georgetown Professor of German Studies, lauded Poiger for her tight knit handling of racial digression, and added that "as the Nazi past was discredited, biological models of racial hierarchy, or indeed the very concept of race, disappeared from public language, to be displaced by psychology as the main paradigm explaining and articulating human differences." The reader will discover many anecdotes, such as the aforementioned one, that provide convincing evidence that American culture was either embraced, or thwarted, by the two states depending on each side's definition of national identity. However, Poiger falls short of weaving a compelling argument that German adolescents were politically influenced by American culture. Although it was clear that both Germanys were inundated with U.S. movies, fashion, and Elvis style Rock n' Roll, no obvious parallels were installed to illustrate how these youth translated American culture into German political alignments. One Social Historian, Donna Harsch, echoed this assessment of Poiger's treatment of German youth and added that, "cultural habits of 1950s youth were, by and large, apolitical." Rebellious German youth may have enjoyed the age of promiscuous temptations by sampling various cultural pleasures enjoyed by Americans, but how these ventures equated to Germaness, or political identity, remains nebulous for the reader. Logically argued, this work contributed, more than it contracted, from the cultural and Cold War history of Post-War Germany. I appreciated the healthy samplings of German artist renderings and propaganda posters, which added a rich dimension to the overall excellent scholarship of this work. Best suited for German, Cold War, gender, cultural and racial scholars, but appropriate for graduate and undergraduate students who have an eye for cultural or gender history, this work would be an interesting read to both the scholar and leisurely reader.

In the two decades after World War II, Germans on both sides of the iron curtain fought vehemently over American cultural imports. Uta G. Poiger traces how westerns, jeans, jazz, rock 'n' roll, and stars like Marlon Brando or Elvis Presley reached adolescents in both Germanies, who eagerly adopted the new styles. Poiger reveals that East and West German authorities deployed gender and racial norms to contain Americanized youth cultures in their own territories and to carry on the ideological Cold War battle with each other. Poiger's lively account is based on an impressive array of sources, ranging from films, newspapers, and contemporary sociological studies, to German and U.S. archival materials. *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels* examines diverging responses to American culture in East and West Germany by linking these to changes in social science research, political cultures, state institutions, and international alliance systems. In the first two decades of the Cold War, consumer culture became a way to delineate the boundaries between East and West. This pathbreaking study, the first comparative cultural history of the two Germanies, sheds new light on the legacy of Weimar and National Socialism, on gender and race relations in Europe, and on Americanization and the Cold War.

From the Inside Flap "This significant contribution to German history pioneers a conceptually sophisticated approach to German-German relations. Poiger has much to say about the construction of both gender norms and masculine and feminine identities, and she has valuable insights into the role that notions of race played in defining and reformulating those identities and prescriptive behaviors in the German context. The book will become a 'must read' for German historians." —Heide Fehrenbach, author of *Cinema in Democratizing Germany* "Poiger breaks new ground in this history of the postwar Germanies. The book will serve as a model for all future studies of comparative German-German history." —Robert G. Moeller, author of *Protecting Motherhood* "Jazz, Rock, and Rebels exemplifies the exciting work currently emerging out of transnational analyses. [A] well-written and well-argued study." —Priscilla Wald, author of *Constituting Americans*