



Helden wie wir

Thomas Brussig

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Die deutsche Geschichte muss umgeschrieben werden: Klaus Uhltscht war es, der die Berliner Mauer zum Einsturz gebracht hat! Dabei ist Klaus eigentlich ein Versager par excellence. Als Sohn eines Stasi-Spitzels und einer Hygieneinspektorin wächst er zwischen Jogginghosen und Dr. Schnabels Aufklärungsbuch auf, bleibt im Sportunterricht auf ewig ein Flachschwimmer. Auch sein großer Traum, als Topagent bei der Stasi zu arbeiten, erfüllt sich leider nicht. Dafür aber wird er, der inzwischen eine Perversionskartei erfunden hat, zum persönlichen Blutspender Erich Honeckers. Jetzt, da auch noch die Mauer durch - man höre und staune - seinen Penis fiel, packt Klaus aus und erzählt von seinem ruhmreichen Leben. Keiner hat bislang frecher und unverkrampfter den kleinbürgerlichen Mief des Ostens gelüftet als Brussig. Ein Lesevergnügen allererster Ordnung!

Helden wie wir Details

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From Reader Review Helden wie wir for online ebook

Ray says

The premise of this book is a good idea - lusty teenager causes fall of berlin wall and it has some funny moments, but it did not really grab my attention. I felt that the plot was rushed and the ending was poor.

worth a read but nothing special

Lupo says

Una spanna sotto "Am kürzeren Ende der Sonnenallee". Il libro è sconclusionato quanto il suo protagonista. E' un insieme di mille dettagli, molti dei quali probabilmente apprezzabili solo da chi è vissuto nella DDR. A partire dal linguaggio che molti dei personaggi usano.

La seconda stellina è meritata solo per la presenza di alcune scene decisamente esilaranti. Troppo poco per farne un buon libro.

Britt says

I had to read this book for one of my German literature classes and I expected to hate it because the blurb sounded so ridiculous. But, reading the first few chapters, I was very pleasantly surprised! The protagonist and his problematic upbringing are very interesting and cleverly written. But the story becomes more and more absurd as it goes on, and not exactly in an enjoyable way... I was pretty annoyed by the last third of the book. Overall it's still an interesting read, though, especially considering how much attention it got when it was first released.

Vincent says

It didn't leave me anything, pretty pointless book. I was expecting a full DDR description but i just plain didn't like the book. And the fact that he becomes a porn star at the end is complete bul*sh**.

Keval says

This book is about a young man whose penis brought down the Berlin Wall. With a description like this, you'd likely want to know how this happens. There were times I could relate to the protagonist and was amused by him and his idiosyncratic family. But I got bored several times because bits of this novel were either a tad too drawn out or tried too hard to be funny. It could also simply be a case of my expectations when I picked up this book.

Brigid says

Once in the 90s, I found myself in the audience of a German performance art piece. The climax of the piece was one of the artists pulling a skinned-but-still-muscled cow head out of a barrel of water and using the skinned cow head to fling water at the audience.

If you're into that kind of thing, this book is five stars.

If not, you can at least give Thomas Brussig credit as the go-to contemporary German author when it comes to novels about die Wende (The "Gentle Revolution" of 1989); you can even give him credit for his funny, lively voice and his interesting insight. But about 25% of this book is about the main character's genitalia and other things I can't manage to type much less revisit.

I should note, however, that the 75% remaining was good enough to tackle Brussig's "Wie Es Leuchtet" with high hopes and a good bilingual dictionary.

Karschtl says

"Die deutsche Geschichte muss umgeschrieben werden: Klaus Uhltscht war es, der die Berliner Mauer zum Einsturz gebracht hat! Dabei ist Klaus eigentlich ein Versager par excellence. Als Sohn eines Stasi-Spitzels und einer Hygieneinspektorin wächst er zwischen Jogginghosen und Dr. Schnabels Aufklärungsbuch auf, bleibt im Sportunterricht auf ewig ein Flachschwimmer. Auch sein großer Traum, als Topagent bei der Stasi zu arbeiten, erfüllt sich leider nicht. Dafür aber wird er, der inzwischen eine Perversionskartei erfunden hat, zum persönlichen Blutspender Erich Honeckers. Jetzt, da auch noch die Mauer durch - man höre und staune - seinen Penis fiel, packt Klaus aus und erzählt von seinem ruhmreichen Leben. Keiner hat bislang frecher und unverkrampfter den kleinbürgerlichen Mief des Ostens gelüftet als Brussig. Ein Lesevergnügen allererster Ordnung!"

Und meine kleine Heimatstadt kommt drin vor!!!!!! Whoopee!!

Ansonsten war mir zuviel von Schwanz und Persionen die Rede, auch wenn der Schreibstil sehr unterhaltsam war.

Kathleen Tahk says

The wittiest, dirtiest, and most original retelling of the collapse of East Germany. The only thing slowing my progress through it is the cover of my edition, a close-up photograph of a sculpture's genitalia, which has made me a little too embarrassed to break it out on the subway. For the most part I prefer strangers on the train not think I might be reading German pornography in public, but perhaps I am just being paranoid.

Stephen Durrant says

Klaus Uhlzscht (the latter surname "carries the seeds of disaster. You need only look at that poor, lonely vowel laboring under the weight of all those consonants" p34) is responsible for the fall of the Berlin Wall. It all has to do with his genitalia, as does so much else in this humorous coming-of-age novel. Klaus has great difficulty liberating himself from his overbearing mother and mysterious but powerful father. In fact, he is powerless to resist either of his parents, and it is through his father's influence that Klaus lands a job with the Stasi, although he is not entirely clear at first that that is indeed where he actually works. The genius of Brussig's novel is to create such a broad comedy about life in Eastern Germany and service in the Stasi, not normally treated as comedic at all. But the funniest passages deal with teenage masturbation and guilt and in at least one instance plainly derives from "Portnoy" (the gentle reader can probably guess quite easily which Rothian scene I have in mind!) "Heroes Like Us" has sections no reader will soon forget, and the guilt-ridden, self-questioning narrator, while at times a bit tiresome, can be exceedingly funny. Brussig, I think, is also making a political argument about Eastern Germany where people "believe in a strength they never possessed, just as they went in fear of a power that never existed" (p260), but the political message this book is intended to carry is well obscured, at least for this reader, by sex, guilt, and impossible parents--in other words, the normal key constituents of the teenage years!

Holly says

"People can go on telling themselves things like 'Think before you speak!' or 'You don't believe that yourself' or 'Forget it!' But they can also say, 'Oh, what lovely flowers!' or 'Are you a phone freak or something?' or 'Suit yourself,' or 'This record makes me feel so happy!' Wonderful! Words are delightful little gifts we exchange like the Easter eggs we paint and hide for others to find and enjoy. I'd forgotten that, but you reminded me of it."

Clever and witty, *Heroes Like Us* is a simply hilarious story. A narrator claiming to have brought down the Berlin Wall with his penis? How could that not pique your interest?

I chose the beginning quote of this review because it very much reminds me of how I felt reading the book. Finding Brussig's eggs of satirical humor of the events surrounding November 9th, 1989, especially the more subtle jabs, reminded me of how refreshing excellent writing can be. Klaus Uhlzscht, our shameless and hypersexual main character, over-analyzes everything, a trait which lands him in a multitude of hilariously awkward social situations. He narrates the events as any revered (perhaps a bit egomaniacal) historical figure would, from his gifted childhood which led to his "joining" of the Stasi, the secret police organization of East Germany. Klaus is truly one of the most memorable characters I have ever encountered in fiction.

Klaus's narration weaves satire with serious social commentary on the state of Germany prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall. This was a fantastic summer read to be enjoyed by all who have a liking for satire or quirky humor in general.

Irene says

Interesting, but I liked the other book I read from him more. But the way he writes about East-Berlin and the Stasi is definitely new and fresh to me.

Ian Fiddes says

8/10. An odd book this one. Very funny in places but probably needed a bit more editing as it did go on too long in my opinion.

Tina says

Basically just a 300-page rant about his small penis. Some scenes were funny tho.

Kriegslok says

Read it, disappointing.

Simona Moschini says

Sulfurea e fantastica pseudo-autobiografia di uno sgangherato Paperino della DDR, oscillante fra ossessioni sessuali alla Alexander Portnoy e nostalgie crepuscolari alla Zeno Cosini.

Eppure, fra le pieghe psichiche autodenigratorie di questo fantasioso uomo del sottosuolo, si capisce molto di quel teatrino dell'assurdo che fu - neppure troppi anni fa - vivere in una città con un muro in mezzo.

Consigliatissima questa intervista della Stampa a Brussig, che pare sia molto amato anche dalla Merkel (sul cui sense of humour si aprirebbbero scenari insospettati): <http://www.lastampa.it/2011/07/10/cul...> .
