

# *Good Bye, Lenin!* (2003)

## Abstract

*Good Bye, Lenin!* by Wolfgang Becker (2003) was one of the most successful films about the GDR past or about “Ostalgie,” nostalgia for the East [*Ost*]. It looked at the opposition between East and West, with an eye toward wealth, lifestyle, gender roles, and family structure, among other topics. The film’s protagonist is Alexander Kerner (played by Daniel Brühl, below), an East German youth, who, together with his sister Ariane, tries to preserve the GDR for their mother, a dedicated socialist who fell into a coma right before the fall of the Berlin Wall and first woke up months later. In one scene, Alex goes to Wannsee, in West Berlin, to search for his father, who had fled the GDR years ago, to tell him that his first wife was on her deathbed. He bursts into a party and tells his two young half-siblings, who are watching the GDR children’s television show *The Little Sandman* [*Sandmännchen*], that he “comes from another country,” where “astronauts” are called “cosmonauts.” (A link to this scene is included below under Further Reading.)

The film still featured below shows Alexander holding a portrait of Erich Honecker, the last SED party secretary and GDR head of state. Alexander stands in front of a bulletin board that is filled with propaganda posters and imagery celebrating the 40th anniversary of the founding of the GDR, which took place on October 7, 1989, just a month before the Wall fell.

## Source



Source: Film still of Daniel Brühl as Alexander Kerner, *Good Bye, Lenin!* (2003)

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