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## Goodies and Baddies: The Presentation of German Police and Criminals in East and West Television Drama

By Regina E. Rauxloh\*

### A. Introduction

Criminal Justice is never only about identifying and sentencing unwanted and thus, outlawed behaviour. As one of the closest contacts between state and citizens, Criminal Justice implies also a system of values and more or less subtle messages which the state wants to transmit to the people. In all modern legal systems, Criminal Law is about society as a whole being deterred from crime, educated and moreover ensured of the state's power, its efficiency and above all its benevolence. In other words, Criminal Justice does not only deal with offenders and victims but additionally with its own presentation in public and the citizens' perception of it.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the mass media developed its full capacity for influencing the public, and is today one of the main means to inform as well as to manipulate people. Thus, in order to obtain a picture of a Criminal Justice system and its public image, state produced media can offer an important insight.<sup>1</sup> In this paper I would like to present the East German police programme '*Polizeiruf 110*' that has been broadcast from 1971 until now, showing how the state used the entertainment media to promote particular perspectives about crime, police, society and the state.

For this work, I analysed 20 out of the 153 episodes<sup>2</sup> that were broadcast in the former GDR, i.e. 25 hours and 49 minutes. These episodes were chosen randomly, as I had no free access to the archives. There are also some analyses of this TV

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<sup>1</sup> Steve Greenfield & Guy Osborn, *Film, Law and the Delivery of Justice: The case of Judge Dredd and the disappearing courtroom*, 6 JOURNAL OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND POPULAR CULTURE, 35 (1999).

<sup>2</sup> Some of these 153 episodes are lost today but I could not find out which ones and how many in total.