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You grew up in the GDR and attended school there. After graduating, you continued your education at the medical vocational school in Greifswald and worked as an orthoptist. Today, you are a professor of educational sciences. From a modern perspective, you've had quite an unusual career path. Could you briefly explain in what way the GDR influenced your education?

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"Above all, the GDR impeded my continuing education. Because I was not accepted to the extended secondary school (now: *Gymnasium*), I made up my *Abitur* through evening classes that I took alongside working as an orthoptist. Even after completing my *Abitur*, I was not permitted to study at a university. In the GDR, it was not possible to directly apply for a spot at a university since I had already been trained as an orthoptist. In order to do this, I needed a delegation from my employer. But I did not receive this delegation since I refused to join the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and continued to be active in the church-related independent peace movement in the GDR. For people whose political views opposed the GDR, attending university was nearly impossible. It was thus only after the fall of the Berlin Wall that I began my studies in West Berlin."

