

Mary Steward

Ms. Barlow

Monsters and Misfits

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Development of *Stranger Things*

When the exciting, new, pop teen TV show, *Stranger Things*, came out on Netflix, I started and finished the 1st season within one weekend. I was hooked on all of the different aspects of the show, ranging from my fear of the alternate dimension, The Upside Down, to the amazing friendship between a group of school boys and a girl with supernatural powers. The topics portrayed in the series including the cultural fears of the unknown, corruption in a higher level of government, and the idea of safety when with loved you're with your loved ones are the themes I wish to explore and add to my adaptation. My research focused on how the show itself created fear through its own idea of the unknown and the topic of an alternate universe with how that might bring a frightening darkness into my adaptation. Also I researched the cultural issue of a corrupt hierarchy and the role that plays in society. This research will inform my own recreation of a modern day *Stranger Things*, happening with a new cast and new ideas. In my adaptation I will be creating a bigger emphasize on the politics and fears of the show. In doing so I will make the characters older, more mature, and more involved in contemporary topics. This will allow my adaptation to bring attention to the real life issues I'm passionate about and create a new emotion towards the fears of the uncertainty, while also being able to make an interesting story based off one of my favorite, binge worthy TV shows.

Annotated Bibliography

“Alternate Universe”

This article focuses on the idea of another dimension and how tv shows often add and least a glimpse of an alternate universe in some way to keep the interest. In part of it's analysis, this article defines the modern idea of an alternate universe, “A story in which the characters we know are seen in a reality that's somehow different, often disturbingly so. If they can access *multiple* alternative universes at the same time, that's The Multiverse”(tv Tropes). The information given creates a experimental thought and will inform my project as I tie together the fear of the unknown with my new knowledge of The Multiverse and how they correspond together creating the exact level of fear I wish to achieve.

“Georgia Locations for Netflix’s ‘Stranger Things’”

This article from the *Deep South Magazine* looks back at the first season to touch on the setting and shine a spotlight on the main points of the story. In examining the role of the woods and the impact it has, the journalists Sarah Czoka and Sarah Richter notes that, “A lot happens out in the woods on this show. The town and police start by searching for Will in the woods, Nancy sees the strange creature she thinks took Barb out in the woods behind Steve’s house and finds the portal while searching the woods with Jonathan. The kids also spend a lot of time riding their bikes through the woods looking for their friend”. Czoka and Richter’s analysis of the woods and the darkness it brings to the show portrays the idea of how frightening something can be when it’s used in a certain way. This will inform my project as I invert the little things, like the

horrifying unknown of the woods, and it will help me tie in the cultural fear of darkness I desire to grasp.

“CORRUPTION IN THE USA: THE DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES”

The topic of corruption in a higher power is brought to light in this article. Part of its analysis brings the fear of tyranny to a reality stating that, “The US faces a wide range of domestic challenges related to the abuse of entrusted power for private gain” and then “rather than feeling better about progress in the fight against corruption over the past year, a clear majority of people in America now say that things have become worse” which creates an uncanny and sickening feeling in the readers(Coralie Pring). This feeling of uncertainty and worry is the exact emotion I want to fabricate and construct in my own adaptation when I introduce the idea of a corrupt government, that is in *Stranger Things*.

“How ‘Stranger Things’ Accidentally Became a Great Teen TV Show”

This article from *Rolling Stone magazine* examines the different parts of the series and how they turned the show into of the best teen TV dramas yet. In the evaluation, the writer David Fear comments on the most intriguing parts of the show,

Maybe you tuned in for the nostalgia factor, basking in the way a half-decade’s worth of pop-cultural raw material and forty-something geek touchstones were deftly turned into an I-Heart-the-’80s mixtape. Maybe you dug the way the first season mined an old-fashioned thrills-spills-chills feeling that left the multiplex eons ago. Maybe you were just curious to see what happens in this oddball story of psychic kids, government

spooks, bad scientists, mirror-image dimensions, monsters, and a magnificently stressed-out Winona Ryder... you simply had to watch [*Stranger Things*] for the fear of being stranded in an Upside Down...

With this, David Fear explains how the little, specific pieces of the show makes the audience sit at the edge of their seat and quickly reach for the remote to start the next episode. This will inform my adaptation as I will use the same technique and include the spine-twitching details in order to make my audience want to continue watching.

“Rose-coloured rear-view: stranger things and the lure of a false past”*

In this article, *Stranger Things* is put under a microscope as the chosen decade of the show gets analyzed. The article discusses how using 1980 as the set time period was a success, “Part of its success is that, in fusing the past and the present, it manages to re-create 1980s television as we remember it, rather than as it actually was. In other words, it avoids the sense of disappointment that often accompanies revisiting old favourites... This is the 1980s as we want it to have been, right now”(Myke Bartlett). The intricate use of the era in *Stranger Things* is one of the main reasons why it became such a big hit. In my adaptation I also want my desired time period to be used for the better and create a deeper thought. This will inform my recreation as I change the time period to the present in order to correctly touch on more modern society problems.

“Political graft and education corruption in Ukraine: compliance, collusion, and control”*

In this last article, the cultural issue of corruption in a higher level of society is brought up once again. The writer, Ararat L. Osipian, describes corruption and how it effects society as a whole,

“This assessment puts the public's interests above the state's interests. However, in transition economies, the state's interests traditionally dominate the public's interests. It is therefore in the public's interest to minimize corruption, whereas the state's interest may lie in optimizing corruption, balancing the public interest and the regime's sustainability”. Ararat L. Osipian continues talking about how realistic this issue is and how it can go unnoticed, right under our noses. In *Stranger Things*, the theme of an untrustworthy government is only a side topic. However, in my adaptation I want to use this knowledge and make it a bigger focal point in order to shine light on the contemporary issue and idea of an unlawful government.

Work Cited

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