

tv, where he calls the Soviet Union the evil empire and because it is archive footage, it adds more authenticity and reflects real anxieties during the threat of a nuclear war. The representations in D83 can influence people's beliefs and attitudes through different social groups, such as social class, as well as gender. For example, D83 presents a clear difference in power between the rich and the poor. The evidently more wealthy Lenora and Walter are able to force Martin to do the mission through bribing him with a transplant for his mother. Deutschland 83 also shows the difference in class and status through the setting. When put into comparison, Edel's social event is paces above that of Martin's mother's birthday. Edel's house is much bigger and cleaner. The people there are wearing suits and dressed very smartly, whereas over in the East they are all wearing casual clothes. So this may affect audiences' values and behaviours in suggesting that class is an important aspect to consider in life. On the other hand, Gerbner's theory subverts/is limited to D83. This is because the Cold War happened in the past and viewers' attitudes/behaviour is less likely to change as they may not feel scared/intimidated because they know what happens during this period and may feel it is unlikely to happen again. Therefore, Gerbner's theory can be outdated. Also his theory may not be applicable to Stranger Things because of its fantasy/sci-fi genre. This is because audiences may know that the drama is based on a fictionalised, dystopian world where the demogorgon or upside down may not exist in real life. Therefore, Gerbner's views underestimate the diverse nature of media representations and does not consider the ways in which audience members (especially in online age) can actively engage in media and reject the values and beliefs it communicates.

Jenkins

Jenkins theory suggests that an emergence of 'participatory culture' in the media has occurred. For instance, audience interpret themselves and share views and opinions online, either through blogging and social media platforms. This can lead to 'spreadable media' also where content is adapted by audience members for their own purpose and shared with others. This is also an example of media convergence where these interpretations are consumed on different platforms.

Shirky

Technological developments have changed the relationship between media producers and audiences. In the past, media producers created content for audiences, now content can be created by audiences. This can create cognitive surplus, where potentially large numbers of people give their time and expertise to create something (e.g. Wikipedia).

J+S

The theory can be applicable to Stranger Things. Stranger Things fan culture demonstrates the different ways in which audiences engage actively with media products. The 'Justice for Barb' meme is an example of media audiences who 'speak back' to the media. The Stranger Things fan wiki is also another example of cognitive surplus – people using their free time creatively to produce content. Social media also allows actors from Stranger Things to interact with audiences. An example of this is the actor who plays Will Byers who used Instagram to respond to online fan discussions about the character's sexuality. However, the theory can be limited to Stranger Things. This is because the theory assumes that people have enough self-awareness of their media use, interests and motives to be able to provide researchers with an accurate picture of that use. It emphasises the power of the audience and so does not take into account the importance of media producers, or existing genres and narratives, in constructing representations of identity. For example, the overlap of genres, such as, comedy, romance and thriller in ST keeps the audiences interested during the series. Therefore, the hybrid genre appeals to a broad audience. Especially because there are elements of teen drama, it can be age dependant and accordingly appeal to 10-50 year olds which the theory does not look at and is thus limited to ST.

The idea

After discussing the movie as a jumping-off point, the brothers began talking about what Matt describes as "bizarre experiments we had read about taking place in the Cold War," specifically Project MKUltra, a mind-control program the CIA led from the Fifties through the Seventies.

That led them to placing the show in the 1983, a year before the Cold-War-hysteria epic *Red Dawn* came out, and it brought into focus the fantasy aspect of the story they'd wanted to include.

"We wanted the supernatural element to be grounded in science in some way," Matt says. "As ridiculous as it is, the monster [in the alternate dimension] doesn't come from a spiritual domain and it's not connected to any religion. It made it scarier. I don't believe in ghosts, but I believe in aliens and alternate dimensions."

Production and Distribution

- Produced by 21 Laps (TV and Film credits include *Night at the Museum*)
- Original Netflix series, so paid for by them and distributed by them exclusively
- Ranked as the most popular digital series in the US only after the week after its release on Netflix (3 x more viewings than *OITNB*)

Synergy

- Eleven's favourite food are Eggo waffles.
- Kellogg's Eggo was not product placement in the first series.
- However, Eggo sales have increase dramatically, and as such Kellogg's have jumped on the 80s band wagon, by including one of their 80s adverts in the [teaser trailer](#) for Season 2. This was launched at the NFL Superbowl.



Preview from Notesale.co.uk
Page 24 of 37

Eggo was quick to capitalise on the internet's love of "Stranger Things" so made sure they included Eleven in its National Waffle Day celebration.



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Celebrate #NationalWaffleDay with a box or two or eleven of Eggo waffles.

8:58 PM - 24 Aug 2016

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language of his unwitting hosts, but **he's also younger, less cynical and more vulnerable** to the allure of capitalism than Philip and Elizabeth in *The Americans*. The moment when Martin is first exposed to a West German supermarket, shelves brimming with exotic brand names, is **both ecstatic and terrifying**. Eurythmics' *Sweet Dreams*, inevitably, plays over the Tannoy.

Yet even while potential apocalypse loomed, **1983 also marked a turning point**; the darkest hour before the dawn of reunification. "That year, West Germany lent East Germany a billion deutschmarks **because they were running out of money and many West Germans had family there**," says Jörg. "It was also the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's birthday, so that was a pan-German celebration. But it was the beginning of the peace movement, too. **People were coming closer together even as America and Russia were becoming more aggressive**. It was exhausting but people were sick of it."

The Wingers hope to follow their characters into 1986 and 1989, *This Is England* style. "There were over 2,000 embedded agents in the West when the Wall came down," says Anna. "**They faded into their false identities**. What does it mean to have devoted your life to something, only to find you're suddenly representing a country that doesn't exist?"

Social context in D83:

- Represents the social contradictions in divided 1980s Germany; East is portrayed as a rigidly controlled state that promotes women's equality. (Lenora). Whereas the West is less controlled and the military is represented as patriarchal. The episode reflects the social contradictions in divided 1980s Germany: East Germany is represented as a rigidly controlled state. The stasi subtle control of the state, spying on its own citizens. Paranoia and intimidated by the west and its support from the US. In contrast West Germany is less controlled, the CND rally means protesting against the government was permitted in a 'free' democracy.
- The west only fear the support of the Soviet 'bloc' and the possible threat of nuclear warfare. Generally accepted defectors from the east but this wasn't reciprocated.
- West on the East- east seen as poor, controlled and firmly ideological. They were oppressive and driving of their citizens.
- East on the West- west seen as rich, free but self-doubting. They were money hungry, selfish capitalists
- Women who were married could not work without permission making them subordinate
- Other cultures in the east germany was very limited and discriminated if there were any, were not treated equally like women.
- Both Germany's are presented as white and representation of the racial integration of the American military seems to add to their 'otherness'.
- Reflects the social anxieties of Germany facing the Cold War and their divided country.
- The health system in east- not as well resourced.
- Medicines etc. Socialist
- Education in the east was a high priority!
- What evidence is there from the opening episode?
- Ingrid's kidney op/transplant.
- Martin reciting the party line.
- **Decay of building + economic decline. This is shown by Reagan increased defense spending, which brought about an arms race with the Soviets. Each superpower was trying to build up a bigger and better military. The problem for the Soviets, however, is that their economy could not handle this surge in defense spending. The Soviet economy was damaged as a result.**

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Political context:

- Reflects German political confidence in being the lead of European politics
- The episode also asks important questions about what 'freedom' might mean, and how it might mean different things to different people (e.g. from East and West Germany)
- Ronald Reagan, originally an American actor and politician, became the 40th President of the United States, serving from 1981 to 1989.
- He was a Republican – generally considered to be on the right side of the political spectrum.
- He and Margaret Thatcher (Conservative British Prime Minister from 1979 to 1990) are widely believed to have introduced neoliberalism: an ideology advocating deregulating the economy and 'shrinking the state' Their policies include privatisation and reduced taxation. Pro free market capitalism.
- Reagan is a symbol of western oppression/superpower- shown in the episode where there is archive footage of his speech in the opening episode which Lenora watches. This is an authentic representation to show the real anxieties that were faced during the Cold War. He called the Soviets the "evil empire" which suggests totalitarian darkness. - Oversimplifies the good vs evil

Historical context:

- The Cold War lasted between the end of World War II in 1945 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The Cold War was not an actual war fought with men, guns, tanks, and fighter planes, but rather a period of competition between the world's two superpowers.
- Episode represents the division of Germany. Cold War- the East represented as poor, controlled and firmly ideological. The West rich free, but self-censoring.
- The first episode reflects the historical trauma of German division and reunification (when East and West Germany were reunited)
- The complex representations in the episode reflect the attitudes faced by Germany in coming to terms with its divided past and the political and military tensions of the 1980s. For example, like the collapse of communism in 1989 meant that East German experience was swept under the carpet.
- There are clear tensions in the episode for some characters between loyalty to the state and to individuals (e.g. to family)
- Many of these tensions and questions are explored through the protagonist Martin, from whose perspective the story is told, and who is presented sympathetically.
- One of its main tasks was spying on the population, mainly through a vast network of citizens turned informants.
- They would apprehend and imprison anyone who was seen as being 'an enemy of the state'.

Economic context

- **Co-production**
- AMC Networks SundanceTV and RTL Television by the production company.- Wouldn't have been made without US money!
- **(£35m) Germany's biggest budget TV series.**
- However it was labelled a 'flop' in Germany with audiences dropping by half. Why?

- Written by the Duffer Brothers who were approached by a TV producer who was impressed by their script which hadn't previously made it
- They pitched the script to a range of networks with no success
- Netflix bought the first season as it was announced for a 2016 release

Production:

- Made in Jackson, Georgia USA
- Written by the Duffer Brothers
- Produced by 21 Laps Entertainment

Distribution:

- Netflix original content
- Can be downloaded or streamed via the Netflix service
- Synergy with other brands such as Kelloggs

Consumption:

- Netflix uses a range of convergence forms
 - Synergised with Kelloggs
 - Cast appearances on a variety of talk and panel shows
 - Use of Eggo Waffles has boosted the food sales dramatically
 - Introduction of "Beyond Stranger Things"
- Preview from Notesale.co.uk
Page 36 of 37*
- Produced by 21 laps
 - Original Netflix series, so paid by them and distributed by them exclusively. (for budget) Because Netflix is paid via a subscription rather than per program there are no figures available yet. However, it is clear that it has been hugely successful.
 - Ranked by the most popular digital series in the US after its release on Netflix (3 X more viewings than OITNB).
 - Netflix was originally founded in 1997 but could not match the competition by companies such as Blockbuster who, at the time, were used by everyone.
 - In 2007, 10 years after its founding, Netflix announces that it will move towards online streaming.
 - Netflix launches in the UK in 2012.
 - In 2013 Netflix starts streaming House of Cards. The series starring Kevin Spacey is Netflix's first original content and does incredibly well within the Netflix community.
 - Netflix began as a mail order DVD service - They changed the service by delivering entertainment right to front doors.
 - 10 years later, Netflix expand into Internet video on demand (VOD)
 - Instead of airing episodes weekly, viewers can consume one season in one go (BINGE WATCHING)