

## **Part One:**

The two primary sources that I would like to explore are the anime “Monster” and the film “Us” by Jordan Peele.

**“Us”:** I used the UCI Library search alongside JSTOR. I was able to find the film itself available on Library Search. For this film, I wanted to look into how it exhibits the concept of the American Dream, thus one of my search terms was “American Dream” which had a lot of content related to it. Furthermore, I used terms such as “dynamic family” which seemed too broad on Library Search and JSTOR so I added the phrase “american” after it to try and get specific content. I found a film review of “Us”, which I found intriguing because it’s from the film and media discipline, thus would provide an alternative perspective on the film.

**“Monster”:** For “Monster”, I really wanted to get into the way that the two sides of the Cold War were portrayed, more particularly how the “East” is portrayed so negatively and the role it plays in conveying the drastic effects of the Soviet Union controlled East Berlin. I started off by searching with locational terms, such as “East Berlin”. I’m leaning towards the political aspects of this show, so I used terms such as “Communism”, “Soviet Union” (in Germany), and “Nazis in WW2” to look into the political climate in Germany during this era. There is a lot of content regarding the Cold War and its impact on Germany. A lot of the sources I found took a political and historical approach, which makes sense given the keywords I was searching with, so I definitely feel more supported with choosing either way to approach my analysis of the source. I wish I could find a review and analysis of the show, however I couldn’t find any.

**Part Two:** Though both sources have rich conversation, it seems like the film “Us” has a richer scholarly conversation surrounding it because not only is the film itself available, but describing the myth of the American Dream is something that has been discussed in depth. Furthermore, aspects of the American Dream such as the dynamic family, gender roles, and capitalism are also subtopics that already have a lot of research associated with them. I’m just worried about choosing “Us” because it feels like there is **so much** content that could be gone over, so I’m feeling like I will have to end up focusing on only one or two aspects of the American Dream. For “Monster,” I feel like the information is a lot more focused on a single idea and can be analyzed from a political lens. For “Us,” I feel like there’s many directions I can go but I’m not quite sure where to go yet.

## Secondary Material for Primary Source 1:

1) Author: Mayfield, D. L

Title: The myth of the American dream : reflections on affluence, autonomy, safety, and power

Type: Book

Summary: This source is promising because it approaches the American dream from the perspective of someone who realized that it is not beneficial to Americans, particularly associated with their religion, Christianity. This book looks at the economic and emotional impact of the American dream, relating it to religious stories at times. The religious inclusion holds significance because in the film, a lot of religious imagery associated with Christianity is seen throughout the film, creating a connection between the two sources.

2) Author: Sheila M. Littlejohn-Blake, Carol Anderson Darling

Title: [Understanding the Strengths of African American Families](#)

Journal Title: Journal of Black Studies

Summary: This source provides information on how African American families overcome setbacks attributed to lack of income stability, something that was caused by systematic racism. Some of these African American families are outside of what is typically perceived as the ideal dynamic family, such as children out of wedlock, however they are still functional families. This source peaked my interest because it challenges the dynamic family form in the American dream, where a family can still be “successful” even when the family doesn’t fit the conventional norms. Furthermore, there is another dynamic white family in the film that is meant to be contrasted with the main family. This makes the source even more helpful because it compares Black and white families just as the film tries to.

3) Author: David C. Wall

Title: [Review: Film Review: Us](#)

Journal Title: Black Camera

Summary: This article seems very helpful because it not only comes from the film and media discipline, but also gets into other works of Peele’s. Something I definitely want to do within my research is to get into how Peele’s general style and chosen genre for his

films tie into the bigger picture ideas he's trying to convey. Furthermore, this review gets into the significance of race and family dynamics play in America and how it's portrayed within the two families of the film.

## **Secondary Material for Primary Source 2:**

1) Author: Germany (West). Bundesministerium für Gesamtdeutsche Fragen

Title: [Revolt in June: documents and reports on the people's uprising in East Berlin and in the Soviet Zone of Germany](#)

Type: Book

Summary: This source falls under the subject of anti-communist movements in East Germany, alongside the rebellions that took place following the Soviet control in the area. I found this source interesting as it would explain some of the behaviors exhibited throughout the show that portrayed East Berlin in a negative light, alongside characters who wanted to escape. Furthermore, it would further explain why the creator may have chosen to portray East Berlin as "the villain" or associate it in this way.

2) Author: Giuliana Chamedes

Title: [The Vatican, Nazi-Fascism, and the Making of Transnational Anti-communism in the 1930s](#)

Journal Title: Journal of Contemporary History

Summary: This source seems promising because the abstract mentions how the Anti-Communist movements in Germany still continued after the end of the Cold War, conveying the political effect of the Cold War on Germany. I believe I can relate these anti-communist movements to the way communism's association with East Germany (because of the Soviet Union) made the creator of "Monster" to negatively portray East Germany in the show. Not only that, but associating the "monster" of the show with the East and showing the way people of the East live, which is poorly in the show.

3) Author: Kasper Braskén

Title: [11 Communist Antifascism and Transnational Fascism: Comparisons, Transfers, Entanglements](#)

Type: Book chapter

Summary: This source seemed really interesting because similarly to the first source I found, it gets into the resistance movements of the people of Germany and furthermore, compares it to other examples of Facism. This peaked my interest because throughout the show, we see the lives of different people in the East and the conditions they're suffering under, which is by an "other" but we're not quite sure who that is. It can be inferred that it is from facism rule within the East.