

Hunger games

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



In the novel, *The Hunger Games*, author Suzanne Collins using the conventions of dystopian literature, creates a world in which inhuman societal control and the image of a perfect society is maintained through corporate bureaucratic control. In this novel, teenage girl Katniss Everdeen lives in District Twelve, a poor coal mining region where survival is an everyday struggle. The Capitol keeps the districts from revolting by forcing them to send a boy and a girl to participate in the annual hunger games where they fight to death on live TV.

Collins adheres to dystopian literature in this novel and through Katniss Everdeen, seeks to fulfill her purpose of making the reader aware of contemporary issues like poverty, the possibility that the government could use hunger as a weapon and war. Katniss Everdeen is an independent, brave young lady who becomes a role model to the reader since the beginning of the novel by her dedication to keep her family alive. After her father's death, she is left with the responsibility of bringing food to the house.

“ Even though trespassing in the woods is illegal and poaching carries the severest of penalties...” (5) Katniss takes the risk and makes sure her family has food to eat. She shows her courageous side the day of the reaping by taking her sisters place and volunteering for the hunger games. “ But a shift has occurred since I stepped up to take Prim's place, and now it seems I have become someone precious. ”(24) Not only has Katniss made her entire district look up to her but also us, the reader. Collins has the readers holding out the district's symbol in admiration of Katniss.

Collins had the option of creating a male character like in other dystopian novels but she decides not to follow that convention. Instead she creates this

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unique, female character that appeals to the reader making him keep up with her actions and hope for her survival. Collins portrays common themes of dystopian literature like survival versus quality of life and having no free will in *The Hunger Games*. She creates District 12 a place of hunger where obtaining food is an everyday mission. Katniss along with her friend Gale take the risk to hunt in a forbidden property in order to provide food for their families.

The consequence of them getting caught would be their death. In the novel Katniss says, " With both of us hunting daily, there are still nights when game has to be swapped for lard or shoelaces or wool, still nights when we go to bed with our stomachs growling. "(9) Collins shows the reader the situation district 12 is in and how difficult it is to survive. Life is miserable in District 12 and how Collins describes it, many would prefer death than this poor quality of life. In this same scene Gale tells Katniss, " Leave the district. Run off. Live in the woods. You and I, we could make it."(9)

With their hunting skills it would be easy for them to survive on their own but Katniss thinks about the responsibility they have to feed their families and that is her main priority. We see how the characters have the chance to get away from the corruptness of the capitol but its power over them does not let them proceed with their plan. If they were to leave, their families would pay the consequences of them leaving. Collins conveys the theme of no free will in the hunger games when each tribute is injected a tracking device. " Now the Gamemakers will always be able to trace my whereabouts in the arena."(144)

Once that happens, each tribute loses their free will. They are now being controlled by the Gamemakers and have no other choice but to kill in order to survive. “ But mostly, they manipulate us into confronting one another face-to-face. ”(177) when tributes avoid killing each other, the Gamemakers create obstacles for them that eventually lead one to the other and that way they have to fight. One example of when this occurs is when Katniss is woken up by flames. “ The flames that bear down on me have an unnatural height, a uniformity that marks them as human-made, Gamemaker made.”(173)

These flames created by Gamemakers make her run in the direction of the other tributes so they can soon have an encounter. She had no other option but to move to where the Gamemakers were leading her. Katniss has no free will while she is in the arena. In order to survive in the hunger games, she and the boy tribute from her district, Peeta, pretend that they are madly in love with each other. In front of the entire capitol, Peeta confesses his love for Katniss. This was a strategy that he and their trainer Haymitch came up with in order to win those sponsors and be able to stay alive in the arena.

“ Youre all theyre talking about. The star-crossed lovers from district twelve! ”(135) that idea was created without Katniss’ consent and she was furious. Throughout the entire games she now has to show affection to a boy she does not love. Not only has the games controlled her movements but also her feelings and that is how not having free will is portrayed in The Hunger Games. Collins follows the conventions that make up a dystopian novel in The Hunger Games. She creates District Twelve a place of poverty where the

characters are being controlled and the theme of survival vs. the quality of life is questioned.

Through Katniss we see how difficult it is to survive and the sacrifices that are made. We are also shown how her opinion is not important. She uses Katniss as her main tool in order to give the reader the freedom to explore issues in contemporary times. In The Hunger Games, we see how the games control the districts not to rebel. It shows the people that the Capitol has all the power. Collins makes us think about our own world and compare our own issues from those of the novel. What would our life be like if our government used hunger to control us?