

Bread and circuses: panem vs. united states

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Over two hundred years ago, a country was formed. The people's blood, sweat, and tears flowed together to create a government and society of what would become one of the most powerful nations in the world; a country that was formed with thirteen colonies.

Only five years ago, a new country was created from one of ruins. The people worked together to create a new nation in a post-apocalyptic world; a country that was formed with thirteen districts... The United States was established with thirteen colonies. Panem, a country formed in a post-apoplectic world and resides in North America, was established with thirteen districts. People from all of the thirteen colonies came together to break away from England, and the king, George III; people from all of the thirteen districts came together to break away from the Capitol, and the President, Coronalus Snow. There attempts led to rebellions.

The people from the thirteen colonies fought against the British, and won. The people from the thirteen districts fought against the Capitol, and lost, and with that loss District thirteen was annihilated. There are many similarities between our nation and Panem's, but there also many differences. In our society, everyone is concerned with their looks. We start crash diets that make us sick; only so we can look just like the sticks they call "models" on TV.

We spend tons of money each year on the latest fashions so we can look "cool". In the Capitol, they are more concerned about their looks than the tributes they send in an arena to kill each other. Effie Trinket isn't even the most bizarre person you would meet in the Capitol. With their fancy hair-dos,

intricate nails, and tie-dyed skin the people of the Capitol care for nothing more than their looks. The Capitol is entertained by the idea of watching children kill other children.

All of Panem tunes in to watch the Games live 24/7. In the United States we are not blood thirsty like the Capitol, but don't you sometimes find yourself turning on the news just to see what violence has occurred since your last glimpse? Even the teenagers are more prone to buy games that are rated M; the bloodier the games, the better right? Even reading stories about nations that send children to fight like gladiators is enticing to us, and yet we are abhorred by the fact that this Capitol is forcing children to kill each other. Even with these facts, we are still very different from the Capitol. Panem comes from the Latin phrase "panem et circenses" which means "bread and circuses". The term means that a person or group is using entertainment to distract public attention from more important matters. President Snow uses this method to distract the people of Panem from seeing what he is really doing.

By distracting them with the Games, the people of the Capitol don't realize Snow is keeping the districts in check with them, and will threaten whoever stands in the way. Our country has a President, who does make some major decisions, but most of the decision making comes from the House of Representatives and the Senate. Whenever a new bill is to be voted on, the people are informed of it. Our country is not of bread and circuses; we are not hidden from the truth. One thing that stands out to most is that, unlike the US, President Snow is not really a president.

He uses the term president to show he is with the people. Snow is a dictator; what he doesn't like, he makes sure something is done about it. When Katniss started a rebellion, he threatened to hurt everyone she loved. When Seneca Crane let two tributes survive, Snow made sure Crane did not walk away alive. The United States was created for the people; we have our freedom of speech, and much more. Just because we speak out against a certain cause, we are not threatened or killed or thrown into jail.

Unlike Snow, we need not be afraid of the government or the President. The nation of Panem once started like our own, but turned into something that cared about nothing but violence. A place where the government was a dictatorship, everyone had to obey their every whim. If we stay the path we are on, we may turn into something very similar to that of Panem. With work, and luck, we will help our nation stay what it is.

As Effie Trinket would say, " May the Odds be ever in your favor."