

The hunger games: comparing and contrasting

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What would it be like if your daily needs turned into a battle to the death? If violence and obsession were much more common than usual and the government was corrupt, what would you do? Could you do anything? Imagine that was your life every single day.

Compare it to your own life, and prepare to see a remarkable change, and many other shocking similarities. Throughout *The Hunger Games*, there are countless similarities and differences when you compare Panem and the real world, such as violence, physical appearance and food. Violence, obsession with physical appearance and the need for food are general topics that relate to both Panem and our world. Basically, the entire idea of *The Hunger Games* was to depict children killing children, turning it into the most overpowering point by itself. However, many other acts of violence were used against others in Panem that were not as prominent.

Panem's media is very open against violence, not to mention making the entire country watch their coverage of the game. The people become desensitized to violence over the years, making this horrible law less disgusting and heartbreaking than some would think before. Violence becomes a part of their lives, and unless a loved one is in the arena, the shock wears away. *The Hunger Games* is a punishment against the people for rebelling because of the absolutely unfair way they have been treated, but other minor punishments are a part of Panem as well. Stealing, disobedience or even speaking out can result in horrible punishment or a death penalty. In all, Panem's level of violence is very high, and certainly a nightmare for any who truly believe in their own freedom.

Our current nation would have a long way to go to get into Panem's state. In comparison, our world does have slightly similar places like Panem, but our own government in the United States, media and punishments are far from all the insanity caused in the Hunger Games. Have you ever watched a fashion show? What if the clothes the models were wearing were your normal apparel? Would you wear layers of multicolored makeup just to look beautiful every day? The residents of Panem's capital do. During the Hunger Games, one of the most important ways to win was surprisingly to look good. Appealing to the viewers and sponsors with looks and personality could result in a victory by itself. After all, it is on television, and though the people of Panem are forced to watch it anyway, they still attempt to make it seem like an entertaining show to watch.

When Katniss first arrived to the capital, the fashion there seemed quite vibrant and seemed incredibly overdone. The most staggering extreme that seemed to stand out is that the people of Panem took to was dying their skin a certain color. Interestingly, even Katniss who had seen the Hunger Games many times on television seemed to be appalled by the preposterous looks of the Capital's people, with few exceptions. Even during the actual games, Katniss was forced to wear a costume. Is it possible that our world could head into the Capital's state? Perhaps it's already on its way.

Our world is filled with not only the immense amount of makeup and clothing, but tanning and plastic surgery as well, which could very well compare to Panem's dying of the skin. The definition of food is quite the same, yet entirely different for the people of Panem. If you lived in the Capital, food is simply a necessary luxury and three meals a day came to

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you at a little cost. If you lived in the poorer districts, food is never guaranteed and those three easy meals a day could turn into none at all. Working, hunting, growing, or even stealing are all difficult, yet normal ways to obtain food for you and your family living in the district.

In the districts, it's not about what you like or don't like to eat. Rather, it's more what you can or cannot eat. The advantage Katniss had over the people in the higher districts during the Hunger Games was that she knew how to hunt animals or in some cases humans, specifically with a bow. The majority of people in Panem are very much food deprived, and labor just to get something to eat. The majority of people in our nation usually work to buy their own food, which is probably much better than the food served in the districts of Panem. There are a lot people in our world that do hunt or grow their own food for themselves or to sell, just like in Panem.

However, we try to get food to every part of our country, not hoarding it all into one place, unlike Panem, so everybody gets their fair share. In conclusion, the similarities and differences between Panem and the current United States are quite plentiful. The connections that Suzanne Collins wrote in her book show interesting results when compared to the real world. Throughout The Hunger Games, there are countless similarities and differences when you compare Panem and the real world, such as violence, physical appearance and food.