

Few novels have ever captured my interest and imagination as Suzanne Collin's The Hunger Games has. The most compelling component in the story was the idea of the tale. Of course, there exist dozens of novels about totalitarian governments and gladiator fights, but Ms. Collins managed to create a wholly new perspective on the idea. The book was captivating because it offered a tantalizing mixture of horror, pain, love, and hope. Even as I closed the back cover, my mind was still swirling with the complex reality that The Hunger Games had fabricated. The quality of the character compositions was masterful in a way few authors can achieve. The author of The Hunger Games understood the twining of the good and bad that is found in any soul. Katniss Everdeen is suspicious and violent, true, but she is also capable of great compassion. These different personality traits, which are constantly battling within any mortal, are what made the protagonist in The Hunger Games cut a stunningly human figure that was undoubtedly real. Katniss took root in my mind, until I felt I knew the tribute as well as any of my friends.

As much as we may attempt to deny it, society today has many characteristics in common with Suzanne Collin's demonized and dreaded Capitol. To allow an atrocity such as the Hunger Games to take place, the citizens of the fictional Panem had to be both violent and consciously detached from the participants. The people of today have both these characteristics. One cannot deny that violence is a fixed part of our lives, and that many people are addicted to it. Video games with blood and death are some of the bestsellers in gaming stores, and movies are now considered "slow" if at least one person is not murdered in the film. Another inescapable fact of society that we share with the Capitol is our love of reality television. While I myself do not condone reality TV, I realize that it is a fact of life. Every day, I hear the chatter of voices discussing the newest episode of American Idol, pouring over every detail of their favorite

candidate's performance. And while on the surface reality TV seems like harmless fun, a closer look reveals it is not. After all, reality television is created with the purpose of ruining the dreams of the contestants for the entertainment of the watchers. How can anyone condone this horrendous practice of filming fellow human beings as they are put through intense mental and physical challenges? To be able to watch these images without the flicker of human compassion, we must forget that these contestants we see are human also. They have thoughts and emotions and a life, but we forget this as the person becomes just another source of entertainment. Ultimately, we forget that these events the people suffer through are *real*. In fact, our refusal to admit the humanity of the participants of reality TV is what makes us shockingly similar to the Capitol residents.

Of course, current society as a whole would never allow the formation of the Hunger Games. However, should our human compassion be drowned out by our infatuation of violence and love of reality programming, then we will draw perilously close to a fate as dire as the one described in The Hunger Games.

I believe that I should be chosen to attend the Hunger Games movie premier. It is because I am such a devoted fan of the series that I should be the one selected. The Hunger Games is one of my favorite texts, and I have read it more times than I can recall. To say that I am infatuated with the book would be an understatement. I keep a "Hunger Games Journal" in which I write a minimum of one page of either text reflections or fan-fictions every evening before I sleep, and make time to read Hunger Games fan-fictions on fanfiction.net almost daily. Portraits of my favorite characters and Arena sketches fill my sketchbook. To go to the world premiere of this film that brought my favorite book to life would be an unforgettable experience, one that I will never again encounter.

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