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“The Hunger Games” makes commentary on reality media

Posted by [admin](#) on Friday, January 20, 2012 · [Leave a Comment](#)

Kelly Malambri/Columnist



Photo Courtesy of Lionsgate Films

Beware: pick up The Hunger Games, and you will not want to put it down. This may be the most addicting series I have picked up since I found Harry Potter in the fifth grade.

The 12 districts of Panem, the continent previously known as North America, are controlled by a totalitarian government called the Capitol. Each year, the Capitol mandates that one boy and one girl between the ages of 12 and 18 from each district fight to the death in what they call the Hunger Games.

The Games, put in place because District 13 once revolted against the Capitol, are meant to serve as a



reminder of what happens to those who do not obey the government’s demands. District 13 was destroyed by the Capitol and anyone who disobeys the law faces the same fate. Meanwhile, the government also mandates that every citizen of Panem watch the children fight to their death. Katniss Everdeen lives in the last and most barren district of Panem, District 12, and decides to volunteer for the Games when her sister, Prim, is selected for the games at the age of 12.

Through its addictive storyline, *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins made it difficult for me to put it down. From the second Katniss risks her life to save her young sister to the moment of climax in the novel, the story never gets dull.

The book offers a little bit of everything — from romance in Katniss’ love triangle to action in the brutal deaths of the Hunger Game contestants. The novel makes a strong statement about not only the effects of war, but comments on the way that “reality” shows and violence on TV have affected and will continue to affect the viewers in our own country.

For example, in the memorable moment of the novel when Katniss volunteers herself to enter the Games for her sister, the entire crowd, including every member of District 12, makes a gesture toward her with three fingers, moving them silently from their lips into the air in her direction.

When Collins informs us that “it means thanks, it means admiration, it means good-bye to someone you love,” she suggests that people are stronger than the negative material and violent aspects in the imaginary country of Panem. She compares the effects of the Games to those that hold us down in our America, as good outweighs evil in the novel from the beginning to the end.

In the same moment and in the relationship created among Katniss and her fellow tributes, or game players, in the novel, Collins proves that the humanity of mankind is enough to inspire people to overcome those who try to control us and tell us what is right and wrong, like the Capitol does to the citizens of Panem.

In this sense, the book promotes virtuosity and the importance of critical thinking. Because of the complex and advanced humanistic ideas that it promotes, *The Hunger Games* is more than just a teen novel — it is more than appropriate for college and adult audiences.

Despite all of its strong points, the book is not flawless. At some points, the novel proves to be predictable. This predictability occurred a little too often for my taste. However, certain parts of the novel — the end in particular — did not cease to surprise me.

The first book of the trilogy has been given rave reviews from many sources, including Stephen King, whose review of the novel can be read on Entertainment Weekly’s website. The book is a relatively short, easy read, making it a breeze to enjoy as the workload of a new semester begins to unfold.

The Hunger Games is to be released in the form of a movie on March 26. I am anxiously waiting for its release and the chance to read the rest of the trilogy, which includes the New York Times bestseller *Catching Fire*, and the third installment called *Mockingjay*.



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