Colleen Brown

The Hunger Games

Critical

The Hunger Games tells the story of a future where the resources are controlled by a few people and the plebeians struggle by while others live comfortably. Katniss Everdeen is chosen to participate in The Hunger Games which is another way to control the people of North America. While our society in the year 2012 is not the controlling world that Katniss lives in, there are certain elements that we should be aware of in our own society. The aspects of reality television, the “class” system, and control of the government are all things that we as American citizens can relate to.

In our society, appearance is held in very high regard. Celebrities are idealized and adored by people everywhere. Their actions are analyzed and gossiped about. They essentially live under a microscope. This happens to Katniss after she goes to the Capitol. Besides being watched in the games themselves, she has to endure the scrutiny of the world before she even gets there. They give her a makeover so she is pretty enough and they do elaborate stunts, like setting her costume on fire, to attract viewers to her side. This is similar to reality television stars today who do whatever they must to stay in the limelight for a little bit longer. Young adults will surely relate to this because they experience this every day of their lives. It makes you wonder how many of our “stars” want the limelight and how many would prefer to live a normal life like Katniss wanted.

As much as America claims to not have a “class” system it is obvious that there is some system that separates people. There are people who live in extreme poverty while others never have to worry about where they will find their next meal. I’m not saying that we hold people down like the citizens of the districts but we do not do all we could to help those who are less fortunate than us. I think that this point would also hit home with students, whether they have experienced poverty themselves or if they have never thought about those less fortunate. There is a certain lack of humanity in the people in the Hunger Games who live in the Capitol that we must strive to overcome in our own lives by giving everyone the same rights that we expect ourselves to have.

The point of the book is to show how things need to be changed. As readers we cannot simply right the world of the book off as fiction. It is purposely set in America in the future because it is supposed to make us think about our own America and what we need to do to prevent our world becoming like the Katniss’ world.