
Social Inequality In The Hunger Games

Imagine having to break the law in order to hunt for meagre food just to feed your struggling family. Meanwhile, your rich neighbours in the capitol are dining on glorious delicacies. "The Hunger Games" by Suzanne Collins, is a fictional book that explains the awful state of the current society, where this is a reality for the citizens of Panem. In this speech I will explain to you about the class inequality within Panem, followed by evidence of it in the book, then lastly, I will show how it is represented in our current society.

There is obvious class inequality displayed between people living in the Capitol and the ones living in the 12 districts of Panem. The class inequality represents itself in several ways, but most commonly, in the way that people in the districts do not have sufficient food, and there are observed cases of starvation. Katniss, the main character in the book, has to engage in illegal hunting in order to be able to provide for her family. On top of that, not many families even know how to hunt. On the other hand, in the Capitol, there is an extensive amount of food. A second display of class inequality within the book is how people in the Capitol have more advanced technology. An example of this is how Katniss takes a shower for the first time in her life during her visit, as well as her first time on a train on her way to the capitol. Another form of social inequality within the book is, the people in the districts are restricted from travelling outside their homes after a certain time and they are not allowed out of their districts, which eliminates their ability to interact with each other and share resources. As well as, the education offered in Panem is biased to limit any potential rebellion in the people against the Capitol.

Katniss was amazed by the food at the capitol during her stay, trying to imagine what it would be like to have just one of the delicacies found within the capitol. "Chickens are too expensive, but I could make do with a wild turkey. I'd need to shoot a second turkey to trade for an orange. Goats milk would have to substitute for cream. We can grow peas in the garden. I'd have to get wild onions from the wood. I don't recognize the grain; our own tessera rations cook down to an unattractive brown mush. Fancy rolls would mean another trade with the baker, perhaps for two or three squirrels. As for the pudding I can't even guess what's in it." This is showing that people in the capitol do not experience any shortage of food, while people from districts are starving. Another example of this in the books is Katniss and Peter attend a luxurious party in the capitol. While they are, they are surrounded by spectacular opulence and people consuming stupendous amounts of food and then drinking a clear purple liquid to make themselves throw up to continue eating, so they are not limited by their full stomachs. "Here, this is for when you're full, it makes you sick, so you can go on eating. How else would you taste everything?" Flavius and Octavia say, as capitol citizens. Katniss and Peeta are pained by this because they are aware that many people are starving in the districts, while in the capitol citizens are redefining gluttony.

Social inequality in "The Hunger Games" represents our current society, unfortunately quite well. In modern society this can be reflected by how our society is structured into different classes. Society contains upper-class, middle class, and lower class or working class. These class distinctions are often made on the bases of people's jobs or income. As you go up the social ladder you often have better access to quality education, healthcare, and other services such as housing or good nutrition. The resources in our current society are unevenly distributed.

Much like how the food is unevenly distributed in Panem. An example in real life of this is the wealth distribution in Australia. The top 10% of Australians hold 48.3% of net wealth, while the poorest 50% of Australians have their total net wealth fall to 3.7%. As we can tell that is a great deal of inequality. The capitol citizens are the highest on the social ladder, wear as the districts are the lower-class. In real life, the rich hoard their money to preserve themselves and their descendants, much like the capital citizens, the middle classes aspire to be rich, either hoarding or spending money that they don't have in order to maintain the appearance of wealth, like districts 1,2 and 4 (the wealthier districts with career tributes), and the poor go from pay check to pay check under constant stress of not having enough money, which is what the other districts, such as district 12 are like. With these high rates of social inequality both in real life and in Panem, people may feel increasingly socially excluded, they may live in segregated neighbourhoods and they may also feel politically disempowered. This can lead to civil unrest and could tempt people into criminal activities. This is shown in "The Hunger Games", where the people of Panem are restricted to only be in their district, and they are unable to protest against the Capitol. Katniss begins rebelling against the capitol, and in the later books causes civil unrest.

The class inequality favors the people in the Capitol.

Overall there are many reflections of social inequality within the book that beg the question, are the odds ever in our favour?