

BOOK REVIEW

The Hunger Games, by Suzanne Collins

Review by Jan Ross, Staff Writer

If you have not heard the name "Katniss Everdeen" yet, you soon will. Katniss is the main character in this hugely popular young adult novel, soon to become the subject of a major motion picture.

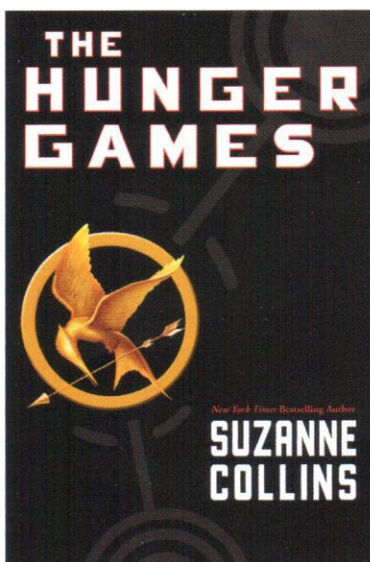
Katniss and the circumstances in the three books in the series ("Catching Fire" and "Mockingjay" are the next two) have captured the attention of just about everyone who reads the book.

Set in a post apocalyptic world in what we assume is the United States, each of 12 districts is required to send two children each year who will serve as gladiators in a grisly, winner-take-all televised game watched by all the citizens and hugely enjoyed by the citizens of the Capital where there is plenty of food and a much better lifestyle than the ones experienced in the other districts.

These "hunger games" are deadly serious – the children are required to fight to the death with a variety of deadly weapons until one winner survives, thus winning food and rewards for their district for the next year.

Katniss is not chosen in the lottery for the games but, to her horror, her beloved younger sister is the chosen candidate.

Without hesitation, Katniss steps forward to take her place. Unknown to those in charge of the games, Katniss is uniquely qualified to survive as the final candidate. Strong, smart, and a hunter since she was



very young, 16-year old Katniss is an expert with a bow. She has been poaching food from outside the legal, fenced perimeter of her District 12 for her widowed mother and little sister for years. But it is her teammate, Peeta, who shows her and all the world the importance of humanity and friendship in the midst of their horrifying ordeal.

Groomed and dressed to look their best in their televised appearances, the two become allies in the fight to the death with the other candidates. As the games progress, we begin to understand that they are partly entertainment but mostly a way to keep the other districts in subjugation to the Capital, to which they provide all their much-needed supplies.

Katniss and Peeta face mostly bigger, stronger candidates, some of whom have trained all their lives for this event and will not hesitate to kill them. The games include harsh terrain and artificial weather conditions which are different each year. But it is evident from the beginning

REVIEW Continued on Page 30

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