DYSTOPIA: REFLECTION OF REAL WORLD IN THE HUNGER GAMES

1. **Afia Kanwal,** Assistant Professor, Department of English, Air University Islamabad
2. **Maria Farooq Maan,** Assistant Professor, Department of English, Air University Islamabad
3. **Naveed-Ur-Rehman Khattak,** Assistant Professor, Department of English, Air University Islamabad
4. **Khoula Hussaini,** MPhil Scholar, Department of English, Air Unviersity Islamabad
5. **Riaz Ahmad Khan** LLM Scholar Law College University of Peshawar

ABSTRACT- This study analyzes the ways in which social and political critique has been offered by the depiction of government institutions in the imagined societies of the dystopian novels. For this purpose, the novels *The Hunger Games* (2008), *Catching Fire* (2009), and *Mockingjay* (2010) written by Suzanne Collins are selected. These novels fall under the category of young adult dystopian literature. The study is qualitative and exploratory in nature. It analyzes the role played by government in the dystopian society presented in these novels. The government exerts its power over the inhabitants by controlling their mind and body. Oppression from the government and continuous misuse of power results in an uprising from the citizens against the government. People become aware of the totalitarian regime and resist against the injustices of the ruling class. Therefore, the concept of Ideological State Apparatuses by Lois Althusser (1971) and the idea of Discipline and Punishment along with the concept of resistance discussed by Michele Foucault (1979) provided the necessary framework for the study. The study falls under the New Historicist approach as it compared the imagined society of Panem with the real world American government by focusing on its power structure, justice system and surveillance. This helps readers to become aware of their social and political surroundings and it produces a possibility of social and political change by bringing such ideas of change into adolescent consciousness.

Keywords: Dystopia, Dystopia Literature, Totalitarian Regime, and Historicist Approach.

1. Introduction

Literature has long been a reflection of human desire to live in a society that is morally, socially and politically ideal as people dream about living a happy and prosperous life. Since More's *Utopia* (1551), the concept of 'Utopia', or an ideal world has become a common knowledge (Finnson, 2016). With the publication of this book, it was assumed by the readers that this work is about a perfect society; however, 'utopia' can be taken as either 'eu-topia' which refers to 'a good place or 'ou-topia' which means 'no place' (Desmet, 2010). This proposes that More saw ideal society as unattainable and non-existent (Desmet, 2010). Conversely, the aim of having a perfect society seemed unachievable and people started imagining worst possible societies. This lead to the emergence of 'Dystopia' as a counter genre and it further developed as a critical response and anti-thesis to utopia (Gerhard, 2012).

The roots of the word Dystopia can be traced to ancient Greece's dys- and topia, which mean 'bad' and 'place' respectively (Adams, 2011). 'Bad Place' is a rather gentle way to describe the denotative meaning of Dystopia. However, the connotative meaning is much darker and includes many facets (Adams, 2011). Dystopia presents an oppressive society that forbids expression of free thought and individuality (Cart, 2010). Control is forced upon the inhabitants, thereby restricting various aspects of people's lives (Cart, 2010). Dystopian literature explores themes related to the totalitarian control that government exercises on its citizens, and the way social change can be brought about by breaking through the net of ideological indoctrination (Ryan, 2014). Dystopian novels depict a world where emotions and morals are carefully controlled in order to produce a perfect society (Correa, 2015). Other morals such as respect, generosity, family relations and education are either entirely removed or an artificial version of them is introduced (Correa, 2015). The dystopian genre provokes readers to find connectivity with the problems discussed in the novels and inciting them to figure out the solution to those problems as well (Reeve, 2011). The purpose of this research, thus, is to describe the ways in which modern day political and social issues are depicted in the young adult dystopian novels, as such problems prevail in our society without people being consciously aware of their existence.

The researches done on the literature of this genre have been mostly limited to the themes and trends prevalent in the novels but there is also a need to compare these attributes with our real world societies. Therefore, this research mainly focuses on the type of government presented in young adult dystopian novels. Furthermore, a comparison is drawn between the dystopian society depicted in the novels and the justice system, surveillance and power structure of real world society of America. Another prevalent theme noticed in dystopian novels is the resistance from the people against the oppressiveness of the government. The ways of expressing this resistance discussed in the novels are also analyzed along with their comparison with the resistance seen in the real world.

The research falls under the New Historicist approach as it suggests that literary text is never isolated from its social, cultural and political surroundings, and is dependent on its historical and cultural circumstances (Barry, 2002). The control of the totalitarian government of dystopian society is analyzed in the light of the concept of discipline and punishment proposed by Foucault in his book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1979). Along with this concept; the idea proposed by Althusser (1971) about shaping people's ideology to make them believe in the righteousness of their actions is also used as a theoretical framework to analyze the control of government. Resistance against the totalitarian regime is studied under the ideas put forward by Foucault (1978) in his book *The History of Sexuality* in which it is suggested that resistance exist where ever the power is exercised. So it is important to analyze the control asserted by the government and also the means by which people gain awareness about the power abuse that results in initiating resistance against the state. These concepts are used to critically analyze *The Hunger Games* trilogy written by Collins. The novels of this trilogy are titled as: *The Hunger Games* (2008), *Catching Fire* (2009), and *Mockingjay* (2010). Many dystopian novels address the social and political issues of modern world. This study specifically focuses on the justice system, surveillance and power structure of the American society; comparison is drawn with the dystopian societies portrayed in the selected award-winning quality young adult dystopian novels of *The Hunger Games* series.

1.1. Research Objectives
In this era, absolute control is exercised by enslaving the minds of the common masses. The minds of people are programmed in a way that they do not recognize the corruptions in the governing systems. Thus they are numb to all the defects and flaws of their society. Here, the dystopian novels serve as a wakeup call to the consciousness of the readers. Therefore, there is a need to critically analyze the fictional societies and draw parallels with the real world in order to bring the implicit strategies of the government to the forefront. By keeping the post-modern socio-political global scenario in the mind, the current research has the objectives to explore the role of the government in dystopian societies, analyze the relevance of real world American government with the dystopian government portrayed in *The Hunger Games* trilogy, and examine the resistance present in the novels by relate it with the opposition shown by people towards the American government.

1.3. Significance of the Study
The study is significant as the analysis of *The Hunger Games* in relation to American society helps readers and future researchers to decode the texts written in Pakistani context. It helps readers to analyze that how they can observe or delineate the traces of the real government in the government presented in Urdu Literature or in Pakistani Literature written in English. As the novels selected for this research reflect and inquire social understandings, they relate to our ability to work for the betterment of our society. This study also helps in producing a possibility of social and political change by bringing such ideas of change into adolescent consciousness.

2. Literature Review
2.1. Dystopia
Most of the stories and images portraying the scenarios of near-future can be categorized in two groups. The first one is an optimistic and technophilic group where the growth and development are persistent and humans overcome worldly limitations (Slaughter, 1998). The second group depicts a more bleak and dark future. There is violence, despair and the dreams of development and economic progress are declining gradually (Slaughter, 1998). But in many accounts, there is an emergence from an optimistic dream-like state to the era of confusion and nightmarish society (Claeys, 2010). It can be seen that ideal societies are now commonly presented negatively in dystopia rather than portrayed as a progressive utopian societies. 'Dystopia' is often interchangeably used with 'negative-utopia' or 'anti-utopia'. It depicts a society where negative social and political developments have upper hand (Claeys, 2010).

Many researchers have attempted to define the exact nature of Dystopia. Moylan (2000) explains dystopian fiction as "conservative texts" which show "dissatisfaction with the present system" (Moylan, 2000, p.142). Hintz and Osrty (2013) define dystopian societies where "the ideals for improvement have gone tragically amok" (Hintz & Osrty, 2013, p.3). Booker analyzed the spirit of Dystopia and wrote two books namely *The Dystopian Impulse in Modern Literature: Fiction as Social Criticism* (1994) and *Dystopian Literature: A Theory and Research Guide* (1994). He defined a dystopian work as constituting a critique of the existing social and political institutions by critically examining the utopian foundation upon which those systems were based (Booker, 1994). He throws a great deal of light on the dystopian impulse that shows his deep understanding of the terminology itself and its salient features.

2.2. Young Adult Dystopian Literature

Numerous studies have also been done to investigate what dystopian novels are about and what are the underlying trends and themes that are prevalent in all the dystopian works. For instance, Newgard (2011) did a comparative study of 12 popular dystopian novels written between the years 2001 to 2010 to find a common ground of all these works. She analyzed the themes present in each novel and determined that four themes were common to dystopian works. Every novel exhibited a resilience of the protagonist, the need for survival, Governmental Control and Social Conformity. Although these themes encompassed different characters and different situations but they were overarching the popular dystopian fiction novels (Newgard, 2011). Dystopian fiction is explained as depiction of imagined situations "to motivate a generation on the cusp of adulthood" (Cart, 2010, p.103). As there has been a change in the popularity of the dystopian fiction with the passage of time, the types and topics related to Dystopias have also changed but there are some trends and elements that have stayed the same. Ryan (2014) acknowledged those elements and trends that have emerged from this genre. According to him, in every successful and influential young adult novel, readers can encounter one or more of these elements: a vivid and well-described setting, individuals or groups in charge with absolute power, a strong protagonist who is shaped by his or her situation, and a dismal conclusion that leaves the reader feeling slightly uneasy (Ryan, 2014).

Ryan's (2014) work is very significant as it delineated the markers that distinguish a dystopian work from any other form of literature. The four trends that he recognized were revealed after a close analysis of all the young adult dystopian literature courses that have been taught at various universities of America. Brunner and Bradbury, the famous dystopian writers, said that dystopian authors do not try to predict the future as a dystopia but to avoid it. The near future prediction about the dystopian fiction is that it has already arrived in the form of embryo, and its growth to maturity is inevitable (Claeys, 2010). Sar and Murni (2012) stated that most of the writings are influenced by the social, political and economic issues prevalent in the society of the author. These facets generally become the themes of the novel. For instance, in George Orwell's *1984* (1949), the main theme is based on the political scenario of his time. A direct parallel can be drawn between the political issues of that time and the book; one of them highlights the totalitarian regime (Dieterle, 2003). Stuver (1998) declared *1984* (1949) as a protest against the current leadership and politics. Moylan and Baccolini (2003) stated that the authors of dystopian fiction provide a social, political and economic critique by internalizing present day problems. They get the inspiration from their personal experiences or from the reality around them (Sar & Murni, 2012). Suzanne Collins is one of those writers who were afraid of violence and war as it increases the possibility of dark and miserable future (Sar & Murni, 2012). She said that she drew the inspiration for writing *The Hunger Games* (2008) while switching between the channels covering war and a reality TV program (Wilson, 2010). As many of the dystopian novels; *The Hunger Games* (2008) gives an overview of dark and terrible future that can be a result of human actions. It presents a different vision of future to make people aware of the possibility of that future happening someday.

In contemporary young dystopian fiction, the relation between government and its oppressed citizens is more prevalent. Many researchers stated that governments portrayed in young adult fiction abuse the people they govern. These governments try to control the citizens by considering them as something other than human beings and by repressing their attempts to proclaim their humanity (Geistfled, 2013). Governments assume themselves to be responsible for working for wellbeing of people and they hold the position of effecting the lives of its citizens in different ways. They mostly attempt to continue working for their goals in ways which effects the lives of people negatively. This also increases the possibility of causing social and environmental risks (Bullen & Parsons, 2007). Bullen & Parsons (2007) labelled such communities as risk societies and discussed that inhabitants of such societies face more risks as compared to the citizens living in other societies due to the decisions made by their governments. The citizens living in these risk societies also face the risks in their private lives. Such social risks not only effect the relationship between individuals and their government but also between the individuals living in the same societies (Geistfled, 2013). Mostly the distrust among societies is created by government itself so it can benefit from them. As

this distrust can cause different social groups of the same society to attack one another (Ventura, 2011). Government also uses this distrust among people as a disciplinary tool in order to control them. Citizens are also under constant surveillance form not only the government but from their fellow citizens as well (Latham, 2004). Latham (2004) in his research stated that the citizens of the society portrayed in *The Giver* (1993) constantly fear about the rules of the government and also report any kind of violation to the officials even if the authority is not watching. The government also controls the language of the civilians, as the protagonist's family in *The Giver* (1993) is completely unable to discuss the concept of love as a result of government's assertion on the use of precise language (Latham, 2004). This resulted in rendering the word 'love' meaningless.

Many societies depicted in young adult novels are based on the citizens who act in the prescribed ways of governments in order to reduce the risk of punishments. It is important for them to make decisions and choices according to the rules of the government. Bullen & Parsons (2007) stated that the character of *Feed* (2002), Violet; dies as she refused to follow the rules set by the government for the society she lived in. Guerra (2009) in her work stated that citizens of *The House of the Scorpion* (2002) are shown to be completely incapable of doing anything physically or mentally expect for the things which are told by their leaders. She explained a class of the citizens by saying that "in a perverse fantasy of ultimate slavery, the eejits have been completely colonized: mind, body and soul are under the sway of the masters they exist to serve" (Guerra, 2009, p. 285). If governments cannot control the minds of the citizens completely, they try to control them by using subtle methods like public education (Geistfled, 2013). They try to persuade the individuals that the goals set by the government are normal and natural. Most of the time they convince people to support these goals even though they contradict with their own goals. Aim of the governments if to dictate a worldview to its citizens which clearly challenges and opposes any other worldview which an individual can develop. People are made to think exactly like government rather than as individual human being (Geistfled, 2013).

Researches done on power structures portrayed in young adult fiction revealed that the habitants of societies comply with the power structures they are living in and they do not struggle to change them. McAlear (2010) in his study of *Green-Sky* (1975-1978) trilogy stated that government asserts its ideology onto citizens by means of social rituals and education. Citizens are made to accept the ideology of government as they encounter it in social settings. McAlear (2010) points out that education system in *Green-Sky* (1975-1978) trilogy is designed to make its citizens conform to the political agenda of the government, as the students are continually demoted to the lower level of education if they fail to completely agree to the state controlled program. This very method of inculcating government's ideology into people's mind as natural and normal can be seen in *The Hunger Games* (2008-2010) trilogy. Timm (2012) suggests that the oppressive regime of government is shown as natural and normal and this thing is implanted into the consciousness of people by culturally and historically isolating the districts from each other. Things that children are taught in school are so much instilled in their minds that they normalize them into their other courses of lives as well (Timm, 2012). Citizens of young adult fiction are unable to base their actions on their own decisions as the government forces them to act according to the ways prescribed by the government. This inability of taking personal decisions based on their own personal choices makes citizens "an extension of the State" (Ventura, 2011, p. 100). People are forced to define themselves according to the interest of the government rather than their own. This type of government's control over people turn them into entities whose "very personhood has been stripped from them" (Guerra, 2009, p. 285). Giardina (2006) highlights this dependence of citizens on their government by stating that the protagonist of the *Feed* (2002) is completely lost without the directions by the government and he "feels like he is living in a small, quiet room" (Giardina, 2006, p. 86). By erasing the individuality of the citizens, government create classes that it can easily exploit. All these exponents of a dystopia can be classified into three major themes which are recurrent in contemporary dystopian fiction.

2.3. Resistance in Dystopian Novels

The research is based on highlighting totalitarian control of the government which is asserted by controlling the minds and bodies of the people depicted in dystopian novels. This subjugation is implanted within the minds of the people by introducing such laws through which government can manipulate citizens for its own benefits. The rules and regulations are presented in a way that people are convinced that these principles are for their own betterment, security and benefits. It is also observed in dystopian literature that there is an element of vulnerability present among the ruling class through which the protagonist is able to observe a flaw. This helps the character to use that element for enacting a plan of action in order to expose the weakness, giving other citizens awareness and encouragement to think differently. It is not important for the protagonist to have outstanding talent or powers, but the ideas and opinions suggested by the character motivates others to jump on the bandwagon (Spisak, 2014).

This awareness and consciousness results in disobedience and resistance against the totalitarian regime in order to bring change in the policies or laws (Nepstad, 2011). These changes are not brought upon conveniently rather they require protestors to "suffer inconvenience, expense, threats, real danger, and eventually punishment" (Nepstad, 2011, p. 565) in the name of justice and opposition. The willingness to be punished shows the commitment of the protesters to a higher cause considering the fact that there is a higher truth beyond the implemented man-made laws and changes can be made in the current authority (Fentin, 2012). Researches show that government tries its best to prohibit any mean through which individual can find its inner self, recognize their individuality and get awareness against its policies. Gerhard (2012) in her research analyzed that writing is banned in most of the dystopian novels. As individuality is suppressed in dystopian world and actions along with thoughts are continuously surveilled, therefore writing possessed a serious threat to the state. Writing renders self-reflection, personal expression and authority; it can help people to think critically which in result can assist them in unveiling the government strategies (Gerhard, 2012). People who took this risk and engaged in any form of writing broke the law and jeopardized their position as a citizen. The act of writing violates the rules of the government and thus, considered as an act of resistance.

Fentin (2012) discussed that mostly resistance is initiated by a young protagonist. As the adolescent period of development interacts with the traditional conventions, the unreasonable pressure exerted on the young protagonist to agree with the customary rules can results in illuminating the contradiction in their self-consciousness and the ideology prescribed by the government (Fentin, 2012). The reviewed literature shows that dystopian genre is newly emerging field which is getting more attention from young adults. The critical analysis of the literature produced in this genre helps in identifying the strategies used by government in order to control and manipulate people that also results in slow or sudden resistance from the individuals. Novels selected for this research, i.e. *The Hunger Games* (2008), *Catching Fire* (2009) and *Mockingjay* (2010), belongs to the genre of young adult dystopian fiction that are also based on the issues of totalitarian regime, mind and body control through power abuse and resistance against the ruling class. The research also highlights that the issues prevailing in the novels are closely related to the real society, hence it draws a comparison between dystopian societies of *The Hunger Games* trilogy with the real world American society.

3. Research Methodology

The purpose of the study is to explain the ways in which modern day political and social issues are depicted in the young adult dystopian novels. This research is a qualitative study as it is exploratory in nature. It aims to analyze things in their natural settings so that meanings and interpretations are done through elaborations (Dezin & Lincoln, 2011). The analysis is done in the light of theories put forward by Foucault (1979) and Althusser (1971) as they provided the necessary framework required to delineate the political and social influences in the dystopian novels. By drawing upon Foucault's discipline and punishment techniques and Althusser's idea of ideological indoctrination, the research examines the events and dialogues that highlighted totalitarian control. Furthermore, the research examines the ways by which the characters resist against the totalitarian regime. The acts of the resistance are discussed under Foucault's idea of resistance. The research falls under New Historicism as it draws a comparison of fiction with non-fiction and delineates the socio-political scenarios in which the novels are written.

These novels are especially based on dystopian issues. Previously it was believed that dystopian novels are centered on drawbacks of technological development or they showed the possibility of the disaster that future world may face due to the rapid advancement in science and technology (Gerhard, 2012). However, the selected novels deal with other dystopian themes as well, such as politics and social stratification, primarily focusing on social change that allows readers to think about their relationship with the society and activism. This shows that these novels incorporate all the elements which are of the researcher's interest. Moreover, these novels contributed in making the genre of Dystopia a leading literary form of the twenty first century.

3.1. Theoretical Framework

The research examines the control that state asserts over its citizens and also the ways discovered by people in order to liberate from that control. The existence of totalitarian government is mostly trailed by the resistance from some of the individuals. The extremity of power assertion and complete subjugation results in individual's reaction against techniques used by governments and power effects over peoples' souls and bodies. The resistance occurs as an effort to obtain freedom from the forces of dystopian government (Basu, Broad & Hintz, 2013). The process is marked by gradual or sudden awareness of the truth about the working of their society. Individuals acknowledging the fact that they have been living in a catastrophic society is similar to the stage where an adolescent leaves his childhood and is

exposed to the bitter reality of the adulthood. Foucualt (1978) has drawn a relationship between power and resistance by putting resistance as "irreducible opposite" (Foucault, 1978, p.96) to power. According to Foucault (1978), "There are no relation of power without resistances; the latter are all the more real and effective because they are formed right at the point where relations of power are exercised" (Foucault, 1978, p.142). Therefore, in order to locate and highlight the application of power relations, it is important to analyze the resistance as well. Foucault (1978) proposed that resistance can be against exploitation, domination and subjection. All these types of power abuses can be found in the novels selected for this research. So Foucault's theory proposing "where there is power, there is resistance" (Foucault, 1978, p. 95) is used to highlight the resistance present in the selected dystopian works.

3.2. Data Collection and Analysis

Although the genre of dystopian literature includes many works but novels selected for this study fall into the category of young adult dystopian literature and realistic fiction because of their growing popularity and wide readership. Among the recent works in this field, the research is restricted only to the top ranking trilogy; *The Hunger Games* written by Suzzane Collins. *The Hunger Games* (2008) won several awards, such as New York Times bestseller, USA today bestseller and Wall street journal bestseller awards and many more. These novels were also adapted as a series of films which received great viewership and became highest-grossing films of box office (Gaudiosi, 2012). The data is collected in the form of words from the novels of *The Hunger Games* trilogy. Textual analysis is done at sentence level as it is used to define and interpret the text. It refers to the importance of genre and context of the text it is written in (Mckee, 2002). The researcher analyzed the themes present in the selected novels. Among those themes, the researcher further focused on the themes of discipline and punishment through the use of surveillance, power and justice system. The researcher selected the incidents highlighting these themes and drew a comparison with the real events happening in present day American society. For the comparison, the researcher gathered the factual data from newspaper articles and researches that have been conducted on the relevant issues. The researcher also discussed the events of the novels that showed the ways by which characters resisted against the government's totalitarian control and later compared with the resistance of people against the power manipulations and privacy breaches present in real life.

4. Analysis and Discussion

4.1. Resistance

This part is based on the topic of resistance identified in *The Hunger Games* trilogy. It is one of the main actions from the lead of the book that has been prominently identified showing resistance and rebel against the powerful. This behavior is compared with resistance by citizens of America towards their controlling government behavior. Throughout *The Hunger Games* trilogy, the Capitol's totalitarian government is undermined by the actions taken by Katniss. It is explained,

> Often, Katniss's acts of resistance do not entail awe-inspiring acts of bravery and heroism. To the contrary, she more often engages in minor acts of resistance that inspire others to come together as a collective and work for change. (Rodriguez, 2014, p. 159)

Even though Panem is controlled by powerful people, but the control of President Snow is not stagnant and hence can be undermined by the citizens. Foucault's theory in relation to the concept of resistance explains that the residents have been under the strict control of the Capitol government and it is hard for them to resist. But they maintain self-monitoring to ensure they present themselves in the way the state expects of them. The residents are nurtured in a way to keep their thoughts censored. They know they are under surveillance by the Capitol and hence they need to be careful about their actions to survive. Foucault also claims that the power systems in this case are not fixed and hence can be resisted (Nyman, 2015).

A prominent concept of *The Hunger Games* is Resistance against the powerful. The lead character develops the ability to overcome the challenges that she and her family faces. As Foucault (1978) have explained that power abuse is always trailed by resistance; constant oppression and forced rules ends up giving people awareness about the injustices so they start striving for their rights. Rebellion is the opposition towards an authority or dominant institution in the society. Katniss Everdeen in *The Hunger Games* is the main lead that led the rebelliousness in the story. Throughout the story, there are a series of rebellious events.

The first was known as Katniss' rebellious streak, which involved a battle where the 12 districts lost and the 13th was destroyed by the Capitol. After this event, the Capitol realized that the residents of Panem were growing against the oppression of powerful people of Capitol. They formed the Treaty of Treason, to avoid any rebel in future. The second rebellion is identified during Katniss' struggle to support his family for meeting the basic needs and food. She had to break several rules imposed by the Capitol. She crawls under the electric fence to reach to the woods. Along with a friend, she reaches to gather berries and hunts for other food. She even sold the hunted meat in black market, trading it for goods and money. Another rebellious step by the lead of the book is Katniss trying her best to keep her sister out of the Hunger Games competition. She volunteered to be part of the game, and took her sister's place. Even though this action meant that she would be dead by the end of the game, she still wanted to save her sister. This also showed her disrespect towards the game, and gained support from her District and respect from other Districts. This prompted her to rebel in future as well. During her training for the game, she was expected to show her archery skills in front of the game makers which ended in her throwing the arrow at them:

> Suddenly I am furious, that with my life on the line, they don't even have the decency to pay attention to me. That I'm being upstaged by a dead pig. My heart starts to pound, I can feel my face burning. Without thinking, I pull an arrow from my quiver and send it straight at the Game makers' table. I hear shouts of alarm as people stumble back. The arrow skewers the apple in the pig's mouth and pins it to the wall behind it. Everyone stares at me in disbelief. (p. 100)

She was clearly against the game makers and was threatening them too. Once the game started, Katniss rebellious was triggered again upon the killing of Rue. She realized the oppressive world she was in and felt enraged upon the death of an innocent child. The least she could do was cover Rue's body with wild flower in order to give her a burial.

> Rue's death has forced me to confront my own fury against the cruelty, the injustice they inflict upon us….I want to do something, right here, right now, to shame them, to make them accountable, to show the Capitol that whatever they do or force us to do there is a part of every tribute they can't own. That Rue was more than a piece in their Games. And so am I….I gather up an armful and come back to Rue's side. Slowly, one stem at a time, I decorate her body in the flowers. Covering the ugly wound. Wreathing her face. Weaving her hair with bright colors. They'll have to show it. Or, even if they choose to turn the cameras elsewhere at this moment, they'll have to bring them back when they collect the bodies and everyone will see her then and know I did it. I step back and take a last look at Rue. She could really be asleep in that meadow after all. "Bye, Rue," I whisper. I press the three middle fingers of my left hand against my lips and hold them out in her direction. Then I walk away without looking back. (p. 233)

Through her rebellious behavior, she was able to gain enough support from the district and hence the powerful also respected and appreciated her. The most significant act of rebel from her was allowing both herself and Peeta to survive the Games. She blackmailed the Capitol by using the poisonous berries. She threatens the head of the games that they both will eat them, and hence will not have any victor. This led to them changing their rules and allowing two winners. She gave the regulatory body, the government of Capitol a tough time through her rebellious acts. This also gave a ray of hope for the people that had their lives ruined due to the Hunger Games. The main reason behind the rebellious behavior is to show the oppressors that the people from the districts cannot be owned. They can make their own decisions and will not starve (Cookson, 2019).

The rebellious nature identified in the lead character of *The Hunger Games*, is a depiction of the Americans tired of the government ruling them with strict policies. One of the most significant activity linked to this in the American society is the resistance shown by individuals against the US government. The recent Whatsapp mobile application disclosed that they will have access to chats of their users, has caused several users demanding a shift back to their original privacy policy. Many users have already shifted to other mobile applications as a replacement of Whatsapp. These users fear their important chats are no more secure, and can be shared with institutions like the government for significant purposes. Similarly, in the past there have been deals between Facebook and Google that have been proven to be dangerous for their users. They both are two biggest companies on the platform of social media and together they have made deals to lead the market in future. One of the most crucial part of the deal was several benefits for Facebook including access to Google data and exception from their policy to unfairly placing more ads than other Google partners. The State agreed:

Facebook received various benefits, including access to Google data and policy exceptions that enabled its clients to unfairly get more ads placed than clients of other Google partners could. (Dave & Paul, 2020)

Even though there were serious investigations made by the U.S Department of Justice on this issue, there were no allegations made on this deal until now. There are claims that the American government themselves have been making use of these companies to monitor and collect data of their citizens. There has been a strong opinion raised in the US against the breach of data, on both of these serious issues. The individuals realize the implications of the access of data to these communications based IT companies. And how the government can manipulate the society through their data. Hence they highly criticize the government to make them realize their power as the citizens of America, against US government monitoring (Paresh Dave, 2020).

US nationals have taken strict actions against their government's Mass Surveillance activities. These are the targeted resistance against the government. The Electronic Frontier Foundation has filed a case against the US. Carolyn Jewel and AT&T customers have taken the mass surveillance issue in their own hands. This issue was identified by technician of AT&T which realized that a fiber cable was taking the communications to a secret room, controlled by US National Security Agency (NSA). The US government was gathering their citizen's data without any permission from the court. This court case, along with several others provide a key point of view of the American citizens. They stand as a resistance force against the issue of privacy of their data from the US government. They have managed to investigate the issue of mass surveillance in the country, and are strongly opposing it as a rebel (PoKempner, 2019). In recent years, there have been unsettling political and economic situations in the US. Revolutions have been predicted in the country due to economic inequality, political elite ignoring this difference and increasing political differences. Studying the previous decades shows that the Americans are working more for lesser pays to achieve their basic necessities. Fox News while presenting the facts stated that there is more than ever need for Americans to have multiple jobs, a full-time job and part-time employment at a time in order to ends meet (Lea, 2019).

These factors in combination led to prevalence of feeling of injustice from the system not working for majority of US citizens. There have been increasing number of protests recently. The marches and petitions are realized as population's display against the system. If the concerns remained unaddressed by the government, the protests became strikes. In last few years. Large protests in America has been occurring. The Women's March, Occupy Wall Street and March for Our Lives have been some of the known marches recently (Turan, 2019). Black Lives Matter movement has been the most recent protest that took place in America. The people came out against the white supremacist culture across different cities. There had been rural insurgencies that involved weeks of armed rebellions from the government and law enforcing agencies. The issue started when the police killed 26 year old, Breonna Taylor in Louisville. Followed by this, a clip of George Floyd went viral where he was being forced by the policemen. A few days later, hundreds of protestors began rallies against the injustice towards the black men. People around different states of America, has since been gathering to support the cause of Black Lives matter, showing resistance towards the aggression and control of the law enforcing bodies and the government. The protests have been focused on:

Protests under the Black Lives Matter banner have rocked streets in cities big and small. And organizers have sought 'to eradicate white supremacy and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes. (Gottbrath, 2020)

Altogether, resistance has been a significant behavior by Katniss in *The Hunger Games* trilogy. The book has outlined several instances where Katniss rebelled against the Capitol, and became the leader for rebel for the districts. Similarly, the control of American government through actions like surveillance and privacy invasion has led to resistance from the US citizens. This shows a clear relevance between the people oppressed under both the societies, and their actions of rebel against the power. The chapter of resistance realizes the actions Katniss and her support system have taken during the oppression from Capitol. She became a symbol of rebel against the power and played against them to save her family and the districts. This resistance has also been seen in the American society, where against the surveillance and privacy invasion, the American community has been raising their voice.

5. Conclusion
Altogether, *The Hunger Games* trilogy and its dystopian society has been a prominent depiction of the American society in reality. It has outlined several themes of dystopian society, which revolve around the role and control of the

government. The oppression by the higher class and the starvation from the lower class has been the essence of the whole story. Through this trilogy, Collins has guided the American society is moving towards a future that can be harmful for them due to the control and power from their government. The research also sheds light on the concept of resistance in imagined Panem as well as the American government. *The Hunger Games* trilogy is littered with acts of rebellion with the protagonist, Katniss became the main proponent of resistance. The whole plot revolves around bringing the oppressive dystopian government down. This need to rebel against the domineering and unjust control of the powerful on the weak in also reflected in the real world American society. From the virtual resistance against the surveillance through various apps to physical protests and strikes such as 'Me too', 'Black lives matter', 'Occupy Wall Street' and 'March for Our Lives' against tyrannical policies and unjust treatment; it is safe to say that American society is politically and socially conscious.

References:

Adams, J. J. (2011). Dystopian fiction: An introduction. Retrieved from https://www.tor.com/2011/04/11/dystopian-fiction-an-introduction/

Althusser, L. (2001). Lenin and philosophy and other essays. (B. Brewster, Trans). New York: NYU press. (1971).

Barry, B. (2002). Social exclusion, social isolation, and the distribution of income. In J. Hills, Le Grand, & D. Piachaud (Eds.), Understanding social exclusion (pp. 13-29). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Basu, B., Broad, K. R., & Hintz, C. (Eds.). (2015). Children's literature and culture: Contemporary dystopian fiction for young adults: Brave new teenagers. UK: Routledge.

Booker, K. (1994). Dystopian literature: A theory and research guide. Westport: Greenwood Press.

Booker, K. (1994). The dystopian impulse in modern literature: Fiction as social criticism. London: Greenwood Press.

Bullen, E. & Parsons, E. (2007). Dystopian visions of global capitalism: Philip Reeve's Mortal engines and M. T. Anderson's Feed, Children's Literature in Education, 38(2), 127-39.

Cart, M. (2010). Young adult literature: From romance to realism. Chicago: American Library Association. Print.

Claeys, G. (2010). The Cambridge companion to utopian literature. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Collins, S. (2008). The hunger games. New York: Scholastic.

Collins, S. (2009). Catching fire. New York: Scholastic.

Collins, S. (2010). Mockingjay. New York: Scholastic.

Cookson, K. (2019). The hunger games: the rebellion within Katniss Everdeen [Web log post]. Retrieved from https://siueyalit.wordpress.com/2019/07/12/the-hunger-games-the-rebellion-within-katniss-everdeen/

Correa, M. G. (2015). Lost humanity: Dystopias and the loss of moral values in contemporary science fiction (Unpublished Honor's Thesis). University of Valladolid, Spain.

Dave, P. & Paul, K. (2020). Google secretly gave Facebook perks, data in ad deal, U.S. states allege. Reuters. Retrieved from https://www.reuters.com/article/us-tech-antitrust-google-facebook-idUSKBN28Q37G

Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). The sage handbook of qualitative research. USA: Sage Publications.

Desmet, F. (2010). Female perspectives in the dystopian novel (Unpublished Master's Thesis). Ghent University, Belgium.

Dieterle, C. (2003). George Orwell's 1984 and its implications on the political system of the GDR (Unpublished master's thesis). University of Kassel, Germany.

Fentin, R. (2012). Disobedient youth: political involvement and genre resistance in contemporary young adult dystopian fiction (Unpublished bachelor's thesis). University of Michigan, Michigan.

Finnsson, G. (2016). The Unexpected Popularity of Dystopian Literature: From Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four and Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale to Suzanne Collins' The Hunger Games Trilogy (Unpublished Bachelor's essay). University of Iceland, Reykjavík.

Foucault, M. (1978). The history of sexuality. New York: Éditions Gallimard.

Gaudiosi, J. (2012, August 17). The Hunger Games trilogy beats Harry Potter series to become all-time bestselling book series. Forbes. Retrieved from https://www.forbes.com/sites/johngaudiosi/2012/08/17/hunger-games-trilogy-beats-harry-potter-series-to-become-all-time-bestselling-book-series/#7ceccd597dc1

Geistfeld, B. J. (2013). Playing games: Governmental influence and individual assertion in Suzanne Collins' The hunger games series (Unpublished master's thesis). Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Gerhard, J. (2012). Control and resistance in the dystopian novel: A comparative analysis. (Unpublished Master's Thesis). California State University, Chico

Giardina, N. (2006). We enter a time of calamity: Informed and 'informated' youth inside and outside young adult fiction. Explorations into Children's Literature, 16(2), 82-98.

Gottbrath, L. W. (2020). In 2020, the black lives matter movement shook the world. Aljazeera.
https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2020/12/31/2020-the-year-black-lives-matter-shook-the-world

Guerra, S. (2009). Colonizing bodies: Corporate power and biotechnology in young adult science fiction, Children's Literature in Education, 40(4), 275-295.

Hintz, C., & Ostry, E. (2003). Utopian and dystopian writing for children and young adults. New York: Routledge.

Latham, D. (2004) Discipline and its discontents: A Foucauldian reading of The giver, Children's Literature, 32, 134-51.

Lea, B. D. (2019). Record-high number of American workers have multiple jobs. Fox Business. Retrieved from https://www.foxbusiness.com/economy/american-workers-multiple-jobs

McAlear, R. (2010). The ideology of the Wissenvine: Critique and closure in Zilpha Keatley Snyder's Green-sky trilogy, Studies in the Novel, 42, 39-53.

Mckee, A. (2002). Textual analysis: A beginner's guide. US: SAGE Publications.

Moylan, T. (2000). Scraps of the untainted sky: Science fiction, utopia, dystopia. Boulder: Westview Press.

Moylan, T. & Baccolini, R. (2003). Dark horizons: Science fiction and the utopian imagination. New York: Taylor & Francis Group.

Nepstad, S. E. (2011). Nonviolent revolutions: Civil resistance in the late 20th century. USA: Oxford University Press.

Newgard, L. (2011). Life of chaos, life of hope: Dystopian literature for young adults (Bachelor's paper, University of Northern Iowa). Retrieved from
https://scholarworks.uni.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1015&context=grp

Nyman, R. (2015). The hunger games as dystopian fiction. NU Writing, (6), 1-7.

PoKempner, D. (2019). US government mass surveillance isn't 'secret'. HRW. Retrieved from
https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/09/18/us-government-mass-surveillance-isnt-secret

Reeve, P. (2011). The worst is yet to come, School Library Journal, 57(8), 34-36.

Rodriguez, R. J. (2014). The politics of panem: Challenging genres. Netherlands: Brill.

Ryan, D. (2014). Emerging themes in dystopian literature: The development of an undergraduate course (Honor's thesis, Western Michigan University). Retrieved from
https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3460&context=honors_theses

Sar, S., & Murni, S. M. (2012). Political dystopia in Suzanne Collins' The hunger games. Genre Journal of Applied Linguistics of Fbs Unimed, 1(2), 23-38.

Slaughter, R. A. (1998). Futures beyond dystopia. Futures, 30(10), 993–1002. doi: 10.1016/s0016-3287(98)00101-3.

Spisak, A. (2014). What Makes a Good…Dystopian Novel? [Review of the book The hunger games, by S. Collins]. The Horn Book Magazine. Retrieved from https://www.hbook.com/?detailStory=what-makes-a-good-ya-dystopian-novel

Stuver, A. L. (1998). The totalitarian destruction of utopia. Maryland: Frostburg State University.

Timm, C. W. (2012). Class is in session: Power and privilege in Panem. In G. A. Dunn, N. Michaud, & W. Irwin (Eds.) The hunger games and philosophy: A critique of pure treason (pp. 277-290). US: Wiley.

Turan, S. (2019). Is the United States on the brink of a revolution? The conversation. Retrieved from: https://theconversation.com/is-the-united-states-on-the-brink-of-a-revolution-123244

Ventura, A. (2011). Predicting a better situation? Three young adult speculative fiction texts and the possibilities for social change. Children's Literature Association Quarterly, 36(1), 89-103.

Wilson, L. (2010). The girl who was on fire: your favorite authors on Suzanne Collins' The Hunger games Trilogy. Texas: Ben Bella Books.