

# Critical Application of Digital Feminism in Literature Classroom: Weaponisation of Beauty, Romance, and Motherhood in The Hunger Games Trilogy

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**Abstract:** This article critically examines the integration of digital feminism into the literature classroom through the lens of Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* trilogy. It explores how the themes of beauty, romance, and motherhood are weaponised within the narrative, reflecting and challenging societal norms surrounding femininity and power dynamics. The study argues that the portrayal of female characters, particularly Katniss Everdeen, serves as a complex representation of resistance against patriarchal structures, wherein beauty standards and romantic expectations are both subverted and reinforced. By employing digital feminist lens on Bourdieu's Cultural Reproduction theory, this article highlights the importance of fostering a critical discourse in educational settings that encourages students to engage thoughtfully with these themes. Classroom discussions are proposed to facilitate awareness on the implications of beauty ideals, the role of romantic relationships in shaping identity, and the societal expectations of motherhood as depicted in the trilogy. Through this analytical approach, students are empowered to dissect how these elements resonate with contemporary issues of gender representation and oppression, fostering media literacy and critical thinking skills. Ultimately, the article underscores the necessity of integrating digital feminism into literary analysis, equipping students with the tools to navigate and critique the pervasive influence of popular culture on societal values and gender dynamics.

**Keywords:** Cultural Reproduction, Digital Feminism, Gender Tropes, Media Awareness, Stereotype Priming

## 1. Introduction: Digital Feminism and Its Relevance in Contemporary Discourse

Digital feminism emerges as a response to the evolving landscape of gender discourse on the internet. It encompasses the ways in which feminist ideas and practices are disseminated, discussed, and enacted through digital platforms, including social media, blogs, and online communities. It recognises the power of the internet to amplify marginalised voices, challenge traditional narratives, and foster global solidarity among feminists. In contemporary discourse, digital feminism addresses pressing issues such as online harassment, representation in digital media, and the intersectionality of race, class, and gender. It empowers individuals to engage with feminist ideals in accessible and innovative ways, promoting activism and raising awareness about systemic inequalities. The integration of digital feminism into educational contexts, particularly in literature classrooms, offers a vital

framework for examining how texts reflect and perpetuate gender dynamics, allowing students to critically engage with the socio-cultural narratives that shape their realities.

### 1.1 Importance of Analysing Young Adult Literature in the Context of Gender Dynamics

Young adult literature occupies a unique position in contemporary publishing and culture, often serving as a gateway for adolescents to explore complex themes such as identity, relationships, and societal, even political expectations. As a genre that frequently features young protagonists navigating their worlds, it provides an essential platform for discussing gender dynamics and the challenges faced by individuals in a patriarchal society. Analysing young adult literature allows educators and students to uncover the subtle ways in which gender roles and stereotypes are constructed and reinforced. Works like *The Hunger Games* trilogy not only entertain but also provoke critical thought about issues such as beauty standards, romantic relationships, and maternal expectations. By examining these texts through a gendered lens, students can develop a deeper understanding of the societal pressures that shape their lives and the lives of others. This analysis fosters media literacy and encourages young readers to become active participants in the discourse surrounding gender, equipping them with the tools to challenge and resist oppressive norms (Phi Delta Kappa International, 2016).

*The Hunger Games* trilogy, authored by Suzanne Collins, serves as a compelling case study for examining the themes of resistance against stereotype priming and cultural reproduction within the framework of young adult literature. Set in a dystopian society characterised by extreme social stratification and oppressive governance, the series follows the journey of Katniss Everdeen, a young woman who becomes a symbol of rebellion against the Capitol's authoritarian regime. Through Katniss's character development, the trilogy not only portrays her personal struggle for agency and survival but also critiques our societal norms and expectations that shape gender roles. The narrative intricately weaves together themes of beauty, romance, and motherhood, illustrating how these elements can be both manipulated and resisted. The portrayal of Katniss defies traditional feminine stereotypes, nor does she fit the typical young adult tropes; her main goal is survival and later liberation against tyranny and manipulation. While she is manipulated and paraded by both the Capitol and later the rebel forces, in both she refuses to remain a passive figure but reclaimed her agency as an active agent of change, reminding everyone just how lethal she has always been. Successfully subverting the very constructs that seek to limit her identity. By examining the ways in which the trilogy addresses stereotype priming—where certain traits and behaviours are implicitly associated with gender—readers can engage in a critical dialogue about the broader implications of these representations in real life. It bears mentioning that priming is but one tool in the systemic perpetuation of socio-cultural beliefs and behaviours known as cultural reproduction. Cultural reproduction refers to the processes through which dominant cultural values, norms, and ideologies are perpetuated across generations, often through various forms of media, education, and socialisation. In the context of *The Hunger Games* trilogy, cultural reproduction is intricately woven into the fabric of the narrative, illustrating how societal norms around power, gender, and resistance are both established and challenged. The Capitol, as the ruling entity in Panem, embodies the epitome of cultural reproduction through its use of spectacle, propaganda, and media manipulation. The annual Hunger Games serve as a brutal reminder of the Capitol's dominance over the districts, the symbolic violence that reinforces their subjugation and humiliation. The name the author chose; Panem, is an allusion to the concept the Roman poet Juvenal discussed in Satire X, "*Panem et Circenses*", where the idea that distraction and entertainment can be harnessed as a means of control. The televised games not only serve to distract the populace from their suffering but also condition them to accept violence and subjugation as inherent aspects of their reality. This spectacle illustrates how cultural narratives can be commodified and transformed into tools of oppression, where the suffering of individuals is reduced to mere entertainment for the privileged few.

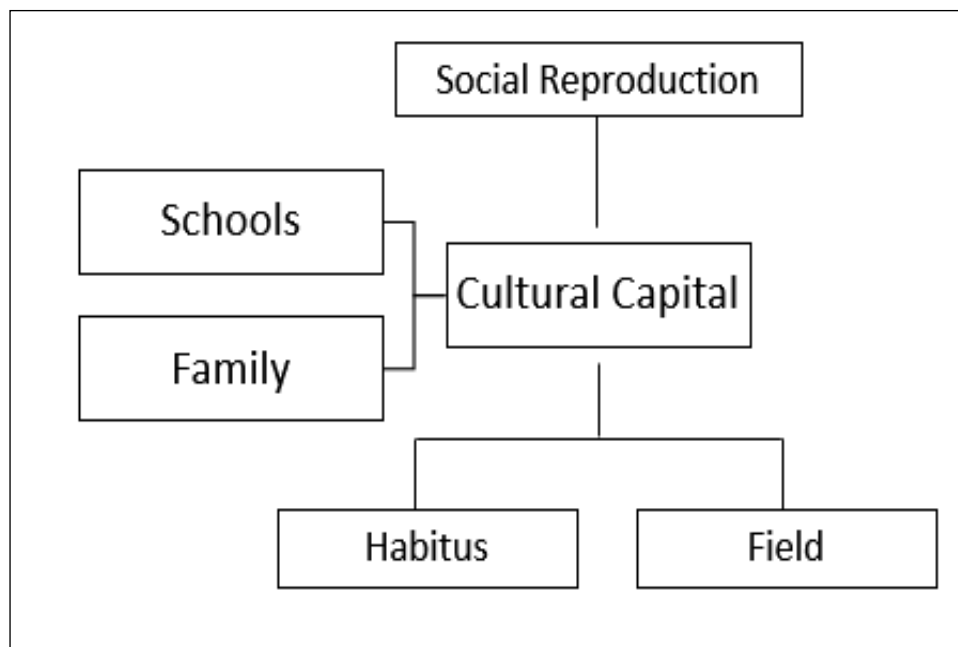
Moreover, the trilogy examines the role of media in shaping public perception and reinforcing societal norms. The character of Effie Trinket, with her emphasis on appearances and superficiality, highlights the Capitol's obsession with beauty standards and the performance of identity. This portrayal critiques the ways in which cultural values around beauty and success are constructed and maintained, often at the expense of individual authenticity. Katniss's struggle against these imposed ideals serves as a form of resistance, as she navigates a world that seeks to define her based on external expectations rather than her true self. Additionally, the relationships between characters, particularly those involving

Katniss, illustrate the complexities of cultural reproduction in terms of gender roles. Romantic dynamics, such as her interactions with Peeta and Gale, reveal how traditional narratives of love and heroism are both reinforced and subverted. Despite being romantically tempted and confused by the two dear young men in her life, her focus was saving her family, friends and later Panem itself, she literally says, “I can’t thinking about kissing when I have a rebellion to incite” in *Catching Fire*, (Collins, 2010, p.126) challenging the typical trope of girls and women who will sacrifice everything for love, even if she is not above utilising the Romeo & Juliet stereotype priming to force Seneca Crane to keep his promise that both District 12 tributes would be allowed to live if they were the last two who survived. While the trilogy includes elements of romance, it simultaneously challenges the notion that a woman's worth is intrinsically tied to her romantic relationships. Katniss's agency and independence serve as a counter-narrative to the cultural reproduction of female passivity, emphasising the importance of individual empowerment and resistance against societal expectations.

## 2. Method: Cultural Reproduction and Its Resistance Through Reader Response

**Figure 1**

*Theoretical Framework of Bourdieu's Social Reproduction Theory (Tzanakis, 2011)*



Cultural reproduction and its resistance serve as the methodological foundation for the framework by providing a lens through which to analyse *The Hunger Games* trilogy in relation to the themes of socio-cultural values and primes about beauty, romance, and motherhood, as well as how the trilogy counter resists these. This approach is grounded in the understanding that cultural values, norms, and ideologies are transmitted and perpetuated through various societal institutions, including literature, media, and education. By applying the principles of cultural reproduction, we explore how the trilogy reflects, challenges, and critiques the dominant cultural narratives surrounding gender roles and expectations. The conceptual framework of cultural reproduction posits that societal norms and ideologies are not merely inherited but are actively shaped and reinforced through media representations and cultural texts (Nash, 2016; Rogers & Swartz, 1999; Swartz, 1977). The process of priming occurs throughout most if not all aspects of social interaction, both passive and interactive. It is part of social conditioning that ensures the perpetuation of the status quo through systemic targeting of certain behaviours, traits or beliefs. The resulting implied and internalised binary values, beliefs, and behaviours heavily influences the meaning and choices we make as our extent of impact grows. The cartoons we watch as a child influences the choice of activities we like, the friends we make, and the

beliefs and behaviours we then tolerate, culminating in the votes we cast and the government we support as adults (Edgerton & Roberts, 2014; Friedman, 2016; Kim, 2020). By investigating how *The Hunger Games* trilogy serves as a representation of both cultural reproduction and its resistance, illustrating the ways in which the narrative perpetuates certain stereotypes while simultaneously offering counter-narratives that empower characters, particularly female protagonists, we facilitate discourse in recognising the extension of such elements in the classroom. Analysis of the textual elements involve a close reading within the trilogy, including character development, plot dynamics, and thematic motifs. By examining how they are depicted, the analysis will uncover the mechanisms through which these concepts are weaponised to reflect and critique societal norms. This methodology also requires situating *The Hunger Games* trilogy within its cultural context, considering the socio-political climate in which it was written and the implications of its themes for current readers/audiences. Understanding the historical and cultural allusions and background allows for a more nuanced interpretation of how cultural reproduction operates within the text (Bourdieu, 1973; Bourdieu, 2021; Lizardo, 2011; Murphy, 1998). By interrogating power dynamics inherent in cultural narratives and exploring how portrayals of beauty, romance, and motherhood reinforces or subverts traditional power structures, particularly in relation to gender dynamics, we demonstrate how literature can serve as both a reflection of societal values and a tool for social critique. Finally, this methodology recognises the role of the reader in the process. By engaging with the text as active participants, readers bring their own experiences and interpretations to the narrative. And by engaging the readers' responses regarding the themes of beauty, romance, and motherhood, the differences in their interpretations can contribute to the ongoing dialogue about gender representation in literature. Through the application of critical resistance to cultural reproduction the literature classroom can extract the intertwined societal norms and other potential avenues against oppressive narratives. This approach fosters critical thinking and engagement with the broader cultural implications of the text (Behar-Horenstein & Niu, 2011).

### 3. Results and Discussion

The *Hunger Games* trilogy provides an unobtrusive preview of cultural reproduction for young adult readers, revealing through the storytelling how dominant ideologies are perpetuated through media, spectacle, and interpersonal relationships. By critically analysing these elements, readers are encouraged to recognise the pervasive influence of cultural narratives in their own lives and to question the status quo. This examination fosters a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of oppression and the potential for resistance, empowering students to engage actively with the cultural texts that shape their realities. Although this discussion has been limited to themes of beauty, romance, and motherhood, hopefully the sampling sufficiently show in their representation in the trilogy illustrates how these elements can be both manipulated and resisted. The portrayal of Katniss and Peeta defies traditional gender stereotypes; she emerges not merely as a romantic interest or a passive figure but as an active agent of change, challenging the very constructs that seek to limit her identity, as does he as a positive supportive constructive friend and partner without toxic masculinity.

#### 3.1 Beauty

In *The Hunger Games* trilogy, Katniss Everdeen's perspective on beauty and fashion is profoundly influenced by her upbringing in District 12, particularly in the Seam, juxtaposed against the extravagant ideals of the Capitol. Through her observations, we are informed of the trickle-down effect of the systemic structures of division and subjugation from the Capitol to the different districts and finally within the districts themselves. Katniss's mother represents a relationship of status with beauty, shaped by her own struggles and societal expectations. She mentions how her mother is from the apothecary family from The Hub, and sprinkles information for us to understand how vastly different she is from those who live in The Seam in District 12, a district primarily known for its coal mining industry and is one of the poorest districts in Panem. The societal structure within the district is deeply stratified (a microcosm of Panem's with the districts), with significant disparities between the different areas, notably the Hub and the Seam, which serves to highlight the class differences and resulting in the varying visual cues of their lives and living experiences. Katniss notes that the people from the Hub often have a different appearance compared to those from the Seam, specifically regarding their

colouring and grooming. The residents of the Hub tend to have lighter skin and hair, and are often better-groomed, reflecting their adjacency to the Capitol's standards of beauty and privilege, being in the administrative and merchant class, including her own delicately beautiful blond mother who Prim takes after. She describes her mother's clothes as precious from those apothecary past, and when praised by her sister Prim, "*You look beautiful,*" she counters by saying she looks "*nothing like myself*" (Collins, 2008, p.15) The Hub is a stark contrast to the Seam, with better infrastructure and facilities. However, it also serves as a reminder of the Capitol's oppressive control, the residents are under constant surveillance, instilling fear and compliance. From a post-colonial perspective, it alludes to *pax Romana* or Roman imperialism and represents the imposition of absolute external authority and the control of regional resources benefiting the oppressors; emblematic of the Capitol's exploitation of the districts, as wealth and power are concentrated in the hands of the few while the majority struggle to survive. Which is etched in contrast by the appearances of the residents of the Seam, described as having rougher, more weathered appearances due to the harsh living conditions and the physical labour associated with coal mining. This difference in colouring can symbolise the disparities in lifestyle and access to resources, which Katniss identifies with as she favours her deceased father in appearance and actions, also in her mentality, valuing function before form. Bringing it back to beauty as a priority or identity, Collins focuses on the 'less pretty' people of the Seam with depictions of families facing hunger and deprivation, leading to a culture where children are sacrificed for resources via the tesserae system, ensuring crippling sense of helplessness for the adults and resentment in the children. Despite the dire circumstances, the Seam fosters an intense sense of community and resilience among its inhabitants. Relationships are built on mutual reliance, as neighbours band together to share resources. But it also creates the resentment against façade of prosperity that obscures the underlying oppression people of the Hub. Evidenced by Gale, who knows what the Capitol does yet still could not contain his resentment of Madge simply for being the mayor's daughter. The inhabitants are conditioned to accept the Capitol's narrative, reinforcing the cycle of cultural reproduction and stereotype priming. The Seam's proximity to the wilderness allows residents like Katniss and Gale to hunt and gather food, which they then trade. This not only serves as a means of survival but also reinforces Katniss's self-identity by her function as a skilled hunter and provider, contrasting with the Capitol's obsession with superficial beauty as a status symbol. Later even as she has been beautified by the Capitol's prep team, her ally and mentor Cinna ensures she remains as natural as non-invasively possible (which was derided as provincial sentimentality). This is very much rooted and relevant to reality, the multi-billion-dollar industry fuelling the Asian obsession with fairness or the western pursuit of tanned skin. Added to this classroom discussion could be how the Capitol's obsession with aesthetics creates a façade of beauty that is unattainable, emphasising the inequities of their oppression for those in the Seam as well as every other district struggling under the oppression, who must focus on survival rather than appearance. Which referring to Bourdieu, indicates one's cultural capital (derived from the privilege background you have) again as that instant visual identifier of class and status. The outrageous expressions of wealth through the beauty products and procedures as well as their fashion signal their status as the 1% of Panem. As a valuable point of class discussion, the correlation between how they look with how they live and the status they are in can be a rich starting point to recognise our own automatic preconceived beliefs, our own habitus because of our backgrounds (Nash, 2016).

On a more conventional discussion regarding beauty, when Katniss is thrust into the Capitol during the Hunger Games, she is confronted with the zenith of its obsession with beauty and fashion. The Capitol's inhabitants epitomise extreme beauty, with exaggerated hairstyles, vibrant colours, and elaborate costumes that serve to showcase wealth and power. Katniss's initial reaction to this world is one of discomfort, distaste, and alienation; she feels like an outsider in a realm that values aesthetics over substance. This contrast illustrates the subversion of beauty norms. While the Capitol's beauty is artificial and performative, Katniss's authenticity and strength lie in her survival skills, wits, and determination. Her journey challenges the notion that beauty equates to worth, as she learns to navigate this superficial world while staying true to her identity.

The characters of Effie Trinket and Cinna embody different facets of beauty and fashion within the narrative, contributing to the trilogy's ability to both magnify our primes about traditional beauty norms and the subversion of them. Effie represents the Capitol's extreme fixation on fashion and superficial beauty. Her flamboyant attire and exaggerated personality serve to emphasise the absurdity of the Capitol's obsession with appearances. Katniss's relationship with Effie highlights the tension

between the oppressive beauty standards of the Capitol and her own values. Despite Effie's attempts to mould Katniss into a Capitol-approved figure, Katniss asserts her identity, using her appearance strategically while maintaining her authenticity. In contrast to Effie, Cinna serves as a subversive force within the Capitol's beauty regime. As Katniss's stylist, he recognises her strength and individuality, opting for a more authentic representation of her character. His designs, particularly the iconic "Girl on Fire" outfit, symbolise Katniss's defiance against the Capitol while simultaneously showcasing her inner strength. Cinna's approach to beauty emphasises empowerment over conformity, allowing Katniss to harness the Capitol's obsession with aesthetics for her own purposes. This collaboration between Katniss and Cinna reveals how beauty can be redefined as a tool for resistance rather than simply a means of oppression. It must be noted that while she initially embodies the Capitol's ideals, Effie evolves throughout the series, revealing a more complex character who genuinely cares for Katniss and Peeta and following the death of Cinna, honours him by using beauty and fashion to aid the propaganda campaign of the rebellion. The prep team, responsible for Katniss's grooming and presentation, further illustrates the complexities of beauty and fashion in the series. Initially, they attempt to impose Capitol beauty standards on Katniss, reflecting the societal conditioning that dictates how individuals should present themselves. However, Katniss's rejection of their attempts to completely transform her highlights her agency and the subversion of traditional beauty norms. By navigating the expectations set by the Capitol while retaining her identity, Katniss becomes a powerful symbol of resistance against the superficiality of beauty standards. The prep team's role underscores the tension between societal expectations and individual identity, showcasing how characters can reclaim their narratives amidst oppressive structures.

Through the subversion of beauty and fashion in *The Hunger Games* trilogy, Collins challenges readers to reconsider societal norms regarding appearance and identity. Katniss's journey, her relationships with characters like Effie and Cinna, and the dynamics with her prep team collectively illustrate the complexities of navigating beauty standards in a world that often seeks to define individuals by their outward appearances as a critique of cultural norms while empowering readers to embrace their authenticity and resist the pressures of conformity.

### 3.2 Romance

In *The Hunger Games* trilogy, rather than being the usual *raison d'être* of teen and young adult stories, despite having the usual two potential romantic rivals, they are used to depict alternative versions of masculine partnership, and as a strategic tool employed by the Capitol to manipulate public perception and control the narrative surrounding the tributes. The relationships between characters, particularly Katniss Everdeen, Peeta Mellark, and Gale Hawthorne, illustrate how romance can be weaponised. The Capitol uses Katniss and Peeta's romantic relationship as a means of propaganda. Their love story is carefully crafted to generate sympathy and support from the audience, transforming them into marketable symbols of hope and rebellion. Effie Trinket and Cinna, as stylists, play pivotal roles in shaping this narrative, emphasising the romantic angle to appeal to the Capitol's citizens. The Capitol's portrayal of their relationship highlights how love can be commodified and manipulated for political gain. In subversion to this, Katniss weaponised their obsession with her romance into a survival strategy in the arena. She recognises that her relationship with Peeta could garner sponsors and increase their chances of survival. Instead of the usual arranged marriages or Romeo Juliet tropes, this utilitarian view of romance underscores the pressures placed on characters to conform to fictional societal expectations while satirising it given the extreme risks of navigating the brutality of the Games. The love triangle between Katniss, Peeta, and Gale serves to heighten tension and conflict within the narrative by initially including the traditional romantic tropes that pit male characters against one another for female attention. However, it instead of reinforcing the notion that a woman's worth is tied to her romantic relationships, which can be seen as a reinforcement of patriarchal norms, we get that famous line, "I can't think about kissing when I have a rebellion to incite" in *Catching Fire*, (Collins, 2010, p.126). As the story progresses, Katniss's approach to romance evolves. Rather than conforming to the Capitol's narrative, she begins to assert her agency in how she engages with love and relationships. Her feelings for Peeta and Gale are complex and multifaceted, something many young adult readers relate to reflecting her and their own struggles with identity, loyalty, and the burden of expectation. This progression allows her to navigate her emotional landscape on her own terms,

challenging the notion that her value resides solely in romantic attachments. The narrative subverts the typical love triangle dynamic by emphasising Katniss's independence and her prioritisation of her mission over romantic entanglements. While both Peeta and Gale represent aspects of her life, Katniss's journey is primarily focused on her fight against the Capitol rather than her romantic relationships. This shift encourages readers to view romance as a secondary aspect of her character rather than the defining feature. The trilogy redefines love as a source of strength rather than a vulnerability. Katniss's relationship with Peeta evolves into a partnership built on mutual support and understanding. Their bond transcends mere romantic attraction, illustrating that love can empower individuals to confront adversity together. This portrayal of love allows for a more nuanced exploration of relationships, emphasizing that true partnership is rooted in respect and shared purpose. Through characters like Gale, the trilogy critiques the idealisation of romantic love and the societal expectations surrounding it. Gale's more aggressive approach to resistance contrasts with Katniss's nuanced understanding of love as a means of empowerment. This critique serves to challenge the notion that love must align with traditional gender roles, offering a broader perspective on how relationships can function within the context of resistance. It is also an excellent gateway towards discussing broader gender identities and toxic masculinity within relationship roles and expectations.

In conclusion, romance in *The Hunger Games* trilogy is initially weaponised as a tool of manipulation and control, reflecting societal norms that dictate the value of individuals based on their romantic relationships. However, the narrative ultimately subverts these tropes, emphasising Katniss Everdeen's agency, independence, and the transformative power of love. By redefining romance as a source of strength and resilience, the trilogy challenges traditional portrayals of female characters and invites readers to reconsider the complexities of love in the context of resistance. This subversion not only enriches the narrative but also contributes to ongoing discussions about gender dynamics and the portrayal of relationships in contemporary literature.

### 3.3 Motherhood

Within the context of the trilogy, the concept of motherhood is often idealised, particularly through characters like Katniss's and Gale's mothers, especially when contrasted with Peeta's acerbic and abusive mother. Initially, Katniss's mother embodies the stereotype of the nurturing caregiver, once vibrant and nurturing, becomes emotionally incapacitated following the death of Katniss's father leaving her to assume the role of provider for the family. Growing up in the Seam, Katniss views her mother through the lens of practicality and survival. Here again we see the contrast with Gale's mother who actively supports her son's efforts after his father's death. But neither mothers are able to stop their eldest from having to risk their lives by repeatedly putting their names in to be reaped in exchange for the tesserae. This change alters Katniss's perception of femininity; in her frustration and resentment at the perceived abandonment and ineffectuality which she associates with weakness and vulnerability. Both she and Gale are essentially parentified, and this dynamic sets the stage for the portrayal of motherhood as synonymous with self-sacrifice and emotional labour, where maternal figures are expected to put their children's needs above their own. Katniss's willingness to volunteer for Prim underscores this stereotype, as she embodies the ultimate maternal sacrifice. The selflessness associated with this trope can serve to limit women's agency, positioning them primarily as caretakers whose worth is defined by their ability to protect and nurture. However, this is subverted with Katniss's self-image is rooted in her identity as a protector and provider. Katniss's relationship with her sister, Prim, further complicates the notion of maternal sacrifice. Rather than being solely a caretaker, Katniss actively fights for Prim's and then later Rue's safety and well-being, demonstrating that her love for her sister is intertwined with her desire for freedom and justice. This duality redefines motherhood, portraying it as a source of power rather than a limiting identity. She is doing the same things as Gale does, her actions are 'masculine' and heroic while retaining her nurturing inclinations as a young woman, affirming that gender roles and performance are not limited (Butler, 2001; Thibordee, 2020). Her skills in hunting and gathering are celebrated, contrasting sharply with the Capitol's emphasis on appearance. She perceives herself as both caring and protective, rugged and resourceful, valuing her ability to survive over conforming to traditional boundaries, illustrating that motherhood encompasses strength, resilience, and the capacity for resistance against feminine standards and it is this perspective that allows her to resist the superficial ideals that the Capitol promotes. In class, we can leapfrog from here to discussing the

evolution of Katniss' mother as well. the character evolves throughout the series. Initially portrayed as immobilised by sadness, she overcame it, takes on a more active role in caring for Prim, the refugees and supporting Katniss. This transformation illustrates that maternal figures can reclaim their agency, she does not remain helpless and dependent, reinforcing the idea that portrayals of the soft fragility types of motherhood does not have to conform to restrictive stereotypes. While initial representations may adhere to traditional notions of maternal sacrifice and nurturing, the narrative ultimately challenges these tropes by emphasizing agency, resilience, and the multifaceted nature of female identity. Katniss Everdeen's journey illustrates that motherhood can be a source of empowerment and resistance, inviting readers to reconsider the cultural narratives surrounding maternal roles and the inherent strength that comes from embracing one's identity. This subversion not only enriches the narrative but also contributes to ongoing discussions surrounding feminism and gender representation in literature. It must be mentioned that while she repeatedly said she did not want to have children, her reasoning has always been out of defiance, refusing to provide fodder for the reaping, protectiveness, not wanting her children to live in fear of premature death and inflicting what she went through onto her children. The epilogue may seemingly capitulate to the typical motherhood completes womanhood but in truth it subverts it, Peeta was the one who wants children and Katniss grants his wishes when she feels her world has healed enough that her children would benefit from being brought into it, with happiness and not fear.

#### 4. Conclusion

To conclude, this article has demonstrated the significant role of digital feminism in transforming literature education, particularly through the lens of Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* trilogy. By critically examining how themes of beauty, romance, and motherhood are weaponized within the narrative, the study reveals the complexities of female representation and the ways in which these themes reflect and challenge societal norms surrounding femininity and power dynamics. Katniss Everdeen emerges as a multifaceted character whose journey embodies resistance against patriarchal structures, illustrating that the interplay of beauty standards and romantic expectations can empower as much as it can constrain.

The application of Bourdieu's Cultural Reproduction theory provides a nuanced understanding of how cultural narratives shape and perpetuate gender roles, reinforcing the importance of fostering critical discourse in educational settings. By engaging students in discussions about these themes, educators can cultivate media literacy and critical thinking skills, empowering young readers to navigate and interrogate the pervasive influences of popular culture on societal values and gender dynamics. As the dialogue surrounding digital feminism continues to evolve, it becomes essential to integrate these discussions into literature classrooms, ensuring that future generations are equipped to challenge oppressive narratives and advocate for equality.

#### 5. Suggestions

Building on the findings of this article, future research could explore the integration of digital feminism in literature classrooms through a comparative analysis of other young adult dystopian texts that feature female protagonists. By examining works such as Veronica Roth's *Divergent* series or Marie Lu's *Legend* trilogy, researchers can investigate how themes of beauty, romance, and motherhood are similarly weaponised and challenged across different narratives. This comparative approach would provide insights into the evolution of female representation in contemporary literature and highlight variations in how different authors address societal norms surrounding femininity and power dynamics. Additionally, future studies could investigate the long-term impact of integrating digital feminism into literature education on students' understanding of gender dynamics and their ability to engage critically with media representations. By employing mixed-method research designs, including surveys and qualitative interviews, researchers can assess changes in students' perceptions of gender roles and their capacity for critical analysis over time. Finally, exploring the role of digital platforms in shaping feminist discourse outside the classroom could yield valuable insights into how youth engage with and respond to gender issues in popular culture. This research could examine how social media campaigns, online discussions, and fan communities related to series like *The Hunger Games* influence readers' interpretations of the text and their understanding of broader feminist movements.



Through these avenues of research, scholars can continue to expand the dialogue surrounding digital feminism, literature, and education, further enriching the understanding of how narratives shape and reflect societal values, particularly in relation to gender representation and empowerment. This suggestion encourages a multi-faceted approach to future research, addressing comparative literature analysis, educational impact, and the role of digital platforms in feminist discourse.

## 6. Co-Author Contribution

The authors affirmed that there is no conflict of interest in this article.

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