

**DRESSING THE MOCKINGJAY: THE ROLE OF KATNISS  
EVERDEEN'S COSTUMES IN THE POLITICAL NARRATIVE OF THE  
HUNGER GAMES**

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**VESTINDO O TORDO: O PAPEL DO FIGURINO DE KATNISS EVERDEEN NA  
NARRATIVA POLÍTICA DE JOGOS VORAZES**

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**ABSTRACT**

Based on Suzanne Collins' "The Hunger Games" film trilogy, the research analyzes how the main character costumes align with the social and political context of the narrative set in Panem, a dystopian society divided into districts subordinate to the opulent Capitol. Class inequality is accentuated by the costumes, which initially portray the population of the districts as submissive, in contrast to the extravagant luxury of the Capitol. As the narrative progresses, the costumes evolve to reflect the political struggle, strength and revolt of the characters, visually marking the transformation and resistance against oppression. Following a qualitative approach, basic nature and descriptive objectives, the work is configured as a bibliographical research and a case study. The study's main objective is to understand the role of costumes in the visual construction of the character and the way in which fashion in cinema can be used to reflect and comment on political and social issues. Furthermore, the research examines the evolution of the costumes of the main character, Katniss, analyzing how each one contributes to the narrative and to the representation of the political context of the saga. Thus, the work concludes that fashion and costume are not only a form of artistic expression, but also a means of communication and resistance.

**Keywords:** costume; hunger games; fashion.

**RESUMO**

Baseada na trilogia cinematográfica "Jogos Vorazes" de Suzanne Collins, a pesquisa analisa como os figurinos da personagem principal se alinham com o contexto social e político da narrativa ambientada em Panem, uma sociedade distópica dividida em distritos subordinados à opulenta Capital. A desigualdade entre classes é acentuada pelos figurinos, que no início retratam a população dos distritos como submissa, em

contraste com o luxo extravagante da Capital. À medida que a narrativa avança, os figurinos evoluem para refletir a luta política, a força e a revolta dos personagens, marcando visualmente a transformação e resistência contra a opressão. Seguindo uma abordagem qualitativa, de natureza básica e objetivos descritivos, o trabalho configura-se como uma pesquisa bibliográfica e um estudo de caso. O estudo tem como objetivo principal entender o papel do figurino na construção visual da personagem e a maneira como a moda no cinema pode ser usada para refletir e comentar sobre questões políticas e sociais. Além disso, a pesquisa examina a evolução dos figurinos da personagem principal, Katniss, analisando como cada um contribui para a narrativa e para a representação do contexto político da saga. Dessa forma, o trabalho conclui que a moda e o figurino não são apenas uma forma de expressão artística, mas também um meio de comunicação e resistência.

**Palavras-chave:** figurino; jogos vorazes; moda.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Through colors, shapes and compositions, fashion is capable of communicating political and social messages, serving as an instrument of resistance and a means to denounce societal issues. When applied to cinematic art, costumes play the role of communicators of a character's identity and their context. From this perspective, it is understood that clothing is a fundamental tool in the visual construction of a cinematic work, as it represents one of the primary manifestations of a character's identity. Costumes also contribute to the creation of an atmosphere, mood and visual style that align with the theme, genre, and aesthetic proposal of the work.

In the adaptation of *The Hunger Games*, a trilogy written by Suzanne Collins, costumes play a crucial role in establishing the setting and understanding the social and political context presented. The narrative takes place in a dystopian society, in a nation called Panem, divided into districts that exist on the margins of the Capitol, the region where all social, political and economic power is centralized. Marked by class inequality, the clothing and presentation of the characters evolve throughout the films. Through their design, the different political moments experienced throughout the narrative are portrayed. At the beginning of the saga, the population is depicted as fearful and submissive, in contrast to the residents of the Capitol, who live in a world of luxury. As the story progresses, this scenario shifts to one of political struggle, strength and rebellion, which challenges the upper echelons of society, forcing them to abandon their lifestyle for the sake of survival.

Thus, the research problem of this study is: How does the costumes of Katniss Everdeen in *The Hunger Games* contribute to the construction and representation of the political and social context of the saga? To address this question, the general objective was defined as: to analyze how the use of Katniss Everdeen's costumes in *The Hunger Games* saga influences the construction of the character and contributes to the representation of the political and social context depicted in the narrative. The specific objectives are: to explore the role of fashion in visual construction within the

cinematic medium; to understand the context of The Hunger Games saga; and to analyze how the costumes reflect the different phases of Katniss Everdeen's character's journey in the narrative.

In The Hunger Games, costumes are masterfully used to represent the identity of the characters and the political and social context of the saga. Therefore, through the analysis of Katniss's costumes, it is possible to understand how fashion communicates messages and themes of resistance in such a perspective.

## **2 FASHION AND COMMUNICATION**

Fashion derives from the Latin word *modus*, translated as manner, measure, or the way something is done (Gonçalves, 2007). Furthermore, it is not limited to clothing but extends to all areas where taste is considered one of the central concepts (Svendsen, 2010), which is based on preferences and trends. With the emergence and historical evolution of fashion, clothing has increasingly become a form of non-verbal communication and expression (Gonçalves, 2007). Linke (2013) argues that the act of dressing is, first and foremost, an act of communicating values, tastes, identities, and belonging. It is thus observed that fashion and clothing are capable of reflecting different cultural, economic, demographic, and ideological aspects of a group, an era, and even the particular characteristics of a specific individual.

The study of fashion goes beyond the mere appreciation of garments; it involves understanding a phenomenon that encompasses social, cultural, economic, and political dimensions. Fashion is a mirror of how people present themselves socially and can symbolize agreements and pacts within society. As a social phenomenon, fashion involves the frequent alteration of styles to highlight social status and individual identity, being considered a way to express political stances within the context in which an individual is situated (Azevedo, 2018). To produce its effects, it relies on visual elements, as will be discussed next.

### **2.1 Visual elements in fashion communication**

The most studied elements in the field of visual communication are color, shape, and composition. The associations between colors and feelings are not accidental or based on personal preference - Heller (2000) suggests that these connections arise from universal experiences that are deeply rooted in language and thought from childhood. Because people have a greater understanding of emotions than of colors, each color can produce different, even contradictory,

effects. For example, the color red, in the context of war, evokes the blood spilled on battlefields, while when associated with a hero, it expresses feelings of courage and strength.

To understand the concept of shape, it is necessary to clarify some basic visual elements, particularly the point and the line. According to Schnaider (2022), a point can be characterized as the smallest structural element of shape. Beyond representing an element on its own, when combined with other points, it forms a line, a plane, or even a texture. Regarding the line, Schnaider (2022) argues that it is a series of connected points. The line also has the ability to define the boundaries of objects and indicate the meeting of planes. From this conceptualization, shape can be understood. A shape is constituted by one or more lines. Among all existing shapes, three are defined as basic shapes: the square, the circle, and the equilateral triangle. All other shapes are derived from these three (Dondis, 1991).

Different shapes have the power to evoke feelings and sensations in those who observe them (Hallawell, 2018). The square symbolizes stability and conservatism, while the triangle represents dynamism, with its message varying depending on its orientation: a flat base suggests stability, while a pointed tip upward conveys danger. The circle is seen as a shape of continuous movement and harmony, often contrasted with the square. So, basically a square is better to represent boredom and integrity; the triangle, dynamism and tension; and the circle, eternity and comfort (Dondis, 1991).

Finally, according to Feitosa (2019), composition refers to the combination and arrangement of all the elements that make up an image and how these elements relate to one another. It can be inferred that the relationships that form the meanings of a visual message are established through composition. Altering or reorganizing the compositional elements will result in a new understanding of the whole, as new visual connections will be established. This understanding allows the viewer to comprehend how clothing can be meaningful and full of different messages within a single piece.

## **2.2 Cinematographic costume**

Costumes are composed of clothing and accessories for characterizing a character (Mendonça, 2017). The origins of costumes date back to the mid-6th century b.C., coinciding with the emergence of theater. Studies indicate that even in the earliest theatrical performances, there was a concern with characterization, using garments and masks to transform the actor into a character (Perito; Rech, 2010).

Cinema emerged in the early 19th century in Paris, created by the Lumière brothers and later refined by Georges Méliès. During this period, cinema was still silent and black-and-white, and costumes played a special role in creating cinematic styles. Productions relied on theatrical visual elements, including set design and costumes. As cinema evolved, the recognition of costumes and costume designers gradually grew. It was only from the 1930s onward that costume designers began to be credited in productions, and costumes gained greater appreciation (Escher, 2008).

There are three categories that classify costumes: realistic, para-realistic, and symbolic. Realistic costumes are those that present faithful representations of reality, such as historically accurate period costumes. Para-realistic costumes, on the other hand, are inspired by reality but are not 100% faithful to it, as aesthetics take precedence over accuracy. Finally, symbolic costumes have no commitment to reality, focusing solely on symbolism, dramatically conveying the intended message (Marques; Almeida, 2018). Among the functions that costumes perform in a narrative are the characterization of context, setting, demonstration of the work's identity, and the construction of characters (Costa, 2002; Moraes; Manna, 2021).

The purpose of theatrical clothing is to appropriately position the character within the narrative, making them appear credible and authentic. It should reflect the character's internal and external qualities, such as their social status, occupation, age, personality traits, and worldview, as well as the historical period and geographical location where the story takes place. Theatrical clothing has the essential function of transforming the actor or actress, allowing them to fully assume the role of the character when dressed (Mendonça, 2017). Having described the basis for a character's visual construction through fashion and its visual elements, the next section will contextualize The Hunger Games saga.

### **3 THE CONTEXT OF *THE HUNGER GAMES***

The Hunger Games saga is an adaptation of the trilogy of the same name by author Suzanne Collins, produced by Lionsgate. For the cinematic adaptation, the franchise consists of four films: The Hunger Games (2012), Catching Fire (2013), Mockingjay – Part 1 (2014), and Mockingjay – Part 2 (2015). The films were directed by Gary Ross and Francis Lawrence and feature a star-studded cast, including Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson, Liam Hemsworth, among others (Cordeiro et al., 2016).

The dystopian story takes place in a nation called Panem, geographically located in what is now North America. Although not explicitly stated, it is understood that the government is a

totalitarian regime, with the president holding absolute power over the nation. The name of the country derives from the expression *Panem et circenses* (Bread and Circuses), which dates back to ancient Rome, where the government promoted gladiatorial fights to entertain the population and offered small amounts of food to distract citizens, believing that if they had food and entertainment, there would be no revolts or questioning of the government.

The country is divided into districts, numbered from 1 to 13, with District 13 considered a ruined district, uninhabited and deemed useless - later, it is discovered that life still exists in District 13. In addition to the districts, the nation includes the Capitol, the region where all the wealth and power of the country are centralized. Each district has a specialty or specific resources on which the Capitol depends and exploits, such as fishing, technology, electricity, and more.

At the beginning of the first film, the Treaty of Treason is narrated, providing context for the story. It explains that after a population uprising against the government, the Hunger Games were established as punishment. Each year, every district must provide a pair of teenagers, aged 12 to 18, to fight to the death in the Capitol's Arena until only one victor remains (The Hunger Games, 2012). This year marks the 74th edition of the Hunger Games, and it is when the protagonist, Katniss Everdeen, portrayed by Jennifer Lawrence, emerges. On the day of the Reaping, 16-year-old Katniss, alongside her 12-year-old sister Primrose and her best friend Gale Hawthorne, aged 18, must present themselves for the Reaping—the occasion when a Capitol representative is sent to each district to draw the names of the tributes selected to participate in that year's Games. In District 12, the official in charge is Effie Trinket, played by Elizabeth Banks.

Although it is Primrose's first year as a potential tribute, she is chosen in the Reaping. In an act of desperation, Katniss volunteers to take her sister's place, becoming the female tribute from District 12. The male tribute drawn is Peeta Mellark, portrayed by Josh Hutcherson. Together, the two are taken to the Capitol to be presented to the public, trained, and eventually brought to the Arena where the Games will take place. Another key character introduced is Haymitch Abernathy, who becomes the tributes' mentor, as he is a Victor from District 12—meaning he has won the Games once before.

The story unfolds through the training and, later, the Games themselves. The protagonist quickly wins over the Capitol audience and is nicknamed "the girl on fire," a reference to her elaborate costumes (which will be discussed later). Amidst this context, a romantic interest also develops between Katniss and Peeta. Through the twists and turns of the Hunger Games, they unite and become the first tributes to win an edition of the Games together. The two star in a scene, interpreted



by many as an act of love, in which, near the end of the Games, they nearly take their own lives by ingesting poisonous berries. Upon witnessing this, the creator of the Games, Seneca Crane (Wes Bentley), declares both of them Victors.

This narrative, however, does not convince President Coriolanus Snow, as part of the population interprets the act as one of rebellion, leading to uprisings and revolts across the nation. From this point, the second film in the franchise, *Catching Fire*, begins. Initially, the film focuses on the Victory Tour, during which the tributes travel through all the districts, delivering speeches to the population, and concluding at the Presidential Palace, the residence of President Snow. By this time, President Snow has already threatened Katniss and her loved ones unless she convinces the population—and himself—that her romance with Peeta is genuine. It is revealed that her efforts were not enough. During this time, Plutarch Heavensbee (Philip Seymour Hoffman) is introduced as Seneca Crane's successor as the Head Gamemaker.

As the 75th edition of the Hunger Games approaches, it is announced that, as is customary every 25 years, the Games will feature a special edition called the Quarter Quell, in which new rules or criteria are imposed. For this edition, it is decreed that the tributes will be reaped from the pool of living Victors. Consequently, Katniss and Peeta find themselves back in the Arena, this time facing prepared opponents and allied with new characters such as Johanna from District 7, Finnick and Mags from District 4, and Beetee and Wiress from District 3. By the end of the film, the allies devise a trap to eliminate their opponents, but the plan takes a sudden turn when Katniss shoots an arrow at the force field that surrounds the Arena, destroying it. She is injured and nearly unconscious, and is subsequently rescued by a hovercraft.

From this point, the story shifts dramatically. It is revealed that District 13 is not in ruins as the Capitol had claimed, but rather a well-organized society inhabits its underground. Additionally, after Katniss's arrow destroys the force field, District 12 is bombed. Many people die in the attack, and the survivors, including Katniss, Finnick, Beetee, Plutarch, Haymitch, and Effie, are rescued by District 13. However, Peeta and Johanna, along with other tributes, are captured by the Capitol.

The final two films focus on a new rebellion, once again coordinated by District 13 under the leadership of President Alma Coin, in alliance with the other districts. Their goal is to overthrow the authoritarian and unequal government. Amidst numerous twists and turns, Katniss becomes the Mockingjay, a symbol of the revolution, and fights alongside the rebels to achieve their objectives.

Analyzing the different social groups depicted in the narrative, it is evident that in the Capitol, there is a significant preoccupation with appearance among the population. They wear elaborate

and flashy outfits and undergo various procedures to alter their natural features. This ostentation of wealth, through the use of expensive items, complex and voluminous designs, and vibrant colors, demonstrates the social and financial power of the Capitol's inhabitants. For this segment of the population, fashion is a form of expression and a demonstration of social status.

In contrast, in the districts, where scarcity of resources is a daily reality, including clothing, the population cannot afford the luxury of following trends or expressing themselves through fashion. Their garments are primarily functional, aimed at protection, and are often inherited. However, on special occasions such as the Reaping, even the poorest must present themselves in a more presentable manner. Although these outfits are less worn and slightly more sophisticated, they remain simple. Typically, they consist of a dress or skirt and blouse for women, and pants and a shirt for men. These clothes are usually in neutral and faded colors, such as beige, white, blue, green, and gray.

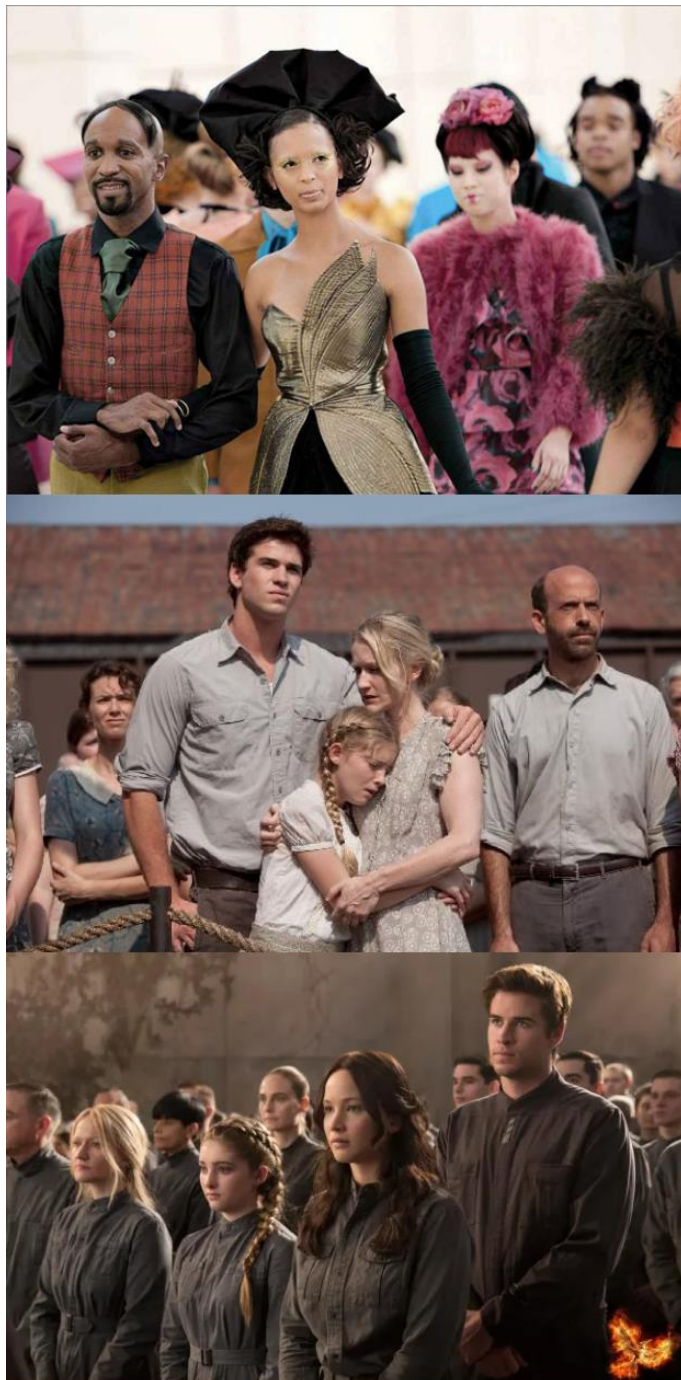
In District 13, strict rules are in place, making the area resemble a military base. The inhabitants are highly disciplined and rigid, and everyone wears uniforms that offer little differentiation. The general population wears gray jumpsuits in their daily lives. Only healthcare professionals and soldiers wear different uniforms, in white and black, respectively, with accessories necessary for their roles. The gray worn by the inhabitants of District 13 represents uniformity and the struggle for survival. It is a sober and functional color, contrasting sharply with the Capitol's extravagance. Figure 1 presents a comparison of the costumes of characters from the Capitol, District 12, and District 13, respectively.



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Figure 1 - Costumes of the Capitol, District 12 and District 13, respectively.



Source: authors, 2025.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Available at: <https://thehungergamesociety.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/poeple-cap.jpg>; <https://br.pinterest.com/pin/457326537137415842/>; <https://fashionista.com/2015/11/hunger-games-mockingjay-part-2>. Access on March 6, 2025.

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Based on the context presented, from here on will analyze the evolution of Katniss's costumes and their relationship with the film's narrative. Katniss Everdeen, the main character of the saga, appears in her first scene wearing simple, earth-toned clothing (Figure 2): plain pants, a black shirt, and a brown leather jacket. Her hair is styled in a braid, which, throughout the narrative, becomes a distinctive visual element of the character. Despite the hunting practice being illegal, Katniss and her best friend, Gale, regularly hunt in the forest surrounding District 12 to ensure their survival.

Figure 2 - Katniss' first appearance



Source: Fan Pop, 2025.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Available at: <https://images5.fanpop.com/image/photos/28900000/Katniss-jennifer-lawrence-28914583-1250-1599.jpg>. Access on March 6, 2025.

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The simple and durable fabrics reflect the need for utilitarian elements in the harsh daily life the character endures. The pants appear faded and worn, reinforcing Katniss's socioeconomic context. The leather jacket, inherited from her father after his death, symbolizes the responsibility she places on herself as the provider and protector of her family. This costume shows how she belongs to her District, made of poor and working class, who must fight everyday to survive, which consonants with what Linke (2013) states: that dressing is an act of communicating values, tastes, identities, and belonging.

After being selected as a tribute and taken to the Capitol, the character is to be presented to the public in a parade, in which each district wears an outfit that represents its main personality. In this context, the character Cinna emerges, the stylist tasked with dressing her, and a friendship quickly forms. For District 12, a coal-mining district, the proposed look is inspired by burning coal. The tributes wear black, shiny garments (Figure 3) with an intriguing texture and imposing design, which are set ablaze with artificial fire during the parade. The appearance of the tributes exudes courage and strength, and the fire is a shocking and exciting element even for the bold inhabitants of the Capitol. This costume sets them apart from the others, making a statement: we are strong, we are capable, we can surprise you.

Figure 3 - Katniss and Peeta presentation





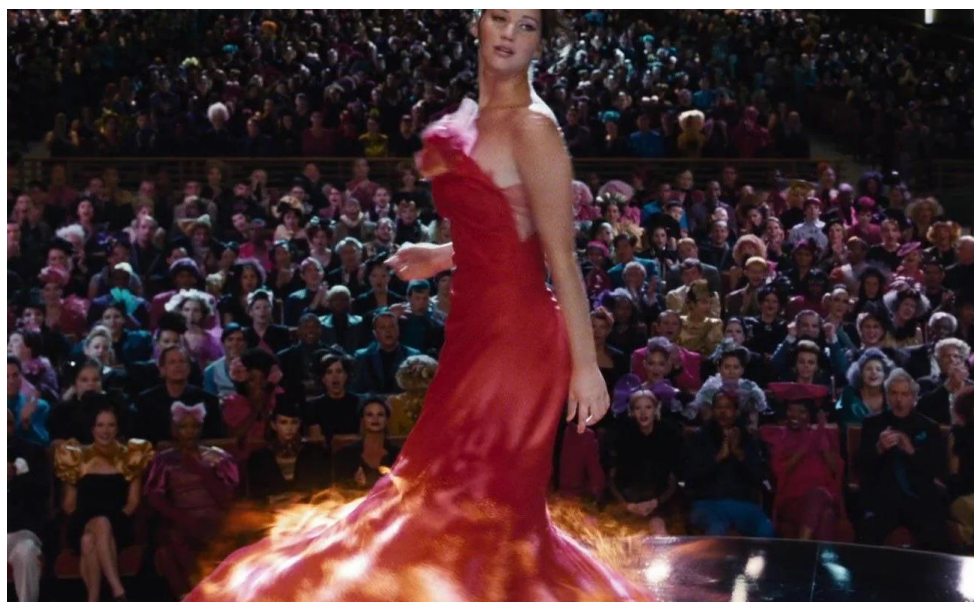
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Source: Buzzfeed, 2022.<sup>3</sup>

It's interesting to notice how Cinna uses a lot of symbolic elements in all the clothing he makes for Katniss, consonant with the classification of symbolic costumes used by Marques and Almeida (2018). After the opening parade, the aesthetic used in the event is perpetuated. For the interview preceding the Games, the stylist proposes a red dress for Katniss, with draping and a fluid design, without excess embellishments (Figure 4), since she has a basic, utilitarian personal style and habits and he wants her to feel like herself as much as possible. The highlight of the outfit is once again the artificial fire, which is already expected by the viewers. During a spinning performance on stage, the dress ignites, and Katniss earns the nickname "*the girl on fire*". This nickname quickly gains popularity, as it not only represents the costumes themselves, with their literal fire, but also reflects the character's strong personality and bravery. This dress states her empowerment and warns the President that this year, the District 12 may have a shot of turning the status quo.

Figure 4 - Katniss' red dress on fire



Source: Reddit, 2024.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Available at: <https://www.buzzfeed.com/marycolussi/the-hunger-games-costumes-ranking>. Access on March 6, 2025.

<sup>4</sup> Available at: [https://www.reddit.com/r/popculturechat/comments/17okwaz/rachel\\_zegler\\_referencing\\_katniss\\_everdeens\\_flame/?rdt=56950](https://www.reddit.com/r/popculturechat/comments/17okwaz/rachel_zegler_referencing_katniss_everdeens_flame/?rdt=56950). Access on March 6, 2025.

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Later, in the second film of the franchise, the character appears once again wearing the brown leather jacket from the first scene (Figure 5). The fact that she continues to wear her old clothes, despite having won the Games and gained better financial conditions, symbolizes the essence she maintains despite all the experiences and adversities she faced the previous year: she is still the District 12 simple girl, despite the traumas. In this outfit, Katniss wears pants that are still neutral but appear new and of better quality than the previous one, and a wool sweater completes the look. Its asymmetrical and unique design brings her closer to the fashion trends of the Capitol, symbolizing that part of her connects with them now. However, the natural fibers give the outfit a rustic and homemade characteristic that shows her origins. This piece reflects the duality Katniss experiences, living between two different and extreme worlds, still trying to figure out where she belongs and how. It also shows how the President now has some power over her.

Figure 5 - Katniss casual fitness update



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Source: EW, 2013.<sup>5</sup>

During the first part of the second film, Katniss and Peeta, along with their team, embark on the Victory Tour, visiting all the districts to deliver speeches about the fallen tributes, culminating in the Capitol. Throughout the tour, Katniss presents a more mature look, with more sophisticated and body-conscious designs. As said by Azevedo (2018), fashion alters styles to highlight social status and individual identity to express political stances within the context in which an individual is situated. The color palette consists of neutral yet dark tones, such as gray, brown, navy blue, and black (Figure 6). These aspects reflect Katniss's maturation after the Games, as well as her mourning for the experiences she endured in the Arena, including the loss of opponents she saw as friends. It also shows to the President and the Capitol population that she sees the Games in a different light, respecting those who did not survive, seeing them as human beings instead of players.

The garments, in excellent condition and perfectly tailored to her body, contrast with the appearance of the district inhabitants, yet they do not significantly align with the extravagant clothing of the Capitol. Once again, the duality of Katniss's condition is evident: she is no longer an ordinary district girl, but she also does not fit into the hedonistic lifestyle of the Capitol.

Figure 6 - Tour



<sup>5</sup> Available at: <https://ew.com/gallery/bestworst-movietv-style-2013/>. Access on March 6, 2025.



Source: Facebook, 2013.<sup>6</sup>

For the interview preceding Katniss's second Hunger Games, the chosen outfit is a stunning wedding dress, supposedly intended for her marriage to Peeta, reinforcing the romantic narrative created for the public image of the characters. The dress featured all the flashy elements the Capitol adores: feathers, jewels, glitter, volume, and more. The piece was selected for the evening by President Snow himself, who was determined to tarnish Katniss's image by associating her with the Capitol and distancing her from her role as a symbol of the rebel cause. His worst concern is the power she has of leading a rebellion and he is determined to control her as much as he can to make sure the peace and stability will reign.

However, Cinna made some modifications to the dress without anyone knowing, so as usual, at a certain point during the interview, Katniss would have her signature spinning moment, and her dress would ignite in flames. This time, however, instead of merely lighting up, the dress actually burns away, transforming into something new: a mockingjay, the symbol of the revolution (Figure 7). Thus, Katniss once again perpetuates her image as a supporter of the rebel cause, defying Snow's wishes. This act by Cinna was a political statement through fashion, which ultimately cost him his life. From this point onwards, there is no turning back: Katniss is the face of rebellion and Snow is not in control of her actions.

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<sup>6</sup> Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=803001419716511&set=a.598499560166699>. Access on March 6, 2025.

Figure 7 - Bridal dress/Mockingjay



Source: Reddit, 2024.<sup>7</sup>

From Mockingjay – Part 1 onward, now in District 13, Katniss is required to wear the standard uniform used by the entire population of the district. Although she does not use accessories to stylize her outfit, she also does not button up her jumpsuit completely. This detail functions as a form of resistance, reflecting her dissatisfaction with certain situations and her feelings of not belonging to the group, as well as her rebellious and non-conformist nature. She is there, she is part of the group, but as always, she is somehow apart.

After being rescued by District 13, while Peeta and other tributes remained held hostage by the Capitol, Katniss initially resisted accepting the role of the "Mockingjay." Although she disagreed with the dynamics of the nation, she also did not align with the ideals of their President Alma Coin and did not want to associate herself with the cause. Eventually, however, she accepts the role. Initially, Katniss's role was intended to be purely promotional, without active involvement in the war. It is revealed that, before his death, Cinna had prepared a theatrical military outfit for Katniss to wear when she made her decision, knowing that he might not be alive to see her in this stage, for his risky decisions - this also shows how he was aware of all the implications of his creations.

<sup>7</sup> Available at:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/popculturechat/comments/17okwaz/rachel\\_zegler\\_referencing\\_katniss\\_everdeens\\_flame/?rdt=56950](https://www.reddit.com/r/popculturechat/comments/17okwaz/rachel_zegler_referencing_katniss_everdeens_flame/?rdt=56950). Access on March 6, 2025.

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In an interview with MTV, Kurt and Bart, the designers responsible for the aforementioned costume, explained that they drew inspiration from historical armor, Japanese archery equipment, and characteristics of birds themselves, such as wings. Additionally, the artists aimed to think like Cinna, reflecting the stylist's vision in the creation. Although the overall look conveys seriousness, the asymmetrical vest is an element that reinforces the idea of a costume designed to please aesthetically, rather than to provide actual protection if needed (Figure 8). Once again, Katniss outfit is made to show her as a leader for the viewers.

Figure 8 - Armor



Source: Fashionista, 2015.<sup>8</sup>

When the character truly begins her active participation as a soldier, her military attire changes. Now, Katniss wears the same uniform as the other soldiers - a utilitarian outfit designed for practicality, with strategic pockets and durable armor intended for protection (Figure 9). The uniform makes clear that they are now living in a state of war against the Capitol and President Snow. Yet, her signature braid remains a part of her style, keeping an element of uniqueness and personality.

<sup>8</sup> Available at: <https://fashionista.com/2015/11/hunger-games-mockingjay-part-2>. Access on March 6, 2025.

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Figure 9 - Military attire



Source: GeekTyrant, 2015.<sup>9</sup>

Finally, after the end of the war and the defeat of the Capitol, Katniss returns to District 12. In the epilogue, Katniss appears alongside Peeta and their two children. At this moment, the protagonist is seen wearing a yellow dress with a floral print (Figure 10), completely different from all the other costumes used throughout the saga, symbolizing a new chapter in her life, distinct from everything she had experienced up to that point.

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<sup>9</sup> Available at: <https://geektyrant.com/news/jennifer-lawrence-reveals-first-photo-for-the-hunger-games-mockingjay-part-2>. Access on March 6, 2025.



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Figure 10 - Final dress



Source: Facebook, 2022.<sup>10</sup>

At first glance, the costume may seem jarring, it even causes some estrangement to the spectators, as it is so feminine, light and fresh, completely different from the Katniss personality built along the previous narrative. The absence of her signature braid, now replaced by loose hair, symbolizes a less tight manner of dealing with reality and a new phase in her life. However, the look complements the idea that costumes have the function and ability to reflect context and environment, as previously said by Gonçalves (2007). In this case, it represents a moment of peace and happiness achieved after much suffering, giving meaning to the soft yellow color and lightweight fabrics that perpetuate these feelings. She finally gains a sense of freedom, calm and peace, now that Panem has changed.

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<sup>10</sup> Available at:

<https://www.facebook.com/TheHungerGamesMovie/photos/a.288998967783428/5823960637620539/?type=3>. Access on March 6, 2025.



## 4 CONCLUSION

The analysis demonstrated that visual communication through costumes involves various factors, such as color, shape, and composition, which are effectively used to convey the identity of the character and the evolution of the dystopian setting of Panem. Over the course of the narrative, the transformation of the character's appearance reflects the shift of the population from submission to revolution, symbolizing political change. Thus, it was concluded that costumes do not merely adorn the character but also serve as an instrument of political and social communication among the characters and with the spectator. The clothing choices reflect class divisions and power dynamics between the districts and the Capitol, visually illustrating oppression and the emerging rebellion throughout the saga. Katniss's transformation from a simple girl from District 12 to the revolutionary symbol of the "Mockingjay" is a clear example of how costumes reflect the narrative of resistance and the fight for justice.

Regarding fashion as a social object, the study explores the fact that it is not merely a matter of style but a rich and multifaceted communication tool. It reflects and influences society, politics, and culture, acting as a powerful social agent in the development of an individual's identity and playing significant roles in individual and collective communication and expression.

In summary, the costumes in The Hunger Games are not just aesthetic accessories but a fundamental narrative element that communicates the evolution of the character and the complexity of the saga. The study reinforces the importance of costumes as a means of communication, reflecting the nuances of human social relations and the interaction between fashion and society in and out of the screen.

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