



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG
DEPT OF LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

ENGLISH

What's in a Name?

An Interdisciplinary Study of Allusive Character Names and
Implied Meaning in *The Hunger Games*.

Ellen Odlöw, 861222

BA Degree paper, 15 hec

Interdisciplinary Degree Project

Teacher Education Programme LP01

Supervisor: Marcus Nordlund

Examiner: Zlatan Filipovic

Report number:

Abstract

This is an interdisciplinary essay discussing the allusive character names with classical sources of origin in Suzanne Collins' trilogy *The Hunger Games*. This study shows that knowledge of these references is important in order to understand more complex aspects of the characters and the overriding themes of the novel. Drawing upon the previous research of Trites and Clemente, this study reflects upon the importance of understanding implied meaning and the ability to decode the author's intentions. The results of this study are discussed in relation to aspects of the core content of English 6 and English 7 in Swedish upper secondary schools.

Key words: The Hunger Games, Suzanne Collins, interdisciplinary, English Language Teaching, allusions, implied meaning, reading literacy.

Thank you, Marcus.

Contents

| | |
|-----------------|----|
| Introduction | 1 |
| Aim | 3 |
| Method | 4 |
| Literary Review | 6 |
| Results | 8 |
| Discussion | 20 |
| Conclusion | 23 |
| References | 25 |

Introduction

“What's in a name? -that which we call a rose, by any other word would smell as sweet.” (Shakespeare).

In 2008, Suzanne Collins published the first book of *The Hunger Games* trilogy. Since then the series has proven to be hugely successful, read and loved by young and adult readers alike. Translated into fifty one languages, sold in over twenty-eight million copies, and adored by the critics; the first book of the series remained on *The New York Times Bestseller* list for a hundred consecutive weeks. Following the immense success of the books, the adaptation for the movie screen resulted in a *Hunger Games*-frenzy spread all over the world. It is not farfetched to believe that the political events of the last ten-fifteen years have had some impact on the success of *The Hunger Games* trilogy. In 2008, the US was at war in Afghanistan and Iraq, the largest financial crisis since the Great Depression affected the entire world, George .W. Bush's presidency ended and he was replaced by the first African-American President in history. Although it has been seven years since the first book was released, the highly political content of the story still seems to affect youths all over the world. In fact, at a recent premier showing of *Mockingjay Part One* in Bangkok, student protesters were arrested for using the 'Hunger Games salute', a silent gesture of solidarity and rebellion (Mydans, 2014). *The Hunger Games* is a story of re-distributive politics, dictatorship and inequality but it also manages to address such themes as love, trust, defiance and solidarity – and it is highly relevant for our time. Apart from the more obvious political themes of the trilogy, one of its greater selling points for me was the chain of associations it created while I was reading mostly evoked by the stories and names that I recognized from classical mythology and history. Indeed, Collins' use of allusions in the series is quite remarkable and calls for attention. In the introduction of *The Oxford Dictionary of Allusions* the literary function of an allusion is described thus:

An allusion may be defined as the mention of the name of a real person, historical event, or literary character which is not simply a straightforward reference (as in 'Hercules was an ancient Greek hero') but which conjures up some extra meaning, embodying some quality or characteristic for which the word has come to stand. So, we can describe a miser as a Scrooge, a strong man as a Hercules, a beautiful woman as a Venus. [...] It is often possible to pack more meaning into a well-chosen allusion than into a roughly equivalent descriptive term from the general language either because an allusion can carry some of the connotations of the whole story from which it is drawn, or because an individual's name

can be associated with more than one characteristic (2001)

So, intrigued by the chain of associations evoked by the allusions in these books I wondered if they would carry actual significance for the story when examined closer. Were there layers to the story that I did not understand, due to a lack of knowledge about the different allusions and allegories? During my practice at an upper secondary school in the spring of 2014 I decided to use the first book of the trilogy as course literature for English 6. What became clear during the weeks was that few of my students identified or, when I pointed them out, had much (if any) knowledge of the classical allusions in the book. As a consequence, I became increasingly interested in Collins' references to classicism, and how she used them in order to set a discursive context for the reader. Seeing that the books are mainly targeted towards young adult (YA) readers, it would be interesting to look into what function the allusions in *The Hunger Games* have for the reader's overall understanding of the story.

The PISA study from 2012, tells us that reading literacy is declining among students in Swedish secondary schools (Skolverket, 2012), and I consider it important to look at what this could entail for the second language (L2) classroom. Only in the core content for English 6, i.e. a course in English for students in secondary schools which is not mandatory, we find that students should be able to understand “[h]ow stylistics and rhetorical devices are used for different purposes and how language is used as an instrument to exercise power” and that they should be provided with “[s]trategies for drawing conclusions about the spoken language and texts in terms of attitudes, perspectives, purposes and values, and to understand implied meaning.” (Skolverket, 2011: 11). Based on this background, this essay addresses the subject of allusive writing in *The Hunger Games* and discusses it from a didactic standpoint, focusing on the ability to understand implied meaning.

Aim

In this study, I will draw upon Roberta S. Trites' and Bill Clemente's readings of *The Hunger Games* trilogy. Trites claims that Collins is manipulating her young readership into a distrust of government by using intertextual references that portray all government as corrupt and autocratic (2014). Clemente notes that the references to the past provide the reader with “revealing contexts”, clues as to where the story might end up, and he suggests that Collins is writing a cautionary tale of contemporary US and urging for youths to take political action (2012). According to Trites and Clemente, Collins uses allusions and intertextual references as a means to convey a subliminal political message. Although I agree with these two authors to some extent, it is my opinion that they rely much too heavily on the notion that readers will identify, understand and interpret the references in a similar fashion, i.e. they base their argument upon the notion that the name Caesar naturally will evoke associations to its original source. However, if the reader is not aware of this name’s origin, such an interpretation will not be automatic. To an uninformed reader, the name Caesar could be as generic as the name Tom. I would therefore like to look into how salient these references are and my aim is to examine the possible ambiguity of the allusions and discuss how it might affect the reader's interpretation of them. I have chosen to discuss Collins' allusive writing by looking at allusive character names and I will limit my examination to the names with a classical source of origin. As Trites discusses in her essay, intertextual references can be used as a device for setting up a discursive context which could have an effect on how the reader then interprets the text (2014: 22). By transferring this argument to the matter of Collins’ classical character names, one might argue that there could be a similar effect in terms of how the reader will interpret the character. That is, if the character most certainly will be associated with a specific person or mythological character, known for certain character traits, physical attributes or actions, it will presumably have an effect on how this character is perceived and interpreted by the reader. However, such an interpretation will most likely be affected by the salience, or possible ambiguity, of the source of origin; and, this factor will be included in this study.

Lastly, I will analyze my results by discussing what importance the reader's knowledge of these references will have for his or her interpretation of the characters and the novel's overriding themes. This discussion will also be related to the core content of the syllabi for English in upper secondary school, and the declining reading literacy among YA in Swedish schools.

Method

“Look it up” is a phrase that I am sure most teachers have uttered on at least one occasion. Whether they are trying to encourage the students' autonomous learning, or they do not know the answer themselves; a dictionary is an apt first source for information. It is important to note that it is a first source i.e. it can provide short and concise information and clues in terms of where to find related articles, but it will not exhaust the subject with history and analyses. I have chosen this method because I consider it the most effective and reliable way to answer my first two research questions. It is also an effective way to limit the search for classical sources, seeing that online search engines can provide contradictory information in terms of which characters could be considered classical, not to mention that such information is difficult to verify. However, I have come to find that search engines, can be a helpful tool when using a dictionary since information about a certain character could be found under a different name. Castor and Pollux, for example, can be found under “D” for “Dioscuri” (Hornblower & Spawforth, 1996).

At this stage, I would like to problematize the information one can find in a classical dictionary. One of my research questions looks at what role previous knowledge plays for the reader's understanding of the series overriding themes, and seeing that women are not represented in an equal way throughout historical writing, one could argue that the female characters will be more difficult to understand in a nuanced way. Although the gender issue is not the main focus of this study, it is important to consider how this can affect the reader's understanding of the characters. It could also have an effect on how male characters are depicted, since the mere quantity of male characters named thus can tell us something about how Collins perceives men. This argument can of course be transferred to other marginalized groups, as well, such as ethnic minorities, people from certain societal classes.

By using a dictionary, I can limit my search and definition of classical names and as a result gain a better overview of the salience of the references. I will look for information about the allusive character names in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (OCD), *The Oxford Dictionary of the Classical World* (ODCW) and *The New Century Classical Handbook* (NCCH). I have chosen these dictionaries based on their reliability and extensive range of classicism; but, seeing that I have limited myself to these sources I will discuss my results with caution. I use these different dictionaries in order to compare the information and reflect upon possible differences. One should also consider the fact that dictionaries are not consistent – which, of course, is why there are more than one available. For example, depending on how a specific dictionary defines the term “classical”, the information included

might differ to some extent. This problem can be illustrated with two allusive character names in *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay*. *Cressida* is a name with a clear connection to myth of the Trojan War. However, the love story between her and Troilus does not appear in Homer's *Iliad* but was presented in the story in the 12th century by Benoît de Sainte-Maure in his poem *Roman de Troie*, and later in Shakespeare's play *Troilus and Cressida* (Avery, 1962: 332-333). *Cressida* is not represented in either *OCD* or *ODCW* and the same goes for *Messalla*, Cressida's assistant in *Mockingjay*. In *NCCH* he is described as a historical individual, a Roman aristocrat, public servant and patron of literature (Avery, 1962:703). There is no obvious explanation as to why he is not included in the *OCD* or *ODCW*. This provides us with yet another example of how the definition of the term will result in different information, and it is likely that the term is defined differently by *OCD*, *ODW* and *NCCH*. The Oxford definition seems to entail a definition of the term that will provide information about the sources that are *from* classical antiquity, whereas the *NCCH*'s definition also includes sources *set in* classical antiquity. For this study, however, I have chosen to use both the Oxford dictionaries as well as *NCCH*, since I will have a wider range of classical sources and can discuss the characters in more nuanced way.

I will categorize the allusive character names in terms of being salient or ambiguous. This is because some allusive character names in *The Hunger Games* have multiple namesakes and the interpretation of a certain character will depend on whom the reader associates the name with. If the name, e.g. Fulvia, only has one source of origin in any of these three dictionaries I will consider it a salient reference; whereas if there are several possible namesakes, I will consider it an ambiguous allusion.

Lastly, I will look to Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital, which he describes as assets in the form of competencies, skills and qualifications specific for a certain field. This theory is mainly used in the sociological field to describe how status, recognition, acknowledgment, titles and degrees give an individual the right to take precedence (Bourdieu, 1991: 127-130). In this study, however, I will refer to it in order to illustrate how skills, e.g. well-developed reading comprehension, and qualifications, as well as prior knowledge of a topic can be of great value for the reader when he or she is interpreting a text. Therefore, I will mainly use Bourdieu's theory in order to describe and discuss such competencies, which otherwise can seem quite abstract and invisible and are often categorized as general knowledge.

Literary review

In the preface of the anthology *Of Bread, Blood and The Hunger Games* Clark writes that she was surprised when she in 2011 realized that very little scholarly work had been produced on *The Hunger Games* trilogy at that point in time. However, she points out that there is a growing interest among academics to discuss the series (Clark et al 2012: 2), and since 2012, the trilogy has been discussed from perspectives such as gender, beauty ideals, politics, space, dystopian fiction, war novels, surveillance society and even food as a cultural metaphor. The subject of allusive writing in *The Hunger Games* trilogy has yet to be exhausted, and although critics will note the allusions and sometimes remark on their relevance for the story, their main focus lies elsewhere. Hanlon, who writes about sociocultural similarities between Southern Appalachia and District 12, notes that the series contains “multilayered allusions to traditions and events, ranging from ancient gladiatorial games in Rome, to poaching in Medieval Europe, to wars and slavery throughout history, to contemporary popular culture” (Hanlon, 2012: 59). Outterson Murphy writes that “[i]f violence in the standard hero myth serves at its core as an allegory for the youth's journey from weakness and victimization to independence and power, then *The Hunger Games* questions that this journey to adulthood is worth pursuing in such a violent world” (Outterson Murphy, 2012: 199). This particular statement is interesting since there is a very real division between adolescence and adulthood in *The Hunger Games* trilogy. Trites suggests that Collins is claiming that the world can only be saved by the young population seeing that they have not yet been corrupted by power (2014: 25), and such a notion of inherent purity with children contrasted with the supposedly corrupt nature of adults can advantageously be compared and discussed in relation to works such as *Lord of the Flies* or *Peter Pan*. In addition to these critics there are those who have written about aspects of intertextual references and thematic parallels between other literary works and *The Hunger Games* (e.g. Eskin, 2012; Pharr, 2012; Henthorne, 2014) but they carry little value for this study.

Instead, I have chosen to draw upon Clemente’s and Trites’ readings of the trilogy seeing that they are both considering the classical references to be a way of portraying misuse of power and that there is a much more subtle political message than the one conveyed by the most immediate plot. Clemente claims that *The Hunger Games* trilogy is a call for political engagement (2012) and, as previously mentioned, he considers Collins' references to the past to be informative in terms Collins’ intentions: “The character's names and other references do, to be sure, incline readers to interpret the story as a future repetition of Rome's inglorious past, but one made more brutal and spectacular through technological devices” (2012: 22). Clemente argues that the allusions to classicism in the trilogy work

as similes for contemporary politics (23). However, in order to make this argument he does not only look to the classical sources. For example, he refers to how Coriolanus Snow poisons his opponents in order to maintain his political power, and by doing so ends up poisoning himself. This, says Clemente, is sure to be a reference to contemporary politicians and their dirty tactics and smear campaigns (23).

In *Some Walks You Have to Take Alone*, Trites addresses Collins' claim that *The Hunger Games* first and foremost is an anti-war novel (2014). Trites, however, states: "Collins relies heavily on intertextuality in *The Hunger Games* series to establish a 'critique of social values' that does far more intricate work than the anti-war agenda she acknowledges" (Trites, 2014: 16). Collins' dystopian intertextual references (e.g. *Lord of the Flies*, and *1984*), says Trites, are used specifically to portray corruption, misuse of power and how political leaders will stop at nothing to maintain their hold on political power (2014: 22). She critiques Collins for manipulating ideology in order to frighten young readers "into a distrust of government" (2014:16). Trites extends this argument by touching upon Collins' use of allusive names, claiming that most of them "evoke [...] gross misuses of power" and she goes on by saying that several of the intertextual references promote violence, or even war, as a political necessity; which in the long run provides the readers with "ideologemes about power and who wields it" (2014: 22). Both Trites and Clemente are highlighting the matter of implied meaning in *The Hunger Games* and they draw attention to what possible consequences it might have on a young readership. However, both critics trust the readers with fairly advanced interpretations and, as I mentioned in the introduction of this study, some readers might not even identify that the allusions exist at all.

Results

The names

In *The Hunger Games* trilogy, there are eighty four named characters (Henthorne, 2012: 166-171). Out of these, there are 20 names that contain a classical allusion as defined in this study: *Aurelius, Brutus, Caesar, Castor, Cato, Cinna, Claudius, Coriolanus, Cressida, Darius, Flavius, Fulvia, Lavinia, Messalla, Octavia, Plutarch, Pollux, Portia, Romulus, and Seneca*; 15 male characters and five female (Hornblower & Spawforth, 1996; Avery, 1962). All but one of the female characters have a salient reference (*Cressida, Fulvia, Lavinia* and *Portia*), whereas the male characters are ambiguous by about 50 percent (*Castor, Coriolanus, Messalla, Plutarch, Pollux, and Romulus*). This means that 11 of the 20 classical characters have a salient reference. When we look at the names with an ambiguous source of origin we find that there are two different Senecas; three Octavias; three Dariuses; four Catos, six Junius Brutuses (two of whom were involved in the assassination of Caius Julius Caesar); and ten different Aureliuses. Furthermore, even if we were to limit the name Caesar to the most famous person who obtained this title, i.e. Julius Caesar, we find no less than 13 different individuals with this name (Hornblower & Spawforth, 1996). It is important to note this vast range of individuals to choose from when one embarks on the quest to interpret the characters from *The Hunger Games*, and it is clear that the reader needs to have some prior knowledge about this era in time in order to identify the most probable namesakes.

The function of the allusive character names seems to work at different levels. At a general level they provide the reader with an aesthetic setting and an inclination as to where the story might end up. However, although the majority of the names with a classical source of origin seem to be in some way connected to the Capitol or the richer districts, there are several characters named thus who are fighting against the cruel government alongside Katniss. Therefore, even though Trites' and Clemente's argument that the classical names evoke "gross misuse of power" is relevant in some ways, we note that Collins in fact illustrates a complex power struggle where citizens from all societal classes are affected by a corrupt system, and actually work together in order to achieve change. At an individual level, some allusions will enhance the characters and can be perceived as quite literal whereas others work at a very subtle level and will demand more attention and knowledge from the reader. Some names will intertwine with other allusions and symbols, which results in a multilayered reading for the observant reader. In the next section of this chapter I will look at some of the allusive character names in order to establish what function they might have and how they could affect the reader's understanding of the story.

Delimitations

The names I have chosen to examine more closely are the following: *Coriolanus*, *Caesar*, *Octavia* and *Fulvia*, *Seneca* and *Plutarch*, *Aurelius*, *Lavinia*, and *Claudius*. The first two names have been chosen because of their close connection to the title of the trilogy, hunger and games, which entails that they can be interpreted in a thematic way. Since there is a literary tradition to put Octavia and Fulvia in contrast to each other, I have chosen to connect them in such a way – and I therefore consider them interesting for this study. Furthermore, Octavia is categorized as ambiguous, and Fulvia as salient, which is important since the reader can choose to either interpret the characters according to the tradition, or discard the connection between these names. The same can be said about Seneca and Plutarch, who the reader can choose to interpret them as a unit or individually. They are also quite conspicuous since both the characters from the trilogy, as well as the historical individuals, share similar characters traits and professions. Finally, Aurelius, Lavinia and Claudius have been chosen to illustrate how some allusive names work on a very subtle level.

Coriolanus

The obvious antagonist of the trilogy - Coriolanus Snow, better known as President Snow is the ruler President of Panem and a corrupt politician if there ever were one. Caius Marcius Coriolanus, who is considered to be a historical person, was a Roman aristocrat and general who suggested that grain should be withheld from the plebs during a grain shortage and insisted that the grain belonged to the patricians. He was accused of being autocratic and forced to leave Rome (Hornblower & Spawforth, 1996: 338), much like Coriolanus Snow who is eventually overthrown and killed. This allusive name can be interpreted in a fairly literal way, seeing that Coriolanus Snow share both important character traits and major life events with his namesake. However, the name also works at different levels and provides interesting information about other aspects of the book. For example, Coriolanus Snow's control of the resources in Panem can easily be connected to Caius Marcius Coriolanus and his thoughts about how to distribute the grain between the plebs and patricians. In turn “grain” lets us notice the many references to bread throughout the series, understand its symbolic value in *The Hunger Games* trilogy, and, by extension, we are provided with clues as to how we can interpret some of the overriding themes of the series e.g. re-distributive politics and inequality.

Inequality between the districts and the Capitol is of course a vital part of the story in *The Hunger Games*: a large number of the people in the districts are starving due to unjust distribution of resources, and, although the abundance of the Capitol is portrayed in several different ways, the most

significant symbol of wealth and prosperity is food – and in specific bread. Katniss' love interest and fellow tribute, Peeta Mellark, is a baker. In *The Hunger Games*, when they meet on the day of the reaping - the day when the tributes are chosen for the games - Katniss recalls that he gave her a loaf of burnt bread when she was starving, and she consequently refers to him as “the boy with the bread” (Collins, 2008). Another boy with bread is Katniss' best friend Gale Hawthorne who, on the morning of the reaping, shares a freshly baked roll with Katniss. The word “Panem” is Latin for “bread” and is very likely a reference to the 10th satire of the Roman poet Juvenal and the expression “panem et circences” - bread and games. The expression describes how common people would give up influence, responsibility and power, so long as they were distracted with instant material satisfaction (G.G. Ramsay).

In a conversation between Plutarch Heavensbee and Katniss Everdeen, Plutarch describes this expression by relating it to the function of the twelve districts: “The writer was saying that in return for full bellies and entertainment, his people had given up their political responsibilities and therefore power”, to which Katniss responds: “So that’s what the districts are for. To provide the bread and circuses” (Collins, 2010: 223-224). Katniss' response gives us some reason to believe that the citizens of the Capitol are the equivalent of the patricians in ancient Rome. They are rich, extravagant, and have forfeited their civic responsibility in exchange for a life in abundance and distraction from the inequalities of Panem. However, it is not just the citizens of the Capitol who forfeit their power for bread: in *The Hunger Games*, Katniss explains the function of so called “tessera”¹ and how they affect the lottery for the Hunger Games. Children who are “of age” for the games can apply for tesserae. In exchange for each tessera they apply for, their name will be added to the lottery and thus the odds are against them come reaping day. This system is especially disadvantageous for children from the poor districts, since they basically do not have a choice in the matter due to the fact that their families would otherwise starve. Trites considers this a warning to the American people to avoid becoming dependent on “governmental handouts”, which of course is interesting from a political point of view and the reader's perception of well-fare programs (2014: 23). As a final reference to grain and bread, the implied meaning of the agricultural reference “the reaping” sends a clear message to the people: “You reap what you sew”, meaning, the atrocities that your children will be subjected to are a consequence of the first rebellion and are therefore your fault (Collins, 2008: 16).

¹ A year's supply of grain and oil for one person, provided by the government (Collins, 2008: 16)

Caesar

Given that the most salient connection between Coriolanus Snow and Caius Marcius Coriolanus is the power over resources which are symbolized by grain and bread in *The Hunger Games* trilogy, a similar connection can be seen between Caesar and the games. Gladiatorial games were a common event during the antiquity but the most spectacular and infamous games were held in the Colosseum: the enormous amphitheater which is easy to associate with “the arena” in *The Hunger Games*. However, the “tributes” and the complex design of “the arena” in *The Hunger Games* can also be associated with the labyrinth in the myth about Theseus and the Minotaur, which incidentally inspired Collins whilst writing the trilogy (Margolis, 2008). In the myth, King Minos revenges the death of his son by offering seven youths and seven maidens – tributes – to the Minotaur in the labyrinth (Hornblower and Spawforth, 1996: 1508). Theseus kills the Minotaur and escapes the labyrinth with some assistance from Minos’ daughter. Similarities can also be found between Collins’ tributes and those who actually fought in Colosseum, some of which were prisoners of war and condemned criminals but also “professional fighters”, slaves or volunteers (Hornblower and Spawforth, 1996: 638).² The gladiatorial games in Colosseum were sometimes overseen by the Caesar. 'Caesar' is a title from the classical period and can therefore be associated with many individuals, but a more likely interpretation is “a man of great power”. If, however, we were to seek out one particular individual with this name; Caius Julius Caesar, the self-proclaimed eternal dictator of Rome, is the most common result on search engines such as Google and also explicitly singled out by the *OCD*. If interpreted in this manner, the name indicates the fall of an empire which of course is applicable to the overriding story in *The Hunger Games*. Caesar Flickerman is the flamboyant host of the TV-show broadcasting the Hunger Games (Collins, 2008). In the Capitol, the Hunger Games are somewhat of a national holiday and a time for the privileged citizens to rejoice in the annual celebration of the suppressed first rebellion. Caesar Flickerman plays an important role in portraying this event as festive and entertaining, and, although he has the difficult task of interviewing the petrified children who are most likely about die, he manages to put a positive spin on anything they might say. Caesar's contrived happy manners, the general grandeur of the milieu surrounding the show, the tributes who are dressed up in highly glamorous costumes and paraded in front of the citizens of the Capitol and President Snow, these are all strategies used to distract the people from the cruelties that are showcased right in front of them. Caesar Flickerman's character does, however, alter in a very real way during the trilogy. In the first two books he is described as an almost clown like character, with his colorful hair and lips and his exaggerated ways; whereas in the third book, he is becoming a more and more important tool in enabling President Snow to use scare tactics

²Children from the richer districts in the Hunger Games train their young, who then volunteer when they turn 18 (Collins, 2008)

and spread propaganda through the show, which is mandatory for all citizens to watch.³ This becomes especially clear in *Mockingjay* when Caesar interviews the captured and tortured Peeta Mellark who is manipulated to oppose the new rebellion:

"Is there anything you'd like to tell her?" asks Caesar.

"There is," says Peeta. He looks directly into the camera, right into my eyes. "Don't be a fool, Katniss. Think for yourself. They've turned you into a weapon that could be instrumental in the destruction of humanity. If you've got any real influence, use it to put the brakes on this thing. Use it to stop the war before it's too late. Ask yourself, do you really trust the people you're working with? Do you really know what's going on? And if you don't... find out. Black screen. Seal of Panem. Show over." (Collins, 2010: 113).

Although Caesar could be interpreted as a man of immense power, Flickerman is merely a pawn of a much larger scheme. As the colorful and charming face of the games, his presence creates a diversion from President Snow and the notion that the games are a political strategy to suppress the people of Panem. Caesar Flickerman is not the emperor of Panem and there is no mention of his political influence on the occurring events. Instead, his charismatic personality is used to influence the opinion of the people, much like the leader of a party in our contemporary time. The idea of Caesar being informed and manipulated by advisers and stakeholders illustrates this "man of power" as a marionette of sorts; a man that can be instructed what to do, what to say and how to act in order to win over the people. In relation to the historical Caesars who ruled Rome, this allusion creates interesting questions in terms of what power is and who is in control of it.

Octavia and Fulvia

The name Caesar is quite interesting since it is intertwined with several of the other allusive character names, some of which illustrate the power struggle in ancient Rome while others show how marriage and other family ties were important to sustain the grasp of power. The aspect of intertwining allusions also occurs among other names, and knowledge of their connection can be important for the reader when it comes to interpreting their function in the books. For example, Octavia and Fulvia are often

³This mandatory TV-program is likely a reference to Orwell's *1984*.

portrayed in literature as each other's opposites in terms of character. They were both wives of Mark Antony, although Octavia divorced him in 32 B.C (Avery, 1962: 486; 760). After the divorce, Octavia did not want to leave him, chose to stay with him and raised his children by Fulvia and Cleopatra. Octavia was therefore regarded as kind and virtuous and "[h]er nobility, humanity, and loyalty won her wide esteem and sympathy" (Roberts, 2005: 510). Fulvia, on the other hand, was very active in politics but shifted her loyalty from Mark Antony to his brother. According to *OCD* she also secured her wealth by grabbing all sorts of riches during the proscriptions.⁴ She was subjected to malicious propaganda and was later regarded as "[...] the type of the wicked matron, contrasted with the virtuous Octavia" (Roberts, 2005: 298). Fulvia only appears in *Mockingjay* as the calculating assistant of Plutarch Heavensbee and she can definitely be interpreted as a person who is active in politics. In many ways she is manipulative and her main objective is to use Katniss as a tool for the revolution against President Snow:

"Plutarch and I have been talking about how on earth we can pull this off. We think that it might be best to build you, our rebel leader, from the outside...in. That is to say, let's find the most stunning Mockingjay look possible, and then work your personality up to deserving it!" she says brightly (Collins, 2010: 44).

In contrast to her, we find Octavia who is part of Katniss' prep team in the 74th and 75th Hunger Games. Octavia first appears in *The Hunger Games*. She is friendly but oblivious the fact that not all citizens perceive the Hunger Games in the festive way she does. As opposed to Fulvia, Octavia has no particular agency in the first books. She is, like the majority of the citizens in the Capitol, seduced by the games and she does not reflect upon what they actually mean. However, her opinion starts to change in *Catching Fire* when she learns that Katniss is forced to partake in the games yet again, which of course makes her very upset. Octavia, who is later kept as a captive by the rebels in District 13, gains agency in *Mockingjay* in her loyalty to Katniss. The kidnapping of the prep team is part of Plutarch's and Fulvia's plan to create so called "propos".⁵ As the quote by Fulvia suggests Katniss is the symbol of the revolution and her appearance is of the utmost importance. Seeing that Katniss is quite deformed after partaking in the Hunger Games not once, but twice, she is in dire need of a prep team to make her look beautiful. However, the state in which Katniss finds her prep team makes her furious, and again we sympathize with Octavia rather than Fulvia:

⁴A banishment or murder en masse

⁵A type of short propaganda movies

That's my chance. I dart around the distracted guard, push open the door marked 3908, and find them. Half-naked, bruised, and shackled to the wall. My prep team.

The stink of unwashed bodies, stale urine, and infection breaks through the cloud of antiseptic. The three figures are only just recognizable by their most striking fashion choices: Venia's gold facial tattoos. Flavius's orange corkscrew curls. Octavia's light evergreen skin, which now hangs too loosely, as if her body were a slowly deflating balloon. (Collins, 2010: 47)

In *The Hunger Games* trilogy, Octavia and Fulvia only appear together in the last book and it is clear that they are contrasted against each other according to the literary tradition. Octavia is almost impossibly naive but incredibly kind, well-meaning and loyal, whereas Fulvia in her ambition is portrayed as cynical, intelligent and indifferent. These two allusive names are interesting seeing that they only intertwine in the end of the trilogy and as a consequence we are presented with a whole new aspect of how to interpret these characters. It is, however, not obvious that knowledge of this traditional literary pairing of Octavia and Fulvia is important for the reader's understanding of these particular characters and their function in the books. Seeing that Octavia is categorized as ambiguous in this study, we can interpret her individually and thereby separate her from this pairing. If we choose to consider her other namesakes, Claudia Octavia or the daughter of Octavius and Ancharia, we find that the allusion is not as clear in terms of how it can be interpreted. In this case the reference's main task is to inform the reader of the character's origin, i.e. the center of power – the Capitol. Having said that, Claudia Octavia was married to Nero, who divorced her, sent her to live in Campania under surveillance and had her killed in the end (Hornblower & Spawforth, 1996:33). As we will discuss later on in this chapter, Seneca the younger was accused of conspiring against Nero, which indicates that Nero is a symbol for the corrupt powers in the Capitol. This reference could provide the reader with a sense of uncertainty, seeing that they are never quite sure of who is on whose side.

However, in my opinion, the first named connection between Octavia and Fulvia is by far the most convincing one – seeing that it complies with the character traits of the ones in the trilogy. It also complies with a tendency of portraying female characters as fairly one-dimensional, either “good” or “bad”, which is interesting in terms of how we interpret female characters with agency or, as in Fulvia's case, political ambition.

Subtle references

Lastly, we will look at how some of these allusive character names can carry significance on a very subtle level. In similarity to the “postponed” relation between Octavia and Fulvia, i.e. that Fulvia does not appear until the last book, we note two additional characters that are connected in such a way: Seneca Crane and Plutarch Heavensbee. These characters are quite interesting, seeing that they invite the reader to interpret them both individually as well as a unit. Seneca Crane is the so-called head gamemaker of the 74th Hunger Games, the producer of the actual game. The name Seneca is categorized as ambiguous in this study, but there are good reasons to believe that his namesake is Seneca the Younger; the philosopher who tutored the infamous emperor Nero. Seneca was accused of conspiring against Nero and he was therefore forced to commit suicide (1996: 96-98). In *Catching Fire*, it is implied that Seneca Crane was forced to commit suicide, as Plutarch informs Katniss that he “decided to stop breathing” (Collins, 2009). The reason for this enforced suicide is of course the fact that Katniss manages to manipulate the games, which results in both her and Peeta winning the game. Since this is regarded as an act of rebellion by President Snow, Crane is deemed responsible and consequently killed. It is probably safe to say that this reference can be interpreted as quite literal and readers would therefore understand that this particular character is not going to have a happy ending. However, on a more subtle note, Seneca the Younger in fact opposed the gladiatorial games in ancient Rome and writes in *Moral Letters to Lucilius (VII On crowds)*:

But nothing is so damaging to good character as the habit of lounging at the games; for then it is that vice steals subtly upon one through the avenue of pleasure. [...] I come home more greedy, more ambitious, more voluptuous, and even more cruel and inhuman, because I have been among human beings. By chance I attended a mid-day exhibition, expecting some fun, wit, and relaxation, – an exhibition at which men's eyes have respite from the slaughter of their fellow-men. But it was quite the reverse. [...] What is the need of defensive armor, or of skill? All these mean delaying death. In the morning they throw men to the lions and the bears; at noon, they throw them to the spectators. The spectators demand that the slayer shall face the man who is to slay him in his turn; and they always reserve the latest conqueror for another butchering. [...] You may retort: "But he was a highway robber; he killed a man!" And what of it? Granted that, as a murderer, he deserved this punishment, what crime have you committed, poor fellow, that you should deserve to sit and see this show? (Gummere)

Although Seneca's letter is mainly discussing the risk of a man's moral decline if he is subjected to a large crowd, this text gives us every reason to believe that he took no pleasure in watching the gladiatorial games. This information provides the reader with subtle irony, and by extension we are provided with even more subtle irony when we consider his 20th letter *On Practicing What you Preach* where he writes “[...] let wisdom sink into your soul, and test your progress, not by mere speech or writings, but by stoutness of heart and decrease of desire. Prove your words by your deeds.” (Gummere).

Plutarch Heavensbee first appears in *Catching Fire* as Seneca Crane's replacement as head gamemaker, although it is not his first time around the block. No, Heavensbee has been head gamemaker before and is making somewhat of a comeback. Interestingly enough, Plutarch who was a priest and essayist, was also a famous philosopher and there are quite interesting and subtle references in the trilogy to his work (Hornblower & Spawforth, 1996: 1200-1201). For example, Heavensbee's comeback is not as innocent as we are first led to believe. In fact, it is his very conscious goal to free Katniss, make the most of her support from the people and let her be the symbol of the pending revolution (Collins, 2010: 44). But in order to achieve this goal he needs to go undercover, or as it were, live parallel lives. This allusion could be understood on an incredibly subtle level since Plutarch's work *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* is commonly referred to as *Parallel lives*. This work includes biographies of such famous men as Coriolanus, Romulus, Theseus and Cato among others, which of course is interesting for further exploration of these allusive names (Dryden). Furthermore, in *Rules for Politicians*, Plutarch offers advice to a young man who is about to enter politics (Hornblower & Spawforth, 1996:1201), which resembles Heavensbee's relationship to Katniss Everdeen whom he is grooming for the rebellion. Finally, seeing that both Seneca and Plutarch are head gamemakers in the books and both of their namesakes were philosophers in real life, there are good reasons to believe that Collins has made this connection consciously and that it carries some significance for how the reader should interpret the characters.

Other subtle allusions can be found among different characters. For example, we have Dr. Aurelius who only appears very briefly in *Mockingjay*, where he is a psychiatrist of sorts who works with Katniss after her traumatic loss of her sister, Primrose. The most famous namesake to Dr. Aurelius is the emperor Marcus Aurelius who reigned in 161 – 180 AD. After a military victory in Media, Marcus Aurelius was titled “Medicus”, which incidentally is the Latin word for physician (Hornblower & Spawforth, 1996: 219-222). Lavinia, a so-called Avox⁶ who is identified by Katniss as someone who was captured in the forest outside of her village, does have a classical source of origin. However, the

⁶Someone who has gotten their tongue cut out (Collins, 2008).

fact that her tongue is cut out lets us believe that her namesake can be found in Shakespeare's play *Titus Andronicus* where Lavinia, the daughter of Titus, who is raped and mutilated by sons of the Gothic Queen. This very subtle reference to her tongue could be considered as important information for the reader's ability to identify the most probable namesake, but could just as easily be overlooked. In *The Hunger Games*, Lavinia carries little value for the story's development but she is recognized in the Capitol – where she functions as a servant to the tributes – by Katniss as someone who was trying to escape from one of the poor districts. This attempted breakaway was a failure, and the cause for her mutilation (Collins, 2008). For me, this allusion is interesting, seeing that I failed to completely understand if and how this name informs the reader's interpretation of the character. A possible interpretation could be that we are supposed to apprehend the fate of the Gothic Princes, the fact that they are murdered, turned into a savory pie and served to their own mother the Queen. In this case, the reader will be aware that vengeance will come.

Lastly, Claudius Templesmith the official announcer of The Hunger Games is the one who announces the victors of the 74th Hunger Games i.e. Katniss and Peeta (Collins, 2008: 186-187). Later on, in *Mockingjay*, Cressida hijacks his voice and uses it to announce “the girl on fire” in one of District 13's propos:

The image of my mockingjay pin emerges, glowing red-gold. The deep, resonant voice that haunts my dreams begins to speak. Claudius Templesmith, the official announcer of the Hunger Games, says, "Katniss Everdeen, the girl who was on fire, burns on." [...] "Is Claudius Templesmith with us?" I ask. This gives Plutarch a good laugh. "Only his voice. But that's ours for the taking." (Collins, 2010: 186-187).

Templesmith has a famous namesake in Tiberius Claudius (Claudius I) who supposedly and ironically enough, had a speech impediment (Hornblower & Spawforth, 1996:338). This allusion could be illustrating the notion of how some people, people of power or influence, possess an arena of sorts where they can be heard; and with such an arena comes responsibility. The fact that Plutarch implies that Claudius voice is theirs “for the taking” lets us understand that an individual who has been given a platform where he or she could speak up, better cherish it or lose it. This interpretation could of course be associated to modern day politicians, TV-hosts, artists, or anyone in possession of a voice and a stage. Considering the subtle allusion to Claudius' speech impediment, Templesmith could be interpreted as someone who is not in control of his own voice; an interpretation that is strengthened by Plutarch's remark to Katniss.

Summary of the Results

When I first began this study, I thought I would find that almost every character's name had a classical source of origin. I was therefore surprised to find that only 20 out of 84 named characters had a classical namesake. Of these, an equal amount have a salient or an ambiguous reference. The salience of a character's namesake can play an important part in how precise and relevant the interpretations of the story will be. The allusive names with a salient reference do in fact contain information that can provide the reader with a wider and more complex understanding of the characters as well as other allusions and allegories in the series. The reader can also draw conclusions regarding their function in the book, and draw parallels to our contemporary society and thus attempt to decode the author's intentions and point of view. It is important to note that the writer does not hold the key to the correct interpretation – but, as mentioned before, the reader should be aware of how “language is used as an instrument to exercise power” in order to not be manipulated by the writer. Also, it is vital to be open for a multitude of interpretations of a text, in order to understand it from different perspectives.

During this study, I also found that several other characters such as Katniss, Primrose, Buttercup, were named after plants that grow wild in nature. I took note of this distinction, since it divided people from the poor districts and those from the Capitol or the richer districts. It would be interesting to examine if different categories of allusive names could play different roles for how we interpret the story and characters. It could, for example, have importance for how we interpret Collins' view on class and power. I have come to consider the allusive character names as quite conspicuous in themselves, but combined with the other allegories and allusions in the trilogy, they build on the more obvious storyline and let the reader understand the sequence of events from very different perspectives.

As Trites and Clemente claim, the classical names will evoke certain associations. Both critics, and Trites in particular, suggest that these classical names represent corrupted power and extravagance. This, however, must be contradicted to some extent seeing that not all of Collins' characters possess, or even desire, power. As previously mentioned, this could instead be seen as a complex power struggle where people from all societal classes and backgrounds work together in order to overthrow a corrupt government. With this I mean to say that one cannot only consider the source of origin, but that one must take note of how the classical name will contribute to the interpretation of the character, and if it is written in a literal, ironic or contradictory way for example. Another aspect, which might very well have a great effect on the reader's interpretation, is the representation of male and female characters. They are in no way equal, with 15 male and five female characters named after classical people, where

the male characters are people whose namesakes have been men of power or influence or even gods; the female characters are mainly represented by wives or relatives to powerful men, and cannot be said to have much agency. The fact that there are several mythological and historical women from this era in time with far more pronounced characteristics than the ones we find in *The Hunger Games* leads us to question why Collins has made the choices she has made whilst naming her characters.

Discussion

In this section of the essay I will focus on my third research question, and discuss how important the reader's knowledge of these references is for his or her interpretation of the characters and the novel's overriding themes. This discussion will relate to the ability to understand implied meaning, as specified in the core content for English 6. In the National agency for Education's summary of the OECD's international study PISA from 2012, we find that reading literacy⁷ has declined rapidly and severely among Swedish lower secondary students (Skolverket, 2012: 12). Those in the fifth percentile have dropped the most (56 points since 2000), compared to the students in the 95th percentile who have only dropped by ten points in the same time span (12). The study also shows that the gap between boys' and girls' reading literacy has significantly increased in favor of the girls (13). Although these results cannot be directly transferred to upper secondary students, it is important to consider this development since it is very likely that it will have consequences for the English language teaching.

Understanding implied meaning in *The Hunger Games*

Reading is an active process where the reader constructs meaning from his or her own previous experiences and expectations. The words will create images and perceptions that go way beyond their literal meaning. In order to understand a text the reader needs an understanding of the background and prior knowledge of the subject that the text concerns (my translation, Lundahl, 2007: 21).

Lundahl illustrates how reading comprehension develops from sociocultural learning processes, seeing that every individual's interpretation will be affected by the social context he or she is a part of. In addition to prior knowledge, factors such as education, personality traits, gender, life experiences as well as religious beliefs and political views will affect the reader's interpretation of a text (Wolf, 2002: 19).

Hedge describes how the reader, in the process of making sense of a text, will have to look at the "combined information from the text and the knowledge [...]" he or she brought with him or her. She says that reading can be seen as a dialogue between the reader, the text and the author; and, she points to the difference of trying to make personal sense of a text and trying to understand the

⁷ According to OECD and PISA, this term entails more than just reading comprehension or literacy, i.e. it is a broader term than reading comprehension.

intentions of the writer (2000: 188). These scholars describe the process of reading in a very similar way, and their arguments are quite relevant when we discuss if the reader's knowledge of these classical allusions will affect their ability to fully understand and interpret the text.

In order to discuss the possible didactic implications of reading *The Hunger Games* in the L2 classroom, we will look at Bourdieu's theory about cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1991: 127), i.e. assets in the form of competencies, skills and qualifications specific for a certain field. Although Bourdieu's arguments about capital are often more relevant to sociological matters such as status, recognition, acknowledgment, titles, degrees, who is allowed to say what and on what authority. (Bourdieu, 1991: 127-130), I consider this theory to be applicable for two reasons. My first argument for applying Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital on the results of this study, is the matter of "prior knowledge" as described by Lundahl above. This is quite difficult to discuss, seeing that this study is not providing any concrete information on student's knowledge of the allusive names with a classical source of origin. However, the syllabi for English do not mention any specific facts that should be taught or which texts to read, which, of course, is mainly positive since it promotes a learning situation that focuses on *how* we learn, rather than *what* we learn and, in doing so, it arguably prevents the forming of cultural hierarchies or a cultural canon. Having said that, we need to consider the arguments made by Lundahl, Wolf and Hedge, claiming that a reader's prior knowledge and understanding of the background is important in order to comprehend and problematize the content of a text. The allusive writing in *The Hunger Games* trilogy should primarily be seen as an example of how seemingly insignificant details in a text, in fact, can contain information that affect the reader's interpretation and understanding. Another text might contain certain terminology, historical facts or statistics, which the reader must be able to identify, verify and analyze in order to deepen his or her understanding of the text. An extensive English vocabulary can also be considered as an asset in terms of prior knowledge. Therefore, I consider it apt to categorize prior knowledge of a subject as cultural capital, which very could very likely be related to issues such as class, social background, gender, reading habits etc. If we look at it from such a perspective, I suggest that it becomes more important for schools to act in a compensatory way, and bridge the possible knowledge gap between groups of students.

The core content and the knowledge requirements of the syllabi for English state which skills and abilities the students are supposed to learn (Skolverket, 2011). Such skills and abilities could, in my opinion, advantageously be compared to the theory of cultural capital, seeing that students who acquire these competencies will have greater possibilities to partake in society; and this is my second reason for referring to Bourdieu. As Bråten (2008) states, reading comprehension is a competency of the utmost importance. It is vital to learn how to understand and interpret a text, in order to fully function in the

workplace as well as in society. He claims that in order for citizens to partake in the democratic process, form their own opinions and influence decision making, it is incredibly important that they understand what they read and how a text could be written in a way to influence their interpretation (Bråten, 2008: 11). However, the ability to understand “[h]ow stylistics and rhetorical devices are used for different purposes and how language is used as an instrument to exercise power” (Skolverket, 2011: 11), is not specified as core content before English 7. Based on Trites’ and Clemente’s claim that Collins is communicating a subliminal political message by the use of intertextual references – which could be categorized as an instrument to exercise power, I argue that Collins’ allusive writing could be discussed in relation to this, seeing that prior knowledge of the classical references is indeed necessary for the reader (i.e. the student) in order to interpret the story thus.

It is, therefore, important for teachers to plan their lessons in order to target these types of reading skills. By practicing extensive and intensive reading, and by providing the students with pre-, during-, and post reading exercises, e.g. creating glossaries of the words they do not recognize, teachers can help the students obtain the habit to reflect upon these things whilst reading.

Conclusion

In this essay I have found that the allusive writing in *The Hunger Games* trilogy, in fact, does provide the reader with a greater understanding for Collins' intentions and political point of view. By contrasting the classical allusions and allegories with a futuristic society, Collins lets the reader understand that history repeats itself, and that it is the responsibility of the people to stand up against corruption and abuse of power. However, this message is to a great extent hidden in the allusions, as Trites and Clemente state, which indicates that the ability to understand implied meaning is of great importance when reading *The Hunger Games*. By being able to identify and understand subtle references - be they allusions, allegories, historical comparisons, vocabulary or terminology, the reader will be able to detect implied meaning in a text and thereby avoid being manipulated by the author. Seeing that reading literacy is declining and that there is a divide between different groups of students, we need to consider the democratic benefits of reading comprehension, as defined by Bråten. This division could entail that certain groups in society will be left out of the democratic processes, and that we risk cementing already existing inequalities in society. The English language is becoming increasingly common in the workplace as well as in educational programs, international collaborations, media, and social media. We therefore need to discuss possible consequences of the fact that the only mandatory course in English for all programs at Swedish upper secondary schools is English 5 in which none of the abilities discussed in this essay are specified as core content. If reading comprehension, in fact, is important in order for a citizen to partake in society, there could be very real consequences for those who have not been able to practice certain aspects of their reading literacy in the L2 classroom. In my opinion, it is, therefore, vital that we discuss whether all English courses should contain a paragraph stating the importance of understanding implied meaning, or if, in fact, all English courses should be mandatory.

Lastly, and a little more optimistically, by encouraging students to broaden and deepen their knowledge, stimulating the desire to understand a subject by examining it from different perspectives, we can strive to let our students come to the following notion, as described by Langer:

The exploration of horizons of possibilities lies at the heart of literary experience. Here, the use of the word "horizon" is critical, referring to the fact that horizons never lead to endings but continually advance whenever a person (reader) takes a step toward the horizon (moving toward closure), the horizon itself shifts (and other possibilities are revealed for

the reader to explore). (Langer as cited by Wolf, 2002: 147)

References

- Avery, Catherine, *The New Century Classical Handbook*, 1962. Appleton-Century-Crofts, INC. Print
- Collins, Suzanne, *The Hunger Games*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2008.
- Collins, Suzanne, *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2009.
- Collins, Suzanne, *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2010.
- Clemente, Bill, *Panem in America: Crisis Economics and a Call for Political Engagement*, in Clark, Leisa. A, Pharr, Mary. F, Palumbo, and Donald. E, *Of Bread, Blood and The Hunger Games: Critical essays on the Suzanne Collins trilogy*. Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2012. PDF.
- Clark, Leisa. A, Pharr, Mary. F, Palumbo, and Donald. E, *Of Bread, Blood and The Hunger Games: Critical Essays on the Suzanne Collins Trilogy*. Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2012. PDF.
- Delahunty, Andrew, Didgnan, Sheila, Stock, Penny, *The Oxford Dictionary of Allusions*, Oxford University Press. 2001. PDF.
- Dryden, John, *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, 1992. Online resource, retrieved at: [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Lives_\(Dryden_translation\)](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Lives_(Dryden_translation))
- Gummere Mott, Richard, *Moral Letters to Lucilius*. 1917. Online resource, retrieved at: http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Moral_letters_to_Lucilius
- Hanlon, L. Tina, *Coal Dust and Ballads: Appalachia and District 12*, in Clark, Leisa. A, Pharr, Mary. F, Palumbo, and Donald. E, *Of Bread, Blood and The Hunger Games: Critical Essays on the Suzanne Collins Trilogy*. Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2012. PDF.
- Hedge, Tricia, *Teaching and Learning in the English Classroom: A Guide to Current Ideas About the Theory and Practice of English Language Teaching*. OUP Oxford. 2000. Print.
- Henthorne, Tom, *Approaching the Hunger Games: A literary and Cultural Analysis*. PDF

- Hornblower, Simon, Spawforth, Anthony (ed.), *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edition. Oxford University press, Inc.: USA. 1996. Print
- Lundahl, Bo, *Läsa på främmande språk*. Malmö: Holmbergs, 2007. Print.
- Margolis, Rick, *A Killer Story: An Interview with Suzanne Collins, Author of 'The Hunger Games'*, School Library Journal. September 1st, 2008.
- Mydans, Seth, *Thai Protesters Are Detained After Using 'Hunger Games' Salute*. New York Times, November 20th. New York, 2014.
- Outterson Murphy, Sarah, *The Child Soldier and the Self in Ender's Game and The Hunger Games*, in Clark, Leisa. A, Pharr, Mary. F, Palumbo, and Donald. E, *Of Bread, Blood and The Hunger Games: Critical essays on the Suzanne Collins Trilogy*. Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2012. PDF.
- Ramsay, G.G, *16 Satires*. 1918. Online resource, retrieved at:
http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/juvenal_satires_10.html
- Roberts, John (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of the Classical World*, New York. 2005. Print
- Scott Curwood, Jen, *The Hunger Games: Literature, Literacy and Online Affinity Spaces*. Language Arts, Volume 90 Number 6, July 2013. National Council of Teachers of English. PDF
- Skolverket, *Sammanfattning av rapport 398, 2013: PISA 2012: 15-åringars kunskaper i matematik, läsförståelse och naturvetenskap*. Sweden: Elanders Sverige AB, 2013. PDF.
- Skolverket, *Syllabus for English at Upper Secondary school*, Sweden: 2011. PDF
- Trites, S. Roberta, *Some Walks You Have to Take Alone*, in Connors, Sean. P. (Ed), *The Politics of Panem: Challenging Genres*. Sense Publishers, 2014. PDF.
- Wolf, Lars. *Läsaren som textskapare*. Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2002. Print.