

On the Hunger Games III

Something that this series, as well as previous ones like *John Carter* and *Carson Napier*, has taught me is the importance of extending empathy to those who have been raised to regard certain actions, say forcing people to participate in a game where they must kill everyone else to win, as not wrong. There's a scene in the third book where Katniss defends the members of her Capitol prep team (make-up, wardrobe) to Gale, who remarks to the effect that they disgust him as residents of the Capitol who love the Games. She tells him that they are like children who don't know any better and don't deserve his scorn. Indeed, I am sure they were themselves victims of intense Capitol indoctrination from the time they could talk to see the Games as good and right and necessary. When we see evil actions, we shouldn't be so quick to judge the evil-doer. He or she are most likely following their cultural programming, developed most likely by those who were likewise culturally programmed. Abuse is cyclical. Empathy, that is, putting yourself in another's place and trying to view the world through their mind, can go along way to understanding someone's suffering, whether that someone is an Adolf Hitler or your neighbor with a Republican Party sign in their front yard. This has been the slowest thing for me to learn. And that's today's two cents.

Skyler.