

Blood and Ball Gowns

The girl warrior and the problem of femininity in recent young adult literature.

Blood and Ball Gowns focuses on the signifiers of ball gowns and other feminising tropes as significant boundaries to be negotiated by girl warriors in recent young adult literature. The girl warrior appears to capitalise on, and embody female empowerment, occupying the agentic protagonist role, but at the same time must navigate significant constraints on that agency. This presentation examines transformational narrative moments in Suzanne Collin's, *The Hunger Games* trilogy and John Marsden's *Tomorrow When the War Began* series for the limitations and opportunities they offer girl warriors in conforming to or resisting gender expectations, and how this informs a response to power and authority.