

IN MOVIES, ALL ROADS LEAD TO 'THE HUNGER GAMES'

Though wildly imaginative, "The Hunger Games" covers some pretty well-traveled storytelling territory. • A sassy heroine caught between two handsome men? Katharine Hepburn did that in 1940 in "The Philadelphia Story." • A dystopian future controlled by omnipotent government? More than 70 movies – from the 1927 Fritz Lang classic "Metropolis" to Japan's version of "The Hunger Games," the critically acclaimed "Battle Royale" – portray the future as a scary place devoid of freedom, food and (have you noticed?) fashion. • But don't call "The Hunger Games" derivative. Director Gary Ross employs the archetypes, tropes and themes to create a new world that's more than the sum of its parts. Here, we find the connections between "The Hunger Games" and its cinematic predecessors. BY DIANE TOROIAN KEAGGY / ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

