



## **Bakalářská práce**

# **From the Ashes we Rise: Television Fan Culture and The 100.**

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na vzdělávání

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## Zadání bakalářské práce

# From the Ashes we Rise: Television Fan Culture and The 100.

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## Zásady pro vypracování:

This thesis proposes to study the dynamics of specific formations of fandom around the post apocalyptic CW television series 'The 100'. It starts out from the observation that the series (both the books and the television adaptation) draws on a variety of genres and therefore displays a great deal of hybridity, which, conversely, pre-defines the types of fans that will be drawn to the show. My Bachelor thesis therefore studies fandom behavior, aesthetic and narrative preferences, and participatory behaviour in specific fan groups on social media platforms (especially Facebook). The thesis aims to answer some questions like how audiences see The 100 a few years after it ended and how the fandom developed and changed over the years – not least along the lines of generic hybridity. The research will be based mainly on audience research and textual analysis

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# Poděkování

Mé poděkování patří Dávid Levente Palatinovi, Ph.D., za cenné rady, věcné připomínky a vstřícnost při konzultacích a vypracování bakalářské práce. Děkuji také mé rodině a partnerovi za jejich plnou podporu, pochopení a trpělivost během celého studia.

# Anotace

Tato práce se zabývá dynamikou specifických formací fandomu kolem postapokalyptického televizního seriálu stanice CW *Prvních 100*. Vychází ze zjištění, že seriál (knihy i televizní adaptace) čerpá z různých žánrů, a vykazuje tedy velkou míru hybridnosti, což předurčuje typy fanoušků, které seriál přitáhne. Moje bakalářská práce se proto zabývá studiem fanouškovského chování, estetických a narativních preferencí a participativního chování ve specifických skupinách fanoušků na platformách sociálních médií (zejména na Facebooku). Cílem práce je odpovědět na některé otázky, například jak diváci vnímají seriál *Prvních 100* několik let po jeho skončení a jak se fanouškovská základna v průběhu let vyvíjela a měnila - v neposlední řadě i po linii generické hybridity. Výzkum bude založen především na průzkumu publika a analýze textů.

## Klíčová slova:

Prvních 100, dystopie, young adult, fikce, žánrová hybridita, LGBTQ+, vztahy, smrti v seriálu

# Abstract

This thesis proposes to study the dynamics of specific formations of fandom around the post-apocalyptic CW television series *The 100*. It starts from the observation that the series (both the books and the television adaptation) draws on a variety of genres and therefore displays a great deal of hybridity, which, conversely, pre-defines the types of fans that will be drawn to the show. My Bachelor thesis, therefore, studies fandom behaviour, aesthetic and narrative preferences, and participatory behaviour in specific fan groups on social media platforms (especially Facebook). The thesis aims to answer some questions like how audiences see *The 100* a few years after it ended and how the fandom developed and changed over the years – not least along the lines of generic hybridity. The research will be based mainly on audience research and textual analysis.

## Keywords:

The 100, dystopia, young adult, fiction, genre hybridity, LGBTQ+, relationships, deaths in the series

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## Introduction

This thesis examines the genres portrayed in *The 100* series (CW, Jason Rothenberg, 2014-2020). The terms young adult fiction, dystopia, and post-apocalyptic fiction are defined, and the study delves into the influences affecting the current popularity of the genre while acknowledging its inevitable decline. This thesis also covers post-apocalyptic fiction on screen, analysing films and series related to the genre and comparing them to *The 100* series. The series displays hybridity, which dictates the potential audience it may attract. Recently, the young adult dystopian genre has fascinated worldwide audiences by presenting tales of societal breakdown, survival and the intricacies of human nature. Amongst the numerous media genres that have embraced this theme, television series have emerged as powerful platforms for these stirring subjects. *The 100* has garnered significant interest for its distinct depiction of a post-apocalyptic planet where a group of youthful survivors confronts the trials of a ruined Earth. In addition to captivating the audience with its engaging plot, the show offers a perspective to scrutinise present-day social concerns. Whether it be political dilemmas or ethical quandaries, *The 100* encourages viewers to contemplate the aftermath of mankind's actions in a rapidly evolving world. A separate chapter provides a summary of the show's key moments, which is instrumental in enhancing the understanding of the audience's responses to specific moments and their emotional expressions towards some characters of the show.

This thesis presents an analysis of the audience's reception of the series. It explores various criticisms of different approaches to unfolding the plot and considers the opinions of the audience. As the thesis investigates fan behaviour, aesthetic and narrative preferences on social media, it will highlight the most significant issues to the audience. The first chapter elucidates the distinctions between the TV series and Kass Morgan's book series, which the audience frequently discusses. This chapter assumes significance as it sets the tone for the subsequent discussion. The show's creators have sought to increase its relevance to audiences by incorporating the LGBTQ+ community into the narrative, so it is imperative to explain certain recurring themes within this community, charting its historical progress and highlighting struggles that people in this community have to undergo. Equally significant, particularly for young adult viewership, are the series' relationships. For this reason, the chapter comprises diverse relationships that have surfaced throughout the series along with the reactions of the audience towards them. Regrettably, not all relationships could be

included for the sake of clarity or due to a lack of interest from the audience. Lastly, the demise of primary protagonists is indispensable to young adult, post-apocalyptic dystopian fiction. They are usually unexpected and heartbreaking which leaves the viewer with strong emotions while experiencing the moment and sets a basis for later discussions.

# 1. Introduction to Young Adult Dystopian Genre

As this work primarily focuses on young adult fiction, it is essential to firmly define this term to understand the subsequent discussion in the text. At the same time, this chapter addresses the definition of utopia and dystopia, which are no less crucial for understanding further contexts.

The term young adult lacks a clear definition. As per Bonnie, young adulthood is generally considered to range from 18 to 26 years of age. This period is designated arbitrarily to represent the developmental process and social transitions that characterise young adulthood. Expanding this range to 16 and 30 years would encompass a broader scope of individual changes. Young adulthood denotes a period of transition throughout the lifespan, typically aligned with the prospects of attaining pecuniary freedom, nurturing romantic connections, childbearing, and undertaking responsible functions within the community. Developmentally, this phase embraces regular and anticipated physiological and psychological maturation. However, societal characteristics prevailing at a given time in history influence the social roles and tasks assigned to each cohort of young adults. In modern-day American society, young adulthood is characterised by many transitional experiences. Diverse paths taken by individuals navigating this phase of life create considerable variability in the timing, sequencing, and content of social roles and tasks. (Bonnie et al., 2015, p. 19) The Cambridge Dictionary provides a broader definition stating that a young adult is “a person who is in his or her late teenage years or early twenties.” Additionally, Crowe defines a young adult person as “old enough to be in junior high or high school, usually grades seven through twelve.” Young adult literature encompasses all literary genres published since 1967, specifically crafted and marketed towards the teenage audience. Although teenagers often indulge in classic works by renowned authors like William Shakespeare, and books exclusively designated for their age group, young adult literature concentrates on works intentionally fashioned for teenage readers. (Crowe, 1998, p. 121)

Unfortunately, not only positive feedback is said about young adult literature and its genre. At the start of this century, criticism of literature for teenagers did not occur infrequently. For more than a century, parents, teachers, and librarians have consistently objected to books meant for teenagers. Although the nature of their critiques has shifted over time, the majority can be categorised into two main themes: disparaging young people’s literature for not being on par with classics or asserting that such literature has a corrupting

influence on the youth. (Crowe, 1998, p. 146) Crowe agrees that “there are some YA books that might have a negative effect on certain teenage readers”, however, he suggested that young adult literature could indeed be the genre that attracts teenagers to reading and keeps them interested.

Another genre featured in the series is dystopia. This genre will be defined in the following paragraphs by first precisely defining the concept of utopia, which will enable a proper understanding of the term dystopia. The reason for this is that those two terms both stand on different ends of the spectrum. According to the Oxford Dictionary utopia is “an imaginary place or state in which everything is perfect” Merriam-Webster dictionary also states that the word ‘utopia’ was first used by English humanist Sir Thomas More in his book *Utopia*, which was published in the year 1516 and this book was a response to the social and economic situation in Europe at that time. The word itself is a combination of two Greek words ou (which means “not, no”) and topos (meaning “place”), which can be understood as a place that does not exist. (Merriam, 2021) This statement is in contradiction to the statement from the dictionary and the reason behind that is that the prefix ou is in English phonetically the same as eu, meaning “good”. This resulted in the idea that utopia is a good or perfect place that does not exist. Sergeant was, unlike the others, able to distinguish between those prefixes. He describes utopia as “a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space.” This description does not mention anything about perfection. On the other hand, the term eutopia is defined as “a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space that the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view as considerably better than the society in which that reader lived.” (Sergeant, 1994, p. 9)

From a historical point of view, the term utopia predominantly represented the unattainable but desired ideal of the perfect community, for instance in Čapek’s *Válka s Mloky*. This thesis will hold on to a traditional understanding of this concept and see utopian ideology as the opposite of dystopian thought. Sergeant sees two reasons for not using the word eutopia for the definition of a perfect society. The first is that there cannot be many authors who believe that their eutopia is flawless. For the second reason, he claims that those who stand in opposition to utopia use this classification because they believe that this ideal cannot be achieved except by the use of force and violence against the people, meaning totalitarianism. There would not be any anti-utopism if utopia were not connected with the word perfect. (Sergeant, 1994, p. 10)

Dystopia, as already mentioned above, is the exact opposite of utopia. Merriam-Webster defines dystopia as “an imagined world or society in which people lead wretched, dehumanised, fearful lives” and the first use of this concept was approximately in 1950 according to Merriam. Dystopia or negative utopia can be perceived as an imaginary society intricately detailed and typically situated in a specific time and space, crafted by an author to be perceived by a reader of the same era as markedly inferior to the contemporary society in which the reader resides. (Sergeant, 1994, p. 9) Adams locates the origins of the term dystopia in ancient Greece, where it is derived from the combination of “dys-” meaning “bad” and “-topia” meaning “place”. Many dystopian societies create utopian ideals for living and governing, but these often only benefit the privileged few in power. Such limitations hold significance for any population, but especially for overwhelmed and introspective teenagers. These definitions will help understand the principle of a dystopian culture and how can be dystopian elements found in *The 100* series.

## 2. The Popularity of the Young Adult Dystopian Genre

This chapter explores why there has been a surge in the popularity of this subgenre among young adult readers. Young adult dystopian literature emerged with the publication of Monica Hughes’s *The Tomorrow City* in 1978. Employing the journey of an adolescent transitioning into adulthood was an ideal choice to emphasise the necessity for political action and the exertion of political will when crafting a dystopian society. As young adult protagonists embark on the quest to discover their identities, they realise that the world they inhabit is far from perfect or free. These revelations serve to steer them away from the simplistic route of political and social conformity. (Hintz, 2002, p. 255) In 1986, Hughes authored another dystopian young adult novel titled *The Dream Catcher*. Seven years later, Lois Lowry’s work, *The Giver*, was published and subsequently became a staple in middle school literature curricula. Hughes and Lowry pioneered the genre of young adult dystopian literature. However, it was only in the early 2000s that other authors started crafting stories set in imagined, punishing environments that put the protagonist’s tenacity and skills to the test. (Hintz, 2002, p. 256)

Ames’ article argues that one of the main contributions to the popularity of the dystopian young adult genre in the United States of America is the post-September 11th, 2001 climate, when the terrorist attack on New York City’s Twin Towers happened. As the genre shows “fictional fear-based scenarios that align with contemporary cultural concerns.”

(Ames, 2013, p. 4) Some dystopian works that emerged in response to the attacks on the World Trade Centre include M. T. Anderson's *Feed* (2002), Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies* (2005), and Cory Doctorow's *Little Brother* (2008). In 2008, a notable shift followed with the publication of Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* trilogy, which brought dystopian YA fiction to the forefront of American culture and led to a remarkable upsurge in the genre as a whole. (Ryan, 2014, p. 4-5)

Contemporary dystopian fiction, drawing inspiration from its utopian origins, frequently critiques a society marked by postmodernism and advanced technology that has veered off course. These narratives often serve as a call for social change, exploring the consequences of a society that has gone astray due to its embrace of postmodern values and unchecked technological progress. (Zipes, 2003, p. ix) These types of fiction “mirror and critique reality, forcing the reader to think about reality while ironically escaping from it” (Hintz & Ostry, 2003, p. 6). The reason why dystopian fiction is popular can be partially demonstrated by Goodnow's statement: “it (dystopia) mirrors a world beset by some of the most frightening problems in recent memory, from climate change to terrorism and the shredding of privacy and free will.” It proves more insightful to analyse the rising appeal of young adult dystopian narratives in conjunction with analogous trends such as post-apocalyptic stories in various mediums—whether in print fiction, film, television, or video games—that exhibit comparable traits. Additionally, narratives featuring zombies and vampires, characterised by fear-driven “us versus them” dynamics, as well as horror films that encompass these subcategories, contribute to this broader trend. The majority of today's young adult fiction authors came of age during the Reagan era, experiencing the tensions of the 1980s Cold War and the impact of broadcasts like *The Day After* (1983), which left a lasting impression on some. During their high school years, they were exposed to a range of texts dealing with themes of misery and social control, including classics like *1984*, *Fahrenheit 451*, *Brave New World*, *Flowers for Algernon*, and *Lord of the Flies* (Hall & Slate, 2011). The dystopian literature of the 1980s often centred on mass destruction, atomic bombs, and apocalyptic scenarios. However, as noted by Hall and Slade, this generation did not face such a dire future; instead, they navigated adulthood with mortgages, subscriptions to the *New Yorker*, and a pervasive sense of regret. Now, it appears that they are actively contributing to the surge in writing, publishing, and promoting post-apocalyptic and dystopian fiction for young people at an unprecedented rate. Thus, it is plausible that this current wave of YA dystopia may be attributed to the authors themselves, with their political

concerns potentially taking centre stage on the pages, possibly more so than those of their readers.

The young adult dystopian genre has become popular for several reasons, and its rise can be attributed to a combination of cultural, social, and literary factors. The initial aspect is a reflection of societal concerns. Dystopian narratives generally manifest and enhance actual societal concerns, creating an opportunity for writers to scrutinise and remark upon present-day subjects including government control, environmental deterioration, social inequality, and repercussions of technological progress. Adolescents grappling with a multifaceted world will discover these topics relatable and stimulating. Dystopian fiction contemplates the potential repercussions if society neglects to adjust its course. Other prevalent dystopian concerns are those of contemporary society, including nuclear war, mind manipulation, artificial intelligence, and government surveillance. It is natural for this genre to mirror authentic fears. (Soldenhof, 2023) All of these issues - nuclear war, mind manipulation, artificial intelligence, and government surveillance - are explicitly addressed in *The 100* series. It is revealed that nuclear war triggered all the events and has an ongoing impact on the generations depicted. Mind manipulation is exemplified by the way leaders of various groups use psychological strategies to sway their followers. Clarke and Bellamy confront moral dilemmas as they wrestle with the outcomes of manipulating others whether it is for the public good or to ensure their individual survival. The role of Artificial Intelligence in the series is quite significant. A.L.I.E.<sup>1</sup> triggered the nuclear war, as it believed that overpopulation was the planet's most pressing issue and sought to address it. Meanwhile, A.L.I.E. represents another instance of mind manipulation due to its attempt to "save" humanity by depriving them of free will and erasing painful memories. Examples of government surveillance include monitoring and controlling individuals on the Ark, Mount Weather's invasive tactics, A.L.I.E.'s All-Seeing Eye, and the use of surveillance by figures like Jaha and Pike to impose their notion of order and maintain authority, posing ethical concerns about the exploitation of power.

Dystopia proves ideal for depicting themes of isolation, otherness, and the heightened intensity of adolescence, given the severe circumstances it frequently portrays. Young adults, notorious for mood swings, often perceive the world in extremes during this life stage. An article in the journal *Articulāte* defines adolescence as the complete juvenile phase of life,

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<sup>1</sup> A.L.I.E. was a sentient artificial intelligence whose primary objective was to make life better for mankind. (The 100 Wiki)

characterised by rebellion, questioning traditional values instilled in upbringing, and exploration of new and personal ideologies. (Roozeboom, 2017, p. 22) Although the exaggerated worlds typical of dystopian settings may not reflect reality, teen readers can connect emotionally with the extreme feelings and choices characters are forced to make. This resonance occurs because teens often perceive their situations as similarly dire in their minds. The dystopian setting reinforces the sense of isolation and otherness experienced by the characters, offering readers a perspective that can make them feel more satisfied with their own lives or less isolated in facing their personal challenges. The influence and popularity of the narratives with readers stem from the direct link between the empowerment of the characters and the qualities or circumstances that make them feel like outsiders. The depiction of isolation in the young adult dystopian fiction reflects reality, but the empowerment presented inspires viewers to acknowledge the source of their perceived isolation and to take proactive steps. Each character's journey to saving their society and achieving self-acceptance is distinctive, much like the diverse experiences of individual viewers. These themes are intended to encourage and empower the audience, giving them the strength to find their own unique paths to personal empowerment. Dystopian narratives also frequently focus on protagonists who challenge oppressive authorities or systems. This theme resonates with the young adult audience dealing with issues of autonomy, rebellion, and the need for change in their own lives. The journey of the protagonists to challenge and overthrow oppressive regimes can be empowering for readers. An example from the series is the authoritarian regime of the Ark,<sup>2</sup> which is challenged mainly by Clarke and Bellamy, leading to internal conflicts and the eventual search for a more democratic and just system. The Grounders, with their hierarchical society and warring clans, also present a complex landscape of power struggles. The most important oppressive regime to be overthrown is that of Mount Weather,<sup>3</sup> where the Mountain Men<sup>4</sup> exploit the Grounders<sup>5</sup> for their blood and maintain a hidden and exploitative regime.

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<sup>2</sup> The Ark (also known as "Ark Station" or the "United Ark Federation") is an orbiting space station that served as the home of the Arkers. (The 100 Wiki)

<sup>3</sup> The Mount Weather Emergency Operations Center or simply Mount Weather, also known as The Mountain, or Maunde (in Trigedasleng), is a United States military underground bunker and missile silo launch facility located in the Blue Ridge Mountains in the eastern United States of America on Earth. It was constructed to house senior US officials in the event of a nuclear war. (The 100 Wiki)

<sup>4</sup> The Mountain Men are descendants of the United States Government and others who survived the Nuclear Apocalypse by seeking shelter within Mount Weather. (The 100 Wiki)

<sup>5</sup> The Grounders, also called Outsiders and Savages by the Mountain Men, is a term used to describe a person who was born on Earth's ground rather than in space or within Mount Weather. (The 100 Wiki)



Another factor appears to be the presence of coming-of-age themes. Numerous young adult dystopian works depict protagonists who are coming of age and discovering their identities within a dystopian society. The challenges they encounter frequently reflect the struggles and uncertainties that young adults encounter when transitioning into adulthood. This coming-of-age element augments the relatability of the stories. Dystopian young adult fiction commonly displays fast-paced and tense plots that captivate readers. The battle for survival, exploration of uncharted territories, and everlasting tension among characters add to the genre's appeal. This makes dystopian literature favoured by readers of all ages, particularly young adults. Another factor included in young adult dystopian fiction is an exploration of morality and ethical dilemmas. Those narratives frequently explore intricate ethical and moral dilemmas, presenting challenging choices for their characters in desperate circumstances. The exploration of these dilemmas adds depth to the narrative, inviting viewers to reflect on the blurred lines between right and wrong in a world where survival often depends on difficult and morally questionable choices. The young adult dystopian genre provides an engaging combination of social critique, relatable coming-of-age themes, and captivating narrative, rendering it a well-liked and long-standing category within television broadcasts.

In contrast, it has been argued that the popularity of young adult dystopias is waning. The YA dystopia boom emerged following 9/11-induced cynicism and instilled a distrust of the government in teenagers. Nonetheless, the genre's decline is attributable to a lack of innovation and the use of repetitive tropes and narratives. While *The Hunger Games* (2012 - 2015, Lionsgate) resonated due to its themes, subsequent works employed shallow gimmicks. These narratives seldom examined the repercussions of oppressive regimes being toppled, omitting the chance to scrutinise the intricacies of re-establishing societies. Young Adult dystopias lacked nuance and hardly delved into characters' diverse backgrounds, previous experiences or present circumstances. As issues like authoritarianism emerged in real life, simplistic hero tales felt insufficient. The genre's deficiency in presenting teenagers' emotions authentically and its imperfection in terms of diversity portrayal contributed to its decline. As the entertainment industry diversifies, there is the potential for a resurgence of interest with more subtle depictions and BIPOC characters. Adolescent readers may crave optimism and practical applications, leading to a transition towards more intricate storylines and resolutions. Ultimately, the rekindling of the genre could draw from the intricate political atmosphere shaped by the endeavours of young activists. (Oladele, 2021)

### 3. Post-apocalyptic Fiction

Post-apocalyptic fiction is an additional genre present in *The 100* series. This chapter will examine the genre, and a subchapter will analyse films and series within this category. Post-apocalyptic narratives are commonly associated with futuristic, dystopian, and science fiction stories. However, the genre is characterised by recurring themes and a departure from the apocalyptic ideology found in other texts. Post-apocalyptic narratives aim to depict an existence in a transitional period, (re)constructed from the artefacts of a pre-apocalyptic world. Futuristic and science fiction narratives most commonly project present conditions into plausible futures based on the trajectories of science, politics, technology, and culture, but post-apocalyptic narratives take a different approach. These narratives imagine worlds in a state of devastation where social and scientific progress is severely hampered. Survivors are left to piece together their existence using relics from the pre-apocalyptic past, highlighting the stark contrast between the two sub-genres. In the post-apocalyptic genre, the hope of a restoration of the previous world has been lost.

The post-apocalyptic world can be recognised by a wasteland setting, a devastated landscape. It lacks the important hierarchies that gave the order to the pre-apocalyptic world. The post-apocalypse is not only a time after the apocalypse, but also a time when the belief in the meaning of existence is lost, along with the meaning of memories. In the post-apocalyptic era, everything that used to have sentimental value for people was only a reminder of the constant state of survivor mode. The theme of survival in the inhospitable post-apocalyptic world is one of the hallmarks of the genre. Take, for example, the protagonists of *The Walking Dead* (2010 - 2022, AMC Studios), who are forced to constantly search for resources and contend with others who pose a threat to their survival. But the theme of survival goes beyond mere survival in conflicts with the forces of nature and other survivors. Those who remain must also contend with the desperation and aimlessness inherent in post-apocalyptic life. The challenges of navigating this world often seem meaningless, leaving unanswered questions about what it means to be a survivor in a world bereft of hope and haunted by the absence of the familiar. In this landscape, traditional hierarchies give way to communities formed out of convenience and necessity, where power structures depend on survival skills rather than political or monetary influence. These communities are fragile, not only because of physical threats but also because of a lack of cohesion among their members. Individuals from diverse backgrounds unite solely for the sake of survival, forming ad hoc groups that are

often unstable and incapable of fostering shared social and emotional bonds. (Walter, 2019, p. 148-149)

This genre tends to develop in the aftermath of events such as the Holocaust and the 9/11 attacks, which have a strong traumatic impact on the culture. According to Walter, in recent years both apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic narratives have seen a remarkable resurgence in popular culture on and off-screen, provoking some commentators to argue that they are so common their impact has been lost. This is not only reflected in the recurring success of the zombie apocalypse in the series *The Walking Dead* (2010 - 2022), blockbuster films like *World War Z* (2013) but also genre crossovers such as science-fiction films *Interstellar* (2015), disaster films *The Day After Tomorrow* (2012) or dystopian fiction *The Hunger Games* series, *The Maze Runner* series (2014 - 2018, 20th Century Fox) or the *Divergent* trilogy (2014 - 2016, Lionsgate). Post-apocalyptic narratives serve as a reflection of characters' engagement with and adjustment to a transformed environment and society "after the end." In this context, these narratives also mirror what appear to be perceived threats to their contemporary societies. As characters navigate this changed world, they often find themselves reconnecting with a time before the apocalypse, shedding light on the challenges and dangers that parallel their pre-apocalyptic existence. (Walter, 2019, p. 136) By connecting with characters as they navigate and confront their traumas, readers and viewers find validation for their own experiences of grief, depression, and loss. This engagement allows individuals to process their emotions alongside the characters, working through those feelings in a shared and empathetic journey.

### 3.1. Post-apocalyptic Fiction on the Screen

This chapter offers insight into post-apocalyptic dystopias by presenting examples from renowned films and television programmes of the genre. Special attention is paid to the differences used in the series, to provide a comprehensive understanding of this topic. The rise of post-apocalyptic dystopian cinema and television, exemplified by productions such as *The Hunger Games*, *Divergent*, *The Maze Runner*, and *The Walking Dead*, has significantly contributed to the popularity of the genre among young people. Such adaptations increase the literary works' exposure to a wider audience, thus consolidating the genre's prevalence in mainstream culture. The decision to lump films and series together is for the sake of simplicity, as there is limited space to distinguish between movies and series. This study

primarily centres on post-apocalyptic dystopian fiction, and the differentiation between movies and series is not significantly crucial for the objectives of this research.

The films, *The Walking Dead* series, and *The 100* series belong to the post-apocalyptic dystopian genre, which delves into the themes of survival, societal breakdown, and the implications of totalitarian rule. Nevertheless, there are considerable distinctions in their narrative emphasis, environment, and target audience. The films follow the personal journeys of the main characters, while both series feature an ensemble cast with numerous characters contributing to the overarching storyline. They also explore political intrigue, ethical dilemmas, and the impact of leadership.

The settings are highly diverse, starting with the fictional nation of Panem in a post-apocalyptic North America (*The Hunger Games*), continuing with post-apocalyptic Chicago (*Divergent*), a mysterious maze known as the Glade (*The Maze Runner*), post-apocalyptic North America (*The Walking Dead*), and finally the space, Earth and even other planets (*The 100*). The setting of *The 100* is an extraordinary example of dystopian fiction, commencing on the Ark, a space station designated for survivors of a nuclear apocalypse, with limited resources and ethical quandaries surrounding population control adding a unique layer. The challenges of inhabiting space form a distinctly dystopian backdrop.

The movies are adaptations of young adult literature that target teenage viewers. The themes and character interactions are tailored to resonate with a younger audience. The two television series are geared towards a wider demographic, with intricate plotlines, character growth, and more adult themes, which captivate young adults and mature viewers alike. The uniqueness of *The 100* lies in its selection of juvenile delinquents as the lead characters. Using young individuals incarcerated and even some children as protagonists offers a unique perspective to the standard dystopian narrative. It permits the examination of themes like redemption and leadership among young individuals.

Several dystopian elements are present in *The 100* series. These start with radioactive threats and mutations. on Earth, with dangerous mutated animals and plants. The constant threat of radiation and the effects of nuclear apocalypse on the planet's ecosystem provide a complex backdrop to the characters' struggle for survival. The second element is the society and language of the Grounders. The inclusion of the Grounders, who establish societies founded on tribal structures, presents an exceptional cultural aspect. The expansion of

Grounder languages, like Trigedasleng,<sup>6</sup> contributes to the creation of a more vivid world and emphasises the complications of communication and cohabitation between distinct factions. The following factor is A.L.I.E. and the City of Light. The artificial intelligence entity A.L.I.E. introduces a virtual reality construct known as the City of Light. This section delves into the psychological results of mind control and the attraction to an idealised life, creating a futuristic variation of traditional dystopian concepts. The series features an extraordinary occurrence with the Flame<sup>7</sup> and the Commander's succession. The Flame is a neural implant that contains the memories and experiences of past commanders, which introduces a superhuman and mystical factor to the story. The selection and passage of leadership through the Flame establishes a distinctive form of governance within the Grounders. Additionally, the Red Sun and the Anomaly contribute to the narrative. The emergence of the Red Sun, triggering belligerent and violent actions, introduces an unpredictable element. The enigmatic Anomaly, a spatial and temporal phenomenon, introduces a science fiction element that diverges from conventional dystopian narratives. *The 100* combines traditional dystopian themes with these unique elements to create a narrative that constantly surprises and challenges both characters and viewers. The incorporation of space, mutated environments, diverse societies, and technological elements contribute to the show's distinctiveness within the dystopian genre.

### ***The Hunger Games, film series***

*The Hunger Games* was adapted from Suzanne Collins' post-apocalyptic, dystopian YA fiction series and directed by Gary Ross and Francis Lawrence. Hall and Slade claim that “*The Hunger Games* series is probably the most visible example of the dystopian trend.” The book series has been a huge commercial success, selling millions of copies and developing into a lucrative film franchise. It has also received widespread critical acclaim, being named a bestseller by *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *Publishers Weekly*. The novel raises concerns about authoritarian regimes and economic inequality, as well as the impact of reality TV, against the backdrop of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. Its portrayal of Katniss Everdeen as a resilient female protagonist has catapulted

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<sup>6</sup> Trigedasleng (Tri-ge-da-sleng), sometimes shortened to Trig, is the language spoken by the Grounders, the clans of Mid-Atlantic United States. Trigedasleng translates to "forest language", it originated with the Trikru clan (*The 100 Wiki*)

<sup>7</sup> The Flame is a cybernetic neural implant in which A.L.I.E. 2.0, also known as the “Spirit of the Commander” resided.

the novel to national acclaim, inspiring children and teenagers worldwide to learn archery and imitate her unique braided hairstyle.

Film series highlights the struggle of the individual against a totalitarian regime, with the films often adopting a darker and more intense tone that focuses on the psychological toll of the Games and the oppressive nature of the Capitol. The story delves into themes of sacrifice, rebellion, and the personal impact of violence. While exploring these darker themes, the show also includes elements of hope, resilience, and the potential for cooperation between different groups. The tone seamlessly shifts between survivalist grit and moments of character-driven drama, resulting in a dynamic viewing experience.

The primary and profound theme in *The Hunger Games* and *The 100* is survival and resource scarcity. Both works depict a world where resources are limited, and survival is a continuous struggle for many. Districts face challenges in meeting their inhabitants' needs, and the annual Hunger Games act as a brutal reminder of the scarcity that characterises their daily lives. Conversely, *The 100* series seldom shows the challenge of finding resources to sustain survival. The perpetual warfare and incessant conflicts among various factions pose the greatest peril. Dystopian fiction's second hallmark is totalitarian domination. The Capitol exerts totalitarian control over the districts, using the Hunger Games as a means of both entertainment and oppression. The citizens of the districts are kept in line through fear, surveillance, and the annual Selection Ceremony, which symbolises the oppressive nature of the regime. Control is also apparent in repressing and attempting to regulate the Ark, but it does not conform entirely to a totalitarian model. Additionally, there is a hierarchy among the Grounders, where some fear and respect customs while showing deference to the Commander, particularly Lexa, who was the most prominently featured character.

### ***Divergent*, film series**

The film series shares the post-apocalyptic young adult dystopian genre with *The 100*, both featuring survival in a post-apocalyptic time and resistance to oppressive regimes. However, there are significant differences between the two, including setting and premise.

*Divergent* presents a conflict that centres on a divided society. While some elements of dystopia in both works can be compared, it is the distinct ones that are more significant. This novel concentrates on a society divided according to personality traits and controlled authoritatively by the Erudite faction. In contrast, *The 100* portrays a post-apocalyptic world

that comprises various societies. These include the authoritarian Ark, tribal Grounders, and technologically advanced Mount Weather. The films present a concentrated and intense ambience, portraying a primary conflict among diverse factions, as well as a love narrative between Tris and Four. On the other hand, the series has a wider spectrum, blending survivalist grit with political scheming, character-driven play, and mindful topics of hope and perseverance. Similar to *The Hunger Games*, *Divergent* was adapted from a young adult book series, thus targeting a teenage audience. In contrast, the series caters also to a wider audience by incorporating complex and mature themes. The central conflict is another notable distinction. The films focus on the conflict between factions and the revelation of the divergent threat. In contrast, the show's initial emphasis is on the group's survival on Earth, which later broadens to involve political conflicts and power struggles among different factions.

### ***The Maze Runner*, film trilogy**

*The Maze Runner* is a 2014 dystopian science-fiction film based on the novel written by James Dashner. *The Maze Runner* features a controlled environment (the maze) with mysterious antagonists (W.C.K.D.). The film has a suspenseful and mysterious tone with a focus on uncovering the truth behind the maze.

The introduction of the Flare virus, a deadly pandemic that affects the mind, adds a biological threat to the dystopian world. The characters must navigate not only physical challenges but also the psychological impact of the virus. The clandestine organisation W.C.K.D. conducts experiments on the protagonists to find a cure for the Flare virus. The ethical implications of these experiments and the secretive nature of W.C.K.D. contribute to the dystopian atmosphere. This can be compared to the experiments from the Mount Weather in *The 100* show. But as a difference can be taken the possibility of a solution to the post-apocalyptic world. Discovering a cure with a high likelihood would mean a potential betterment for the world, allowing it to escape the constant state of survival mode. In contrast, *The 100* paints a world destroyed by nuclear war, in which the situation cannot improve. The main characters must acquire the skills to adapt and continually resolve problems in this unforgiving environment.

### ***The Walking Dead series***

*The Walking Dead (TWD)* is a post-apocalyptic horror drama television series based on the comic book series by Robert Kirkman, Tony Moore, and Charlie Adlard. It was developed by Frank Darabont. The series is distinctive within the dystopian genre, combining traditional elements of post-apocalyptic scenarios with the unique challenges posed by a world overrun by zombies (walkers). *TWD* depicts a global epidemic in which the dead are reanimated as zombies. This widespread and almost universal nature of the threat distinguishes it from dystopian narratives, which might focus on a localised disaster. But compared to *The 100*, it is quite similar, as the nuclear apocalypse also affects the entire world.

*TWD* series emphasises moral ambiguity, exploring how survivors grapple with ethical choices in a world where traditional moral norms are challenged. Characters are forced to make difficult choices for the sake of survival, often blurring the lines between right and wrong. It also explores the psychological toll of isolation and the gradual loss of humanity. Survivors are not only threatened by external forces but must also deal with the internal struggle to maintain their moral compass and sense of self. Finally, while many dystopian narratives emphasise external threats, *The Walking Dead* places great importance on character relationships. The bonds formed and broken in the face of adversity become central to the narrative. All of these dystopian elements of the *TWD* series can be labelled as similarities to *The 100* series. As mentioned above in the chapter on the popularity of young adult dystopian fiction, morality, ethical dilemmas, isolation, and character relationships are also present in *The 100* series.

I could only identify a few distinctions between the two shows. One is the issue of repopulation. While *TWD* emphasises the significance of having and protecting children, *The 100* series revolves around only one main character anticipating a baby. Furthermore, solely the mother of the baby (Diyozá) pursued a secure place to raise her child. Another difference entails the enduring challenges of surviving in a post-apocalyptic society. It extends beyond immediate threats to consider matters such as resource scarcity, infrastructure decay, and the effects of prolonged stress on mental health. *The 100* does not afford the chance to confront long-term challenges as there are constantly fresh forms of immediate threat introduced.



In concluding this chapter, I assert that these works are all comparable yet distinct. *The 100* demonstrates the myriad of possibilities in presenting post-apocalyptic dystopian fiction in a truly distinctive manner. The incorporation of genre hybridity contributes greatly to this uniqueness. *The 100* series is a distinct addition to the young adult (YA) genre due to its sophisticated and demanding storyline. It deviates from the typical YA dystopian literature by offering complex characters and scenarios with moral ambiguities, rather than the conventional portrayal of characters as purely good or bad. The series investigates the harsh truths of survival in a post-apocalyptic setting, emphasising realistic themes such as resource scarcity and ethical dilemmas. Notably, the series has garnered praise for its dedication to diverse representation, resulting in a more inclusive portrayal of society. Throughout its seven seasons, the programme experiences substantial narrative progression, delving into intricate subjects like politics, leadership, and the repercussions of war. *The 100* utilises its post-apocalyptic setting to explore important social issues, integrating social criticism and prompting reflection on parallels with our reality. The series' strength lies in its character development, which goes beyond the conventional hero's journey, portraying authentic growth, mistakes, and consequences. It is praised for defying expectations, avoiding predictable plotlines, and taking risks that lead to surprising character arcs and narrative twists. In brief, *The 100* challenges conventions of YA dystopian fiction through its thought-provoking storytelling, complex moral dimensions, diverse representation, exploration of societal problems, and commitment to advancing its narrative. These qualities make it an exceptional and intellectually stimulating addition to young adult television, departing from conventional norms in the genre.

## 4. Genre Hybridity in the Series

Genre hybridity involves combining various genres within a literary work, film, or other art forms. According to Mäntynen (2014), hybridity is “an umbrella term for all kinds of blending, mixing, and combining that occur in genres and texts.” This blending process generates original and exceptional art forms not restricted to traditional genres. Genre hybridity can also challenge the audience’s expectations and result in greater diversity and inclusivity in the artistic field. For instance, a science fiction book that incorporates romantic elements or a horror film including comedic elements would be prime examples of genre hybridity. Hybridity has sparked considerable discourse in postcolonial studies. It has been recognised as a positive deviation from essentialist notions of identity and binary reasoning in coloniser-colonised dynamics. Additionally, scholars have identified hybridity as an acceptance of politically resistant possibilities, existing within the “in-between” spaces (1) and “the interstices” (2), a term coined by Homi K. Bhabha. The meanings and categorisations of hybridity, which range from cultural and racial to linguistic and literary, show significant divergence across fields and among scholars. In this context, my use of the concept is limited to genre. Consequently, this thesis adopts the term “genre hybridity” to describe texts that blend elements from two or more literary or artistic genres. This type of genre hybridity has the potential to either give rise to a new genre or subgenre, or it may simply acknowledge that a work incorporates elements from different genres without claiming that an entirely new genre is the result of this amalgamation. (McDonald, 2016, p. 134) The labelling of a text as generically hybrid is made simple by utilising a de-contextualised interpretation of the term, as almost any entity, whether it is a genre, body, or community, can be seen as being “composed of ... diverse elements” (Oxford, 2023). In reality, identifying an entirely homogeneous production is a challenge due to the fact that “contemporary media is based on convergence.” This leads to high-quality programmes adopting hybridity, which provides them with a competitive advantage that resonates positively with audiences. (Palatinus, 2023 p. 165)

Exploration of genre hybridity concerning *The 100* television series holds significant value due to the incorporation of multiple genres, such as post-apocalyptic fiction, young adult genre, science-fiction, dystopian fiction, drama, action, and romance. To illustrate, the depiction of post-apocalyptic Earth contains science fiction elements, while the dissection of power dynamics and character relationships is reminiscent of a drama. Genre hybridity

contributes to the intricacy of the storyline, permitting the show to investigate various themes and captivate a multi-layered audience. This broad reach of the show amplifies its popularity. The hybridity of genres in *The 100* allows the series to deviate from conventional storytelling norms. The show offers a refreshing, innovative perspective on post-apocalyptic narratives by incorporating diverse elements that go beyond a single genre. The complexity of real-world issues is reflected in the hybridity of genres present in *The 100*. The series avoids oversimplification of societal, political, and ethical challenges faced by the characters, highlighting the intricate nature of these issues. The versatility to incorporate diverse genres enables flexibility in storytelling, allowing the series to navigate varying tones, themes and narrative arcs. This ensures that the plot remains dynamic and engaging over successive seasons. Furthermore, by interweaving mythological elements and developing a unique language (Trigedasleng), the series contributes to a richer cultural tapestry. The genre hybridity also facilitates the exploration of cultural diversity within the fictional world of *The 100*. Different genres offer diverse possibilities for character development. By including components from genres such as young adult fiction, romance, and political intrigue, the series can investigate more profoundly the characters' emotions, relationships, and personal growth. Utilising a mixed genre approach, *The 100* can delve into these multifaceted topics, causing audiences to ponder upon morality, the concepts of survival, and the repercussions of human actions. In conclusion, genre hybridity enables the plot to evolve, introducing new themes and elements and preventing monotony, thus maintaining viewer interest.

## 5. Reception of *The 100*

Exploring the reception of a series can help in understanding how audiences engage with and interpret it. By analysing audience reactions, we can gain valuable insights into the show's popularity and cultural impact. Reception studies also provide a platform for critically evaluating the series, as viewership responses can offer a glimpse into how it conforms to or challenges genre conventions. Understanding how audiences perceive the blending of genres in a series can also enhance genre studies. Additionally, investigating fan reactions can shed light on the workings of a show's fandom and the role of fan culture in shaping its reception. Moreover, analysing the reception of a series can contribute to broader discussions in media and cultural studies, as it offers material for examining how media content is consumed, interpreted, and integrated into cultural discourse. Assessing audience reactions helps us understand the impact of the narrative on viewers and provides insights into the aspects of the

story that resonate most strongly with the audience. It is important to note that identical narratives can be interpreted differently by different viewers. Exploring the diversity of viewer perspectives through reception studies showcases the complexity of audience reactions. Reception studies also make it possible to examine the interaction between fans and producers. This includes how producers respond to fan feedback and how fan engagement can influence the progression of the series. Incorporating the audience's response in a bachelor thesis can contribute to the scholarly conversation surrounding the series and broaden the study's breadth and depth by considering both the show's text and the audience's perspective.

*The 100* series has received praise for its multifaceted characters, intricate storylines, and stimulating themes encompassing good and evil, authority, and the implications of human conduct. Additionally, *The 100* has been applauded for its inclusive characterisation, incorporating people from diverse ethnicities, sexual orientations, and gender identities. Nevertheless, debates have arisen surrounding particular portrayal aspects, resulting in criticism. The passing of LGBTQ+ characters and the use of the "Bury Your Gays" trope has created disappointment amongst viewers and triggered discussions regarding their representation and associated impact in the show's story arcs. There have been calls for more in-depth exploration and careful handling of cultural aspects regarding the portrayal of indigenous characters. The depiction of mental health issues, particularly with the character Jasper Jordan, has been criticised for lacking sensitivity. In addition, despite having a diverse cast, some characters have been seen as having inadequate development, thus restricting the exploration of their backgrounds. Representation debates are intricate, and opinions differ within the audience. These discussions develop as the series advances and creators make choices about character arcs. Viewer responses are subjective, and evaluating representation in *The 100* necessitates considering different perspectives within its audience and the wider cultural context of the show. Despite the mixed reception, the series has gained a devoted fan base over its seven seasons and has been acknowledged for its influence on the science fiction genre on television. This chapter will look at some specific questions and topics discussed in the fandom.

*The 100* delves into intricate ethical dilemmas and fans frequently discuss the moral choices made by characters. Conversations range from practical survival decisions to deeper ethical contemplations. As an example might serve the moment when John Murphy implanted Emori in his brain to extend her life span and then wanted to die alongside her. The

query that emerged is why he did not ascend with her instead. They would have evolved, rather than perished. He had always been striving to survive and had doled out actions that he could not be proud of, all to ensure that he and Emori could achieve immortality. How he made this choice while acknowledging that death supposedly does not bring any afterlife is a mystery. Different discussions also revolved around science fiction elements, including the portrayal of advanced technology, the concept of Nightblood,<sup>8</sup> and the show's exploration of futuristic and dystopian themes. Specifically Nightblood is quite fascinating and has been discussed a lot in the fandom. Nightblood is actually incredibly rare. The Primes have not been able to reproduce it artificially, so they have had to rely on natural breeding for it to occur. This has raised some questions. Did the Primes reproduce in their host bodies? Were they breeding among themselves to produce more Nightblood children? How many of the Primes had children in their host bodies?

Viewers often scrutinised plot twists, cliffhangers, and significant events in the series. The aftermath of such episodes instigated multiple discussions and theories. The fandom displayed exceptional creativity in producing intricate and well-thought-out fan theories, ranging from speculations on the larger series' mythology to forecasting upcoming plot developments. Fans often speculate about the possible outcomes of various storylines and make predictions about what will happen next in the show.

Some Facebook groups<sup>9</sup> pose intriguing questions such as: What would have happened if Becca discovered Mount Weather instead of the Second Dawn Bunker? What actions would Jaha have taken if he was on Sanctum? How did the stone come to be beneath the bunker floor? Why did the grounders revert to primal ways within only a century, resulting in Ton DC not being recognised as Washington DC? With so many individuals remaining, how did so much knowledge become lost over that timeframe? And additionally, how would you alter the show's conclusion? The analysis of fan theories is fascinating. For

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<sup>8</sup> Nightblood, originally called Black Blood, is a genetic trait that makes people resistant to radiation and is expressed through black blood. Nightblood did not occur naturally but rather is a result of genetic engineering. (The 100 Wiki)

<sup>9</sup> For the purposes of this study, fan communities on Facebook needed to be sampled. Those are: "The 100" Worldkru (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2108205869255523/>); The 100 Go Float Yourself (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1188286898714881/>); The 100 Blood Must Have Blood (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/848631539792796/>); The 100 CW TV Series (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/464906840330046/>); The 100 Fan Club (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/420982078428442/>); The 100 & Eliza Taylor (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/185159868725555/>); "The 100" Grounders (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/178211843822039/>). Additionally, the series fandom website was also examined: The 100 Wiki ([https://the100.fandom.com/wiki/The\\_100\\_Wiki](https://the100.fandom.com/wiki/The_100_Wiki)). This methodology involved analyses of posts related to The 100 television series, examining audience preferences, choices, and opinions.

example, one theory focuses on Bellamy's character. While many viewers were critical of Bellamy's actions in seasons 3 and 7, a particular fan noted that Clarke was not present to offer him guidance at that time. If Clarke had been by his side, it is possible that Bellamy would not have supported Pike and the Shepherd. Furthermore, she could have dissuaded him from making the wrong choices, as she had done in the past when she was around. The following theory suggests that Callie Cadogan could be the First Flamekeeper<sup>10</sup> or even the First Commander. Certain enthusiasts have made associations between the fictional Polis of the show and a real place in the real world, suggesting that the name is derived from Annapolis rather than Polaris, indicating a setting on the Atlantic coast. Lastly, numerous Facebook posts express disappointment over the creators' decision not to make a prequel to the series. Many feel that it could have provided much-needed explanations. The stone under the bunker, how the Grounder tribes evolved, or how long the Mountain Men had been harvesting Grounders. In the end, the fans are left to their own imaginations and are given the space to create fan fiction.

## 6. A Brief Summary of *The 100* Series Plot

While summarising the entire series is not deemed necessary, certain key moments in the show are noteworthy in understanding the reactions and opinions of the show's fanbase. These moments, among numerous others, enhance the depth and unpredictability of *The 100*, crafting a narrative that delves into moral dilemmas, survival instincts, and the complexities of human relationships in a post-apocalyptic world.

*The 100* follows a group of juvenile delinquents who are sent to Earth from the Ark, a space station, to see if the planet is habitable again after a nuclear disaster that happened 97 years ago. The series portrays a feasible scenario within modern-day society upon initial inspection. It also features a diverse cast of characters who face many challenges, including enduring a harsh environment, competing with other groups of survivors, and uncovering mysterious and dangerous events on Earth. Throughout the narrative, the characters grapple with complex relationships, daunting dilemmas, and their struggles as they strive to rebuild society. Each season is filled with gripping scenes, character development, and unexpected plot twists.

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<sup>10</sup> The Flamekeepers or Fleimkepa (in Trigedasleng), also known as the Order of the Flame, or the Keepers of the Flame, were the spiritual leaders of the Grounder faith. They devoted their lives to safeguarding the Flame and ensuring its succession. (The 100 Wiki)

## Season One

The main protagonists among the children are Clarke Griffin, Bellamy Blake, Octavia Blake, John Murphy, Finn Collins, and Wells Jaha. One pivotal event in the debut season of *The 100* is the juvenile delinquents' descent from the Ark to scrutinise the planet's viability. The profound moments have many elements, including the landing of the dropship, which is fraught with apprehension and anticipation. The individuals, who have spent their entire lives within the restricted confines of the Ark, are currently confronted with the unfamiliar obstacles of a post-apocalyptic society. Upon stepping onto the surface of Earth for the first time, the audience observes the characters' responses to the unfamiliar terrain. The extensive, overgrown landscape represents both the chance for a new start and the hazards that await. In the initial season, the characters contend for control and power in the wake of the Ark's absence. Bellamy Blake and Clarke Griffin are prominent figures in the power struggle, laying the foundation for ongoing dynamics within the group. The meeting with the Grounders, particularly the initial encounters with Anya, signifies a pivotal moment. It presents the intricacy of managing other communities of survivors, laying the groundwork for forthcoming coalitions and disputes. The battle between the delinquents and the Grounders, particularly in the episode titled "Unity Day," represents a significant conflict. This occurrence highlights the obstructions to communication and comprehension among various factions in this post-apocalyptic universe. The romantic liaison between Lincoln, a Grounder, and Octavia, a Sky Person,<sup>11</sup> serves as a bridge between the two factions, accentuating the difficulties that result from differences in culture. Discovering Mount Weather adds mystery and raises questions regarding the state of Earth. The recognition that there are additional factions with their objectives and methods for survival adds to the intricacy of the plot. The first season also explores the personal challenges faced by the characters and their relationship development. Clarke's leadership, Bellamy's protective instincts, and the dynamics among the delinquents are shown. The season sets the tone by establishing themes of survival, leadership, and the complexities of human interaction in a post-apocalyptic landscape.

## Season Two

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<sup>11</sup> Sky People, or Skaikru (in Trigedasleng), is a term used by the Grounders to describe a person who came from the Ark.

One of the most noteworthy events in the second season is the sacrifice made by Finn. This act has a profound effect on the characters and explores the consequences of their actions within a complex moral reality, following the conflict with the Grounders. He had to sacrifice himself to ensure a truce between his people and Grounders. The prominent role played by Mount Weather is also highlighted, especially in light of the discovery of the Mountain Men's use of Grounders' blood for their own ends. To defeat the Mountain Men, an uneasy alliance is formed between the delinquents and the Grounders. The collaboration arises from necessity although it brings about cultural conflicts and trust issues. This collaboration ends with Lexa's betrayal of the Sky People at Mount Weather and the subsequent abandonment of the Sky People at a critical time. Fortunately, Clarke and Bellamy's act of genocide against the people inhabiting Mount Weather led to the defeat of the Mountain Men. One of the final noteworthy moments in this season is when Thelonious Jaha embarks on a quest to find the City of Light. This introduces a mystical and philosophical dimension to the narrative, delving into themes of faith and the aftermath of striving for a utopian resolution.



### Season Three

The third season commences with the introduction of A.L.I.E., with the City of Light presenting a set of fresh challenges that blur the distinction between reality and a simulated existence. Characters grapple with issues of free will and control. Amidst this, Clarke transitions into Wanheda, having been forced to leave her people after her actions at Mount Weather. An unexpected development occurs as John Murphy becomes romantically involved with Emori, a Grounder girl. The developing bond between Murphy and Emori provides a human touch to the season. Moreover, a significant point was when Roan abducted Clarke and brought her to Lexa. The subsequent occurrences were noteworthy as Clarke felt furious with Lexa, while Lexa acknowledged her mistake and apologised to Clarke. Soon after, the Sky people were recognised as the 13th clan, which ensured their safety. Lexa was the first commander to unite the 12 clans. However, shortly after, she passed away, which came as a shocking and emotionally charged moment. The event left a significant impact on Clarke, the broader Grounder, and Sky People alliances. The death of a Commander sparked a Conclave,<sup>12</sup> in which Ontari emerged victorious under dubious circumstances. Jaha manipulated her into ingesting A.L.I.E.'s chip. A coalition of Sky People and Grounders united to defeat A.L.I.E and discovered that shutting her down required the Flame. They fought their way through to Ontari, but Jaha dealt a fatal blow to her head, leaving her brain dead. Clarke was able to accept the Flame through a blood transfusion, utilising the heart of Ontari's brain-dead body. Despite defeating A.L.I.E., another threat soon emerged.

### Season Four

The fourth season continues with the search for a solution to the nuclear apocalypse threat known as Praimfaya.<sup>13</sup> The concept of Praimfaya and the struggle to survive in the face of impending destruction is a defining moment. Several solutions arise, but only one endures. Thelonious discovers a bunker called Second Dawn Bunker, located directly beneath the tower in Polis. With the discovery comes a form of redemption for Jaha for his actions with A.L.I.E. As no Commander is remaining, there is no one to decide who shall claim the bunker and survive the apocalypse. To establish order, The Final Conclave is announced, with each of the 13 clans represented by a delegate in the battle. The victor shall obtain the bunker.

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<sup>12</sup> The Conclave is a Grounder tradition, held upon the death of the Commander in which a Nightblood successor for the role is selected.

<sup>13</sup> The Nuclear Apocalypse, also known as Praimfaya (in Trigedasleng) or Apocalypse One, was a catastrophic event which took place in 2052, 97 years before the start of The 100 series. (The 100 Wiki)

Octavia becomes a Skairipa and fights on behalf of the Sky People. She won the final Conclave and granted the bunker to all clans, ensuring that each clan would have 100 of its representatives secured inside. One of the main characters, Jasper Jordan, decided to take his own life, which was a tragic scene that illuminated the toll of trauma and loss on the characters. Its lasting impact on the group's remaining members is significant. When the series concluded, a group of friends, including Clarke, Raven, Bellamy, Murphy, Emori, Echo, Monty, and Harper, decided to go back into space to the Ark for safety. As complications arose, they were forced to abandon Clarke, who had a vital mission to complete to facilitate the group's entry into the Ark. This sacrifice was necessary for the sake of survival. Shortly after, the Second Death Wave<sup>14</sup> followed.

### **Season Five**

This season opens with a time jump to six years later. It depicts Clarke's survival during this time, her prolonged isolation, and her discovery of the verdant Shallow Valley (Eden), a seemingly untouched territory. Shortly thereafter, she encountered Madi, a juvenile Nightblood, and they developed a mother-daughter-like bond. In the early stages of the season, the ship *Eligius IV* with its crew of convicts is introduced. Upon arriving in Shallow Valley, a conflict arises between them and Clarke in short order. A notable aspect of the season is the portrayal of Octavia's reign as Blodreina (Red Queen). Her leadership within the bunker establishes a violent regime featuring gladiatorial combat. Both the challenges faced within the bunker and Octavia's autocratic rule shape the central narrative of the season. The disclosure of the Dark Year, an extreme survival period within the Bunker, also explains the challenges faced by the inhabitants and adds layers to Octavia's leadership and the choices made in desperate times. Despite Wonkru and the prisoners of *Eligius IV* being offered a truce, Octavia rejects the proposition and this decision destroys the last survivable place on Earth. Therefore, all individuals are compelled to board the dropship and journey to space on the mothership, where they undergo cryosleep.

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<sup>14</sup> The Second Nuclear Apocalypse or Apocalypse Two, also known as the Death Wave, Second Praimfaya, or simply Praimfaya, was a cataclysmic event that occurred in 2150. It was caused by the failing nuclear power plants around the world which resulted in a wave of radiation spreading across the world. (The 100 Wiki)

## **Season Six**

The penultimate season opens with the arrival of characters at the seemingly idyllic planet Sanctum. The series portrays an unexpected and difficult decision made by Monty and Harper. They opt to live their life together on the Eligius IV ship upon realising that the Earth will not heal as soon as anticipated. The two have a child named Jordan, who chooses to enter cryosleep at the age of 26. Monty discovered a remote habitable planet and navigated the ship accordingly, resulting in the crew being left in cryo for 125 years. Upon landing on Sanctum, the research team discovered that the planet has its flaws. The subsequent discovery of the Primes, a group of individuals who achieve immortality through Mind Drives, is noteworthy. An intriguing moment occurred when Josephine, one of the Primes, temporarily replaced Clarke's consciousness. During Clarke's fight to save her own body, the Dark Commander, Sheidheda, appears inside the Mind Drive, adding a new and formidable antagonist. The mysterious Anomaly, a spatial and temporal phenomenon, becomes a central focus throughout the season, adding a sci-fi element and intriguing the audience about its origins and purpose. In the season finale, Octavia disappears into the Anomaly alongside Diyoza, who is expecting a baby and seeking redemption and a fresh start for her and the baby.

## **Season Seven**

The final season continued with the Anomaly, through which the main characters explored new planets while trying to save their friends. They also battle Sheidheda and ultimately defeat him. The Backdoor Pilot in the episode "Anaconda" was noteworthy for viewers as it delves into the Grounders' origin story and initial apocalypse events. This has piqued viewers' curiosity, and many of them are dissatisfied with the fact that there is unlikely to be a prequel to this series, as the audience desired some explanations. The demise of the main character Bellamy was also a significant aspect of the show, but it did not elicit many positive responses from the audience. Several fans expressed their wish to see Bellamy in the last episode, where the main group of characters is on the beach after everyone else has transcended, which leads us to the last significant act of the main protagonists. The story reaches a critical turning point as our protagonists set foot on Bardo, where they discover a potential solution to the endless war: the Transcendence Test. This test poses moral and existential dilemmas, and if passed, one can ascend to a higher state of existence. The concept of transcendence is introduced by the extraterrestrial race known as the "Judge" or the "Higher Beings". These beings possess the capability to assess the suitability of a species for

transcendence. Upon reaching transcendence, individuals merge with a collective consciousness and attain a state of unity and enlightenment. Clarke failed the test, which would have caused the extinction of the human race. Raven intervened and persuaded the “Judge” to reconsider. Fortunately, the entirety of humanity is offered the opportunity to transcend, except for Clarke, who bears the burden so that others need not. The “Judge” relocated her to a restored Earth, where she discovered that some of her companions had chosen to reside there for the remainder of their lives alongside her.

### **Recurring tropes**

First, Raven Reyes is a character with incredible resilience and resourcefulness in *The 100* series. She is depicted as a highly skilled and astute engineer whose problem-solving abilities significantly aid the group’s survival. Throughout the series, Reyes masterfully resolves complicated issues with creative thinking. Her remarkable physical endurance enables her to overcome challenging obstacles, including injuries suffered while in space and later on Earth. For example, the character was shot by Murphy in the first season, and the lasting effects of the injury are evident throughout the rest of the series. She struggles with mobility issues but persists in her efforts to overcome these physical obstacles. When she wished to rid herself of the A.L.I.E chip, she underwent an EMP treatment, which induced brain failure. Eventually, this would have led to a stroke, but she managed to cure herself shortly before the group departed for space for six years in the fourth season. Raven faced not only physical challenges but also emotional struggles. Firstly, the breakup with Finn and his subsequent death caused her significant emotional distress. Secondly, the death of Sinclair affected her deeply. Lastly, she struggles with the responsibility of the death of several prisoners from Eligius IV on Sanctum. Raven’s mental toughness is evident in her ability to cope with trauma and loss.

And finally, this chapter would not be complete without Clarke’s leadership choices. Clarke Griffin is a central character in *The 100* series and serves in various leadership roles throughout the show. Her leadership choices are often driven by the challenging circumstances of the post-apocalyptic world. The first key aspect of her leadership is that emerges as a natural leader as the characters explore Earth. Clarke faces decisions about forming alliances with Grounders, the Mountain Men, and other factions. Her choices require her to weigh her people’s needs against broader ethical considerations. Clarke’s decisions at Mount Weather hold particular significance. She grapples with the moral dilemma of

sacrificing a few to save many. Her decision to irradiate Mount Weather has a lasting impact on her relationships and mental well-being. Clarke's leadership extends to the Grounder communities. She negotiates alliances, navigates political complexities, and assumes the responsibilities of Wanheda (Commander of Death) among the Grounders, and as the second apocalypse looms, Clarke is challenged to find a solution for survival. Furthermore, Clarke's actions during this period of crisis, particularly her decision to select the Second Dawn Bunker, will have ramifications for her people's destiny. Shielding Madi from both the Grounders and Eligius prisoners is a testament to her abilities as a nurturing mother figure and skilled leader. This decision highlights her protective instincts. Clarke's leadership on the new planet Sanctum requires that she negotiates the intricacies of the Primes' culture. Overall, her decisions affect the relationships between the original characters and the newcomers from Eligius. The latest crucial decision involved taking over the transcendence test. In this test, her choices, including sacrificial decisions, played a pivotal role in resolving the series.

## 7. Trending Issues and Themes Discussed in *The 100* Fandom

### 7.1. Differences from the Book

Talking about differences between the series from the book belong to the central phenomena in the fandom groups. The majority of comments focus on fidelity to the source material. Deviations from the source material can result in negative reactions towards television adaptations, even if of high quality. The fans generally show a greater affinity for the television series than the books. Jason Rothenberg directed the show in a markedly different direction from Kass Morgan's written works, which led to two completely divergent narratives for fans to delve into. Though the two share similar foundations and characters, the creators made intentional modifications to the original storyline to construct the on-screen plot. A majority of comments in Facebook groups state that the overall presentation is dissimilar. It is evident that the books served as inspiration for the series, but they are not comparable in other aspects. Only Clarke and Bellamy have somewhat similar characters, and not all characters are present in both. Additionally, the books have a stronger focus on young adult romance. The only similarities between them are the initial premise and the names of some characters. Furthermore, the character personalities differ significantly. Octavia comes closest to the archetype of bravery and courage, but she is also much younger and not a point-of-view character. It is recommended that individuals who have watched the series prior to reading the books approach them with an open mind and attempt to forget any preconceived notions. It should be noted that some fans of the series may not have considered reading the books at all and some do not consider reading the books if their favourite characters are not involved. The fan base can be divided into several groups, including viewers who have watched the series many times without reading the books and who are not concerned about the adaptation's accuracy. Others have seen the series and prefer it to the books. Furthermore, there is a scenario where the audience appreciates both forms of media equally but perceives them as two distinct worlds. And lastly, there may be individuals who prefer books, yet no comments or posts reflecting this preference have been identified on Facebook. This chapter outlines some of the primary distinctions that may interest the audience for discussion.

The first significant difference is the introduction to Bellamy's character. In the show, he shoots Chancellor Jaha to get himself to the dropship, so he could protect his sister. In contrast, in the book he steals his friend's guard uniform. The other counterpart of Bellamy Blake is that in the show there is no mention of his father, however, in the book it is. The book reveals that Chancellor Jaha is Bellamy's biological father. The show never even hints that they might be related in any way.

In addition, his relationship with Clarke in the show contrasts with their relationship in the book. In the television series, Clarke and Bellamy's relationship encompasses various roles, spanning from adversaries to allies, partners, and close friends. However, their connection has not ventured into the realm of romance. Their novel counterparts, on the other hand, follow a different trajectory. In the novels, Clarke and Bellamy swiftly transition from being uneasy allies to becoming romantically involved, culminating in their engagement by the end of the fourth book. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that their relationship in the novels lacks the same depth and dynamic experiences that the on-screen portrayals of Bellamy and Clarke have undergone. The TV versions of these characters have faced more significant challenges and trials together.

Wells Jaha's short occurrence in the show is not even comparable to the novel. He dies in the third episode of the first season not being able to even interact with Grounders. On the other hand, the novel portrays him interacting with Grounders (called Earthborns in the book) and even having a romantic relationship with one of them. This is different from the show where Octavia is actually the one who falls in love with a Grounder called Lincoln. Wells also moves past his feelings for Clarke in the book, while in the show he vies with Finn for her attention and does not have the opportunity to conclude their relationship before his death.

Another distinction of the show from the book is Octavia's character development. In the series, she is known as the girl from under the floor, happy to be on the ground and growing into a great warrior over time. In the novel, she is discovered at five years old, is not arrested but moved to an orphanage, and then detained for stealing drugs.

Clarke being one of the most significant characters in both media has a completely different background on each of them. The show pictures her parents as a doctor and engineer, her father being floated for wanting to reveal secret information to the people on the Ark and her mother being the one, who turned him in. This traumatic experience was one of

the factors that made an impact on Clarke's development through the show. In contrast, the book portrays her parents as scientists who experiment on children. The reason behind the immoral act is being threatened by Vice-Chancellor Rhodes. The novel also makes Clarke believe that her parents are dead, which proves her wrong after the reunion on Earth. And for an unknown reason, Jason Rothenberg even changed their names from Mary and David to Abby and Jake.

In the television adaptation of *The 100*, the representation of Grounders is limited to what the show portrays on screen. The series depicts their culture, language, and warrior way of life, which deviates from what is presented in the novels. The TV show depicts a significant looming war between the delinquents and the Grounders, which is a departure from the source material. Instead, in the book, one of the major conflicts is the kidnapping of Octavia, which is a less significant event in the wider story arc. Furthermore, there is a noteworthy change in terminology. In the books, the Grounders are called "Earthborns" and they survived the apocalypse and its aftermath by living in Mount Weather. However, the plotline regarding Mount Weather diverges significantly in the second season of *The 100*, where researchers turn to Grounder blood and bone marrow to protect themselves from external radiation. The most debated distinction amongst fans regarding the Grounders is the omission of the prominent character Lexa.

The reason for the significant division is that most of the books were written after *The 100* was broadcast, so they are not the same. The first book was published before the TV series debuted, but afterwards, the show's production surpassed the author's writing pace. They began filming the series before the first book was even released.



## 7.2. Introduction to the LGBTQ+

LGBTQ is an acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer. Plus stands for non-straight or non-cisgender identities. This community represents the minority of people with different sexual orientations than straight people, and whose gender identity does not correspond with the sex they were assigned at birth. In other words, the acronym covers all sexual orientations and gender identities. The use of the acronym LGBT, which includes only lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans people, has now been abandoned. (Titlbach, 2022, p. 19)

To gain a better comprehension of the acronym LGBTQ+, it is necessary to clarify some of the terms it encompasses. The letter “L” stands for *lesbian*. According to Merriam-Webster dictionary lesbian is “a woman who is sexually or romantically attracted to other women.” The first use of the word *lesbian* was in the year 1559. The second letter “G” represents the word *gay*. A definition from Tiltbach says that gay men are romantically or sexually attracted to other men. As an adjective, the term can also represent homosexuality in general, which means that lesbians can also be referred to in this way. Bisexuality, according to Titlbach, is an emotional and sexual attraction to both sexes not necessarily in the same way and with the same intensity. Last but not least, the concept of asexuality necessitates clarification. Titlbach defines asexuality as the absence of sexual attraction to both men and women. However, it is crucial to note that the emotional dimension remains present in relationships. When discussing minimal to no romantic attraction, it is more accurately described as aromanticism. These terms are subordinate to the concept of sexual orientation, which is explained as a persistent feeling of emotional and sexual attraction to either sex or possibly both sexes. (Titlbach, 2022, p. 19-21)

The following is the concept of transgender people. Being transgender means “noting or relating to a person whose gender identity does not correspond to that person’s sex assigned at birth.” (Dictionary.com, 2023) The transgender person also does not adhere to traditional ideas and norms regarding sex and gender. While presently employed as an umbrella term encompassing various non-conventional gender identities, the term “transgender” is occasionally used interchangeably with more specific terms such as “transsexual” or “transvestite” in broader usage. (Oxford English Dictionary, 2023) Transvestism, as Titlbach explains, is dressing up in clothes characteristic of the opposite sex with no attempt to live in this role permanently, only for one’s own pleasure. (Titlbach, 2022,

p. 33) The term transition is tightly related to the concept of transgender. Transition is understood as a process of gender reassignment. Each individual undergoing transition may have a different idea of satisfaction with the state of transition. The abbreviations MtF and FtM describe the gender transition from male to female or vice versa. Transition is divided into physical, official, and social. Physical may include hormone therapy, surgical changes, or external modifications. Official means a change in information on official documents. And in social transition, life changes within a perceived social role. (Titlbach, 2022, p. 35)

From the historical point of view, the LGBTQ community has been abused by police and publicly harassed without a significant response until the summer of 1969. The representatives of the community protested against the oppression at the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in New York City. Thanks to this act the community mobilised and the discrimination of LGBTQ people was brought to public attention. The first city law banning discrimination based on sexual orientation was agreed upon by the city council in Michigan in March 1972. The Michigan ordinance did not protect all members of the LGBTQ community, but only city employees. That changed after a decade. Wisconsin made it illegal to discriminate against lesbians, gay and bisexual people not only in employment but also in public accommodations and housing. Until 1975 all prohibitions revolved only around a sex orientation. The first place that also took into account the rights of transgender people was Minneapolis, Minnesota in the year 1975 (Goldberg, 2016, p. 823) The pursuit of equality for the LGBTQ community persists globally. While there is gradual improvement in LGBTQ rights, many countries still do not allow same-sex marriage, let alone adoption.

To truly comprehend the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in their daily lives, it is important to not only acknowledge the progress made throughout history but also recognize that being a part of this community comes with its own set of struggles. Unfortunately, LGBTQ+ individuals often face dissatisfaction and resistance from those who are not part of their community, which may escalate into expressions of hatred. Many people harbour negative attitudes toward the LGBTQ+ community, and one contributing factor to this phenomenon is heteronormativity. Titlbach (2022) defines heteronormativity as the perception that views heterosexual orientation as the only normal and natural expression of sexual and emotional identity. This perspective suggests the superiority of heterosexuality over other preferences. Heteronormative culture is often associated with incidents of homophobia and discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals. (Titlbach, 2022, p. 17)

Merriam defines homophobia as “an irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexuality or gay people.” Being homophobic encompasses a range of negative attitudes and behaviours, including discriminatory practices, bias, and the rejection of individuals based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. Homophobia can manifest in various forms, such as verbal abuse, social exclusion, physical violence, or the enactment of discriminatory laws and policies. It reflects a lack of acceptance and understanding of diverse sexual orientations and identities (Wickberg, 2000, p. 42) Internalised homophobia can be a more challenging issue for members of the LGBTQ community than homophobia itself. As stated in an interview for Titlbach’s book by Dr. Vojtko, internalised homophobia encompasses the dread of oneself or the potential of being, or even acknowledging, queer. It is a prevalent cause of depression, anxiety, and in some cases suicide among queer individuals. The effect is magnified by external homophobia, living in an environment that strongly defines and excludes queer people. (Titlbach, 2022, p. 25) Discrimination is another negative aspect of the daily life of people from this community. It is a particularly serious act to discriminate against LGBTQ+ people. The discrimination individuals are often skilled at concealing, making it difficult to prove. Titlbach (2022) defines discrimination as treating people differently because they belong to a group, regardless of their abilities or other aspects of their personality. Anti-discrimination law understands discrimination as unfavourable treatment of individuals due to certain reasons and in particular areas of life. (Titlbach, 2022, p. 25)

### 7.2.1. LGBTQ+ in the Series

As communities throughout the United States become more accepting and understanding of individuals who identify as LGBTQ+, these themes are beginning to find their way into dystopian and general YA literature. Although romantic relationships are commonly portrayed in the majority of young adult literature, same-sex couples are not as frequently included. This lack of representation can be attributed to “overwhelming heteronormativity.” LGBTQ+ themes are increasingly becoming visible, and there have been recent efforts to introduce diverse relationships into YA dystopian literature. Several significant publications, including *Proxy* (2013) by Alex London, *Crewel* (2012) by Gennifer Albin, and *Rebellion* (2013) by J. Tomas, are making a strong impact on teenage readers. (Ryan, 2014, p. 12)

Incorporating LGBTQ representation in different forms of media can alleviate individuals' apprehension towards being different. By showcasing positive portrayals, it can aid in standardising the subject. At the time of the series release, was the inclusion of LGBTQ+ issues in film media a novelty and also a unique form of intimacy that made the series both interesting and controversial. *The 100* series features a representation of the LGBTQ+ community and has been praised for the portrayal of its diverse characters and relationships. This has contributed to a more inclusive narrative and reflects the complexity of relationships amidst survival challenges. One post on Facebook implies that the programme is suitable only for individuals considered "good." The assertion is that racists and those who oppose the LGBTQ+ community might not like to watch the show due to the representation of many characters who are people of colour or LGBTQ+.

Several members of the LGBTQ+ community have featured in the show. The main character, Clarke Griffin, is depicted as being attracted to both genders. Her relationships with male and female characters are extensively explored throughout the series, including her romantic liaison with Lexa, a leader of the Grounders. Lexa, the Commander of the Grounders, is portrayed as pansexual, meaning to be attracted to people regardless of their gender identity. Her relationship with Clarke is an important aspect of the series and has received acclaim for its positive and prominent portrayal of LGBTQ+ characters. The next representative of this community in the series is Nathan Miller, a recurring character. He is openly gay, and the series explores his journey and relationships, contributing to the diversity of sexual orientations portrayed. Similarly, Jackson, a medical professional, is presented as gay. His role belongs to the ensemble cast, and his personal life is presented as a natural part of the storyline. Nyilah, a repeating character, is also depicted as pansexual. Her connections and interactions with other characters contribute to the series' broad representation of sexual orientations. The subsequent sections of this chapter will undertake a detailed examination of particular relationships, tracing their origin and showing the response of fans to them.

### **Clarke and Lexa**

Clarke Griffin and Lexa were initially adversaries due to the ongoing war between their people during the first season and the first part of the second. In "Long Into an Abyss," Clarke formally reached out to Lexa to put aside their differences in favour of peace between their communities. Together, they embarked on a shared mission to defend their people from a common enemy, and their similarities drew them closer. They both occupied leadership

positions in allied clans and worked together on challenging choices while having mutual respect. Their little romantic moment occurred in the episode “Bodyguard of Lies,” but Clarke was not ready for a relationship so soon after Finn’s death, which Lexa had ordered. Their relationship had strained after Lexa pulled back from Mount Weather to safeguard her people, and in so doing betrayed the Sky People, in “Blood Must Have Blood (Part 1).” They reconciled in the third season when Lexa had Clarke abducted to Polis. As Lexa aimed to establish harmony among her people, Clarke forgave her and they rekindled their alliance, eventually becoming romantically involved. Unfortunately, Titus, the Flamekeeper of Lexa, was displeased with their relationship and accidentally shot Lexa while trying to assassinate Clarke. Despite Clarke’s desperate efforts to save her, Lexa succumbed to her injuries in episode called “Thirteen.” However, her consciousness was preserved in the Flame, enabling Clarke to call upon her aid in the City of Light during “Perverse Instantiation (Part 2).” Lexa shielded Clarke from A.L.I.E.’s Cult, and Clarke professed her affection for Lexa before their eventual separation. Clarke persisted in grieving for Lexa long after her passing. In “Nevermind,” Josephine Lightbourne, for instance, pointed out that Clarke was still tearful when thinking of Lexa, even six years after her death. Other individuals also mentioned Lexa when conversing with Clarke, sometimes to influence her judgement or to tease her. During the fifth season Madi Griffin, Clarke’s adopted daughter, was given the Flame, allowing Lexa’s consciousness to communicate with Madi. In “Damocles (Part 1),” Lexa conveyed to Clarke, through Madi, that leaving her at Mount Weather was her greatest regret, hoping to prevent Clarke from making the same mistake. Lexa’s message led Clarke to make the right choice but also brought her to tears. In the final episode, Clarke undertook a critical test to decide the destiny of humanity. Throughout the evaluation, the Judge assumed the appearance of Lexa since she was Clarke’s most profound love.

This overview of their relationship was necessary to gain slight insight, as this relationship was one of the most significant throughout the whole series, and certainly the most crucial one with LGBTQ+ context. This couple has many things in common. They are both strong leaders who happen to be very young and both also lost their previous lovers. Lexa and Clarke have saved each other’s lives several times. Clarke spoke the initial line of dialogue in the series, and the Judge delivered the concluding line in Lexa’s manifestation. And their relationship was very influential even outside the series. ClexaCon was named after the couple by Clexa (Clarke and Lexa) shippers. Kass Morgan opted to introduce a romantic

partner for Octavia in the book series because of the positive feedback from fans regarding Clarke and Lexa's relationship in the television series.

Numerous posts about their relationship can be found on each Facebook group related to this thesis. Comments under these posts vary in sentiment. A positive comment highlights the tenderness of their kiss, which was a significant moment in the scene. The love between Lexa and Clarke was unique and had a profound impact on the global LGBTQ+ community, inspiring many people. Although we do not reside in an apocalyptic world, we persevere each day in our own way to survive. *The 100*, as a whole, provides us with strength and inspiration to continue fighting and moving forward, regardless of the circumstances. Lexa's significance grew as the LGBTQ+ community discovered comfort in her character and the representation of gay individuals in television programmes. Her immense popularity lies in the fact that she was a strong character for the LGBTQ+ community, hence the hype surrounding her. It provided individuals with the confidence to accept their sexuality. However, others view them with a more pragmatic perspective and harbour negative feelings towards them. As Clarke developed romantic feelings towards the woman who ordered the execution of her former lover and left Clarke and her people to perish at Mount Weather less than six months prior. Certain individuals perceive their relationship as overrated and find them both exasperating.

### **Clarke and Niylah**

During the three-month gap between Seasons Two and Three, Clarke meets Niylah. Clarke frequently visits Niylah's isolated shop, where they form a friendship. In "Wanheda (Part 1)," Niylah flirts with Clarke, leading to a night of intimacy. However, Clarke leaves discreetly during the night. Niylah is not mentioned again until "Nevermore," where Clarke seeks refuge from A.L.I.E. During Season Four, Clarke and Niylah's interactions become more regular as Niylah helps the Sky People preserve meat. In "The Tinder Box," Clarke persuades Niylah to remain in Arkadia for the Nightblood remedy. Following Clarke's departure for Becca's Island, she and Niylah do not cross paths until inside the Second Dawn Bunker. As the weight of leadership bears down on Clarke, Niylah provides emotional support. They go their separate ways, and six years pass without any communication. Their reunion takes place in "Exit Wounds." during Season 5, and despite Clarke's avoidance, they maintain a cordial connection, both having pledged allegiance elsewhere. Niylah uncovers Madi's Nightblood lineage and considers informing Octavia, contrary to Clarke's wishes. However, she allows Clarke suitable time to handle the matter herself. In the sixth season,

following the encounter against Primes in “The Blood of Sanctum,” Niylah reveals her happiness at seeing Clarke alive. Throughout the seventh season, Niylah joins Clarke’s team in the investigation for Bellamy, Octavia, and Echo. Despite sleeping together multiple times and sharing a caring relationship, Clarke and Niylah have never had a romantic involvement. They share a friendship based on emotional support and sexual intimacy. Niylah was among those who chose to forego transcendence, opting to be with Clarke and prevent her from being alone.

Opinions among members of the fan group differ regarding this couple. The supporters concur that Niylah would have been an ideal match for Clarke if it were not for Lexa. Niylah understood Clarke, served as a source of comfort for her, and had a mutually beneficial relationship with her without being jealous of Clarke and Lexa. Some, however, sympathised with Niylah because Clarke did not regard their relationship with much seriousness. Others disliked their relationship altogether, stating that there was no chemistry and that the couple did not work well together.

#### **Nathan Miller and Eric Jackson**

The precise nature of Miller and Jackson’s relationship during their time on the Ark is unclear. In the episode “A Lie Guarded,” Jackson is shot and trapped by one of A.L.I.E.’s drones with Miller at his side until the drones are deactivated, ensuring Jackson’s safety. Jackson expresses romantic interest in Miller in “DNR,” and their connection deepens further in “The Chosen.” Their bond evolves into a romantic partnership while inside the bunker. Although there are limited glimpses, their relationship appears to be a harmonious, affectionate, and supportive one. The narrative suggests a strong bond between Miller and Jackson, who have stayed united since their days in the bunker. Their tale portrays an enduring and affirming love that overcomes the hardships of their post-apocalyptic existence. Since the fifth season, they are the sole homosexual couple featured in the show. This couple does not get so much credit in fandom groups. They are not very discussed, but those few comments concerning them are positive at least when they compare their relationship with the one that Nathan had with his ex-boyfriend Bryan.

### 7.3. Relationships in the Series

Not every relationship will be presented in this thesis, as there is limited space for analysis and it would be impractical to cover them all. Only the most emblematic relationships, from my personal perspective, will be examined.

#### **Octavia's relationships**

Octavia has several romantic relationships throughout the series, with the first showcased in her relationship with Atom. At the start of the first season, Octavia wanders into the wild by herself, with Atom following closely behind. They come across a part of the forest inhabited by enchanting luminescent butterflies and share a passionate kiss in the midst of this enchanting setting. Later, Bellamy witnesses their intimate moment and punishes Atom for defying his orders. Upset by Bellamy's punishment, Octavia confronts him and asserts that she cannot be isolated from everyone. Tragically, Atom becomes trapped in the acid fog and undergoes immense suffering. Despite attempts to save him, his condition proves fatal. Out of compassion, Clarke must mercifully kill Atom to end his suffering. Octavia learns the distressing reality of Atom's death and is deeply impacted by the loss. There are a few positive comments concerning Atom on the fandom websites and also on Facebook groups. People grew fond of him despite his brief appearance.

The relationship between Lincoln and Octavia, the first Grounder/Sky Person couple, drew criticism from both communities. They were initially introduced in "Twilight's Last Gleaming" subsequent to suffering an injury from a steep descent. In "His Sister's Keeper," Lincoln tends to Octavia's wounds, saving her from other Grounders. Octavia is thankful, but tensions arise when her brother Bellamy learns of their relationship. In "Contents Under Pressure," Bellamy captures Lincoln and subjects him to torture, causing Octavia's distress. During her brother's absence and the delinquents' hallucinatory state induced by tree nuts in "Day Trip," Octavia seizes an opportunity to set Lincoln free. By "Unity Day," their relationship has developed romantically as Lincoln protects Octavia by taking an arrow. In "We Are Grounders (Part 2)," Lincoln saves Octavia in a battle with Bellamy's agreement, despite the threat to the alliance between the Mountain Men and the Grounders. In addition, in "The 48," Lincoln risked his life to acquire medicine for Octavia's poisoned wound, even after being captured by Reapers. Octavia searches determinedly for him and ultimately triumphs in "Fog of War." In "Long Into an Abyss" she collaborates with Bellamy and Clarke



to aid in Lincoln's recuperation from becoming a Reaper and regaining his former self. As Lincoln struggles to overcome his addiction to the Red drug of the Reapers in "Rubicon," Octavia continues to offer him support. In the climactic "Blood Must Have Blood (Part 2)," Lincoln prioritises Octavia over his allegiance to the Grounders, endangering the alliance with the Mountain Men to rescue her at Mount Weather. Lincoln teaches Octavia about combat and self-defence, displaying his deep protectiveness towards her. Unfortunately, Octavia had to witness Lincoln's killing by Pike, which profoundly affects her. Further details on the impact of Lincoln's death on Octavia and the reactions of the fandom are discussed in Chapter 7.4.1, Memorable Deaths and Fandom Reactions to Them. This relationship is widely regarded by social media users as one of Octavia's finest and as one of the best in the entire show. Fans idolised their bond, particularly with regard to Lincoln himself. The audience was heavily impacted by his death and Octavia's subsequent torment at the sight of his passing. Some fans claim he may be the only universally loved character.

The next relationship occurred sometime after Lincoln's execution. The complicated relationship between Octavia and Ilian began in the second episode of season four when they first met in "Heavy Lies the Crown" in Polis, Octavia accompanied by Kane. Initially, they were opponents, with Ilian striving to overthrow Roan and Octavia being determined to sustain the Coalition. Ilian sought vengeance for his family's demise and aimed to eliminate all AI technology in Polis, including the Flame. He was also responsible for destroying Arkadia, the Sky People's contingency plan for Praimfaya. Ilian maintained that he was unaware of the approaching cataclysm when he started the fire and asserted he had no intention to cause harm. During the moment, when Arkadians were seeking revenge for his deeds, Octavia declared her intention to execute him. Whilst the warning alarm alerted most individuals to take cover from the black rain, Octavia kept her weapon fixated on Ilian. Kane reminded Octavia of Charles Pike's execution of Lincoln in the same location, persuading her to lower her weapon. Distraught, Octavia fled Arkadia, and Ilian tracked her in the forest. As a storm erupted and unleashed dangerous black rain, Octavia urged Ilian to seek refuge on Helios with her. While riding in search of shelter, Octavia sought solace by kissing a surprised Ilian and sharing an intimate moment with him. After the storm, Ilian announced his plan to go back to his farm. Octavia, who felt a close bond with him, kindly offered him a ride. Their relationship ended in tragedy during the Conclave, where Ilian fought with great courage for his clan. Ultimately, he sacrificed himself in the attempt to help Octavia. Consequently, his demise signified the conclusion of their turbulent relationship. Ilian is not

as popular a character as Lincoln. Some fans do not approve of the idea of them being a couple, and even assert that they were not a couple, as the protagonist claimed to have felt “all alone, and felt nothing other than grief and hate.” Nevertheless, given that they had lived together before the conclave for a few days or weeks, I would personally consider them to be a couple.

Her final romantic involvement occurred towards the finale of the production. She subsequently discovered herself in Bardo, where Levitt’s debut appearance in the flashbacks took place. During Octavia’s Memory Capture (M-Cap), he exhibited sympathy towards her and forged a bond. Ultimately, he aided her in evading captivity. He then works as a janitor, and when she and her friends try to enter the Anomaly Stone room, he advises them not to go in because they will be killed, but to go to the surface where they cannot survive for long, as the Disciples would not follow them there. Octavia questions Levitt’s new profession, which he thinks was worth it, as he is still an essential member of the code-breaking team. He then instructs Octavia to hit him again and flee. In the episode “The Flock,” the two characters engage in flirtatious behaviour before eventually having intercourse. In “A Little Sacrifice,” Octavia is forced to leave Levitt bound and gagged after Echo tortures him, to prevent him from alerting the Disciples and causing Echo’s death. In “The Dying of the Light,” Levitt turns against the Disciples and assists Octavia and Clarke in reaching Bardo. Upon reuniting with Octavia, he greets her warmly, exhibiting no resentment towards her for her prior actions. When preparing to join the two women in preventing Bill Cadogan from starting the Last War, Levitt declared that he lacked a purpose before meeting Octavia. Therefore, he is willing to assist in stopping Cadogan. And in the last episode they both give up Transcendence to live together on Earth with their friends. The reaction to their relationship has been exceedingly favourable. The relationship between Levitt and Octavia was profound. Levitt provided support for Octavia when she required it and she imparted upon him the knowledge of how to love and embrace life. A fan asserted that despite Octavia’s inability to forget Lincoln, she deserved a contented conclusion after enduring so much hardship.

After concluding Octavia’s romantic relationships, her family-like connections remain. Her brother continuously accompanies her during the series, with their bond mostly strong but also shattered at one point. Despite being a loving, protective, and supportive sibling, their relationship drifted apart due to Octavia’s actions. However, it is not deemed fit to analyse this particular relationship as it is not widely discussed among the fans. On the contrary, Octavia’s relationship with Indra is a topic of interest within fan communities, with

varying opinions. However, their development was entertaining to observe. Octavia saves Indra's life in "Repercussions," leading Indra to name Octavia her Second in "Survival of the Fittest." Indra even expresses her affection for Octavia, claiming to love her as she does her own daughter Gaia. Nonetheless, in "Blood Must Have Blood (Part 1)," Indra informs Octavia that she is no longer her Second. It is evident that Indra places trust in Octavia as she refers to her as "her people." During "Shifting Sands," Indra expresses her love towards Octavia and questions whether it makes her appear feeble, to which Octavia replies "no." Their relationship is a favourite among certain fans. Some argue that Indra was instrumental in making Octavia a genuine warrior, providing support and love. In essence, Indra acted as a mother figure to Octavia. The comments indicating contradiction suggest that Indra did not offer adequate support to Octavia and her affection was somewhat conditional. It was only towards the end of the series that she began to acknowledge the harm she caused both of her daughters.

### **Clarke's relationship with Bellamy**

Clarke Griffin's first on-screen romantic relationship was with Finn, which will be addressed in the paragraph regarding the love triangle. A non-romantic relationship that is a frequent topic of discussion among viewers is the one between Clarke and Bellamy. Initially, Bellamy views Clarke as part of the privileged class on the Ark, and their relationship starts with animosity. However, as they encounter obstacles on Earth, their relationship progresses from a mere partnership to a friendship founded upon mutual respect and trust. Over the course of the series, they experience separations and reunions, working through significant challenges and making difficult decisions together. Nonetheless, in Season Seven, their close bond is tested when Bellamy sides with the Disciples, ultimately resulting in a heartbreaking conclusion. At a crucial juncture, Clarke is compelled to eliminate Bellamy, who had wholeheartedly dedicated himself to the cause. Despite the emotional burden, other characters reassure Clarke that the true Bellamy was already gone, and his absolution would have ensued. This occurrence marks a significant and tragic turning point in their relationship. On the whole, the audience had been anticipating the two to form a romantic couple throughout the series. Jason Rothenberg stated that Bellamy and Clarke had no romantic relationship in season three. However, he mentioned that Bellamy might become a couple in later seasons. Nevertheless, with Bellamy's death in Season Seven, they never became romantically involved. Bob Morley commented that Bellamy was intended to be portrayed as romantic and he and Eliza were instructed to play them romantically. Bellamy

indirectly disclosed his love for Clarke while conversing with Octavia. The statement does not specify romantic love and could refer to platonic love instead. There has been a significant amount of commentary regarding the potential romantic relationship between the two characters since the show's inception. One fan has even suggested that the chemistry we see on screen is simply a reflection of the real-life relationship between the actors portraying the characters, Bob Morley and Eliza Taylor. Additionally, there is a debate between fans as to which relationship would be superior: Bellarke (Bellamy and Clarke) or Clexa (Clarke and Lexa). It is impossible to clearly determine which view prevails, but both camps have a large number of representatives.

### **The love triangle (Raven, Finn and Clarke)**

Raven's initial romantic encounter was with Finn Collins, whom she had known since she was a child. They had formed a close bond from their childhood friendship. Raven and Finn's connection developed into a romantic relationship thereafter. However, things became complicated when Raven, who was already 18, embarked on a dangerous spacewalk with Finn, causing the Ark to lose oxygen. Finn took the blame and was imprisoned in a juvenile detention centre, but Raven remained loyal and visited him regularly. Later on, Raven negotiated with Abby Griffin to travel to Earth with Finn and discovered that 100 teenagers had already been sent to the planet. However, their relationship became strained when Finn slept with Clarke, and Raven ultimately decided to end things due to feeling that Finn did not love her "the way she wanted to be loved" in "I Am Become Death." Many fans have questioned Finn's actions - why did he cheat on Raven just 10 days after arriving on Earth? He did not even discuss it with Clarke, and as a result, betrayed them both. It is unclear why he did this, especially considering how quickly he fell in love with Clarke on their journey to Earth. Some speculate that he had no intention of being faithful. The audience harbours disapproval for him due to his involvement in the Trikru village massacre, where he caused the undeserved deaths of innocent people. He endeavoured to generate a truce and sacrificed himself, however, Clarke intervened and saved him from being tortured. Raven implored Clarke to eliminate Lexa, but instead, she had to end Finn's life out of mercy, and Raven called her a murderer. Clarke not only spared Finn from torture but also saved Raven. While one fan believes this illustrates Raven's self-centredness and Clarke's selflessness and bravery, others hold a high regard for the bond between Clarke and Finn, noting their shared qualities. Their opinion is that if Finn did not do what he did, they would make a couple of great peacemakers.

### **Jasper and Maya**

The connection between Jasper Jordan and Maya Vie played a pivotal role in the series, particularly from season two to four. Their acquaintance began when both the Delinquents and the Mount Weather residents found themselves confined together. Quickly establishing a bond over shared experiences, their relationship took shape amid the challenges they faced. In the episode “Repercussions,” Maya takes Jasper to a warehouse filled with preserved paintings from before the bombings. A moment nearly leads to a kiss, interrupted by a guard, prompting a quick escape to avoid detection. Afterwards, they share breakfast, and Jasper seeks Maya’s help in locating Clarke after her disappearance. Collaborating on a plan to provide the 47 juveniles with a radio for their escape from Mount Weather, Maya and Jasper work together, with Maya disabling cameras to avoid detection during their endeavours. In “Remember Me,” they join forces during a heist, staying behind to repair a painting covering a hole in the wall. When a guard approaches, Jasper kisses Maya to divert attention. The tragic radiating of Mount Weather follows, and Jasper rushes to the mess hall to find Maya, disregarding pleas for freedom from Harper and Kane. Octavia holds a dying Maya, with Jasper expressing her innocence. Maya’s final words, “None of us are innocent,” resonate with the profound impact of their experiences. Deeply affected, Jasper is upset and enraged with Monty and Clarke, believing that with more time, he could have taken down Cage, the antagonist. Bellamy provides a harsh reality, stating that the Mountain Men would never have stopped. It is worth noting that Maya is Jasper’s second romantic interest, with Octavia being the first. The fan community is once again separated into two factions. The first faction believes that their romantic relationship could have lasted longer and that they deserved to be together happily. They blame Clarke for ruining it again. The second faction does not fully support this relationship and fails to sense their connection.

### **Murphy and Emori**

The final relationship under discussion in this thesis is the one between John Murphy and Emori. Unlike Linctavia (Lincoln and Octavia) who also feature as romantic partners on the show, John and Emori are the only Frikdreina<sup>15</sup>/Skaikru couple. Their relationship develops from an unanticipated encounter in the Dead Zone to a deep and enduring connection. In “The Last War,” Murphy describes their initial meeting as “love at first knife to throat.” Although they initially acted treacherously towards each other, they later

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<sup>15</sup> Frikdreina means mutated human in Trigedasleng. (The 100 Wiki)

reconciled and strengthened their bond while facing trials together. They work together to scavenge, confront the danger of Praimfaya, and explore immortality as Primes. Their partnership experiences a temporary separation from a time jump, but they reunite. In the sixth season, Murphy proposes marriage to his partner, making them the only couple on the show to reconcile after breaking up, and the first couple to get engaged. During the seventh season, they take on the role of Primes in Sanctum and demonstrate a tender, enduring partnership. Unfortunately, Emori passes away, and Murphy sacrifices himself to spend her final hours with her through the Mind Drive. Together, they Transcend and choose to return to Earth to live in harmony with their loved ones. Murphy and Emori have been together for six years (excluding their “break”). Unlike other characters, Emori affectionately refers to him as John. Both of them were exiled from their respective communities at some stage in their lives. Murphy was expelled from the 100, whilst Emori was banished for being genetically mutated. Murphy’s attachment to Emori played a part in his growth as a character, transforming him from an overly self-involved individual to one who had someone else to be caring for. A considerable number of enthusiasts refer to them as the “post-apocalyptic variant of Bonnie and Clyde.”

#### 7.4. Deaths in the Series as a Narrative Device

In the post-apocalyptic genre, main characters often meet memorable and emotional deaths, making them a distinctive feature of these stories. This thesis, focusing on the fan base of such series, requires delving into this aspect more deeply. The producer of *The 100* has demonstrated a willingness to eliminate key characters, even when a significant portion of the storyline revolves around them. Character deaths often trigger significant plot developments. For instance, the death of key characters can lead to power struggles, factional conflicts, or changes in leadership within the post-apocalyptic world, driving the narrative forward. The series frequently explores complex moral dilemmas and character deaths are central to this exploration. Choices related to who lives and who dies are frequently depicted, forcing characters and viewers to grapple with the ethical challenges of their harsh environment. Deaths impact the development of surviving characters. The loss of loved ones can lead to personal growth, character transformation, or a deepening of relationships as survivors confront their grief and adjust to the new reality.

Some characters in *The 100* undergo redemption arcs, and their deaths can play a pivotal role in the realisation of these arcs. Sacrificing oneself for the greater good is a

recurring theme, demonstrating the capacity for change and growth in even the most morally conflicted characters. The deaths of characters in the series are designed to evoke strong emotional responses from viewers. The grief, guilt, anger, and sadness experienced by the remaining characters and the audience intensify the emotional connection to the story. *The 100* often subverts typical storytelling tropes, including character survival expectations. Characters who seem pivotal may be unexpectedly killed off, contributing to the series' reputation for unpredictability. The series effectively maintains suspense by keeping viewers uncertain about which characters will survive in a constantly perilous and unpredictable world. Character deaths in *The 100* drive fan engagement, sparking discussions, theories, and emotional investment in the fates of the characters. Overall, character deaths in *The 100* serve as a multi-faceted narrative device, contributing to the show's complexity, emotional impact, and the ongoing evolution of its characters and plot.

#### 7.4.1. Memorable Deaths and Fandom Reactions to Them

##### **Deaths having a great influence on Clarke Griffin**

The initial and impressive death in the series occurred in episode three of the first season when Charlotte, a young girl, killed Wells Jaha. She stole a knife from a delinquent John Murphy and as others thought he did the killing, they tried to hang him, which led to John's notable character development. This milestone marked the beginning of John's transformation into a "cockroach," a term that described his subsequent survival instincts throughout the remainder of the show. Charlotte's motive for murder came from her time on the Ark. She was battling her inner demons, which manifested as Chancellor Thelonious Jaha, the father of Wells. Thelonious had floated Charlotte's parents, and Wells was a reminder of this traumatic event. Bellamy encouraged Charlotte to confront her demons, but murdering one of their own people was not what he had in mind. This misinterpretation resulted in audience frustration. Many viewers believed his death was tragic and that he was Clarke's close friend, who let her hate him to maintain her relationship with her mother. Fans stated that the creators should have provided opportunities for him and Clarke to mend their relationship. This event raised a question among the audience. Whether Charlotte should have been punished as a child for killing Wells, assuming she did not commit suicide, is a matter of debate. It is generally agreed that she should have been punished for killing Wells, as she still knew that killing was wrong. However, opinions differ on the severity of the punishment. Some argue that execution would be too harsh, but some form of punishment would be

necessary. The same applies to Murphy's hanging, as it was considered too severe given the lack of evidence and the fact that they were all underage.

The death of Finn Collins (s02e08) remains a memorable moment in the show. Initially established as a peacemaker, Finn's character took a turn after falling in love with Clarke. When Clarke was believed to be kidnapped by Grounders and in danger of being killed, Finn acted rashly and without consideration for the consequences. Fueled by fear for his loved one, he massacred an entire Grounder village. This frustrating turn of events highlights how Finn's lack of knowledge and steeped emotions led to avoidable destruction. Clarke was actually taken captive by the Mountain Men rather than the Grounders. As a result, Finn committed murder without any justifiable reason. The Grounders sought revenge for their loss and Finn, acting impulsively, eventually surrendered. He was set to suffer through torture and execution for his wrongdoing. Clarke made an unsuccessful attempt to negotiate his release, ultimately choosing to end his life herself to avoid any further suffering. Finn's death was depicted in the eighth episode of the second season. By that point, the audience could already relate to the characters more than at the outset, due to their observable development. As a result, the viewer experienced Clarke's desperation, Raven's fear for her loved ones, and Finn's fear of death. Although Finn's demise was a sorrowful moment in the series, there were individuals who were satisfied with it, as he had betrayed Raven and Clarke and had taken the lives of innocent people.

In the seventh episode of the third season, called "Thirteen," Lexa's kom Trikru physical form is killed. Her Flamekeeper Titus unintentionally shoots her, as he is trying to kill Clarke because she alters her perception of living a life and a way of approaching clan ruling. For a viewer, this death meant a lot of negative and strong emotions. Lexa was providing the necessary protection for the thirteenth clan, the Skaikru. And she also meant a lot to Clarke, which led to Clarke losing another person she cared about. The accident happened right after they spent their first night together. This could have left a viewer with the thought that Clarke does not deserve anything even close to being happy and finding someone to love romantically. Fortunately, the opportunity for closure emerged when Clarke journeyed to the City of Light with the Flame implanted in her mind, where Lexa's consciousness had been uploaded. A majority of individuals assert that Lexa was a remarkable character. She embodied strength, autonomy, courage, and the belief that love is not a sign of weakness despite years of being taught otherwise. She established peace by forming a coalition among the clans and sought to break with tradition, such as the "Jus drein



jus daun,”<sup>16</sup> to put an end to the violence and death. She was a strategic leader, unlike her heartless and ruthless subjects. Many fans were deeply upset by how she was killed off - she deserved a warrior’s death, perhaps protecting Clarke or in battle, certainly not through the accidental loss of a bullet. Some viewers thought the character’s death was premature and unnecessary, making the scene distressing for many fans. They argued that her relationship should not have ended so soon after its beginning and that the writers should not have killed her off. Her popularity may have also been influenced by her LGBTQ+ identity. Conversely, some believe that she is an overhyped character and does not deserve such recognition.

### **Deaths contributing to Octavia’s development**

The next memorable death in the series comes two episodes after Lexa’s death. Lincoln kom Trikru is executed by Charles Pike. A leader of the Farmstation, at the time of the execution already a chancellor, shot Lincoln in his head. Lincoln’s path to this faith began with rescuing Octavia, one of the hundred delinquents. Octavia and Lincoln developed romantic feelings and Lincoln also helped the delinquents, which led to him being viewed as a traitor to his own people. He was captured by Mountain Men, transformed into a Reaper, rescued by Bellamy and Octavia, and then Abby cured his addiction to RED.<sup>17</sup> After the fall of Mount Weather, he settled in Arkadia, because he was a traitor to his people and was sentenced to death by their commander. When Pike became chancellor, Lincoln and other Grounders in Arkadia were imprisoned as they were all seen as enemies to the Sky People. After an unsuccessful revolt, Pike ordered Kane’s, Sinclair’s, and Lincoln’s execution for treason. But Kane and Sinclair escaped, whereas Lincoln chose to stay behind since Pike issued a threat to harm the other Grounders he had imprisoned. Octavia was significantly influenced by the death of her loved one. She blamed her brother for Lincoln’s death as he was part of the group that supported Pike being a chancellor and his decisions. A viewer could see that something inside of her broke at the time of the execution. She saw every moment of it, which did not help her with dealing with the loss. A spectator could also feel the sadness, anger, and desperation that came with the tragedy. Both deaths were significant, but the impact of his passing was greater than Lexa’s. His death was emotionally touching for the audience. However, some argue that Lexa’s death was worse because of the unexpected nature. Overall, both deaths were devastating.

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<sup>16</sup> “Jus drein jus daun!” means Blood must have blood!

<sup>17</sup> RED is an addictive drug used by Mountain Men to create Reapers.

The Final Conclave itself affected Octavia quite significantly. In the tenth episode of the fourth season, more characters that were significant throughout the show die. The first important character to die in the Conclave was Illian, with whom Octavia created a special bond through the last episodes. Illian dies in Octavia's hands after being pierced by an arrow. The arrow was fired by Echo, who should not be present at the Conclave and it was a violation of Conclave rules. The second one was Roan, the King of Azgeda, who was killed by Luna, the last survivor of Floukru. Roan helped Sky People and Clarke multiple times, but at some point in the show, they were also on the verge of beginning a war. That luckily did not happen and they made a deal about surviving the Second Praimfaya. The last important character killed in the Conclave was Luna. She lost faith in humanity after a negative experience with Skaikru. "Skaikru taught me that people are cruel, and violent, and selfish to the core." She fought in the Final Conclave for the extinction of the human race. Fortunately for the human race, Octavia killed Luna and became the last warrior and winner of the Conclave. The majority of the fandom believes that Roan deserved a better storyline. According to comments on Facebook, suggestions were made that the character should have had a longer life and should have been made a major character. Different post also stated that Luna did not deserve this type of ending. One fan requested that she be treated with more respect even in the moments leading up to her death. Octavia told her that there were people worth saving, except for her. It was said that Luna upheld superior values compared to Octavia. She no longer desired to engage in violence nor share in the savage lifestyle of other grounders. Instead, Luna chose to uphold a society of peace and love, safeguarding this individual enclave from individuals like Octavia.

The death of a recurring character Charles Pike (s03e16) is probably not that memorable, but surely was of great importance for the development of other characters. Especially Octavia Blake. He was primarily an antagonist, but many remembered him also as a teacher of earth skills from the Ark. After becoming Chancellor of the Arkadia, he assassinated 300 Trikru warriors, who were sent by Lexa to protect Arkadia from Azgeda aggression. His past experiences with Grounders made him paranoid and distrustful of the Grounders. Because of the sin, he was captured and sent to execution, but A.L.I.E was in charge at that time, which led to him being imprisoned. After helping with defeating A.L.I.E, Octavia stabbed him to death. She did that to avenge Lincoln's death. Octavia could not resist the temptation of vengeance, which led to creating another demon for her to fight. Viewers could see this act as deserving and rightful or on the contrary as wrong, thinking he deserved

to be judged by the people in charge. Overall, Pike is a contentious individual and his emergence in the series is met with disdain from viewers allegedly due to his destructive actions. Following his appointment as Chancellor of Arkadia, he destroyed their alliance with the Grounders and their protection by massacring an army of 300 Trikru warriors. Many viewers derived satisfaction from the portrayal of a character's death on the show, and also from the fact that Octavia was the one who got revenge for Lincoln's death, because it is as if she is getting revenge for all the fans who were just as affected by his death as she was.

Jaha's character went through a complex journey throughout the series, evolving from a Chancellor with a rigid mindset to a more nuanced and selfless leader. During Kara Cooper's attempt to seize control of the hydroponic farm in the Second Dawn Bunker, Jaha is stabbed. Despite assisting Wonkru in regaining control of the farm, Jaha succumbs to blood loss shortly thereafter and meets his end. His death is portrayed in the second episode of the fifth season. Jaha was a central character throughout the earlier seasons of the series playing a key role in the survival of the Ark's people. Throughout his time on *The 100*, Jaha was known for his leadership, determination, and sometimes controversial decisions. His death added another layer of complexity to the narrative and contributed to the evolving dynamics of the characters as they faced the challenges of the post-apocalyptic world. His last major influence was on Octavia. She was tasked with getting rid of the people in front of the hydroponic farm so that they would be able to regain control of it without any unrest among the residents. She did not know how to do this and Jaha told her how they had solved such problems on the Ark. He told her that you were either a friend of the Ark and followed the rules strictly or you were an enemy in breaking those rules. Strict adherence to the rules was necessary to keep the peace and also for the survival of the human race. This is when the popular line "You are Wonkru or you are the enemy of Wonkru, choose!" was born. And that is when Blodreina was born too. Jaha assumed responsibility for his son's death, along with the 300 who asphyxiated on the Ark and those who perished during the landing – these events spurred his actions. His search for salvation drove him to take extreme measures. Oftentimes, the most intelligent individuals are the easiest to manipulate, and Jaha, feeling lost, sought a belief system to hold onto. A.L.I.E. provided exactly that. By leading his people to the City of Light, he could save them all. He was so desperate to play the hero that he allowed the villain to manipulate him. According to the audience, Jaha was acceptable during the first and maybe the second season, but after that, he started to go downhill. It may be an unpopular opinion, but Jaha may have made mistakes; nonetheless, in the end, he was more helpful than

harmful. Despite being a mostly hated character, no one would have survived without him. His ultimate goal was always their survival. The only season he became less likeable was when he was with A.L.I.E. He led his followers to the bunker, acting where others failed. Despite any shortcomings, he stood before everyone, took responsibility and made amends. Some consider him to be one of the greatest leaders.

### **Jasper's death and its cause**

The second season, the sixteenth episode, featured the death of Maya Vie. She died after Bellamy and Clarke irradiated the whole bunker causing the death of all the Mountain Men, which meant 184 men, 174 women, and 26 children, 384 residents in total. This genocide is a memorable act itself, but Maya's death is of great importance because it influenced one of the main characters, Jasper Jordan, and his relationship with the friends responsible for the genocide. He believed that there was a different solution to their situation and that not everyone in Mount Weather deserved to die because many people from the bunker helped the Sky People. Jasper Jordan was one of the most important individuals in the show. Since the beginning of the show, the viewer has seen him as a happy and brave character. But after the death of his loved one Maya, he rapidly changed. He was fighting depression and desperation. Jasper blamed his friends for her death and thought that Maya's death was not necessary for saving their people, because he was coming to save them when they were imprisoned and threatened in Mount Weather. He could not stand the desperation and did not see any reason for staying alive and trying to survive. Jasper committed suicide by overdosing on the tea made from hallucinogenic Jobi Nuts (s04e11). Jasper's death was a heartbreaking and emotional moment. He struggled with mental health issues and the trauma of the harsh realities they faced on Earth. In the end, Jasper chose to end his own life, unable to cope with the constant struggle for survival. It was a powerful and tragic portrayal of the toll that the post-apocalyptic world took on the characters, and it had a significant impact on the show's narrative and characters. He was popular among the audience until the Mount Weather incident. Their viewpoint is that everyone suffered a loss due to others, and only Jasper's behaviour was unjustifiable. The Maya in Clarke's subconscious, as depicted in "Nevermind," held Clarke accountable for Jasper's suicide for suggesting that Maya's death was Clarke's fault, which ultimately triggered his spiral towards death. However, both Bellamy and Monty were comparatively less blamed for her death. One commenter suggests that Jasper was already struggling with depression before the loss of Maya, which had a profound impact on him. He felt completely hopeless and lacked any motivation to fight.

Jasper's character was important to include because not all individuals are like Clarke, always prepared for conflict. Some would inevitably crumble, just as Jasper did. Another commenter suggests that Jasper should not have assigned blame at all. The mountain men were determined to extract all their bone marrow until they reached the ground, so resistance was futile. Even if President Cage were to be killed by Jasper, others would continue to drill. Jasper failed to understand what was at stake and instead took the easy way out. Whilst it is understandable how he felt towards the end, the audience believed that he deserved a better ending.

### **Deaths with a great impact on the fandom**

In the finale of Season 5, titled "Damocles – Part Two," Monty Green and Harper McIntyre decide not to enter cryosleep with the rest of the characters. Instead, they chose to live out their lives on the Eligius IV spaceship, which had a sustainable environment. Monty and Harper recognized the challenges and conflicts that were often accompanied by survival on Earth, and they sought an alternative path. They had a child together while living their life on the ship. They decided their life to be like that, but their son Jordan did not and so he went into cryosleep when he was 26 years old, resulting in never seeing his parents again. Monty and Harper, having lived a full life together, passed away of old age. Harper unfortunately passes away a little bit sooner of an unspecified genetic condition in her seventies leaving Monty to live alone until the time of his death. Monty's last act was to help guide the ship towards a new habitable planet, which they named "Alpha." They left a message for the remaining survivors, including Clarke and Bellamy, explaining their decision and providing hope for a better future in the new world. Monty's death was a poignant moment in the series, and his character's journey from a tech-savvy problem solver to a wise and selfless leader left a lasting impact on the storyline and the remaining characters. This sacrifice also added an emotional depth to the narrative, highlighting the theme of sacrifice for the greater good that was prevalent throughout the series. The demise of both characters had a profound impact on the audience, particularly Monty, who was a fan favourite throughout the entire series. Nevertheless, the audience seems to not like them being undervalued. Harper ought to have received greater attention from the creators, having been deserving of more visible character development. Similarly, Monty should have received more credit for his role in saving their people, similar to what Raven received. This couple enjoyed a happy life with their son aboard Eligius IV. It is commendable that they passed away peacefully and from natural

causes instead of perishing in battle. This was significant for their characters, sensible, and courageous.

Marcus Kane, a pivotal character in the series, underwent significant character development. Following a harrowing encounter during the Battle for Eden, where he was nearly killed by the psychologically unstable Eligius prisoner Michael Vinson, Kane slipped into a coma. At the conclusion of the fifth season, he, like others, entered cryosleep. Throughout the sixth season, Kane grappled with the lingering injuries inflicted by Vinson. Abby, seeking a solution, found a way to save him. However, after a heated argument with Octavia during which Kane began coughing up blood, he was reluctantly placed back into cryosleep. In a surprising turn, Kane's consciousness was reborn into the young body of a Sanctum Guard named Gavin through a Mind Drive. Uncomfortable with this new existence, he opted for a final release. At his request, Indra floated Kane from Eligius IV after bidding a poignant farewell to Abby. Thus, the original body of Marcus Kane met its end, concluding a complex and transformative journey for the character. He was a character whom many admired, albeit for his fatal decision to betray Octavia and Wonkru. The creators had to write him off, given that the actor Henry Ian Cusick had other commitments. Had the actor not left, Kane could have played a significant part in both the war against Bill Cadogan and on Sanctum. Kane is one of the few who relentlessly fights for humanity's destiny, along with Monty. When he was severely injured and Abby's obsession with becoming a Prime had taken hold, he selflessly sacrificed himself due to his unwavering righteousness and moral compass. Marcus Kane was a remarkable Chancellor, negotiator, and human being. He excelled where others faltered, upholding principles of Humanity and Wisdom for the greater good.

Abigail "Abby" Griffin, a prominent character in the series known for her role as the chief medical officer and mother to Clarke Griffin, encountered profound challenges in the sixth season. Amidst numerous ethical dilemmas, especially those pertaining to the welfare of her daughter and the moral quandaries posed by consequential decisions, Abby's narrative took a tragic turn. Her pivotal role in the resurrection process, utilising the Mind Drive technology, marked a critical juncture in her storyline. In the twelfth episode of the sixth season, titled "Adjustment Protocol," Abby's dedication to protecting Madi led to her transformation into a Nightblood. However, this sacrifice took a devastating turn when Russell Lightbourne wiped Abby's mind, effectively ending her life and repurposing her body as the new host for his wife Simone. Subsequently, Clarke, faced with the unbearable

reality, floated Simone, thereby terminating Abby's new existence. Abby's lifeless body, devoid of consciousness, drifted into the depths of space. In the absence of a tangible remnant, Abby's wedding ring, returned by Russell to Clarke, assumed a symbolic role. In a poignant ceremony depicted in "False Gods," the ring was interred on the Sanctum beside the inert Flame, offering a symbolic farewell and a semblance of closure in the form of a funeral ritual. As per the audience's claims, Abby was the most exasperating character in all seasons except for the final one. She displayed remarkable self-centredness and extreme hypocrisy. The demise of both Abby and Kane set off a discussion among fans, and one question emerged about which character they would wish to bring back if given the opportunity. The response was almost unanimously in favour of Kane, who was seen as a superior character to Abby because of his efforts towards peaceful solutions. On the contrary, Abby impeded progress continually. Many viewed Abby unfavourably due to her conduct, particularly because it was she who suggested cannibalism as a survival strategy, blaming Octavia for it. Some are undecided as they like both Abby and Kane, including their bond. A few would opt for Abby out of necessity, as she was vital to the group's survival. However, they could have coped without Kane's presence.

The final death documented in this dissertation of *The 100* television series concerns the demise of Bellamy Blake, which ensues during Season Seven, in the episode designated "Blood Giant." Throughout this episode, Bellamy's allegiance to the Disciples appears to have strengthened. The demise of Bellamy is a critical and disputed incident in the series. Bellamy was a significant character throughout the show, and his passing was unexpected and emotional for many fans. This change in allegiance positions him against his former friends and culminates in a confrontation. Eventually, Clarke Griffin, one of Bellamy's closest friends, is forced to make a difficult and painful decision. She shot him to protect her adoptive daughter Madi from the Shepherd. This event generated various reactions among viewers, considering Bellamy's enduring appeal since the beginning of the show. The decision to remove Bellamy from the show was met with criticism from certain fans who thought that the character deserved a more fulfilling conclusion or a bigger role in the series' end. However, others acknowledged its influence on the storyline and the emotional weight it added to the relevant characters. Bellamy's death continues to be a significant and debatable event in *The 100*, contributing to debates on character development, narrative choices, and fan anticipation. Whilst many fans came to accept Bellamy's death, the majority felt that it was poorly executed. The motive behind his demise was to protect Madi, however, the book

was left behind and Madi surrendered herself to the Shepherd due to Scheidheda's persuasion. Bellamy's death was motivated by several factors, including the creators' desire to take the series in new, complex directions by exploring themes of power, spirituality, and transcendence. Bob Morley, who portrayed Bellamy, requested a reduced role in the final season for personal reasons. This resulted in Bellamy being absent from the main storyline for a significant portion of the season. The decision to kill off a central character like Bellamy created shock value, and emotional resonance, and sparked debates among viewers, ultimately contributing to the unpredictability of the final season. The demise of Bellamy permitted the programme to explore the intricacies of his character's voyage, consisting of instances of ethical vagueness and redemption. Despite the verdict potentially contradicting admirers' presumptions, it signified an innovative selection designed to cater to the overarching narrative and concepts of the show. The termination of Bellamy's character performed a crucial part in moulding the denouement of *The 100*.



## 8. Conclusion

In conclusion, *The 100* series is a deserving representative of young adult fiction due to its intelligence and sophistication, although it is often overlooked. The story stands out from typical clichéd narratives such as *The Hunger Games*, *Divergent*, and *The Maze Runner*, by offering a unique and challenging narrative that deviates from conventional YA dystopian tropes. Hence, it deserves more attention for its exceptional contribution to the genre. *The 100* sets itself apart by presenting morally intricate situations and characters. Unlike some other young adult series that simplify characters in stark black-and-white terms, *The 100*'s characters frequently encounter difficult choices and ethical ambiguity. The programme examines the brutal realities of survival in a post-apocalyptic universe. Taking a practical approach to survival, *The 100* stands out from other young adult shows that prioritise fantastical elements. The show has received acclaim for its efforts to represent a diverse range of perspectives. The cast boasts characters from various ethnicities, sexual orientations, and backgrounds, which promotes a more inclusive depiction of society. Throughout the series, the characters undergo substantial growth and transformation. The character's development surpasses the archetypal hero's journey; encountering setbacks, enduring repercussions, and evolving in response to experiences. This depth adds authenticity to the storytelling. *The 100* is recognised for exceeding expectations and avoiding predictable plots, displaying bravery in taking risks, resulting in unforeseen character growth and plot twists. This aspect of unpredictability differentiates it from other young adult series that tend to follow more formulaic structures. In summary, while incorporating some aspects of the YA genre, the show diverges from established patterns, making it a significant and intellectually stimulating contribution to the young adult television landscape.

The analysis was focused on fandom behaviour which shows that fandoms comprise diverse individuals with varying backgrounds, interests, and demographics. By examining the fandom of *The 100*, we gained insight into the series' global impact and its resonance with diverse audience segments. Fandom behaviour reflects viewers' emotional investment in the characters and storyline. Analysing reactions, discussions, and fan-created content (such as fanfiction or fan art) has helped to gain insight into the emotional attachment fans possess towards the show. An examination of fandom behaviour further illuminates how fans responded to pivotal events, character trajectories, and surprising plot twists. Consequently, this data can offer valuable evidence for appraising the show's storytelling prowess and its

ability to captivate audiences. Studying fandom responses revealed feedback on the portrayal of diversity in *The 100* series and its impact on the audience. The analyses provided insights into audience interpretations and discussions of different social and ethical themes about survival, leadership, morality, and the repercussions of human actions, along with any discourse concerning societal commentary interwoven in the narrative. Generally speaking, the audience often changes their opinion of specific characters as they develop, because their actions evoke a mixture of emotions. This can be summed up as being a natural response of people.

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