

## HPAC 11 - Author Abstracts

*Feel welcome to continue the conversation with presenters in person or by email (where available).*

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Independent Scholar

### *The Purpose of Peeves: The Puckish Poltergeist and Pranksters of the Past*

Peeves the poltergeist is considered such an unnecessary character in the *Harry Potter* series that he was completely cut from the films. He provides entertainment but is not essential to the plot and is therefore treated as expendable. Yet Peeves appears in every single book, a ubiquitous presence at Hogwarts, and his antics often have direct consequences for Harry.

Amoral agent of chaos or loyal defender of the school, Peeves is a fixture of the castle as much as the changing staircases or enchanted ceiling. This paper explores Peeves's personal and literary purposes: what does he want, why does he behave the way he does, and what narrative function does he serve? Peeves is one in a long line of magical troublemakers, and his antecedents—from medieval folklore and romance to Shakespeare's Puck to Peter Pan—can tell us where his peevish ways come from, what they represent, and why the series needs him.

Julye Bidmead, Ph.D.  
and Emma Brandel

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Chapman University

### *An Engagement Guide for the Critical, the Caring, and the Curious*

This presentation reflects on a Chapman University class, "Deconstructing Hogwarts: Gender, Race, and Religion in Harry Potter." Many changes in the Harry Potter world have occurred – the *Cursed Child* play, the *Fantastic Beasts* movies, opening of Wizarding World theme parks, added narratives on Pottermore, and Rowling's problematic tweets. While the books and movies had instances of racism, patriarchy, gender inequality, and lack of representation to spark class discussions and assignments, the newer elements added different problems to analyze, especially in light of changing societal views. Students pondered the question of whether one should even read the books and support the Potter franchise and whether a college course should be taught on the subject. A proposed solution arose: The books could be read/taught along with a reading guide that acknowledges and discusses the flaws of the Potterverse, encouraging critical thinking, curiosity, and social action. As an additional assignment, Ravenclaw House students created their own reading guide. The guide examines topics such as ableism, religion, racism, misogyny, consent, death, historical parallels, transphobia, and homophobia, with contemplative questions and contemporary examples to engage new and seasoned *Harry Potter* readers.

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Osteopathic Medicine in Arizona

*Harry Potter and the Osteopathic Medical School Part 1 & 2:*

*In-person and Virtual Harry Potter-Themed Days as a High-Yield Review for Final Examinations*

Incorporating contemporary fiction into educational activities that are interactive and memorable creates a positive learning environment for students. This presentation describes how an osteopathic medical school created a *Harry Potter*-themed educational event to review didactic material before a final exam. The event was conducted in person for two years and included a Sorting ceremony, eight themed classrooms that reviewed material for the individual disciplines, a board game night, an arts and crafts afternoon, a Quidditch tournament, and a Yule Ball. For one year during the pandemic, the event was conducted virtually and included a Sorting ceremony, a trivia night, and six themed classrooms. Both versions of the event received positive feedback from students and faculty and led to a self-reported improvement in the connectivity between students and their faculty members, as well as to an increase in wellness through stress reduction.

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Marietta College

*Perverse Polyjuice: Trans Harry Potter Spite Fic as a response to JK Rowling's TERF Wars*

On June 10, 2020, JK Rowling followed up a set of anti-transgender tweets with a post on her website entitled "TERF Wars." The piece laid out Rowling's views regarding gender essentialism and the dangers the trans movement posed to a cisgender world. While much of the Harry Potter fandom was saddened and enraged by her position, one key group of fans took subversive action to claim a portion of the Potterverse as their own, sending a clear message to Rowling and the rest of the world that they would not be silenced.

In the years since Rowling's controversial statement, both the creation and consumption of trans *Harry Potter* fan fiction has exploded, ironically leading to more trans representation within the Harry Potter fandom than ever before. This presentation examines the features of the Trans Harry Potter trope and how it has changed since the "TERF Wars" publication. In addition to an increase in volume, what some call "spite fic" has taken a more overtly political tone that both repudiates Rowling and reclaims the world of *Harry Potter* for trans readers and writers.

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*Toxic Traditions at Hogwarts*

One aspect of Hogwarts that has always stood out to educators is the poor learning environment within the castle. Using textual evidence from *Harry Potter* Books 1-6, we filled out the U.S. Department of Education School Climate Survey for students, staff, and parents about Hogwarts. While Hogwarts has educated almost all witches and wizards in Britain, this study concludes it has not been a conducive learning environment for all students to reach their full magical potential, leading to dangerous consequences for the wizarding world. This presentation closely examines the Sorting system and whether the benefits (e.g., a sense of belonging, community, and pride) outweigh the intense bullying associated with inter-House rivalries and recommends changes for the next Hogwarts Head to consider implementing.

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*Restorative Conversations: There Is a Place for Us All*

This workshop introduces the “Restorative Leadership” approach to help facilitate a discussion where all voices of the Harry Potter community are invited to address the splintering and pain from looking for representation of under-represented communities and Rowling’s divisive rhetoric. The Restorative Leadership Touchstones are: We choose invitation over coercion. We practice radical inclusion. We work together to achieve objectives. We craft and sustain equitable communities.

Participants will create an Unbreakable Vow, identify stakeholders, split into groups, and identify the key issues for stakeholders. An elected spokesperson for each group will gather around a table where the facilitators will moderate a discussion around questions like, “How do we create an inclusive Harry Potter community where all ideas and feelings regarding the books, the author, and everything beyond that are heard and honored?”

Jennifer Duggan

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University of South-Eastern Norway

*An Elaboration on "Transformative Readings:*

*Harry Potter fan fiction, trans/queer reader response, and J. K. Rowling"*

This presentation argues that the politics of children's literature and the actors surrounding it have never been more visible than in this digital age and that the *Harry Potter* series arrived on the global stage at the perfect moment to develop an avid, connected fandom. This fandom has laid bare the many conflicting ideologies of the fans themselves and of the actors surrounding the texts.

This presentation will first discuss the *Harry Potter* texts as both queer and trans texts. It will then discuss the queer/trans reading practices common to the fandom, both historically and in the present, within the context of a series of texts this author (and many fans) understand to be fundamentally queer/trans. Finally, it will focus on fans' resistance to the author's ongoing trans-negative commentary as it is expressed in/through their transformative works, highlighting how fans are using their collective power to undermine Rowling's gender politics through their fanworks.

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*Eating Death: Ancient Divine Activity and the Hubris of Immortality in Harry Potter*

Members of Voldemort's terrorist organization are called Death Eaters, but it is unclear from the text where this name comes from and why it was chosen. Given their murderous activity, it is likely that the Death Eaters see themselves as nourished by the death of others. While such an explanation supports the production of Horcruxes, such an explanation is unlikely, as the Death Eaters neither create nor know about the Horcruxes.

This presentation argues that "eating death" is meant to convey prominence over death. Since Voldemort expressly states that he is committed to conquering death, and his followers undoubtedly share that aspiration, "eating death" suggests that the consumer is higher up on the food chain and thus more powerful than death. This presentation aims to highlight the ancient, divine trope of "Eating Death" and explores how this motif appears in the ancient Canaanite mythology of Mot as well as the prophetic scriptures of Israel. Such a background serves to explain the rationale for the name of "Death Eaters" and highlights the hubristic representation of immortality in *Harry Potter*.

Louise M. Freeman, Ph.D.

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Mary Baldwin University

*From Transabled to Transgendered: What can we learn from Cormoran Strike?*

Sometimes agreement isn't possible. In those cases, a better understanding of a position we disagree with can at least provide some common ground for conversation. How can we think through this concept of understanding in current conversations about *Harry Potter*?

There is textual evidence that J.K. Rowling relied on the popular works of neuroscientist V.S. Ramachandran as a resource for the Cormoran Strike series. In his 2010 book, *The Tell-Tale Brain*, Ramachandran addresses the science underlying Body Identity Integrity Disorder (BIID), an intense desire for the amputation of a healthy limb. This condition is faced by three characters in Robert Galbraith's *Career of Evil*. Ramachandran also hypothesizes a neurological link between BIID and transgenderism.

Exposure to *Harry Potter* has been shown to reduce prejudice and be associated with improved perspective-taking. The Cormoran Strike series provides an opportunity to experimentally test whether Rowling's adult writings could similarly promote reader empathy for marginalized groups, even if some members of those groups are depicted in an unflattering fashion. This presentation reviews experimental evidence for Ramachandran's hypotheses and examines the ways connections between BIID and transgenderism have been interpreted by both supporters and opponents of transgender rights.

*This talk is adapted from conversations and research informing perspectives in the forthcoming Harry Potter & Resistance, edited by Dr. Beth Sutton-Ramspeck.*

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*Hogwarts Faculty Meeting: Pedagogies and Problem-Solving*

This panel is an open forum on how to teach the *Harry Potter* novels. Like all faculty, these Hogwarts teachers are eager to be face-to-face again. And for this occasion, Lana Whited, editor of two volumes of *The Ivory Tower and Harry Potter* and a contributor to a forthcoming essay collection on teaching Harry Potter, joins Cecilia Konchar Farr as co-headmistress and department chair.

Having taught *Harry Potter* as literature since 2010, the forum begins with a brief reflection on using popular novels in the literature classroom. Working from a list of prepared questions, the discussion covers (among other things) how to continue to teach and love these novels despite their transphobic author's active (and often offensive) presence on Twitter.

Other "Hogwarts faculty" from across academic disciplines have been invited to respond to questions, share ideas, activities, syllabus-construction, and teaching tips, so that everyone comes away from the session with a stronger sense of the breadth, depth, and generosity of these texts and how they can enliven our classrooms.

Catherine Hall, Ph.D.      [catherinecwhall@gmail.com](mailto:catherinecwhall@gmail.com)      Independent Scholar

*Hogwarts Will Always Be There to Welcome You Home:*

*Immersion, Belonging, and Activism in the Wizard Rock Musical Community*

Wizard rock is a community of musicians that creates and performs music based on the narrative, characters, and tropes found in the *Harry Potter* series. This presentation explores several questions: How does heroism inform the work of wizard rock musicians? How does engagement with *Harry Potter* through music create a sense of belonging and aid in constructing a system of morals? In what ways does this value system reflect the wizard rock community's ideals of egalitarianism? How does critical reception of the *Harry Potter* series through these musical works encourage social activism?

This presentation combines ethnographic fieldwork with historical research to thread wizard rock through a narrative of transmedia storytelling, millennial culture, fan creativity and activism, and community-building. Highlighted are Harry and the Potters, Tonks and the Aurors, and Lauren Fairweather – wizard rock musicians who use their lyrics and performance spaces to speak to Potter fans through references to the series and often by emphasizing participatory culture. These musicians have performed wizard rock for more than a decade and remain active. This presentation considers the impact of the Harry Potter phenomenon through the practice of wizard rock, articulating the sense of morality, idealism, heroism, and belonging cultivated by wizard rock musicians in the Potter fandom.

Sara Hardman, Ph.D.

Columbia University

and Peter Amuso, AB, JD

Chestnut Hill College

*The Philosophy of a Hogwarts Education - and Why It Doesn't Include Philosophy*

Is there an overarching philosophy of education at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry? The philosophy of education discipline reveals that the most successful teachers at Hogwarts abide by the two central tenets of the seminal philosophers of education: 1) John Dewey's idea that education is best when it is integrated into life and 2) Nel Noddings's belief that care is the basis of learning. With these tenets in mind, this paper examines the pedagogy of three particularly successful teachers: Professors Lupin, McGonagall, and Dumbledore. This paper also examines the pedagogy of teachers missing one of these tenants – Professors Snape and Slughorn – and the teachers missing both tenants – Professors Umbridge and Lockhart. Finally, this paper considers why Hogwarts does not have a philosophy class (a virtual requirement for Dewey) and questions whether that negatively impacts the wizarding world.

Caitlin Harper, MFA

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*Why Quidditch Makes Exactly as Much Sense as It Needs To*

There are generally two perspectives when it comes to Quidditch: One disregards Quidditch because they say it just makes no sense at all, while the other claims that of course it makes no sense—and it was never supposed to. I propose a third perspective: Quidditch makes exactly as much sense as it needs to.

When it comes to what makes sense, who decides and why? This presentation examines some of the weirdest rules in the world's most popular sports—including Quiddich—and makes the case that, when it comes to “making sense,” sociopolitics, history, and how the sport reacts to itself are what matters most.

Lorrie Kim

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Independent Scholar

*No Plan, Or Many Overlapping Plans: The Secrets of Dumbledore*

The film, *Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore*, almost apologizes for itself when the characters explain that their plan is “no plan. Or many overlapping plans. Thus, confusion.” Yet treasures abound: the book magic of Lally Hicks, the dignity of Yusuf Kama, and the perfect portrayal of Albus Dumbledore. This presentation traces how the filmmakers wrangled *Fantastic Beasts* storylines in this third installment that brings the series to a pause, or perhaps to an end.

*TERFpocalypse: Reconsidering Boggart Snape*

In 2022, how does it feel to reread the *Prisoner of Azkaban* scene in which Lupin coaches Neville to ridicule Snape through an image of forced feminization? What considerations and wordings should Potter scholars include when we write about this scene? This presentation recounts the process of consulting trans and queer sensitivity readers while updating a 2016 book about Snape for a post-TERFpocalyptic readership.

Mark-Anthony Lewis, MA

Independent Scholar

*The Modern Prometheus: Severus Snape and the Subtle Science and Exact Art of Techne*

In a rousing speech full of drama and romance, the Hogwarts potions master introduces his pupils to the subtle science and exact art of potion-making. Like a modern Prometheus, Severus Snape promises to teach his students to tame the elusive elements of fame, glory, and death. Drawing inspiration from Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Snape quests to take his art, his *techne*, to unexplored depths. *Techne* is the root of technology. But in Ancient Greece, the word had a broader meaning, encompassing both craft and art and implying not just the production but also the product—not just the making but also the ethical implications. As a meeting at the crossroads of art, science, and ethics, no word encompasses Snape's story better.

This paper explores the ethics of creation through Snape's character arc and how it parallels the characters of Lord Voldemort and Shelley's Victor Frankenstein. It also explores how the limitations of language can create a harmful separation of ideas and how the word *techne* can help bridge the gap between subtle science and exact art.

Valerie Longo, MA

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*Creating Our Own Light: Harry Potter's Fan-Generated Realm of Queer Possibility*

The *Harry Potter* series' variegated, complex societal parallel to "our world" exemplifies diversity while helping readers understand and critique prejudicial superstructures that perpetuate oppression and privilege. This paper applies a queer examination of the series, including Hermione's nonconformity to traditional feminine ideals, Lupin's lycanthropy metaphorizing queer disenfranchisement, and Harry's mirroring a common queer experience by building familial bonds with friends when relatives are not accepting. Discussing these factors encourages a more open, less heterosexist space for identity formation.

Nevertheless, the books' sometimes questionable attempts at representation, reinforcing standards that often center and privilege a heteronormative ideal, necessitate conversation of their messages regarding readers' rights to claim spaces, as well as the presence of queer-coding and the ghosts of its history within the writing. Queer analysis illuminates assets and problems, aiding social justice by highlighting real-world inequities, modeling the work of challenging them that leads to change. Canon neglects to actualize queerness beyond coding, and the author has ostracized many through trans-exclusionary rhetoric. But the fandom is a space of inclusivity and reclamation that explores the series' queer potential, offering increased representation of diverse identities and sexualities, practices key to reclaiming these narratives and building a more inclusive environment.

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*Secrets and Lies: Deception in the Harry Potter Novels*

In each of the *Harry Potter* novels, the plot turns on at least one important secret. The climax of each novel happens when that secret is revealed. This presentation examines the role of deception in the novels. Who deceives whom? How does that deception drive the plot? And how are we, the readers, deceived, so that we are as surprised as the characters in the book when the secret is revealed? Dumbledore isn't the only one keeping secrets.

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Saddle Brook Middle School

*J.K. Rowling and the Subtle Trans-Coding of Severus Snape*

While scrolling through Tumblr, a personal favorite site for all things fandom, the author came across a post where someone felt as though Severus Snape was transcoded. This reading is visible upon rereading. There are many historical associations with the type of magic Snape performs, especially associating it with womanhood, yet Rowling refuses to go down that road of exploring the way she's written her own (and many fans') favorite character. This presentation explores the various examples of the trans-coding of Severus Snape and the implications of this reading in light of the homophobic and transphobic comments made by his creator.



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Marietta College

*Looking through the Dumbledore Mirrors*

The Dumbledore family has an affinity for mirrors as powerful magical objects. In addition to Albus's Mirror of Erised and Aberforth's use of the communication mirror in the book series, the film *Fantastic Beasts: Secrets of Dumbledore* shows the men of this family using mirrors—and even mirror-dimensions—in magical ways.

Mirrors have an extensive history as sources of knowledge, power, and divination, capable of displaying both the outside world and the individual's interior, paradoxically shielding from harm and exposing vulnerabilities. Mirrors have also long been seen as key objects for magical trickery and deceit. They can not only reveal but hide, not only reflect but deflect, not only clarify but cloud with illusion. In the wizarding world, mirrors perform all of these magical and deceptive roles. They are also commonly used as literary metaphors to suggest relationships, likenesses as well as foils, throughout the Harry Potter series. But what does it mean that the Dumbledore family uses so very many mirrors in the latest *Fantastic Beasts* film, which purports to tell the story of the Dumbledore secrets? Aberforth and Credence/Aurelius communicate through a two-way mirror; Albus's Deluminator appears to open up an entire mirror dimension in which battles but also negotiations may take place. The Dumbledores' association with mirrors indicates not just their power as a magical family but more significantly their collective struggles with issues of reality and illusion, revelation and secrecy, connection and isolation.

Ian McLaughlin, MA

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UNC Greensboro

*Giving Wands Their Due: Applying Speculative Realism to Harry Potter*

Magical objects are legion in *Harry Potter*. Wands are the most magical—and the most taken for granted. This presentation uses a bricolage of theories known as speculative realism to explore the nature of wands through a flattened ontology. Recognizing wands as having equal ontological status to all

other objects, including the human object, rather than passive screens that reflect an anthropocentric worldview helps us bypass our limited access to their noumena and gives wands room to be what they are qua themselves. By focusing on ontology rather than epistemology, we can begin to see wands as they are, to shine a light on their nature, to compare that nature to those of non-fictional objects, and to more fully examine the massive importance of wands throughout the series, particularly in the final battle between Harry and Voldemort.

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Knox College

*The House of Riddle: Oedipus the King and Intertextual Salience*

Given the omnipresence of ancient Greek and Roman culture in the *Harry Potter* series, it is no surprise that Potter scholars have often turned to classical mythology to unpack the novels' themes. Few have considered the question of method: For any given mythological reference, is it more productively interpreted as a general, "handbook-type" reference or as evidence of engagement with a particular work of literature?

Where a literary source is widely known and can, on its own, provide the material clearly in *Harry Potter*, it should be regarded as having a high degree of "intertextual salience." This paper argues that, while Potter scholars have made persuasive arguments based on the Oedipus myth and/or Freudian psychoanalysis, the most productive place to start is Sophocles's *Oedipus the King*. The play provides the structure for the paths followed by both the patricides Voldemort and Barty Crouch Jr. Furthermore, key names in Voldemort's family (Merope, Cadmus, and Riddle) point specifically to *Oedipus the King*. This presentation explores the idea of doubling and the fact that these references are clustered around dead characters.

Barbara Purdom

Independent Scholar

*There Were Never Just Three: The Many Hallows of Harry Potter*

The title of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* would seem to be the first mention of Hallows in the seven-book series. However, two symbolic sets of Hallows lurk at the beginning and end of Sorcerer's Stone, one of the many hallmarks of the mirrored structure of the first book (and every book) in the series, as well as the series as a whole. Symbolic Hallows appear at the start of the seventh book: Dumbledore's bequests to Harry, Ron, and Hermione. These are mirrored at the end of the final book, as Harry unites the non-symbolic Hallows.

This presentation brings to light why Dumbledore hides the Sorcerer's Stone in the Mirror of Erised; why Harry, Ron, and Hermione are each attracted to "their" particular Hallows; why the Battle of Hogwarts is on the second of May; how Dumbledore may have found Grindelwald before defeating him to become Master of the Elder Wand; and why Harry's titles during the course of the series, three more symbolic Hallows, are The Boy Who Lived, The Youngest Seeker in a Century, and The Master of Death.

*The Snitch, the Stone, and the Sword: Harry Potter the Alchemical Seeker*

Harry Potter undergoes some of his most significant transformations in the series' first book, whose original title refers to a process of transformation: *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. He is repeatedly a catalyst for change—a human Philosopher's Stone—as well as a human Golden Snitch and a human Sword of Gryffindor.

This presentation is adapted from a chapter of the same title in the book *The Alchemical Harry Potter: Essays on Transfiguration in J.K. Rowling's Novels*, edited by Anne Mamary, explores how Harry undergoes literal and symbolic transformations and is also a catalyst affecting others' changes,

particularly three of his closest allies. It further explores how Quidditch is symbolic alchemy; how Harry being a symbolic Snitch and literal Horcrux makes Horcrux-hunting symbolic Quidditch; and the paradox of Harry being both a Horcrux and the ultimate Horcrux-destruction machine. Finally, this presentation examines Harry's most significant transfiguration: Professor McGonagall making him into a Seeker whose ultimate goal isn't merely to catch a small gold ball in a school competition but to be an *axis mundi*, an intercessor between the wizarding world and the dark forces that would destroy it forever.

Erica Romero, Ph.D.

Independent Scholar

*Let's Talk Teaching: The Value of Children's and Young Adult Literature in the College Classroom*

This presentation argues the particular value of children's and young adult literature to undergraduate college students taking English Studies courses. Focusing on different aspects of English Studies, such as visual rhetoric, composition, new media, and creative writing, this presentation uses both the *Harry Potter* series and the *Vampire Diaries* series to support this argument. This talk explores how reading and writing *Harry Potter* fan fiction can engage and empower students in a literature or creative writing classroom.

Kandice Rose, MA

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Independent Scholar

*Black Girl Magic: The (re)Imagining of Hermione Granger - An Analysis and Autoethnography*

Hermione Granger was described only as having "brown eyes, frizzy hair, and very clever," with no reference to her race or skin tone. But it was long assumed and accepted that Hermione Granger was white. However, iterations of Black Hermione Granger have emerged within fanfiction, fanart, other fanwork, and in the casting of Afro-British actress Noma Dumezweni in *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*.

A survey of and various virtual interviews with 193 participants dissected why the reimagining of a Black Hermione Granger came to be and why she is important, particularly to the Black Community. This presentation discusses how the character of Hermione Granger has impacted the speaker's life. A Black Hermione Granger is important because representation matters. Hermione Granger as a Black girl serves as a role model to the Black community, and her salience in pop culture tells us that not only does representation matter but that inclusion matters too.

Lindy Ryan, Ed.D.

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*The Social Potterhead: Perceptions and Sentiment of the Wizarding World on Twitter*

It has been more than two decades since the publication of *Philosopher's Stone*, and the Harry Potter fandom remains as active and engaged as ever. However, recent years have seen a sentiment shift in the

wizarding world as readers revisit the series with a heightened awareness of the need for diversity, inclusion, and equity – elements which sometimes seem at odds with rhetoric shared by the creator.

Textual, sentiment, and linguistic studies of Rowling’s interactions on Twitter exist. This paper expands on this body of research with a thorough analysis of sentiment from the online Harry Potter Twitter community. Using hashtags and other available social media data, this presentation shares the study’s results to understand sentiment, critical discourse, and content analysis of the *Harry Potter* fandom on social media.

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Widener University

*Hem Hem... I take Umbridge with Canceling Queer Fans: J.K. Rowling and the Half-Blood Fan*

In a striking resemblance to Dolores Umbridge, J.K. Rowling demands “order” from her fans, endeavoring to shape a fandom that bows to her whims by encouraging Queer fan fiction while serving cease and desist Howlers. Rowling’s Educational Decrees (tweets) establishing her Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminist (TERF) position have created a sociological discursive phenomenon within the LGBTQIA Harry Potter fandom. Many Queer folks have rejected the Potterverse entirely. The message for Queer fans who remain is to snap your wand or ally yourself with J.K.’s bigotry—a pure-blood ideology echoing much of the pathological cultural divisions in the world today.

For “Half-Blood fans” who remain, a common – and legitimate – answer is to separate the art from the artist. Yet for both Queer fans who have left and Half-Bloods, the common thread is loss. Since the Potterverse has been a place of Queer discovery, magic, and belonging, the sudden polarizing curse to leave Hogwarts or betray the Queer community invokes trauma of coming out, family rejection, and societal stigma. This fractured fandom leaves Half-Blood fans in tenuous positions in Queer and activist circles. This presentation explores these paradoxical and conflicting imperatives, honoring narratives of Queer Half-Bloods, those who have left, and what moving forward looks like with integrity and justice.

Emily Saunders

Chestnut Hill College

*Time Travel in Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*

Time travel in *the Prisoner of Azkaban* is both straightforward and contradictory. Despite the contradictions to scientific theories and paradoxes regarding time travel the book, *Prisoner of Azkaban* demonstrates the concept of the “single-verse” theory. Harry and Hermione’s adventure back in time is successful both in saving Sirius Black and Buckbeak and not being seen by their past selves or anyone else. They seem to have avoided the dangers of time travel such as causing someone including themselves to not exist. Although the book contradicts the Grandfather Paradox and multiverse theories, Harry and Hermione’s time travel demonstrates the possible success of time travel and might be a useful model to physicists and future time travelers.

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Erskine College

*The House Elf Problem: Teaching Harry Potter in a Fraught Cultural Moment*

At a time in which society is particularly aware of the persistent problems of racism in the United States, the House-Elves of Harry Potter – caricatures of the "happy slave" trope from Hollywood and elsewhere – make many readers deeply uncomfortable. This paper examines the representations of House-Elves in the books and suggests that, rather than simply considering it a problem and stopping there, the subject can help teach young readers critical thinking and discussion skills in a world in which the issues the House-Elves raise are more urgent than ever.

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*Fantastic Memes and Where to Find Them*

The *Harry Potter* series may be riddled with magical tales and envious optics, but the real Muggle magic lies within a community far from the wizarding world — the Internet. Since the fandom's inception in 1997, Potter enthusiasts have transported their adoration of the series on page to a subculture on webpage by employing folkloristic videos, memes, and fanfics in an effort to expand the wizarding realm. Indeed, Potter memes have become a vital vernacular of the global fandom, including memetic frameworks such as comedy, parody, and digital folk groups who thrive on remixing the original narrative. This talk is a memetic remix within itself and a composition that explores the viral success of Harry Potter online.

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*Who, Exactly, Saves the World in the Harry Potter Saga?*

In *Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore*, fans of the wizarding world learn even more about the extent of Albus Dumbledore's planning, preparation, recruitment, and perseverance in defeating the dark wizard Grindelwald. Further, the significance of Albus's orchestrations against evil in *Secrets* seems to stretch far into future events. This prompts an intriguing question: Who, exactly, saves the world in the *Harry Potter* saga, of which *Fantastic Beasts* is a prequel story? Is it Harry in his defeat of Voldemort, or is it, ultimately, Albus?

This presentation poses and attempts to answer this question, relying on a reading of the characters Albus and Harry as figures with deep religious significance drawn from the Christian tradition. Applying a Christian understanding of the relationship between God the Father and Jesus Christ and their respective roles in the salvation of the world makes clear the answer, with regard to Albus and Harry, is meant to be "both." Exploring this question reveals more of the pervasive and multi-faceted ways in which Christian notions of heroism and salvation influence both the *Harry Potter* and *Fantastic Beasts* series.

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*"Filth! Scum! By-products of dirt and vileness!" The Dirt on Dirt in the Harry Potter Series*

This paper argues – as supported by Mary Douglas’s *Purity and Danger* – that every culture deems what is considered to be “out of place,” based on its own systems, to then call that matter “dirty.” Wizard culture is no different. Thus, what characters in *Harry Potter* assess as dirty and disgusting says as much about the characters and their value systems as it does about the person or object being assessed. This paper explores the ways the series reverses expectations by associating dirt with positive things (and cleanliness with negatives), as well its use of dirt as misdirection. This paper also introduces the growing trend of “disgust” studies and explains what responses to “moral dirt” suggest about Voldemort, the Death Eaters, and their attitudes toward Mudbloods. The *Harry Potter* series challenges preconceptions about dirt, but not always. Dirt, like so many other issues in *Harry Potter* and like life itself, is messy.

*When Ron Was Reg: Why Ron’s Experiences as “Mr. Magical Maintenance” Matter*

When Harry, Ron, and Hermione infiltrate the Ministry in *Deathly Hallows*, Ron impersonates Reg Cattermole, “Mr. Magical Maintenance.” In comparison with other episodes in the series, it seems fairly minor. Moreover, Reg’s appearance and job invite readers to underestimate him—as Ron certainly does. But Ron’s experience inhabiting Reg’s body provides an important stage in his growth and illuminates important themes of the series. This paper explores Ron’s and the rest of the Trio’s misconceptions about Reg, from seeing him as timid, easily tricked, and “keen on his job” to Ron’s assessment, “I didn’t get the feeling Reg Cattermole was all that quick-witted, though, the way everyone was talking to me when I was him.” Of course Ron, not Reg, has no clue how to stop the rain in Yaxley’s office. The episode nudges readers to question their classist views of custodial work, a questioning heightened by knowing that Dolores Umbridge—whose Muggle-born Registration Commission interrogates Mary Cattermole—is herself the daughter of a Magical Maintenance Worker and a Muggle but suppresses that information. Furthermore, through Polyjuiced and walking in Reg’s skin, Ron gains perspectives that challenge the internalized assumptions derived from his pure-blood privilege.

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Independent Scholar

*The Great Resignation: JK Rowling Explains Why Teachers Are Leaving the Classroom*

Since March 2020, teacher resignations have significantly increased, causing shortages across the muggle world. The *Harry Potter* series addresses many of the main stressors facing educators today. Trolls in the dungeon, Death Eaters in the hallways, and a basilisk in the plumbing all contribute to school safety fears. Parent criticisms of the headmaster, teachers, and curriculum blur the boundaries between home and school relationships. Additionally, demanding teacher evaluations and state testing requirements take the magic out of learning.

This interactive presentation discusses how Hogwarts, along with its headmaster and staff, struggle with many of the same issues as muggle schools, which is contributing to the Great Resignation in our schools. Bring your wand (or your muggle mobile device) to join in the discussion.

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Independent Scholar

*Harry Potter and Osteological Discrepancy*

In *Chamber of Secrets*, Harry loses the bones in his arm after a misguided spell by Gilderoy Lockhart. As Madam Pomfrey administers Skele-Gro to correct this, she states the young wizard has 33 bones to regrow.

This presentation will explore the validity of this statement by investigating fetal and juvenile bone development and at what stage in that process Harry's bones were when the unfortunate incident occurs. Discussions on the bones of the arm, the number of bones in an adult arm compared to Harry's at age 12, bone growth and development, and the number of human growth plates inform the instances when Madam Pomfrey's statement may be considered correct and to ascertain the true number of bones Harry had to regrow that night.