

# Harry Potter's World Wide Influence



# Harry Potter's World Wide Influence

Edited by

Diana Patterson

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**P U B L I S H I N G**

Harry Potter's World Wide Influence, Edited by Diana Patterson

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## PREFACE

The papers here are considerably expanded versions of the best of the Accio 2008 Conference, entitled “From Quidditch Flyers to Dreaming Spires: Exploring the Worldwide Influence of the *Harry Potter* Novels.” What emerged from the group exploration of the influence was both geographical and discipul. The papers selected here are mainly related to areas of knowledge, although they certainly include contributions from a variety of places.

The purpose of assembling these papers is to increase the distribution of the best of Potter Studies suitable for academic study, particularly for those in post-graduate studies, looking for congruent ideas to explore. There have been at least a score of conferences and hundreds of web sites, dissecting, analysing, and extending the work of J.K. Rowling. It is easy to dismiss much of this abundance as children blogging about childish materials. And while certainly some material is of that calibre, some of the conferences are completely or mostly academic. Some papers are genuinely insightful. Some prove, I contend, that there is much worthy of pursuit in Rowling’s works.

There are many who are dismissive of these books: they are too popular to be of any value; they are long and repetitive; they are childish; they are derivative; they are insufficiently “literary” to be worthy of attention, much less of study. Each of these claims might as easily be made against Dickens. Some still persist against J.R.R. Tolkien. This collection is made partly in an attempt to quash such facile responses. Popularity, particularly across immense cultural divides, is itself worthy of study, as much as one might consider why a tale of a 10-year siege of a town 3000 years ago might still have any interest today. Length and repetitiveness have certain values, particularly in building character, creating a camouflage, obscuring plot lines. While the tale of Harry Potter begins in a childlike fashion, it matures along with the protagonist in a way highly unusual, if not unique, to works of fiction. One might say there are only seven plots in all the world, and thus everything is derivative: True Wit is Nature to Advantage drest / What oft was Thought, but ne’er so well Exprest . . . .” (Pope 1965, 153) What is genuinely new under the sun? And what is “literary” fiction save another genre?

At this point, Potter Studies is in its infancy, and yet even now it is clear how widely the work we might easily dub an epic has created ideas worthy of analysis from a variety of areas of knowledge, as from life itself.

For one of the intriguing aspects of the *Harry Potter* books is their closeness to our modern life, for the Potterverse is around an invisible corner of our own world, where we could observe the witches and wizards had we just a tiny twist in our genes that would make us into one of them. Thus it is an Horatian satire on our notions of civilisation, especially education and our notions of good and evil.

Goldsmith (1869) attempted to write such a critique without a plot in his *Citizen of the World*. Much of the best of science fiction is a look at our world, often following our current behaviours to *reductio ad absurdum*.

Of course in addition to being an epic and an Horatian satire, *Harry Potter* is also a school novel, a fantasy novel, a postcolonial novel. These have been easily glimpsed and accepted, (e.g., Smith [2003]; Anatol [2003]).

But some of what raises the attention of the non-British, non-colonial world to these novels is that the *Potter* series is a genuine epic, re-founding a great nation after a long struggle, and concerned with great swathes of society in that nation. Epics are both national and universal, and here lies some of the *Harry Potter* appeal, and some of what we find in the papers included here: the magnet of universality.

Epics have always had an element of fantasy to make the heroic untouchable, unfathomable. Milton, borrowing the fantasy of Ariosto, still thought he could not set an epic in modern humanity back in 1680, so he chose the deepest possible past: the time of creation. Joyce could create a modern, and thus prose, epic, but only a bathotic one. Bakhtin's comments on the epic vs. the novel may be pertinent here. Bakhtin (1996) admits the epic was new once, but at a time in the distant past we know nothing about (13–14). Yet at one time the epic was new, the heroes possibly from some mythical position either in the prehistorical past or the religiously infinite space. Bakhtin ignores Virgil, who is writing in a well-defined present about a documented hero, and he certainly ignores the recreation of national epics in the 16<sup>th</sup> ] and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, as well as Joyce. He did not, of course, see the rise of science fictional and fantastical epics, such as *Dune* or *Lord of the Rings*, and had he done so, he would have denied that they were epics and called them novels.

Yet science fiction has tried to recreate the epic, and done so using Bakhtin's notion of the untouchable time. *Dune* separates itself so much from the current time that it is more easily seen as a biblical epic, and other science fiction epics take their plots from Homer, or at least mythic tales, such as the fall of Hyperion. *Potter* is both satire and original epic—the epic as it might have been when new—set not in some prehistory, nor in some great future, but in the present, although just round the unreachable corner. Thus it is both epic in the heroic untouchable, but as universal as any epic has ever been, partly because it is also now. Bakhtin's seeming placement of novel and epic in opposition fades fairly rapidly as analysed by Galin Tihanov (2001). He sees Bakhtin's comments as coming from a young man, then an old one, undiscussed in between, seemingly without due consideration of Joyce's work. We might also consider that Bakhtin has created something of a tautology: if the novel, the ever flexible and vibrant genre, eats the epic, then the novel triumphs. What if it is the epic eating the novel and gaining life once more?

The quality of the epic that explores the vastness and complexity of human life is reflected in the variety of disciplines that find that the *Potter* stories speak to them and comment on their discipline, world view, and moral compass.



Petra Rehling's look at the uses of *Harry Potter* probably can be said to set the tone for this volume. "One Harry to bind them all"—The Utilisation of *Harry Potter*" notes how every discipline or cause can find use or justification within the novels, from the religious right to the gay left, from teenage fan fiction writers, to senior academics. *Harry* is not merely a text for analysis, but also a cultural object, remade into films, toys, web blogs and costume parties. This "thingification" of cultural icons is symptomatic of our time, and provokes us to ask not whether *Harry Potter* will be "integrated into the collective memory of mankind."

Many have wondered whether Harry Potter is a credible character: an abused child who does not continue the abuse, who does not become attention-seeking or whining. Rather he is generous and modest. Angelea Panos is not the first to fit Harry into practical psychological theory to prove that he is credible, but she goes further to examine his resiliency, not only as plausible, but as a model for the young undergoing comparable difficulties.

Ronnie Carmeli does an examination of the Freudian and Kleinian needs of the infant for mother figure and father role. Harry's search for a father—*pater*—Patronus-figure in his life contrasted with the Voldemort and Crouch patricides are discussed in these terms. While psychological readings of Harry are fairly common, and feminist readings abound, this masculine reading fills a long-felt gap.

One of the important father figures is Albus Dumbledore, who in *Deathly Hallows* becomes less remote, more human, and immensely more complex. The aegis of the formerly paragonic figure asks us to examine a "good man's" moral compass, particularly after a serious lapse of judgement in youth. Alicia Willson-Metzger explores, in particular, Dumbledore's keeping of secrets, censoring truth, giving false impressions, and manipulating Harry's life, supposedly for some higher good. Meanwhile, Eliana Ionoaia examines the overall moral rectitude inculcated by the series against a background of degenerating and relativistic views of right and wrong.

The most usual approaches for confronting a work of literature include the use of the battery of critical theories, often imposed as a mask to create a reading. Linda Jardine has used the psychoanalytical approach, leading to an encouragement of reader response theory, seeing reader involvement through reader response as a movement creating discourse communities.

Silvia Lafontaine has done a very concrete examination of reader response using marketing techniques to find out the appeal of *Harry Potter* to potential purchasers in a German bookshop. How readers classify the text, what relationships they see, what genres they think the novels fall into take reader response out of the realm of solipsism into something quantifiable. One might say that her marketing approach proves the epic quality of the book: it is large and encompasses the world, as the epic ought.

Another much used literary approach has been the use of postcolonial theory. Joanna Lipińska has taken a tuck in the postcolonial cloth to exercise "otherness" in machines and beasts as well as human races.

Meanwhile Susan Howard has examined slavery texts in relation to the enslavement of house elves, convincingly proposing that slave narratives form a backdrop to the character development of the docile, fawning underclass portrayed too well in the novels.

The “them” of otherness is moved into an historical context by Aida Patient and Kori Street. Using trauma theory, they recognise the potential for a wizard holocaust just before the Hitleresque Voldemort is annihilated. Here is historical reference—not accurate history, but rather the depiction of evil in the collective memory. The films, particularly, have fashioned their view of evil on WWII images as a short-cut to describing a series of events and details of character, building on reader or viewer response to cultural icons.

The theory of the gaze, based on Laura Mulvey’s original work, evolves under Susan Reynolds’ hand into a Victorian panopticon of gaze from all directions on the life of Harry and his schoolmates. This is a Marxist look at gaze, not merely a feminist look, a self-gaze into mirrors as well as gaze from the other.

Reader-response in the new milieu of culture as icon, as manipulatable things, evolves into a source for original composition, participating in making derivatives, not merely analytical responses to the original. Joelle Paré takes a look at the creation of wizard rock as a participation in response-discourse.

Religion has much to say about the original ambiguity of the novels. Hogwarts, like so many modern schools and institutions is accepting of people of all cultures, and religion is simply not discussed—not plurality of religion, but none at all, as though to ensure none is neglected, all are neglected. And yet so clearly is religion lacking, that certain groups have believed that the message was in favour of witchcraft as a devil worship, filling the gap left by explicit religion. One approach to this subject is that the magic, as portrayed in the books, is like technology, full of complications, but ultimately simply useful (Patterson 2003). And like technology and science in our own world, magic tried to fill the gap of religion, at least in terms of the curriculum at Hogwarts. But many readers have seen through the superficiality of the witch costumes to Christian archetypes. There have been a persistent number of authors insisting on a Christian message in these novels. Some go so far as to see the *Potter* novels as something approaching a Christian allegory (Neil 2001; Andréa 2007; Granger 2007). In this collection, Christine Littlefield has examined the nearly allegorical parallels of plot and character as a journey and struggle through the difficulty to reach a higher plane of spiritual satisfaction.

The world-wide influence of *Harry Potter* not only on readers but also on writers has created some stir. Hogwarts seems not to teach either literature or composition, and possibly for this reason, teachers at many levels are concerned about Rowling’s grammar as well as her style. What kinds of writing is she inculcating in young people? Certainly she has increased the number of those attempting to write narratives, as the huge number of fan fiction sites attests. Deborah Bridge has confronted the problem, both in the British and American systems of correctness and returned with what I found surprising results.

Finally, my own contribution to this collection is to compare the American and British editions in terms of language. The investigation is into why the differences were deemed necessary, based on the history of language and publishing since the 19th century.

Potter Studies, like the concept of *Littores Humanitas*, is inclusive of disciplines, not just an acceptance of the usual literary critical categories: the heroic, the Marxist, the feminist, the postcolonial, the body ... . Because of the epic quality of the work, and certainly because of the positioning of this fantastical satire at no distance from ourselves, save beyond a veil, through a glass darkly, or round the bend, the work(s) attract not only the theoretical, but the practical scholars. And certainly it attracts truly multi-disciplinary examinations. Potter Studies includes not just a psychological analysis from a literary scholar, but also a practising psychologist, not a religious look from an English scholar, but also a religious scholar, not just a look at science by a dabbler in the subject, but also a scientist, not just a Marxist look at work, but a management scholar's look at business and economics. This collection is a taste of such an epic parliament.

—Diana Patterson

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# ABBREVIATIONS

## Standard Abbreviations Used in the Papers

All books are by JK Rowling

<i>CoS</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets</i> . London: Bloomsbury, 1998.
<i>CoS-DVD</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets</i> . DVD (2 discs). Chris Columbus, Dir. Warner Bros. 2003.
<i>CoS-US</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets</i> . New York: Arthur A. Levine, 1999.
<i>DH</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows</i> . London: Bloomsbury, 2007.
<i>DH-US</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows</i> . New York: Arthur A. Levine, 2005.
<i>FB</i>	Newt Scamander. <i>Fantastic Beasts &amp; Where to Find Them</i> . London: Bloomsbury, 2001. [US editions of this work are paginated identically]
<i>GoF</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire</i> . London: Bloomsbury, 2000.
<i>GoF-DVD</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire</i> . DVD (2 discs). Mike Newell, Dir. Warner Bros. 2005.
<i>GoF-US</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire</i> . New York: Arthur A. Levine, 2000.
<i>HBP</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince</i> . London: Bloomsbury, 2005.
<i>HBP-US</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince</i> . New York: Arthur A. Levine, 2005.
<i>OotP</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix</i> . London: Bloomsbury, 2003.
<i>OotP-DVD</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix</i> . DVD. David Yates, Dir. Warner Bros. 2007.
<i>OotP-US</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix</i> . New York: Arthur A. Levine, 2003.
<i>PoA</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban</i> . London: Bloomsbury, 1999.
<i>PoA-DVD</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban</i> . DVD (2 discs.). Alfonso Cuarón, Dir. Warner Bros. 2004
<i>PoA-US</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban</i> . New York: Arthur A. Levine, 1999.
<i>PS</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone</i> . London: Bloomsbury, 1997.
<i>PS-DVD</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone</i> . DVD (2 discs.). Chris Columbus, Dir. Warner Bros. 2002.
<i>QttA</i>	Kennilworthy Whisp. <i>Quidditch Through the Ages</i> . London: Bloomsbury, 2001. [US editions of this work are paginated identically]
<i>SS</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone</i> . New York: Arthur A. Levine, 1998. [Scholastic paperback has same pagination.]
<i>SS-DVD</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone</i> . DVD(2 discs). Chris Columbus, Dir. Warner Bros. 2002.
<i>ToTB</i>	<i>The Tales of Beedle the Bard</i> . London: Bloomsbury, 2008.
<i>ToTB-US</i>	<i>The Tales of Beedle the Bard</i> . New York: Arthur Levine, 2008.

# CHAPTER ONE

## THE S.P.L.I.C.E. OF LIFE?

DEBORAH BRIDGE

When writing was in its infancy, there was no such thing as punctuation. Back then, there were no spaces between words and no capital letters either, but that was all right, because not very many people could read; instead, they listened, and those who *could* read did most of the talking, so they knew where to end their words and sentences, when to pause, when to stop, and so on. In other words, spaces and capitals and periods did not really matter either to speakers or listeners.

But that was centuries ago. Now we have mechanics and punctuation, and rules about how to use them correctly. When writers, novice or experienced, break those rules, readers can be confused or misled. One rule that is broken hundreds of times in the *Harry Potter* novels is the one that says you cannot use a comma alone to separate two independent clauses; the result is a comma splice, also called a fused sentence, a run-on, a comma fault, a comma mistake, or a comma error. Comma splices are not just punctuation errors; they are sentence structure errors, and have been considered so for decades.

The profusion of comma splices in *Harry Potter* bothered me more than anything else—more than not knowing whose side Snape was really on or whether Harry would die in the final book.

Why did these errors bother me so much?

I teach university-level composition, and I spend a lot of time—much more now than 5 or 10 years ago—identifying comma splices and other errors in students' writing and explaining how to prevent or fix them. More and more young people coming into my classes know less and less about what is acceptable and what is not; many cannot write an intelligible sentence; most have grown up relying too heavily on spelling- and grammar-checking software without actually learning correct spelling or grammar from these tools, and few know any rules beyond "Don't start a sentence with 'because'" or "i before e except after c," (even though neither is a real rule). As the distinctions between formal and informal communication become fuzzier and as newer media—such as text messaging—have become more common, a growing number of inexperienced writers do not realise that although "C U l8tr" and nonstandard spellings such as "l-i-t-e" are fine in a text message, they should not be used in an essay. While new forms of communication were contributing to the decline of people's basic writing skills, the *Harry Potter* series was introducing millions of youth to the joys of reading.

As wonderful as the latter was, it also worried me, because I became concerned about the possibility of comma-splice-challenged *Harry Potter* fans winding up in my English classes along with all the other grammar-ignorant students.

I thought perhaps the first book or two had eluded editing because no one anticipated their popularity, and because they were by an unknown author—why pay an editor to fix errors in books that may not sell? Then, as the series progressed and became best sellers, I thought surely comma-splice-free editions were imminent. Apparently I was wrong.

Since neither Rowling nor the publishers have commented on why this error is so profuse and persistent in the books, I want to address the question unofficially.

First, I wondered if anyone else shared my concern about the negative influence all the comma splices might have on young readers. The following paragraphs discuss what I found.

Commenting on *Order of the Phoenix*, one U.S.-based composition and children's literature instructor of 37 years says this:

Over the course of 870 pages, J. K. Rowling consistently uses commas to separate main clauses, as if there is no comma splice in England. Yet thousands of young, impressionable readers take this in as they valiantly succeed in reading ... from cover to cover. (Johnson 2006, 14)

A Canadian critic, reviewing *Half-Blood Prince*, writes

There [are] comma splices everywhere. If you're going to publish thirty million copies of a book, you should at least run it through Word grammar checker [*sic*]. God invented semicolons for a reason; please use them. (Bader 2009)

Calling *Deathly Hallows* “a punctuation train wreck,” another American teacher of English observes that while the books “have accomplished the magical feat of inspiring millions of children to read,” he found himself “marking [the] final *Harry Potter* as though it were a student's paper.” He “noted 474...‘comma splices’,” and concludes that

The rules of language provide boundaries within which our voice must flow; they force us to discipline both expression and thought, which is why it is so important for young people to learn to use language precisely ... . Grammar is not the enemy, a scheme to suppress creativity wherever it rears its head, and following its conventions would not have compromised Ms. Rowling's vision. It is unfortunate that the editing of her books, with millions of young, impressionable readers, has not matched the quality of their storytelling. (Warhaftig 2007)

Bravo! thought I. However, lest I had got caught up in some purely North American objection to comma splices that was unfounded in the United Kingdom, I sought support among British sources; after all, the English do a lot of things differently than either Americans or Canadians, and I wanted to be sure this was not one of them.



A consultation of many British grammar books and web sites revealed that comma splices are considered just as wrong in England as elsewhere (although the works of adult fiction writers such as Phillipa Gregory, Penny Vincenzi, and Maeve Binchy might suggest otherwise). But had any British experts expressed concern about the *Harry Potter* comma splices in particular?

Yes!

Paul Livesey, a senior lecturer in English language and linguistics at the University of Central Lancashire, complains that Rowling's "biggest sin" is her "habitual use of run-on sentences, which even seven-year-olds are supposed to avoid." Livesey (2003) goes on to say

Unless they have good reason, no one, least of all a bestselling author read by millions of children, should put main clauses together in one sentence without a conjunction

and asserts that Rowling "does not set a good example. Her books are riddled with run-on sentences."

Livesey (2003) acknowledges that many of the comma splices occur in dialogue and suggests they "could in theory be defended as being used for effect," but then writes, "There are...too many instances for this defence to succeed." After establishing that he is "not anti-Harry" and conceding that "The Potter phenomenon is a contagious but benevolent plague," Livesey says he feels sorry for today's children, because "They are expected to follow language norms, yet are bombarded with examples of bad practice" (2003).

Though relieved to discover that others shared my concern about the possible negative influence of the *Harry Potter* comma splices, I still wondered why the publishers of perhaps the most popular young readers' series ever had not corrected these errors. Did they, as one critic asks, "neglect to assign an editor to the project, or were Ms. Rowling's manuscripts protected by an immutability charm?" (Warhaftig 2007). Or could there be some other explanation?

Although numerous grammar and writing handbooks state that "Two complete sentences may *never* be joined by a comma alone" (Trask 2002; emphasis added), others are less rigid, saying, for example, that "you may encounter a comma splice *now and then* in the novels of respected writers ... [but] that doesn't mean ... they're acceptable in academic or formal writing." (Hairston and Ruskiewicz 1993, 420–21; emphasis added). Or, as Lynne Truss says in *Eats, Shoots & Leaves*, "so many highly respected writers adopt the ... comma [splice] that a rather unfair rule emerges...: only do it if you're famous" (2004, 88).

The comma splices in *Harry Potter* certainly occur more than "now and then." And why is it okay to create comma splices only if you are a respected and/or famous writer? The grammar handbooks do not explain, and Truss's answer is not very satisfactory; she writes

Done knowingly by an established writer, the comma splice is effective, poetic, dashing. Done equally knowingly by people who are not published writers, it can look weak or presumptuous. Done ignorantly by ignorant people, it is awful. (88)

But Rowling was not established nor famous in the beginning, nor were any other writers whose work is now apparently exempt from the rule. And who determines whether their comma splices were “done knowingly”—the writers? An editor? The readers? Were the comma splices in *Philosopher’s Stone* “weak or presumptuous” only until Rowling became a famous or established or respected writer, and then they were all right?

There is another possibility. Since Rowling demonstrates, from the beginning, that she knows how to use punctuation correctly to join independent clauses, we might conclude that where she uses a comma *incorrectly* to join complete thoughts (according to the rule), she does so for reasons that perhaps even she is not fully aware of and that the experts may not have considered.

Here are several examples from the first volume, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* in which comma splices have been avoided:

For a second, Mr Dursley didn’t realise what he had seen—then he jerked his head around to look again. (*PS*, 8.)

The dash here not only avoids a comma splice—it adds emphasis to the second clause.

Mr Dursley was enraged to see that a couple of them weren’t young at all; why, that man had to be older than he was and wearing an emerald-green cloak! (8)

The semicolon is a common way to join two independent clauses; it is most effectively used when there is some relationship or connection between the two clauses, as in the above example.

But then it struck Mr Dursley that this was probably some silly stunt—these people were obviously collecting for something ... yes, that would be it. (8)

Again, the dash here correctly joins the first and second clauses—and it draws our attention to the second clause. The ellipsis, an unusual way to join independent clauses, adds some immediacy ... it subtly creates the impression that we are inside Dursley’s head, seeing his thoughts as he thinks them.

He liked to complain about things: people at work, Harry, the council, Harry, the bank and Harry were just a few of his favourite subjects. (24)

This sentence uses a colon at the end of the first independent clause to introduce a second, an enumeration of what Dursley means by “things.” Although this, like the

dash and the ellipsis, is an uncommon use of punctuation to join independent clauses, it is certainly correct.

Interestingly, all of these examples are either from or about Mr. Dursley's perspective—Mr. Dursley, who is so concerned about being seen as proper and correct. Also interestingly, much of Hermione's dialogue contains comma splices, which is ironic, since she is another character who, through most of the story, is concerned about following the rules and not just being seen as correct, but about *being* correct. These points, as well as an analysis of where else comma splices occur, may be worthy of discussion in a future paper.

So, if Rowling knows how to avoid comma splices, as these examples suggest she does, there must be some explanation for why she writes so many of them, an explanation that goes beyond their being written for stylistic effect or the publisher neglecting to assign an editor.

There are, and always have been, two main views of punctuation: the rhetorical and the grammatical (Baron 2000; Parkes 1993). The older of the two, the rhetorical, focuses on "bringing out correspondences between the written medium and the spoken word" (Parkes 1993, 4), while the grammatical "has been concerned with the application of punctuation to identify the boundaries of ... 'sentences' and the units of ... grammatical constituents within them" (4). "In rhetorical punctuation, a comma is inserted wherever a major breath group ends, regardless of the overall grammatical structure of the sentence" (Baron 2000, 170). So, the sentence "The shadowy figure who lurked outside my office for weeks on end, turned out to be a private detective" is punctuated correctly from the rhetorical perspective (170), but not from the grammatical, which says subject and verb should not be separated by a comma. The sentence can be punctuated grammatically two ways—with no commas, in which case the "who" clause is restrictive, or with a comma before "who" and after "end," in which case the "who" clause is non-restrictive (*and* the sentence can be read rhetorically, with breath groups ending after "figure" and "end").

Although the rhetorical and grammatical approaches to punctuation are different and the rules governing each change as language use itself changes, sometimes the two overlap (as in the non-restrictive "who" clause in "The shadowy figure" sentence), and "there is usually some agreement between grammarians and rhetoricians as to what constitutes incomplete and completed sense" (Parkes 1993, 4). Further, "Adherence to one ... [approach] or another reflects a writer's views about the role of punctuation, as well as about the relationship between speech and writing" (4).

Over the past 160 years,

tele-technologies—the telegraph ... telephone, radio, television, and the Internet ... [have] helped redefine the relationship between speech and writing, largely blurring the distinctions between the two. (Parkes 1993, 186)

Although we have not stopped putting spaces between words when we write—at least, not in formal writing yet—shorter sentences, less formal diction, and

punctuation used according to the way people speak—or rhetorically—are evidence of “an increasingly oral basis to written language” (193). So more and more, written language is becoming like speech, but because speech is *less* formal now than ever before, so is writing. One signal of this shift can be seen in the way some writers use internal punctuation.

Many of the *Harry Potter* comma splices can be classified as rhetorical in the traditional sense of writing that attempts to mirror or re-present speech, but—and this is important—they also exhibit characteristics of the more modern shift, rhetorically *and* grammatically, toward writing influenced by tele-technologies. Viewing the comma splices this way can also explain why they are loathed so much by some: they violate that area of “agreement between grammarians and rhetoricians as to what constitutes incomplete and completed sense” (Parkes 1993, 4) and in so doing, create a gap—some would say a chasm—between the rules of sentence structure, often reflected in what *should* be (or the prescriptive approach) and what *is*, or actual practice in both speaking and writing (or the descriptive approach).

Can the gap between prescriptive and descriptive, grammatical and rhetorical, be closed on the *Harry Potter* comma splices? I believe it can.

Over 30 years ago, one grammarian and linguist argued that “the comma splice is a legitimate use of the comma” under certain conditions, and more recently, another asserts that regarding the comma splice as an error “has no logical basis” (Brosnahan 1976, 184; Klink 1998, 96). These experts point out that several kinds of comma splice are “widely accepted” (Brosnahan 1976, 184); indeed, they are so common, we do not even recognise them as errors, and all illustrate how rhetorical punctuation in the vernacular has resulted in grammatical acceptance of a comma between independent clauses in writing. Here are some examples of acceptable comma splices in *Harry Potter*:

1. a. Where one independent clause is a tag question:

And you’ve got dirt on your nose, by the way, did you know? (*PS*, 82)  
Sort of freeze your insides, don’t they? (*PoA*, 75)

b. Where one independent clause is a tag comment or comment clause:

You know, the Stone was not such a wonderful thing. (*PS*, 215)  
His comeback didn’t come off quite the way he wanted it to, you see. (*OotP*, 87)

2. In “not only ... but also” constructions where the “but” or “but also” is omitted:

He not only won every prize of note that the school offered, [but] he was soon in regular correspondence with the most notable magical names of the day. (*DH*, 22)

3. Between short, parallel independent clauses, including those in series (called paratactic clauses):

“I can’t work, I can’t concentrate” she said nervously. (*PoA*, 222)  
Greatness inspires envy, envy engenders spite, spite spawns lies. (*HBP*, 415)

And perhaps the most recognisable instance of acceptable comma splices in fiction is this one.

4. In dialogue, to indicate rhythm or rate of speech. Many of the Harry Potter comma splices occur in dialogue, as when we first meet Hermione:

“Are you sure that’s a real spell?” said the girl. “Well, it’s not very good, is it? I’ve tried a few simple spells just for practice and it’s all worked for me. Nobody in my family’s magic at all, it was ever such a surprise when I got my letter, but I was ever so pleased, of course, I mean, it’s the very best school of witchcraft there is, I’ve heard—I’ve learnt all our set books off by heart, of course, I just hope it will be enough—I’m Hermione Granger, by the way, who are you?” (*PS*, 79)

Note that this speech also includes tag questions and comments.

In addition, the novels contain three more kinds of comma splice that are not formally acknowledged in sources.

A. Those that “sandwich” the name of the person being addressed or identification of speaker—or both—between two independent clauses:

“I can’t, Harry, I’ve still got four hundred and twenty-two pages to read!” said Hermione (*PoA*, 195).  
“I know I messed up Ancient Runes,” muttered Hermione feverishly, “I definitely made at least one serious mistranslation” (*GoF*, 99).  
“Don’t call me Nymphadora, Remus,” said the young witch with a shudder, “it’s Tonks” (*OotP*, 49).

B. Those that combine an imperative and a declarative or vice-versa, sometimes in combination with A:

“Watch out for the bottom stair, it creaks,” Harry whispered back, as the twins disappeared onto the dark landing (*CoS*, 25).  
“There are plenty of mice around this place, go and chase them” (*PoA*, 130).  
“‘Yeah, don’t worry, Hagrid, we’ll back you up,’ said Ron.” (92)

All instances of A and B occur in dialogue, but do not always indicate rhythm or rate of speech, because some of the pauses between clauses are clearly intended to be longer. For example, “Watch out for the bottom stair, it creaks” demands a longer pause than “‘I know I messed up Ancient Runes,’ muttered Hermione foolishly, ‘I definitely made at least one serious mistranslation’,” because the

“muttered Hermione foolishly” breaks up the two independent clauses more effectively.

C. The third use of comma splices occurs in both narrative and dialogue, often mirroring common speech patterns; I call them elliptical, because the commas take the place of co-ordinate or subordinate conjunctions, relative pronouns such as “that” or “which,” or other connective words:

He was so absorbed, [that] he even forgot to be horrible to Crookshanks. (*PoA*, 221)

Harry half wished he hadn’t asked what was under a Dementor’s hood, [*because* or *as*] the answer had been so horrible, and he was so lost ... that he walked headlong into Professor McGonagall. (*PoA*, 183)

The meeting’s over, [*so*] you can come down and have dinner now. (*OotP*, 72)

I thought it might have been Kreacher, [*since*] he keeps doing odd things like that. (72)

I’ve been meaning to tell you, Sirius, [*that*] there’s something trapped in that writing desk in the drawing room, [*because*] it keeps rattling and shaking. (81)

Many of the “sandwich” sentences (see A, above), as well as the imperative and declarative sentences, can be seen as elliptical too.

Just as the first four types of comma splice—between independent clauses with tag questions and comments; between “Not only” “but” or “but also” independent clauses (which are essentially elliptical); between paratactic clauses; and between independent clauses in dialogue—are widely accepted; the last three identified here should be acceptable too, and not just for use by, as Truss says, “established” writers, but by anyone. I propose, therefore, that everyone join S.P.L.I.C.E., the Society for the Promotion of Literate and Intentional Comma Errors, and start telling people that the *Harry Potter* comma errors are examples of the *positive* influence of tele-technologies on writing.

In a way, we have come full circle—just as audiences of centuries ago had no idea that texts they were hearing lacked punctuation, modern audiences certainly cannot detect comma splices in the *Harry Potter* films.

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## CHAPTER TWO

### FOUR MODELS OF FATHERHOOD: PATERNAL CONTRIBUTORS TO HARRY POTTER'S PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

RONNIE CARMELI

The paternal role is highly important in emotional development, both in life and in Rowling's septology. The *Harry Potter* series has father figures and father-son relationships in abundance. The examples Rowling offers us of fatherhood reveal her underlying assumptions about the paternal role in psychological development. Not only does psychoanalytic understanding aid the reading of *Harry Potter* but it also demonstrates how Rowling's insight contributes to the understanding of paternity, advancing and developing psychoanalytic ideas of the father role.

Psychoanalysis began with Freud's conceptualisation of the Oedipus complex, marking the father role as significant in psychological development. Embedded in a paternalistic culture, Freud's Oedipal complex and its healthy solution play the important role of constructing ambition in the child, through sublimation of the drives and internalisation of the social values essential for participation in social conduct. After Freud, psychoanalysts such as Melanie Klein and Donald Winnicott attributed much more influence to the child's earlier development, thus advancing the mother-infant relationship to the frontier of psychoanalytic thought, overshadowing the role of the father.

Recent ideas in psychoanalytic thought return to emphasising the previously neglected father role, hence the interest in the septology's reflection of contemporary western psychological and sociological dilemmas. If mainstream mid-century psychoanalysis stressed the need for a nurturing environment for the baby, marking the need for an "attuned enough mother" by terms such as "holding" and "containing," there is now a growing awareness in psychoanalysis of the importance of the father role. This awareness also stands out in clinical work, especially with children and adolescents, with whom the need to reconstruct lost values and parental guidance is striking. Rowling's septology demonstrates magnificently this role of the father, intertwined with later psychoanalytic ideas, such as those of Melanie Klein (Carmeli 2008, 31–33).

It is needless to point out the overwhelming psychological influence the *Harry Potter* series has had on audiences worldwide. This success echoes that of Sophocles's *Oedipus Rex*, and both, to use the words of Aristotle, invoke our deepest fears, and arouse our most profound feelings of compassion (Aristotle, Longinus and Demetrius 1995, 24–28). In both cases the protagonist's basic situation is uncommon: Oedipus is adopted. In a way, so is Harry, although Harry's biological parents are not alive. Both cases, though extreme, provide magnified reflections of normal developmental issues, hence engaging the reader in emotional processing, and producing what Aristotle termed “catharsis.”

All human beings use many paternal figures to transfer their feelings and relationship patterns by means of displacements and condensations and to process issues concerning their basic paternal relationship. It should be noted that in every significant relationship paternal tendencies appear as one layer of the complex strings that tie one human being to another. This tie is independent of age and gender. Hermione's voice, for example, appears on many occasions as an introjected part of Harry's superego, usually associated in psychoanalysis as a *paternal* construction (e.g., “Not for the first time, a voice very much like Hermione's whispered in his ear: reckless.” [*OotP*, 343]).

Harry, as a child who lost his father at a very young age, is particularly dependent on “strangers” to supply him with paternal figures. Many characters in the septology step up to this task, the most significant being Remus Lupin, Sirius Black, Albus Dumbledore, and Severus Snape.

It has previously been noted that the *Harry Potter* series is marked by the developmental growth of the protagonist, thus introducing a new genre in (children's) literature (McGavock 2006). In the septology, Harry's development, paternally speaking, can perhaps be divided into two stages. The first three books exemplify Harry's gradual solution of the Oedipal conflict climaxing in the acquisition of the Patronus charm and in gaining a sense of potency. The last three books lay out Harry's second developmental stage, as he eventually succeeds in introjecting a whole and imperfect father figure. This is illustrated in his choice to trust Dumbledore in deciding to seek the Horcruxes instead of the tempting Hallows (Carmeli 2008, 34). *Goblet of Fire* plays an intermediate developmental near-plateau between these two important developmental leaps, much as Sophocles's middle play, *Oedipus in Colonus*, does in his Oedipal trilogy.

## The Oedipus Complex

The mythology of psychoanalysis narrates Freud's discovery of the Oedipus complex during his 1897 summer vacation, in which he supposedly underwent self-analysis, the first psychoanalysis in history (Jones 1953, 319–27). Freud conceptualised the Oedipal triangle—mother-father-child—as a cornerstone in the foundation of psychoanalysis. The father's role in resolving the Oedipus complex was key to his theory.

During his 1897 vacation, Freud neglected his previous account of neurosis, “the seduction theory,” which attributed different neuroses to the parent’s seduction of the child at various ages. In his famous letter to his friend Fliess, he states: “I no longer believe in my neurotica ... ” (Freud 1966, 259). The appearance of a new practice, a new discipline to be born, also triggers an exciting and innovative line of research concerning the role of the father in psychological growth. In his theoretical shift he also changes his focus from the female child to the male one. The prototype for child development changes from his and Breuer’s hysterical female patients, to himself (Breuer 1955).

In finding the parallel of hysteria within him, Freud realised that it is not the parent who seduces the child, but rather it is the child’s libidinal fantasies that complicate his psychological life. The son wishes to be rid of his father and gain his mother’s exclusive affections. Due to these fantasies he fears his father’s retaliation, mainly by castration. However, his emotions towards his father are ambivalent, for he also seeks his love and intimacy (Freud 1953, 4:256–64; Freud 1961, 31–32).

The father figure in Freud’s Oedipal theory sets the norms of conduct in social interaction, beginning with the prohibition of incest. Through his fear of castration and the love of his father, the son succeeds in introjecting the father figure, and accepting social norms. This is an essential stage climaxing in the formation of the superego, enabling the child to enter society as a capable human being (Carmeli 2008, 31).

It is important to note the historical background of these Freudian ideas: the foundation of psychoanalysis took place in Vienna’s *fin de siècle*, a time in which social norms and rules became ambiguous and questioned. This modern ambiguity of social law may be historically compared to the ambiguity of law in fifth century BCE Athens, when it became apparent that man’s law (political law) and God’s law (religious law) are at times opposed (Vernant 1981). At times such as these, the basic laws of human society need to be spelled out, hence the cultural success of Sophocles’s *Oedipus Rex* and *Antigone*, as well as Freud’s “Oedipal Conflict.” The basic law against incest or as Pucci (1992) names it, “the Father’s,” becomes explicit (2–3). It may be that Harry’s lack of father, and his consequential “certain disregard for rules” (*CoS*, 245), makes it difficult for him to resolve his Oedipal issues, and introject the Father’s Law.

In an article titled “Harry Potter’s Oedipal Issues,” Noel-Smith (2001) demonstrates Harry’s Oedipal complex by highlighting the moment in which James tells Lily to flee with their child, thus protecting the mother-child dyad both physically and psychologically. It is important to grasp the idea of the Oedipus complex as a conflict between the hate/fright the child feels towards the retaliating/castrating father image and the love/identification he feels towards the benevolent/protecting father image. Noel-Smith (2001) argues that Harry splits off the malevolent father image, projecting it into Lord Voldemort (2006). This split enables Harry to protect his dead father from his Oedipal ambivalence towards the

father figure, but seems to hinder his psychological growth in resolving the conflict.

Noel-Smith (2001) argues that the *Harry Potter* series is rooted in this splitting position, allowing the readers to participate in Harry's Oedipal complex. On the contrary, the splitting tendency Noel-Smith (2001) marks becomes a negotiable and changeable psychoanalytic issue through the septology.

## The Totem Father

As his writings progressed, Freud continued to develop his Oedipal ideas, and in consequence enriched his theoretical assumptions about the paternal role in the child's mental development. Thirteen years after publishing his *Traumdeutung* (*The Interpretation of Dreams*), Freud introduced to psychoanalysis another paternal function: separate from that of the Oedipal father, though in close interaction with the Oedipal idea, viz., the "Totem Father."

Freud speaks of Totem as an animal or more rarely a natural phenomenon, which is identified with a clan, and marks the alleged ancestor of the clan. Freud speaks of the Totem as a symbolic remnant of an actual (pre-) historical event which occurred in different clans: the murder of the Totem ancestor-father. This Patricide was, according to Freud's account, followed by a Totem meal, in which the sons ate the Totem father in order to internalise him and his abilities and privileges. In this action the sons also internalised the father's law—namely, the prohibition of incest—thus becoming a society abiding by the Oedipal laws.

In Freud's account of pre-historic anthropology of mankind, previous to the act of patricide and the Totem meal, the father alone had access to intercourse with women in the clan. In this sense the Totem father was omnipotent, while his sons were impotent. The prohibition of incest does not apply to the Totem father. In the social pact made by the sons, they not only agree to be rid of their father and gain access to the women of the clan, but also the pact itself marks the entrance of social order ruled first and foremost by the prohibition of incest (Freud 1955). From this point on, fathers will no longer be omnipotent, and the prohibition of incest will apply to them; they are Oedipal fathers, as opposed to the Totem father.

Rowling offers us a wide arch of paternal possibilities, or father-son relationships. On one end of this arc, there is the possibility of total rejection of the father by the son, as demonstrated by the act of patricide, which occurs twice in the books, once with the Crouches and once with the Riddles (Carmeli 2008, 34).

Not only does a young Voldemort kill his father, but he also revives himself by means of the murdered father's bone (*GoF*, 556). This brings to mind Freud's Totem meal, as the internalisation of the father involves crude, dark magic. However, in contrast to Freud's Totem story, Voldemort's father does not become a warning Totem symbol. In the Riddle case, the son himself is trying to become omnipotent, while social law does not apply to him. He sees his father as an impotent Muggle, and cannot accept his mother's choice of his father over him.

This is why he does not resolve his Oedipus complex at all, and cannot internalise norms of social conduct.

Barty Crouch, Jr. identifies with Voldemort in many aspects of paternity they shared. Although their stories differ in many ways, he also sees his father as unworthy. In Crouch's case, however, the son gains his mother's love over his father. The Oedipal situation is complicated not only by this, but also by his father's inability to love at all. In Crouch, Sr.'s harshness, Rowling exemplifies what might happen to the son when his father's superego presents cruel demands and overtakes the father's ego strengths. Crouch, Jr. turns to Voldemort for the paternity he has never had.

At the other end of the wide arch of the father-son issue, Rowling offers us the story of Harry. Harry is presenting a heroic and desperate struggle throughout the series to internalise a whole father figure, against all odds, and in the face of recurring premature losses of potential father figures. Later on, the focus will be on the process Harry is laying out for us in his struggle, but first let us examine the child's first relationship.

## The Mother-Child Dyad

Although this paper's primary concern is the analysis of different paternal contributors to Harry's mental development, the capacity for introjecting a father figure is built on the child's first experience of a relationship, his relationship with his mother figure. Moreover, psychoanalytically speaking, Harry's mother, Lily, has had the time to fulfil her primary role, as the mother's contribution to her son's development is most important in his first year of life.

Winnicott's famous saying, "There is no such thing as a baby," refers to the absence of a baby without a mother or a main caretaker, because one never sees a baby on its own (Winnicott 1964, 8). A baby cannot survive without a mother-figure. In comparison to most animals, the human child is born immature. At birth he is still connected to his mother as a biological organism; his survival will be dependent on her for a few more years. This accounts for the lengthy psychological process of human separation.

Klein was the first to stress the mother-child dyad, with a special focus on the baby's first year. In this sense, Rowling's basic assumptions are Kleinian. Harry's strength of character, or ego strength, stems first and foremost from his first year of life. No matter how much he was mistreated by the Dursleys, they could not crush the basic mental stability given to him by his certainly "good enough mother" (a term coined by Winnicott [1964]), just as they could not squash the magic out of him (or is it the same thing?). As Dumbledore explains, Lily's love for Harry left an indestructible mark of safety on his psyche:

*If there is one thing Voldemort cannot understand, it is love. He didn't realize that love as powerful as your mother's for you leaves its own mark .... Not a scar, no*

*visible sign ... to have been loved so deeply, even though the person who loved us is gone, will give us some protection forever. (PS, 216; emphasis added)*

Voldemort's mother, on the other hand, was definitely not good enough. Her love for her son was not strong enough, even to help her survive and raise him. This is not being judgemental of Merope's moral fibre, but merely indicates the explanation Rowling gives for Voldemort's deep pathology and mistrust. As opposed to Lily, who died to keep her son alive, Merope died in spite of her son being alive. Also, as Noel-Smith (2001) notes, Lily's love for her child was significant and lasting, even in the face of the loss of her spouse. Merope's love for her husband was stronger than any other significance to her life, including her motherhood. (This of course has a lot to do with the parental care Lily and Merope experienced themselves as children).

Harry as a baby was able to experience himself as a possible object of his mother's desire, to use Lacanian terminology (Homer 2005, 53–55). Thus his mother prepared him for the challenges of the Oedipal stage. This does not mean, as Noel-Smith (2001) states, that Harry must develop an Oedipal fixation, because at this pre-Oedipal young age, a child needs to feel he is the centre of his mother's attention. Voldemort, on the other hand, was deprived of this experience, and therefore he is unprepared for the Oedipal developmental tasks, doomed to deny his father's significance in his life, as well as the importance of social norms of conduct, which the father mediates for his son.

Klein states that during his first few months the baby cannot grasp whole objects, including himself or his mother. He does not understand the mother as a whole human being and only experiences fragmented images of her. Neither time nor space exists for the newborn baby as a continuum (Carmeli 2008, 32). This idea of Klein's provides a notion of the baby's world as a confusion. Klein calls the baby's state during these few first months "the schizo-paranoid position": *Schizo*—splitting in Greek—for the baby's immature perceptual and cognitive capacities split objects in his world into part-objects, and *paranoid*—because the anxieties aroused in the baby are of persecutory nature. Originally, the baby's mind experiences itself as omnipotent—the full breast will show itself by mere thought of the hungry baby, fantasising about its food. This is why the baby is confused and even terrified by the inability to anticipate the arrival of the feeding breast, a fear that is naturally intensified by his dependency on his mother. He is afraid of annihilation. He wants to have the full-of-milk breast to himself, is envious of its fullness, and therefore fears its retaliation. This is not altogether fictional, for the breast does abandon the baby and does not arrive at any given moment of hunger the baby experiences. Klein (1986b) explains that the baby uses a splitting mechanism, conceptualising the fantasy-fulfilling breast as "the good breast" and the disappointing breast as "the bad breast." This splitting mechanism is not unlike Harry's splitting of the father image, according to Noel-Smith, into "the good father," James, and "the bad father," Voldemort.

According to Klein (1986b), during his first half-year of life the infant moves from this schizo-paranoid position to a more mature one. Now he can grasp whole