Legilimens!

Legilimens!:
Perspectives in Harry Potter Studies

Edited by

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**CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS**

P U B L I S H I N G

For Chicken and Pigeon

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

CHRISTOPHER BELL, PH.D.

The introduction for this collected volume will be mercifully brief, because, be honest: no one picks up a book to read the introduction. One or more of the essays to follow has piqued your curiosity, and far be it from me to keep you longer than strictly necessary. I just wanted to give you a bit of background as to how this volume came to be.

In the fall of 2000, I found myself a stranger in a strange land. My then-girlfriend (now wife) and I had made the bold post-graduation decision to move in together, and to do so halfway across the country from our homes. We had both grown up in the Denver area, but she had been accepted to Washington State University, and we decided to have an adventure together in The Palouse.

As she busied herself with all of the responsibilities of a first-year graduate student, I busied myself with all of the lack of responsibility of a guy without a job. I spent days and days wandering the stacks of the local Barnes & Noble, reading books I really had no intention of purchasing, engaging in that age-old youthful practice of loitering.

While dodging the store employees one afternoon, I stumbled across a small display of *Harry Potter* paperbacks. The first two books had been out for a couple of years, and *Prisoner of Azkaban* was still available only in hardback. I had never heard of Harry Potter, but a friend of mine had gotten me hooked on *Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events* the summer prior, so any aversion I may have had to shopping in the children's section of the bookstore had long since passed. I picked up *Sorcerer's Stone*, found a quiet corner of the bookstore's coffee shop (where I figured the store staff could not see me), and proceeded to read the entire book over the course of the afternoon. Despite my resolute intentions to loiter without purchase, I bought it, along with *Chamber of Secrets* and the hardback *Prisoner of Azkaban*, and my *Harry Potter* obsession took flight.

Over the years since, I have earned a doctorate, launched a successful career as an assistant professor, and begun an aggressive research agenda. *Harry Potter* has been an integral part of that journey, from my fledgling

attempts at serious *Potter* scholarship as a first-year doctoral student through the successful publication of my last edited volume, *Hermione Granger Saves the World: Essays on the Feminist Heroine of Hogwarts.* (In the interest of full disclosure, we even named our cat Hermione.)

Through my involvement in the Southwest Popular/American Culture Association (SWPACA), I began to connect with a network of fellow *Potter* scholars and enthusiasts, and in 2011, I approached the chair of the organization with an idea to begin a Harry Potter Studies division. Many, many cultural properties, from *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* to James Bond have gathered their own divisions of scholars, and I was certain *Harry Potter* could draw a significant crowd. With the blessing of the organization, in 2012, we launched the first official Harry Potter Studies Area of the annual SWPACA conference. It was an immediate success, with dozens of scholars submitting papers for presentation and hundreds of participants attending the panel discussions. In 2013, we repeated the performance at the annual conference, and the idea was discussed of pulling together some of the amazing scholarship being produced by the division. As the chair of the division, I was incredibly excited to spearhead this project, culminating in the volume currently before you.

The current state of scholarship surrounding *Harry Potter* is both vibrant and varied. One of the reasons scholars continue to be attracted to the series as an artifact is the colossal range of disciplinary foci that can find treasures to unearth in its pages and films. For example, this volume contains the work of anthropologists and theologians, of historians and rhetoricians. The authors run the gamut from upper-level undergraduate students through graduate and doctoral students to junior and senior faculty at universities across the United States. Benedict Anderson (2006) suggests that modern society necessitates "imagined communities;" that is to say, people need to feel as though they are a part of something greater than themselves. In this respect, the Harry Potter Studies community is dual-functioning. It exists in both "real" and "imagined" dimensions: once a year, we gather to exchange thoughts, ideas and research, broadening the body of knowledge surrounding this rich and fertile text; yet, for the rest of the year, we exist as an imagined community of learners, digitally sharing our findings in preparation for seeing one another again.

I hope you find something to further your own study of the texts within these pages. There are plenty of winding and interesting roads from which you could select. The first section of this volume deals with The "Other" Potter. In this section, chapters explore the ways in which intersectionalities of identities interact within the texts. **Masha Grigoryan** kicks off the discussion with a thoughtful examination of society's ostracism of Harry

Potter, followed by **Meri Weiss**'s detailing of the roles of motherly figures in Harry Potter's life. **James Harmon** skillfully links identity to space and place, then my own discussion of the rise of Lord Voldemort calls into question Wizarding society as a whole. Finally, **Lindsay Clifton** describes the rigid caste system of the Wizarding world.

In the second section – The "Internal" Potter – attempts to dig deeper into the thoughts and motivations of the major characters in the series. Both **Elizabeth Morrow Clark** and **Bryce Langford** deal with the function of memory in the series, while **David** and **Sarah Maya Rosen** discuss the philosophy of utilizing child soldiers in the second Wizarding War. **Kj Swanson** brilliantly dissects the hidden Latin meanings of "*expecto patronum*" and links them theologically to Scripture. Wrapping up the discussion, **Andrea Krause**, **Elizabeth Goering**, and **Sabine Behringer** catalog the differences in communication styles among the major characters of the series.

In all, this collection of work of the Harry Potter Studies area of SWPACA (http://www.southwestpca.org) is a wide-ranging discussion of the texts and the meanings contained within. It parallels our yearly discussions nicely; scholars from broadly disparate fields coming together to spend some time deliberating over the greater scholarly significance of these wonderful texts.

Speaking of which, one final minor note before I send you on your way: in the interest of uniformity (and sanity), for the remainder of this volume, the books/films will be abbreviated as follows:

SS or *PS*:	*Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone/Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*
CoS:	*Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*
PoA:	*Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*
GoF:	*Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*
OotP:	*Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*
HBP:	*Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*
DH:	*Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*

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THE "OTHER" POTTER

CHAPTER ONE

WAND-ERING BETWEEN WORLDS: "OTHER" IDENTITIES IN *HARRY POTTER*

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Regardless of age, race, or gender, being prevented from living a "normal" life through exclusion from activities and groups simply because of a distinguishing characteristic or circumstance, is an unpleasant experience for anyone. This feeling intensifies when one's identity and skill in certain abilities expel one from two societies simultaneously, as is the case for Harry Potter who is expelled from both the Muggle and Wizard world in J.K. Rowling's world-renowned *Harry Potter* series. Any person who has read the series, including Potter fans all over the world, knows that Harry's identity and mere fact of existence are enshrined in mystery, magic, and inexplicable power. In order to fully understand Harry's development, one must recognize and appreciate the complexity of his character and identity formation, and live through his experiences and emotional turbulence. According to Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), ostracism and misrepresentation within a human being or group often occur in dichotomous societies, a process in which that person or group becomes what Said labels the "Other." Harry Potter is an "Other," who is ostracized by all the dominant groups with whom he associates (Muggles, Wizards, children, and adults) because of his unique hybrid identity and various linguistic talents.

In the "Introduction" to his book, Edward Said discusses the phenomenon of Orientalism, in which the Occident manipulates and projects onto the Orient images of barbarity, exoticism, mysticism, magic, sensuality, and so on. In other words, Orientalism is the process whereby whatever image is necessary for the Occident at the time is imposed on the East, in order to maintain the "relationship of power, of domination, [and] of varying degrees of a complex hegemony" (Said, 1978, p. 216). Said provides a long and detailed definition of Orientalism and concludes that

"Orientalism is—and does not simply represent—a considerable dimension of modern political-intellectual culture, and as such has less to do with the Orient than it does with 'our' world" (Said, 1978, p. 221). This argument is neatly summarized by Karl Marx in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*: "they cannot represent themselves; they must be represented." This notion of an "us" versus "them" world is what Said refers to as the manifestation of the "Other," in which one group or individual ostracizes another group or individual because of differences in traits, ideology, societal structure, inherent characteristics such as color or gender, and a multitude of other factors. The foundational argument of this chapter explores how Harry Potter is "Otherized" by the dominant groups in the novels, and how this "Othering" occurs because of his linguistic and identity hybridity.

Harry Potter exhibits a hybrid identity: he is both Muggle Harry and Wizard Harry. In his book, *Identity: Youth and Crisis* (1968), Erik Erikson explains the importance of the connection between a mother and her child, both for mental and sexual development, from infancy to adolescence. Erikson's point clarifies why Harry's identity forms at a slower pace when compared to the other children. Harry's parents are murdered by Lord Voldemort when Harry is only a baby; thus the vital connection for identity formation and reception of information between Harry and his mother, Lily, is severed. As a result, this leaves Harry without a means of understanding the world around him, or of developing his skills as both an individual and as a wizard. More importantly, however, is the effect of the disrupted family unit on Harry's growth. When the Wizarding community discovers his miraculous survival despite Voldemort's killing curse "Avada Kedavra," Dumbledore decides to bring Harry to his only remaining living relatives, the Dursleys. The Dursleys' treatment of Harry is anything but familial: they speak about him "as though he wasn't there—or rather, as though he was something very nasty that couldn't understand them, like a slug" (Rowling *SS,* 1997, p. 22), lock him in his cupboard, exclude him from family activities, and withhold the truth about his parents and his identity from him. The animosity and loneliness that their treatment generates within Harry changes when he attends Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, a place that quickly becomes "the first and best home he had known" (Rowling *DH,* 2007, p. 697). As John Kornfeld and Laurie Prothro discuss in their article, "Comedy, Quest, and Community" (2009), due to the several family units that Harry has at Hogwarts—the larger community of Hogwarts, the smaller community of Gryffindor, and his intimate friendship with Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger—"for the first time in his life, Harry knows what it means to

belong" (2009, p. 125). However, the substance of Kornfeld and Prothro's article is in their discussion of Harry's "journey of self-discovery" (2009, p. 131), which they argue occurs when Harry realizes that he must leave his home in order to find a home and himself. Incidents such as the discovery of The Mirror of Erised and his willful acknowledgement of his necessary sacrifice, are examples of his "solitary search for his true family [...and] for his own identity" (Kornfeld and Prothro, 2009, p. 135).This lack of a family and home are what spark both Harry's identity crisis and discovery, and are the reason for his hybrid identity as both a Muggle and a Wizard.

In a matter of pages, Harry goes from having no identity, to simultaneously having two—Muggle and Wizard. As a Muggle raised by the Dursleys for 11 years, Harry never fit in because of his inability to control and ignorance about the involuntary magic he could perform. Moreover, because, unlike Harry, the Dursleys knew who his parents were, they consequently looked upon him as a freak. But when Hagrid arrives with news of Harry's acceptance to Hogwarts and explains to him who he is, who his parents were, and what kind of world he belongs to, Harry realizes that he's not a freak and that he had merely been living in the wrong place with the wrong kinds of people. But although such a discovery should make Harry feel more complete and at home, its effect is the opposite. It is this hybridity, this inability to belong solely to one specific group, which makes Harry an "Other" in both worlds. Even though Harry "embodies both the ordinary and the extraordinary" (Natov, 2001, p. 315), and "magical [characters] are defined by their human as well as their magical traits" (Natov, 2001, p. 317), Harry doesn't fit in the Wizarding world either. At first, everyone is shocked and excited to meet him because of his legendary survival of the killing curse, but soon, his actions, like losing points for Gryffindor, and his abilities, like connecting with Voldemort's mind, ostracize him from the group. Besides his closest friends, who also have their doubts at one point, none of the other students want to associate with him, "everywhere Harry went, people pointed and didn't trouble to lower their voices as they insulted him" (Rowling SS, 2007, p. 244-245), and like the Dursleys, begin to see him as a star-struck freak.

As Jayetta Slawson states in her article, "Harry Potter Books as Indexes of American Culture" (2006), "the Harry Potter books speak to issues of hybridity and pluralism in global contexts, and to the conflicting ideologies between groups of people" (2006, p.72) in the magical world as well as in the Muggle world. Although in the article Slawson specifically refers to the violence and hatred expressed by the pureblood wizards

toward the Mudbloods, this idea can be used to argue for the "Othering" of Muggles by wizards, and vice versa. Thus, if looked at from that standpoint, Harry as a Muggle is "Othered" both by Muggles, for not being "normal," and by wizards, for having been brought up by Muggles. In the same way, Harry the Wizard is also "Othered" by the Wizarding community for both not being pureblood, and at the same time having a magical connection with Voldemort, which none of the other wizards have. In "Imitation and Gender Insubordination" (1991), Judith Butler explains her theory of performativity, which is a key factor in defining gender and identity. Harry's failure to assimilate may be explained by his failure to perform in his two worlds. Discussed in "Thinking Sex: Notes Towards a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality" (1984), Gayle Rubin's theory of normativity, which explores the normal and abnormal behaviors in a given context is also useful to explain Harry's otherness. Although Butler's argument focuses on gender as a performance, as opposed to a biological trait, it is appropriate for explaining the formation of identity in a given person. In the case of Harry Potter, Harry performs as either a Muggle or wizard, modifying behavioral traits and adjusting the gradient of his other world qualities depending on the context in which he finds himself. However, this leads to problems because of Rubin's theory of normativity, which claims every society and specific circumstance have guidelines for what is considered normal and abnormal, and that a person who does not respect these boundaries is punished. This is the reason why Harry fails to assimilate into either the Muggle or Wizarding world: he is not and does not act in a way that is considered normal for that given context, thus making him abnormal. Therefore, Harry cannot properly perform in either society, since he is instantly placed into the abnormal category in each society, for one reason or another. This means that either way Harry turns, to the Muggles or to the wizards, he is stuck in a shadow of solitude and disapproval; he is like a mulatto, not white enough to be white, but not black enough to be black.

Like Franz Fanon's desire to "be a man among other men" in "The Fact of Blackness" (1952), so does Harry have a desire to belong (a desire that does not become reality until the end of the series). As Fanon describes the "history that others have compiled" for him (1952, p. 69), one can draw parallels to the history created for both Harry as an individual and Harry as a part of the Muggle and Wizard race. The prophecy made about Harry, his legendary escape and destruction of Voldemort, and, therefore, his duty to lead the war against Voldemort when he returns, pre-determined Harry's fate. The story was written before he was a conscious being, thereby leaving him no choice but to

unconsciously follow in its footsteps as he grows up. As a wizard, Harry is considered by the other wizards and witches to be dim-witted and behind on magical information, such as Quidditch. Similarly, by his Muggle family, everything associated with magic and the Wizarding world is considered to be strange and filled with childish weirdoes and freaks, a category that Harry immediately falls into when his Hogwarts acceptance letter arrives. In this way, Rowling's books display the internal struggle that takes place within Harry for the right to discover and live through his hybrid consciousness, through a meaning that he makes for himself, and not a "meaning that was already there, pre-existing, [and] waiting" for him (Fanon, 1952, p. 77).

This consciousness, however, derives from the development of an identity, one that according to Jacques Lacan occurs in three stages: imaginary, mirror, and symbolic. In his psychoanalytic studies of the formation of the "I," Lacan discovers that a baby's consciousness is formed during the mirror stage, during which the baby absorbs his imago, or "mirror image," and lives out his entire life trying to obtain that image, which wasn't a realistic representation in the first place (1949). This "mirror image" does not need to be reflected off an actual mirror, however, but can be the projected image of oneself through society, family, or friends. There are many imagoes within the *Harry Potter* books, such as Lily as Snape's imago, but one of the most important ones is Voldemort as Harry's imago. Throughout the series, Harry is compared to Voldemort because of his possession and use of the inexplicable powers that destroyed the Dark Lord, his ability to speak Parseltongue, his mind and dream connection with Voldemort later in the series, and even the Sorting Hat's indecisiveness about whether to place Harry in Gryffindor or Slytherin. All of this, in addition to the prophecy which overshadows Harry's life, intensifies Harry's "Otherness" amongst the other students at Hogwarts because it emphasizes his superiority and uniqueness.

Harry then carries all of this weight with him into what Lacan calls the symbolic order, which is associated with language and the father figure, and during which the baby learns to express and distance itself from the mother. The father figures in the series are plentiful, but none play as big a role for Harry as James Potter, Severus Snape, Albus Dumbledore, and Sirius Black. The fact that Harry is an orphan, yet again makes him an "Other," setting him apart from all the other students, except Neville Longbottom, because it attempts to display that something is askew about him. Although Harry's father is dead, he still has a presence in Harry's life, because of the "constant reminders of his heritage—the fact that he has his mother's eyes, or his father's athletic skills—[…that] the Hogwarts

community give Harry insight into the parents he never knew, while reinforcing his connection to them" (Kornfeld and Prothro, 2009, p. 129). His father's presence is also evident every time Harry conjures a Patronus (which coincidentally has the Latin root word of 'father'). Furthermore, his parents' protection of Harry is seen in their appearances as ghosts during Harry's discovery of The Mirror of Erised and his wand's connection with Voldemort's wand in *GoF*. Yet his image of his father as being noble, smart, and kind is drastically altered when he sees Snape's schoolboy memory of James being an arrogant bully and teasing him. Harry unwillingly re-evaluates the image that he has created in his mind of his father, but cannot seem to fully empathize with Snape until Snape's true identity is unveiled.

Even though Harry distrusts him and thinks his alliance lies with Voldemort, Snape is another father figure to Harry, because Snape actually protects and defends Harry (which Harry discovers later is due to his eternal love for Harry's mother, Lily). After proving him innocent, Sirius Black also becomes an important father figure to Harry because he is Harry's godfather and James' best friend. Like Snape, Sirius, too, risks his life and being recaptured to help or save Harry in specific situations, thereby "fulfilling [his] duty as godfather" (Rowling *GoF,* 2000, p. 522). Because Sirius was the only real family Harry had ever known, his death in *OotP* (2003) crushes Harry, and to lose him makes his life even more unfair and unjust than it already is. The only constant father figure that Harry has throughout the series is Dumbledore, whose continual presence and devotion to Harry's safety and success spare Harry punishment, humility, and even death. However, in *OotP*, Dumbledore mysteriously stops talking to and looking at Harry, which later is revealed was for Harry's protection, and then in a later book, like all the other father figures, Dumbledore dies. I argue that this pattern of disappearing father figures hinders Harry's character; however, it is more likely that the presence of so *many* father figures, and their eventual deaths, is what helps Harry become an individual. He learns that he must develop his own strengths and not depend on older males, and becomes a fully mature man because of the influence of such different men and their experiences. It is the presence and then disappearance of these father figures that help Harry realize his true identity.

Through a Lacanian reading, Harry's absence of a father figure with whom to connect in the symbolic order, may lead to linguistic issues, such as the development of a hybrid language as replacement for the absence of the expected father language. Harry's hybridity is displayed not only through his actions and double identity as a Muggle and Wizard, but also

through his ability to speak different languages. As Gloria Anzaldúa states in her article, "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" (1987), "ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity" (1987, p. 360). Even though Harry's ethnic identity does not change with his shifting from the Muggle to Wizarding world, his sense of self does. English is spoken in both the Muggle and Wizarding world, but the diction and signs that are associated with each word play a major role in one's ability to be understood. For example, Muggle Harry isn't going to talk about "Knuts," "Howlers," or "Animagi" to the Dursleys, since he knows that he wouldn't be understood, just as he wouldn't talk about television, ballpoint pens, or rollerblades to Ron or Mr. Filch. As Anzaldúa explains, there are variations in Spanish, such as Spanglish and Chicano Spanish, with Spanish speakers in America versus Spanish speakers in Mexico, and yet the shift from one variation to another happens gradually and unnoticeably. Similarly, Harry shifts his English lexicon accordingly, depending on his location and needs, allowing him to separate and distinguish between his Muggle English-Muggle identity and Wizard English-Wizard identity. But if the shift occurs naturally and in the absence of the other group (no one from the Wizarding world really hears Harry speaking Muggle English, and vice versa), then why does his language make Harry an "Other"?

In Harry's case, which is anything but simple and concrete, during Voldemort's attempt to murder him, he unknowingly transferred a part of himself unto Harry, not only opening a connection between them, but passing on such traits as the ability to hear, speak, and understand Parseltongue, the language of snakes. Earlier in the series, in the Muggle world, Harry speaks to a Brazilian boa constrictor at a zoo, and when he sets it free, he says that he "could have sworn a low, hissing voice said, 'Brazil, here I come…. Thanksss, amigo'" (Rowling *SS,* 1997, p. 28). Because he doesn't have knowledge of his wizard abilities, he accepts the situation as being a fantastical stretch of his imagination. In the second book, Harry tells Ron and Hermione that he hears voices within the walls, but *their* inability to hear the voice makes them think that Harry has gone mad, until he speaks to a conjured snake during the duel between him and Draco Malfoy. At that point, Ron and Hermione realize that Harry has the gift of Parseltongue, and their explanation of its association with dark wizards, like Voldemort, clarifies for Harry why the other students are now afraid of him. Throughout the series, Harry learns to use this gift as a tool to expand his knowledge about Voldemort's whereabouts and actions, ultimately using it for good. Yet the mere fact that he can speak a language that only he and Voldemort share "Otherizes" him in the eyes of the other students. Partly because of jealousy, but mostly because of their

insufficient information about both Harry and Voldemort, the other students consider Harry's ability to speak Parseltongue a freakish quality, something that links him to dark magic, and therefore, dark wizards, something Harry spends six books trying to contest. Rubin's and Butler's theories are relevant in this situation as well, because it is due to Harry's label as freakish (abnormal) that he cannot fully perform as an individual in that world. According to Structuralist Ferdinand de Saussure (1916), language creates reality, therefore the more languages one knows, the broader and more colorful one's perception of reality is. Thus, because of Harry's ability to speak Muggle English, Wizard English, and Parseltongue, his knowledge and perspective on life and reality differs from those unable to adjust in the same way, something that is exemplified in his unique telepathic connection with Voldemort.

Saussure's notion of the sign is also an important way to explain Harry being an "Other," since it is a sign that demarcates his identity. As Saussure describes it, a sign is comprised of a signified (a concept) over a signifier (a sound-image), which implies that one signifier is attached to one signified, and no variations are allowed. Although the latter portion of this theory has been deconstructed by post-Structuralists, it suits the discussion of Harry being physically marked as an "Other" because when Voldemort attempted to kill Harry as a baby, his curse marked Harry with "a very thin scar on his forehead that was shaped like a bolt of lightning" (Rowling *SS,* 1997, p. 20). That scar is a signifier that associates Harry with Voldemort throughout the series, both literally (through the connection that later develops) and historically (as it is a symbol of proof that Harry is indeed the "boy who lived"). Because of this physical attribute, Harry is first made into a positive "Other," a celebrity because of his unconscious accomplishment of defeating Voldemort, and then into a negative "Other," when students begin to suspect him for the use of dark magic, such as opening the Chamber of Secrets. His scar becomes an actual character, "the sign not only of the dark forces which have tried to kill him since birth, but of his survival and the reason for that survival […—] the love of his parents" (Deavel & Deavel, 2002, p. 50). In addition to this signifier, Harry is also made into Voldemort's seventh horcrux, intensifying their connection. And even though the other students don't have this information, it adds to Harry's "Otherness" because it physically, mentally, and spiritually prevents Harry from discovering his true identity and performing it. At one point, Harry, too, begins to doubt his distinction from Voldemort, remembering the Sorting Hat's indecision about whether to place him in the house of Slytherin (the house Voldemort was in as a student, Tom Riddle) or Gryffindor. As he realizes just how much he and

Voldemort have in common, Harry begins to think that he "*should* be in Slytherin […] the Sorting Hat could see Slytherin's power in me" (Rowling *CoS,* 1999, p. 333). But Dumbledore explains that "It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities" (*CoS,* 1999, p. 333), and that because Harry "asked not to go in Slytherin" (333) his choice makes him "*very different* from Tom Riddle" (1999, p. 333). Dumbledore's point is supported by Catherine and David Deavel's discussion of character: "character is […] the mark that is left on the world by a person's chosen actions, […] his way of being in the world. It is the stuff of the moral judgment of a person" (2002, p. 50). Nevertheless, Harry's connection with Voldemort through Legilimency (mind-reading), his scar, and the fact that he exists as Voldemort's horcrux, prevent Harry from escaping his image as an "Other" until the epilogue of *DH*, when his scar ceases to play a definitive role in connecting him to Voldemort.

How does Harry deal with his hybrid identity and linguistic talents being the cause of his "Otherness"? Theorist Julia Kristeva (1980) would argue that he does this through abjection, the process by which an individual disposes of pieces of himself, such as nail clippings, cut hair, or excrement, in order to reassert his boundaries. There are several instances of Harry abjecting himself throughout the novels, one of which is a reverse abjection and occurs unconsciously in the first book. Harry states that his Aunt Petunia would constantly make him get haircuts because of the unruly nature of his hair, but overnight the hair would grow back. As Hagrid later explains to Harry, this is his unconscious use of magic through emotions of anger or frustration, and yet it is a form of reverse abjection because through his *re*-growing of his hair, as opposed to cutting it, Harry reasserts his magical boundaries as an individual in the Dursley house. According to some critics, Harry doesn't develop emotionally or mature sexually within the series. Although these critics may have a strong case because of minimal emphasis placed on his sexuality by Rowling, his emotional development is difficult to argue against. An exceptional example of his emotional development is in the seventh book, *DH* (2007), in which Harry and Ginny break up because of the dangerous and uncertain circumstances that Harry must face in his fight against Voldemort. Not wanting Ginny to grieve too hard in case anything happens with him on his mission, Harry breaks up with her, which is an abjection of his desire for her. He is abjecting a strong undercurrent of emotion in order to save her, and reassert his boundaries as a self-sacrificing and decision-making male.

However, the strongest example of abjection is Harry's abjection, and at the same time discovery, of the desire for a home. Alongside Kornfeld

and Prothro's earlier argument about the necessity for Harry's departure from home (Hogwarts) in order to truly find both a home and himself, is the sacrifice of Harry's utmost desire—to belong to a family. Even though the Weasleys become Harry's surrogate family, and he clearly has no lack of father figures (one of whom is his actual godfather), no one can take the place of his biological parents, and the hole he has because of their absence. And yet, Harry abjects this desire for a family when he discovers the prophecy, which states that "neither can live while the other survives" (Rowling *OotP,* 2003, p. 841). He does this in anticipation of the final battle, thinking that since his fate has been chosen for him, he has no other choice but to fulfill his mission: either defeat Voldemort or be defeated. Not only does this sacrifice show maturation in character, but it also displays Harry's mature thought process: in order to fully devote himself to attempting to kill Voldemort, he must discard, abject, everything else in his life: his love for Ginny, his desire for a family, his desire to be normal, and so on. Harry's desires are what help him discover his identity, especially his difference in comparison to Voldemort. In spite of this, it is this conscious decision to *abject* that desire from himself that cultivates his identity formation. Thus, even Harry's abjection keeps him as an "Other," physically separating him from his peers and loved ones.

Whether it is because of his history, his connection with Voldemort, his linguistic talents, his knack for being at the wrong place at the wrong time, or just his fate of being born as a half-blood and being raised by Muggles, Harry cannot escape being labeled as an "Other." His story and fate are common knowledge, and his decisions are scrutinized ten-fold over, but his heart always remains in the right place. His conquest for truth, light, love, and peace lead him down an interesting, though dangerous, path, one for which few eleven year old would volunteer. And that's the point: Harry didn't volunteer to be "the boy that lived," he just became him, and mustered up enough strength, courage, and will power to take responsibility for an imposed load. Yes, Harry is an "Other," but being one makes him unique, and the center of mystery, gossip, and attention.

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CHAPTER TWO

THE ROLE OF MATERNAL FEMALES IN HARRY POTTER'S JOURNEY

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When readers first meet Harry Potter in *SS,* his world is lonely and mother-less. However, author JK Rowling soon introduces Harry to a protective pack of strong female characters to help him navigate his journey. Mrs. Weasley, Hermione and Professor McGonagall provide Harry with maternal love and protection throughout the *Harry Potter* series. It is because of these reliable women that Harry learns how to love, matures into a selfless young man, defends his found family and defeats Lord Voldemort. Harry's status as an orphan is the foundation of the story, and a typical characteristic of archetypal literature; however, JK Rowling firmly establishes the importance of substitute mothers in his life. She provides him with women he can trust and rely on for both his emotional and physical needs. The relationships Harry shares with Mrs. Weasley, Hermione and Professor McGonagall illustrate how Rowling ensures that his character arc depends upon the influence of these women. He cannot endure his journey without their encouragement and assistance. By the end of the series, Harry is no longer a neophyte in the world of wizards, nor is he the outcast he once was with the Dursleys. He receives maternal love; he is shaped by unselfish bonds of friendship; and he learns to trust in the emotions of these unique relationships. Harry Potter's world is now a brighter and better place, not only because Lord Voldemort has been cast out of it but also because his relationships with Mrs. Weasley, Hermione and Professor McGonagall have altered and improved it. Although Dumbledore and Sirius temporarily fulfill the role of Harry's substitute father, and Ron's fraternal love and loyalty inspire Harry, it is due to Harry's emotional connections with three strong, opinionated maternal figures that he successfully completes his journey.

At the beginning of *SS*, Harry is not only a mother-less son, but he is also an outcast and a loner. The Dursleys mistreat him and make him feel so much worse than merely unloved. Although Vernon and Petunia Dursley are Harry's aunt and uncle—his legal guardians—Harry has no role models and no real family. He is, essentially, alone in the world.

Once JK Rowling predicates Harry's loneliness, she opens up an entire world to him, one in which he not only fits in but where he is welcome (and a celebrity!). To Harry's credit, as Danielle M. Provenzano and Richard E. Heyman (2006) state in their essay "Harry Potter and the Resilience to Adversity," "when given the 'life chance' of being placed in the supportive environment of Hogwarts, Harry emerges as a globally well-functioning adolescent" (p.117). Although the idea of Hogwarts is initially overwhelming and intimidating to Harry, Rowling quickly introduces an insecure, apprehensive Harry to a warm, generous Mrs. Weasley, a gregarious, confident Hermione and a direct, dependable Professor McGonagall.

While Hermione and Professor McGonagall will become part of Harry's family at Hogwarts and Mrs. Weasley his primary maternal figure outside of school, it is Mrs. Weasley who provides Harry with the metaphorical key to enter Hogwarts—the secret passage onto Platform 9 ¾. She not only guides him through Platform 9 ¾ but tells him to enter before her own son, Ron: "Go on, go now before Ron" (Rowling, 1993, p. 93). She also chides her children at the mere suggestions that they might ogle Harry or ask him inappropriate questions about the day his family was killed. She tells Ginny: "[. . T]he poor boy isn't something you goggle at in a zoo" and threatens Fred: "I forbid you to ask him [. . .]. No, don't you dare. As though he needs reminding of that on his first day at school" (Rowling, 1993, p. 97). Mrs. Weasley has known Harry for less than fifteen minutes yet is already maternally protective of him. Furthermore, a few months later, after Ron tells his mother his best friend Harry isn't expecting any Christmas gifts, she sends him a sweater and a box of fudge. The significance of the sweater cannot be overstated; in Ron's words, "[. . S]he's made you a Weasley sweater [. . .]. Every year she makes us a sweater [. .]" (Rowling, 1993, p. 201.) Thus Mrs. Weasley has extended, via ugly, hand-woven sweater, an invitation to Harry to join her family. The sweater is a symbol, an indication to Harry that he is welcome. Mrs. Weasley continues to show Harry maternal kindness and worry about him as if he were her own son.

While life is relatively calm before Lord Voldemort returns, Mrs. Weasley's chief concern for Harry is his stomach; she consistently plies him with food, which, for a growing boy, is important. More important,