

The 13th Annual Harry Potter Academic Conference



October 18-19, 2024

Chestnut Hill College
Philadelphia, PA

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To reach a Board member with an urgent concern during HPAC, please call or text our Google Voice number, (484) 441-3579. Chestnut Hill College campus security can be reached at (215) 242-7777, though please note that CHC campus security is not in direct contact with the HPAC Board. For medical or safety emergencies, call 9-1-1.

ABOUT THE HARRY POTTER ACADEMIC CONFERENCE

Drs. Patrick McCauley and Karen Wendling co-taught an Interdisciplinary Honors Seminar at Chestnut Hill College entitled “The Emergence of the Hero in the Epic Voyage.” We gratefully acknowledge our “Hero” students, whose excellent scholarship provided the initial spark (and ongoing inspiration) to create and continue the Harry Potter Academic Conference.

HPAC BOARD

Patrick McCauley, PhD (Chestnut Hill College), HPAC Co-Founder and Co-Chair

Patrick McCauley is Associate Professor of Religious Studies and Philosophy. He is the author of *Into the Pensieve: The Philosophy and Mythology of Harry Potter*.

Karen Wendling, PhD (Merion Mercy Academy), HPAC Co-Founder and Co-Chair

Karen Wendling is a science teacher and a proud alumna of Chestnut Hill College. She is the author of several presentations relating to science in *Harry Potter* and using *Harry Potter* to improve pedagogy.

Lauren Camacci, PhD, Vice Chair and Official Conference House-Elf

Hannah Yanow, EdD, Logistics Coordinator

Laurie Beckoff, MSc, Communications Coordinator

OUR THANKS

We would like to acknowledge that HPAC meets at Chestnut Hill College, which sits on the ancestral lands of the Lənape Haki-nk (Leni-Lenape). We acknowledge the sacred and historical significance of these lands—a small gesture towards recognizing, honoring, and reconciling with the Lənape Haki-nk people, whose lands and water we benefit from today.

The Board gratefully acknowledges all the members of the Chestnut Hill College community, especially Don Visher and Greg Gorski, our Tech Wizards, without whom the conference would not be possible.

The Board is also grateful to [45Press](#), especially Claudia Reese, Chelsea Sedmak, and Jim Fortunato II, our extremely generous Web Wizards.

And we are grateful to YOU, our HPAC community, for sharing your scholarship and fellowship with your fellow Potterheads for over a decade.



Chestnut Hill College, founded by the Sisters of Saint Joseph in 1924, is an independent, Catholic institution that fosters equality through education. Faithful to its strong liberal arts tradition, Chestnut Hill College offers academic programs of excellence in the areas of undergraduate, graduate, and continuing studies. Sponsorship of the Harry Potter Conference is just one of the many ways in which Chestnut Hill College demonstrates its commitment to its mission: to provide students with a holistic education in an inclusive Catholic community marked by academic excellence, shared responsibility, personal and professional growth, service to one another and the global community, and concern for the Earth.

Chestnut Hill College is a non-profit institution. The Harry Potter Academic Conference and Chestnut Hill College are not affiliated with J.K. Rowling, Bloomsbury Press, Warner Bros., or Pottermore.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

All times are in Eastern Standard Time (EST)

HPAC VIII – Day 1 – Friday, October 18, 2024		
8:15–8:50	Registration	St. Joseph Hall Rotunda
8:50–9:00	Conference Welcome	East Parlor (w/ stream)
9:00–11:40	Concurrent Sessions 1	
	Session 1a – International Panel	East Parlor (w/ stream)
	Moderator: HPAC Board	
9:00–9:20	Reading <i>Harry Potter</i> as a Quest	Pyle
9:30–9:50	Mandatory Mischief: Understanding the Trickster Myth in the <i>Harry Potter</i> Films	Guglani
10:00–10:20	Hearing Written Magic in <i>Harry Potter</i> Films: Unlocking Questions of Truth and Power through Music	Webster
10:30–10:40	<i>pause/break</i>	
10:40–11:00	How Did Harry Survive? Lily’s Sacrifice and the Myth of Blood Magic in Wizarding Society	Mathiesen
11:10–11:30	Machiavelli, Salazar Slytherin, and an Honest Understanding of Power	Chanda
	Session 1b	Redmond Room
	Moderator: Whited	

9:00–9:20	I've Scene You Before: On Role Doubling as Thematic Emphasis in <i>Cursed Child</i> , Parts One and Two	McLaughlin
9:30–9:50	From Wizard Wheezes to Etsy Empires: An Exploration of Fandom and Entrepreneurship	Kohler
10:00–10:20	<i>Harry Potter's</i> Secondary World: A Reconsideration	Butchart and Wang
10:30–10:40	<i>pause/break</i>	
10:40–11:00	The Use of <i>Harry Potter</i> Names, Spells, and Magical Objects in the Muggle Press; Confederate Statues as Horcruxes and a Politician Making an Unbreakable Vow	Martin
11:10–11:30	<i>Harry Potter</i> After 2020: A Chapter Re-read Podcast	Kim
11:40–12:50	Lunch Break	
1:00–1:05	Introduction of Plenary Speaker	East Parlor w/ stream
1:05–2:00	<i>Plenary Lecture</i> "Wands Up!": What We Learn from Harry	Hobbs
2:10–2:40	Hem Hem... I Take Umbridge with Lies: Mr. Trump, My Office	Satterly
3:00–5:00	Concurrent Sessions 2	
	Session 2a	East Parlor (w/ stream)
	Moderator: Amuso	

3:00–3:20	Magical Properties Make Magical Property: How to Make Sense of Property Ownership in the Wizarding World of <i>Harry Potter</i>	Keiter
3:30–3:50	Generative AI as Tool to Study Fan Fiction: Fictional Facts, Feelings, and Ships	Leung
4:00–4:20	The Geneva Convention and the Battle of Hogwarts: Violations of the Law of War in the Wizarding World	Amuso and Hardman
4:30–4:50	Harry Potter, Peter Pan, and the Lost Boys: Arrested Development in <i>Chamber of Secrets</i> as a Preamble to J.K. Rowling's Open Transphobia	Purdom
	Session 2b	Redmond Room
	Moderator: Freeman	
3:00–3:20	The Impact of Early Childhood Trauma in the <i>Harry Potter</i> Series	Faye
3:30–3:50	The Power of Patronus: Transforming the Subconscious Mind	Sedaghat
4:00–4:20	Sex in the <i>Harry Potter</i> Series and the Symbolic Sexual Maturation of Harry in <i>Goblet of Fire</i>	Ward
4:30–4:50	Positive Psychology: The Lumos That Charmed <i>Order of the Phoenix</i>	Freeman
5:00–5:15	Break	
5:15–5:45	Round Table: The Current State of <i>Harry Potter</i> Studies	East Parlor, In Person
6:00–9:00	Dinner Social at The Cedars House: All conference attendees are welcome to meet at The Cedars House, The Little Café in the Woods (200	

	W Northwestern Ave). Pizza and the Wizards' Favorite Drink provided! Gifts of food or Galleons (donations) gratefully accepted!	
HPAC VIII – Day 2 – Saturday, October 19, 2024		
8:30–9:00	Registration	St. Joseph Hall Rotunda
9:00–9:05	Conference Welcome	East Parlor
9:05–9:35	Food, Community, and Communication: A Potluck Panel	Lewis
9:35–9:45	<i>pause/break</i>	
9:40–11:50	Concurrent Sessions 3	
	Session 3a	East Parlor (w/ stream)
	Moderator: Beckoff	
9:50–10:10	The “Masculine” and “Feminine” Sides of Hagrid: One of Harry's Mentors and a Rare Survivor	Murphey
10:20–10:40	Harry, Gawain, Green Knights, and Goblets	Strand
10:50–11:10	“All with Flaming Red Hair”: <i>Harry Potter</i> and the Magical Redhead Tradition	Beckoff
11:20–11:40	Irma Pince and Librarianship in <i>Harry Potter</i>	McLaughlin
	Session 3b	Redmond Room
	Moderator: Ramspeck	
9:50–10:10	“The Ministry Has Fallen”: Voldemort's Policies and Project 2025	Ramspeck

10:20–10:40	The Subtle Magic of Epithets in <i>Harry Potter</i>	Sosa
10:50–11:10	Hogwarts’s Hidden Drug Scene: The “War on Drugs,” Sexual Violence, and Subverting Bio-Power	Ciampi
11:20–11:40	Dumbledore, Agamemnon, and the Imperfect Legacy	Parks
11:50–1:10	Lunch Break	
1:20–1:30	Special HPAC Update from Lauren Camacci	East Parlor with 1-Way Online Streaming
13:30–13:50	Invited Speaker: Julian Wamble “Hermione Granger and the Relativity of Privilege”	East Parlor with 1-Way Online Streaming
2:00–2:10	<i>pause/break</i>	
2:10–4:40	Concurrent Sessions 4	
	Session 4a	East Parlor (w/ stream)
	Moderator: McDaniel	
2:10–2:30	The Dark Side of a Headmaster: Analyzing the Ethical Failures of a Wartime Educator	Matsakis
2:40–3:00	Love, Guilt, and the Inner Struggles of Albus Dumbledore	Taggart
3:10–3:30	The Petunia Palimpsest	McDaniel
3:40–3:50	<i>pause/break</i>	
3:50–4:10	What Did the Headmaster Know, and When Did He Know It? Questions and Speculations About the Actions of Albus	Martin

	Dumbledore on the Evening of June 6, 1994	
	Session 4b	Redmond Room
	Moderator: Koch	
2:10–3:10	Panel: Key Chapters in <i>Harry Potter II</i>	Whited, Aaron, and Kim
3:10–3:20	<i>pause/break</i>	
3:20–3:40	The Non-Fiction Adventure Outside the Fictional One	McCauley
3:50–4:10	Harry Potter and the Goblet of Gethsemane: Christian Art and Tradition in the Passion of Albus Dumbledore	Dunne
4:25–4:45	Conference Closing Remarks	East Parlor (w/ stream)

Abstracts

Feel welcome to continue the conversation with presenters in person, by email (where available), or on our Slack workspace.

Co-authored presentations are listed under the first author's name.

 indicates a first-time HPAC presenter

 indicates an international presenter

 indicates an invited presentation

Peter Amuso, JD (he)
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Chestnut Hill College
Columbia University

*The Geneva Convention and the Battle of Hogwarts:
Violations of the Law of War in the Wizarding World*

A school is one of the most protected places under modern International Humanitarian Law, or the Law of War, and its students the most protected people. Yet the climatic moment of the *Harry Potter* series is the Battle of Hogwarts, which takes place at a school, against its students. It is of course easy to pin this significant Geneva Convention violation on the Death Eaters, but that the wizarding world would allow Hogwarts to be defended by children in the first place hints at deeper transgression of basic human rights at the heart of the wizarding world. This presentation first explores the state of the Law of War at the time of the International Statute of Secrecy of 1689. Then, it traces its subsequent development in an attempt to find where the deviation between Muggle Generals and Ministry Aurors began, and how it grew. Finally, this paper applies specific provisions of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, including both 1977 Protocols, against specific events of the Battle of Hogwarts.

Laurie Beckoff, MSc (she)

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Independent Scholar

*“All with Flaming Red Hair”:
Harry Potter and the Magical Redhead Tradition*

The very first thing readers learn about the Weasley family in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* is that they are all redheads—and the books never let us forget it, regularly mentioning their hair color throughout the series. While redheads have often been singled out and given special attention in art, literature, and media, it is unusual to feature so centrally an entire family of nine redheaded characters, plus Lily Potter and even Albus Dumbledore once upon a time, each with distinct personalities. In a world in which the protagonist’s best friend, romantic interest, parental figures, and surrogate family are all redheaded, there is ample room for variation in their depictions, beyond villain, vixen, or comic relief. Perhaps it is fitting that redheads would be overrepresented in the wizarding world when there is a long history of red hair being associated with magic. This presentation examines the historical portrayal of redheads as magical, with a focus on the Middle Ages and modern depictions of medieval characters, and how the *Harry Potter* series upholds, engages with, and subverts cultural ideas about redheads.

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*Harry Potter’s Secondary World:
A Reconsideration*

Even though the *Harry Potter* (HP) series has achieved immense popularity, critical reception has been notably chilly, especially in early responses to the work. Particularly, the series has been derided by

some literary critics as an aesthetic failure because of its putatively weak secondary world construction. This presentation contends that this criticism misunderstands the series' generic identity. Rather than being high fantasy, akin to Tolkien's writing—against which HP is often compared—the books are actually wainscot fantasy; thus, they need to be evaluated differently.

This presentation proposes a new criterion for aesthetic success, based in reader-response theory: satisfying the reader's desire to be a part of the text, through referential handholds. Thereafter, the paper attempts to show how the HP books draw readers into their fantasy world through the intentional cultivation of connections between the primary and secondary worlds. This is particularly important for the young adult readers for whom the series has been written and to whom it has been marketed, who themselves are wainscoted—they are the disempowered social group, much like the wizards hidden from the muggle world in HP. This depth of the interplay between texts and readers—and how deeply many readers have been drawn into the texts—marks them as aesthetically successful.

Shrayon Chanda, MA
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Independent Scholar

Machiavelli, Salazar Slytherin, and an Honest Understanding of Power

Throughout the timeline of *Harry Potter*, there are always the obvious good, the obvious demarcated bads, and the dubious, treacherous, but not-so-sure in-betweens. With popular culture and social media working hand in hand to marketize the idea that all Gryffindors are not brave (Pettigrew) and all Slytherins are not selfish (Snape), something feels a bit too obvious. The portrayal of Slytherin House and Salazar Slytherin himself is uncannily similar to the perception of Machiavelli and his works, such as the antagonization of ambitiousness and cunning, with the backdrop of shrewdness and a portrayal of ruthlessness. Is Slytherin painted with such a color deliberately, or is there an inherent underlying realization to this entire picture? Is the portrayal of Slytherin House basically a David-and-Goliathization of the characters to make Harry and everyone around him look 'good' and as the inevitable 'chosen one'? And can it be used as a marker of fundamentalist far-right social politics that run through the entire social structures across Muggles and wizards?

The importance of choices throughout the series focuses on how to understand when and how power becomes tyranny, and which choices can actually act as a guidebook for recognizing fascism and tyranny. This study uses the example of the reception of Machiavelli's *The Prince* to thread through the imagery of Salazar Slytherin, Slytherin House, and Death Eaters, drawing a parallel between Muggle history and the history of the wizarding world.

John Ciampi, MA (he) 📧

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Rutgers University

*Hogwarts's Hidden Drug Scene:
The "War on Drugs," Sexual Violence, and Subverting Bio-Power*

The later *Harry Potter* books have been criticized and praised for taking up themes like sexuality, death, and social inequality. Dealing with these issues associated with the teenager's loss of childish innocence is part of the work of young adult literature. Another increasingly important issue connected with the coming-of-age story is drug use. The discourse on drugs surrounding most teens in American institutions in the early 2000s was derived from the "war on drugs" declared by the Reagan administration. This "just say no" approach denies the realities of drugs in the lives of modern teens. This, then, is the site of intervention for a critical consideration of the role drugs play in *Harry Potter*.

At first glance, the books offer little on this topic. However, when their tendency to deal with social issues via metaphor is considered, Hogwarts's hidden drug scene becomes visible. The Mirror of Erised functions as a metaphor for addiction. Here, a position similar to Nancy Reagan's is articulated. *Half-Blood Prince* provides descriptions of Harry's use of the mood-altering substance Felix Felicis and Ron's non-consensual consumption of a love potion. Felix Felicis disrupts the dominant medical and psychological discourses on drugs, while the love potion acknowledges the role sexual violence plays in drug use. By drawing on research from the fields of history, addiction studies, philosophy, and economics, this presentation shows how *Potter* provides a thoughtful, and sometimes radical, roadmap for navigating the difficult terrain of coming of age in a modern world where drugs are ubiquitous.

John Anthony Dunne, PhD (he)

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Bethel Seminary

*Harry Potter and the Goblet of Gethsemane:
Christian Art and Tradition in the Passion of Albus Dumbledore*

This paper brings the cave scene from *Half-Blood Prince* into conversation with the story of Jesus's prayer in Gethsemane from the four Gospels of the New Testament. Juxtaposing the two episodes is a fruitful exercise not least because they represent penultimate struggles just before the deaths of prominent figures, but also because of how they do so with imagery related to drinking from a cup. In the case of Dumbledore, he literally consumes liquid from a cup, administered by Harry, which is intended to make him dizzy and disorientated, and most importantly thirsty, so that he consumes the water from the cavernous lake, activating the Inferi. In the case of Jesus, he does not literally consume a cup, but he refers to his imminent death as a kind of drinking from a cup, a cup which he prays that the Father might take away from him. When we put these texts into conversation with each other, and the subsequent traditions about them in the case of Gethsemane, we can see some ways in which to take on new meaning in the light of HBP in terms of the salience of pain, regret, and thirst in the cave scene.

M. Faye, PsyD (she)

Independent Scholar

The Impact of Early Childhood Trauma in the Harry Potter Series

Did Voldemort ever have a chance? How much did the Dursleys influence Harry's choices? Was Snape always destined to be a bully? For over 25 years, researchers have examined the way Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and childhood trauma impact outcomes later in life. This presentation will review evidence from the original texts and utilize a well-known psychology assessment tool to estimate levels of ACEs for some of the most popular, and infamous, *Harry Potter* characters. In research, these scores are connected to specific consequences, such as criminal arrest, serious physical injuries, depression, loneliness, substance use, and early death. How well does this beloved series represent personal development following childhood trauma? And can we use an enhanced knowledge of childhood trauma to better understand how these characters chose their path in life?

Louise M. Freeman, PhD (she)

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Mary Baldwin University
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Positive Psychology:

The Lumos that Charmed Order of the Phoenix

Order of the Phoenix (OotP) is the darkest book of the series and the only one for which the author has made early outlines available. Multiple changes between this early vision and the final publication are apparent; remarkably, the original outlined story was even darker than the eventual book. Five specific changes draw on the positive psychology concept of learned optimism to create a more upbeat storyline: the outline more prominently features Dementors, monstrous personifications of clinical depression; Harry takes more arduous Occlumency lessons in the outline; neither Dumbledore nor the Weasley twins enjoy their empowering escapes of the final volume; Ron does not overcome his Quidditch nerves and win the championship; and Luna Lovegood, who, moon-like, brightens up a dark story, is absent. These changes' psychological effects mold OotP into a story that supports Harry in resisting depression and developing resiliency, even as he is broken down emotionally in this alchemical nigredo novel. Through positive psychology, the self-pitying adolescent of OotP begins his evolution into the "Dumbledore's man" of the later books.

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
Mandatory Mischief:

Understanding Trickster Myth in the Harry Potter Film Series

In myth and folklore traditions around the world, tricksters are described as impenitent troublemakers who are proficient at deception. They are capable of great shrewdness and yet, at the same time, fall flat on their face due to their sheer silliness. In many instances, tricksters are unscrupulous characters, typically humorous, inquisitive, and lackadaisical. Their frequent troublemaking impulses, as illustrated in mythologies and folktales across the globe, offer innovative paths out of tight spots. In various sundry

ways, they offer central knowledge and tools for survival to those in need. Tricksters, through their audacious actions, work towards cultural evolution as once the distress is addressed and appropriated into an institution, the entity redefines itself in ways that will ensure its social and political survival.


This paper explores the spectrum of trickster myth and the various shades of its manifestation in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. Characters in *Order of the Phoenix* through their tricks lead to significant disorder that essentially paves the way for the conception of a newer and more evolved dynamic order. These acts of trickery are instrumental in confronting the larger issues tackled in the subsequent films, and at the same time, hold literary significance. Moreover, the paper also examines how various characters including Harry, Hermione, Ronald, Fred, and George take on the role of tricksters and question authority, and promote societal change, demonstrating the universal power of the archetypal figure.

Priscilla Hobbs, PhD (she)  

Southern New Hampshire
University

PLENARY LECTURE: “Wand’s Up!”: What We Learn from Harry

The *Harry Potter* series coincided with a period in American history that positioned the books as influential to the audiences who picked them up. Targeted at the preteen market, *Harry Potter* found readership in younger children to adults. In the case of the latter, *Harry Potter* broke a stigma between “kids’ books” and “grown-up” or “adult literature.” The series demonstrated that established patterns in the publishing industry could not compete with the desires of readers—readers who not only enjoyed the series but found aspects of themselves reflected in the characters and their adventures. As such, the appeal of Harry is more than a spark of interest—it’s a lifestyle, a moral compass, and an experience that brings disparate populations together. But also, that Harry is a guiding light in an era fraught with turbulence and disharmony. This presentation reflects on the archetypal nature of Harry’s journey, what readers learn from the books, and what makes the book series one of the most beloved of its generation through the lens of cultural mythology.

Dorothea Keiter, PhD Candidate
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Max Plank Institute for
Legal History and Legal
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*Magical Properties Make Magical Property:
How to Make Sense of Property Ownership in the Wizarding World of Harry Potter*

Despite being set in a vastly different environment, many legal institutions from the Muggle world play a pivotal role in the wizarding world of the *Harry Potter* series. This is especially true for property

ownership—a concept that, at first glance, seems difficult to reconcile with the wizarding world characterized by magical abundance. However, despite the importance of these legal categories, perspectives from legal scholarship have been rather underrepresented within the academic *Harry Potter* community. This presentation addresses this research gap by exploring the concept of property ownership in the wizarding world through the lens of legal theory.

Through a textual analysis of the references to property and ownership in the series, this paper examines why these concepts—despite the availability of multiplying or summoning charms—are not fundamentally distinct from their Muggle legal counterparts. For property ownership to be a meaningful economic institution in the wizarding world, it must be tied to certain (more or less) magical characteristics that make the object of ownership unique and prevent it from being identically replicated at will. Additionally, this presentation emphasizes the textual association between property ownership and themes of power, control, and mastery in the series. Goblins’ perspective on ownership reflects John Locke’s labor theory of property and assesses this insight in relation to other depictions of ownership throughout the books. In conclusion, this presentation aims to make (more) sense of property ownership in the peculiar economic dynamics of the wizarding world while proposing a theoretical framework for its interpretation.

Lorrie Kim (she)

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Independent Scholar

*Harry Potter After 2020:
A Chapter Re-read Podcast*

The words on the page don’t change. But times change. The author has changed. We, the readers, change. And that changes the story. Re-reading, like a Time-Turner, can remind us how we felt in the past. The series, like Tom Riddle’s diary, contains a memory of the author from decades ago. This presentation discusses what the presenter and co-host JC have discovered in the year since they launched their weekly chapter re-read podcast.

Abigail Kohler, MBC (she)

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Brown University

*From Wizard Wheezes to Etsy Empires:
An Exploration of Fandom and Entrepreneurship*

In *Sorcerer’s Stone*, Harry emerges from behind a “tiny, grubby-looking pub” to find the bustling shops of Diagon Alley. The small businesses of the wizarding world like the Leaky Cauldron, Florean Fortescue’s Ice Cream Parlor, and the Three Broomsticks serve as both portals and refuge from the challenges faced by characters. Similarly, in the real world, *Harry Potter*-inspired businesses often function as portals to

economic security and refuge from the conventional demands of life. Many fans exhibit the entrepreneurial spirit of the Weasley twins, even though they sell their wares on markets like Etsy and Goimagine instead of in Diagon Alley. The operations and impacts of fan businesses often mirror the roles of businesses within the *Harry Potter* universe. Examination and survey of fan enterprises reveals how strategic positioning and community engagement can transform fan enthusiasm into viable business opportunities, uncovering parallels to the innovative spirit exemplified by characters in the beloved series. Much like the Weasley twins' shop, which ultimately becomes a successful enterprise, modern fan businesses often start as small ventures and evolve into prosperous businesses. This presentation examines the small businesses that populate both the wizarding world and our world to give insights on entrepreneurship and how fandoms can provide an unexpected gateway to prosperity.

Alice Leung, PhD (she/any) 

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RTX BBN Technologies

*Generative AI as Tool to Study Fan Fiction:
Fictional Facts, Feelings, and Ships*

Modern large language models (LLMs) and services built on them (e.g., ChatGPT) are known to have a number of controversial uses, such as students using them to instantly write essays for class. However, LLMs can also be used as a tool to study bodies of text that are on the Internet, including fan fiction. This talk is a quick introduction and demonstration of some basic approaches to using LLMs to explore Harry Potter fan fiction. First, it shows how to check that a particular LLM is able to reflect canonical Harry Potter facts as answers to “trivia” type questions. It also shows how to check that an LLM can respond coherently to opinion judgment questions about *Harry Potter* characters. Then, it shows how to prompt an LLM to fill in underspecified canonical information (such as the form of Draco Maloy’s Patronus) by drawing on its training data, which almost certainly includes a large amount of fan fiction. Finally, this presentation demonstrates how to prompt an LLM to reveal which romantic pairings between characters are most often portrayed as happy or doomed, as a summarization of what is out there on the Internet. This talk is designed to give both fan fiction scholars and hobbyists some ideas for how to use modern LLMs in their work.

Mark-Anthony Lewis, MA (he)

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Independent Scholar

Food, Community, and Communication: A Potluck Panel

Every year, Hogwarts students are welcomed back to the wizarding community with a feast. Over food and drink, they gather to create new bonds with friends, housemates, and the ever-expanding magical community. Food and drink facilitate community and communication. Sharing food is a way of sharing culture, signaling values, expressing care, showing love, delivering harm, apologizing, forming

friendships, creating in-groups and out-groups, provoking conversation, and building community. In the spirit of King Arthur's Round Table, this potluck panel seeks to provoke conversations about food and drink in *Harry Potter* (both in-text and real-life communities) as panelists and attendees bring their ideas and treats to the table (potluck-style) and explore the bonds formed and broken in our community. Textual analysis from the books will provide a framework of discussion around food and community, but this panel encourages meta-analyses of the *Harry Potter* academic community as well. *Bringing food to share is NOT a requirement for participating in this panel. Common allergens in potluck items will be flagged for participants.*

David Martin, MS (he)

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Independent Scholar

*The Use of Harry Potter Names, Spells, and Magical Objects in the Muggle Press:
Confederate Statues as Horcruxes and a Politician Making an Unbreakable Vow*

One of the clear signs that a story has penetrated a culture is when items from the story are used in casual conversation to express ideas or situations. For example, most people know what it means to say “Toto, we’re not in Kansas anymore” or “I’m gonna make him an offer he can't refuse.” Unsurprisingly, as the *Harry Potter* stories have penetrated our society, items from these stories have been showing up in places far removed from discussions of the books or movies themselves. Louise M. Freeman has made several presentations about the use of *Harry Potter* items in science—for example, in giving scientific names to newly identified species. This talk shares some of the surprising uses of *Harry Potter* items in the media.

What Did the Headmaster Know, and When Did He Know It?

Questions and Speculations About the Actions of Albus Dumbledore on the Evening of June 6, 1994

On the evening of June 6, 1994, Harry Potter and Hermione Granger went three hours back in time – from midnight to 9:00 PM—to rescue Buckbeak and Sirius Black. We know a great deal about what the two of them did during those three hours—both the first time they lived through these hours and second time. But what was Albus Dumbledore doing during those three hours? This question is important mostly because of what Dumbledore did NOT do. Specifically, Dumbledore tells Harry—in chapter 37 of *Order of the Phoenix*, “The Lost Prophecy”—that he “watched from afar as you struggled to repel Dementors.” Dumbledore knew that Harry was being attacked by a crowd of Dementors and he just watched? Even though this was happening not far away on the grounds of Hogwarts? This talk will lay out a timeline from 9:00 PM until midnight on that evening and show what various characters were doing during that time. It will also give reasons why Dumbledore’s seeming failure to act was, in fact, rational based on what he knew and when he knew it.

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Independent Scholar

*How Did Harry Survive?
Lily's Sacrifice and the Myth of Blood Magic in Wizarding Society*

The question of how Harry really survived Lord Voldemort's attack as a baby is seemingly answered in the ultimate chapters of *Deathly Hallows*. Harry survived because his mother sacrificed herself to prevent Voldemort from killing him. This invoked a form of ancient magic which shielded Harry from the renewed attempt on his life following his mother's death, causing Harry to become Voldemort's Horcrux in the process. But what if that ancient form of magic never really existed? Following Patrick McCauley's suggestion during the 2021 Harry Potter Academic Conference, that Harry survived because the Horcrux newly made inside him resisted Voldemort's attack, this paper explores an important consequence of that argument: that Lily's death did not provide Harry with a magical protection.

The paper discusses why both Dumbledore and Voldemort, along with the rest of wizarding society, believe in the power of blood to transmit magic. Even if it is a prominent cultural belief in the wizarding world, it can be shown that the link between blood and magical power is actually quite weak. The question is whether Dumbledore really subscribes to the idea that blood relations have a magical bond, or whether it is yet another one of his convenient lies to effectuate the "greater good," enabling Harry to believe in the power of self-sacrificial love. The paper concludes by discussing the real magic of love and what the books, in the end, have to teach us.

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*The Dark Side of a Headmaster:
Analyzing the Ethical Failures of a Wartime Educator*

This paper critically examines Albus Dumbledore, not as the beloved mentor figure often lauded in literary discourse, but as a problematic educator who manipulated vulnerable children into the frontlines of war. Through the lens of educational ethics and the moral responsibilities of educators, this analysis will explore how Dumbledore, during both the Marauders' era and Harry Potter's era, fostered a culture of secrecy, passive guidance, and fatalism that ultimately placed students in harm's way. By interrogating Dumbledore's leadership in key moments, such as his inaction during the rise of Lord Voldemort and his covert orchestration of Harry's path to self-sacrifice, the presentation will reveal how his decisions led to the emotional and physical endangerment of young people under his care. This analysis will invite audiences to reconsider the ethical implications of Dumbledore's role and challenge the idealized portrait of him as the ultimate guiding figure in Harry Potter's universe.

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The Non-Fiction Adventure that Happens Outside the Fictional One

Those of us who love novels know that we must suspend disbelief in order to enter into a fictional world. It is the price of admission, and we often offer this generosity without even thinking about it. The *Harry Potter* series charts the real character development of fictional children over seven books. However, in the world outside of the author's fictional one, real children were also developing within the context of their immersion in these books. The act of reading an engrossing novel is far more than a descent into a fictional realm. The individual and existential act of reading a novel can be one of the most powerful catalysts for the mysterious and profound development of one's own authentic character. This presentation will try to show that it is time to return more deliberately to this kind of orientation within the classroom.

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The Petunia Palimpsest

Harry Potter film actors Fiona Shaw and Kathryn Hunter play roles in the *Star Wars* television series *Andor* that create alternate trajectories for their wizarding world characters. Shaw's portrayal of Harry's aunt emphasizes Petunia Dursley's pettiness and rigidity, from the first movie to the seventh. As a stand-in mother for Harry, she is woefully deficient, never showing him love; never telling him anything about his mother, her sister; never providing any moral guidance, even as Harry leaves to battle evil forces as a seventeen-year-old. Shaw reprises the role of adoptive mother to Cassian Andor in the *Star Wars* universe. Shaw plays a very different kind of adoptive mother: one who loves, teaches, and guides her son—and in her death inspires the whole of Ferrix to rebel against the evil empire. Kathryn Hunter's Arabella Figg, a squib on the margins of wizard society, plays a protective motherly role to Harry in the fifth movie. In contrast, as Syril's mother, Eedy Carn, Hunter portrays an embittered and ambitious mother who contributes to the rise of evil imperial forces. Through the two actresses' performances, viewers bring the cross-world characters into contrast as we consider the pivotal role of mothers in the rebellious struggle against malevolent forces.

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Independent Scholar

Irma Pince and Librarianship in Harry Potter

Since *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* was first published on June 26, 1997, the franchise has faced near-constant politicization and quickly took 48th place among the most challenged books of the 1990s. In the 2000s, Pottermania continued, resulting in the franchise having the most challenges from 2000 to 2009. Because of this, people have had much to say about librarianship and *Harry Potter*, but

what is there to say about librarianship in *Harry Potter*? While there has been some discussion of the topic, most of it has revolved around Harry and his allies using the Hogwarts library as a space or tool for information gathering. Thus, one aspect of the Hogwarts library goes quietly and invisibly unexamined: Madam Irma Pince. This presentation examines the evidence, compares it to Ranganathan's five laws of library science, and asks, "Is Irma Pince guilty of bad librarianship? Or is she a good librarian with a bad reputation?"

I've Scene You Before:

On Role Doubling as Thematic Emphasis in Cursed Child, Parts One and Two

Role doubling is used by playwrights and directors to "pun with actors." The West End production of *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* Parts I and II opened utilizing four three-way role doublings, including Voldemort/Vernon Dursley/Snape, Umbridge/Petunia Dursley/Hooch, Dudley Dursley/Karl/Viktor, and Cedric/James Sirius Potter/James Potter. Drawing on close readings of *Cursed Child* and the other installments in the *Harry Potter* franchise and on examples from classical and contemporary theater, including Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Lin-Manuel Miranda's *Hamilton*, this presentation examines some of the role doubling in *Cursed Child*, showing how the decision to double these roles has a thematic function in the plot and provides a "back door" to accessing those themes. (This presentation represents part of an in-progress project. Not all doubled roles will be covered in this talk.)

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The "Masculine" and "Feminine" Sides of Hagrid:

One of Harry's Mentors and a Rare Survivor

It is Hagrid who brings the infant Harry Potter to Professor Dumbledore to be left with the Dursleys at 4 Privet Drive in Little Whinging. It is Hagrid who finally delivers Harry's Hogwarts letter of acceptance to him at the Hut-on-the-Rock on The Sea. And it is Hagrid who takes Harry from 4 Privet Drive to the safe house at the start of the last novel. Hagrid as half-giant is a fierce and formidable force. However, Hagrid is also a very maternal figure to Harry and to others. His "monster fetish" means that Hagrid sends Norbert, the baby dragon, off with rats, brandy, and a teddy bear. He bakes and knits and frequently uses his pink umbrella in which his confiscated wand is concealed. Hagrid is an important mentor to Harry, and given that Harry loses his parents, Sirius, Dumbledore, the Dursleys, Hedwig, Dobby, his wand, Remus, and Fred, Hagrid is one of the few mentors/companions he has left at the end of the final novel.

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Dumbledore, Agamemnon, and the Imperfect Legacy

For one of its two epigraphs, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* quotes Aeschylus's ancient Greek tragedy *Libation Bearers*, one part of the dramatic trilogy known as the *Oresteia*. This presentation argues that the connections between *Harry Potter* and the *Oresteia* go much deeper than surface level. Although a number of scholars have suggested ways of reading these texts against each other since the novel's release in 2007, this presentation sheds new light on their intertextual conversation through juxtaposing the figures of Albus Dumbledore and Agamemnon, the murdered father of the young hero Orestes, who serves as the analogue to Harry. Harry's complicated relationship to the recently deceased Dumbledore in the final novel mirrors that of Orestes and his father. Agamemnon had, for instance, sacrificed Orestes' sister Iphigeneia earlier in his career: this is mirrored by Dumbledore's complicity in the death of Ariana. The key difference between the texts lies in how consciously Harry grapples with his mentor's ambiguous legacy, in contrast to Orestes' more cocksure devotion to his father's cause. Harry's careful processing of Dumbledore's past marks him as an ethical improvement on his ancient model.

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Harry Potter, Peter Pan, and the Lost Boys:

Arrested Development in Chamber of Secrets as a Preamble to J.K. Rowling's Open Transphobia

In 2020, J.K. Rowling became explicit about what had previously been implicit: her opposition to anyone transitioning from their gender assigned at birth. In hindsight, we can see evidence for this position in a 2003 interview and in the second book in the *Harry Potter* series: *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*. *Chamber of Secrets* is a watershed not only because it introduces important story elements for later, from the diary Horcrux to the sword of Gryffindor, but in the book in which Harry has his spiritual coming of age, a symbolic confirmation or bar mitzvah, Rowling includes her implicit opinions on childhood and maturation. Two chief concerns are children unnaturally frozen as children—the Petrification victims—and children who never grow up because they are killed, like Moaning Myrtle. Other authors have explored similar ideas about childhood, maturation, and arrested development, including J.M. Barrie, Philip Pullman, Jane Langton, Ray Bradbury, and Cornelia Funke. In juxtaposing their works with Rowling's, we can see where they overlap and where they diverge. We can also see where Rowling's work supports declaring that you know who you are better than others ever can and that your biological legacy—or having a piece of Voldemort in your head—doesn't have to mean that you cannot choose your own path.

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Reading Harry Potter as a Quest:

Parallels in Chivalric Literature

The quest, the adventure of a hero who leaves home and enters dangerous territory in search of an object (the Grail or, in *Harry Potter*, the Philosopher's Stone) or to rescue a person (Sir Orfeo's rescue of his abducted wife from the kingdom of death is echoed by Harry's rescue of Ginny in *Chamber of Secrets*), is the subject of much of early English literature. This presentation looks at how the series may be read as both a quest and a series of quests, and in particular episodes that echo the Old English poem *Beowulf* and the Middle English poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.

There are several parallels with the poem *Beowulf* in the series, starting in *Philosopher's Stone* with the entrances of Grendel in the former and Hagrid in the latter, but where one brings destruction, the other brings life. *Beowulf* and Harry both undergo an underwater struggle and a potentially fatal poisonous wound. In the *Gawain* poem, the hero undertakes a challenge, the climax of which is the point where Gawain keeps his promise to meet the Green Knight to receive what he expects to be a fatal blow from an ax. The climax of the *Harry Potter* series is when Harry goes to meet Voldemort in the Forest aware that he is going to his death.

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*Hem Hem... I Take Umbridge with Lies:
Mr. Trump, My Office*

Iconic villain Professor Dolores J. Umbridge has long been cast as a pink example of systemic corruption with a toad-like smile. It is quite clear that the Republican presidential candidate, former President Donald Trump, reflects much of the Umbridge psyche. That is, he relies on indelible lies—from the size of rally crowds to the state of the economy to the Big Lie itself: his loss of the 2020 presidential election. *The Washington Post* reported over 30,000 lies told during his four-year administration alone. But his lies are simply exemplars of a greater darkness, the specter of disinformation and the conspiracy of silence.

Based in fear of difference and prejudice, Trump's 2024 presidential election campaign is fraught with deception and decrees lauding authoritarians as heroes while condemning facts as falsehood. The lessons we again learn from history—magical and Muggle—are that the most effective and needed ways to counter pink lies and Trump disinformation are through the characteristics of the four Great Houses: Courage to speak up, Resourcefulness to organize, Patience to wait, and Wisdom to act. The horrors of war and oppression all begin with a lie that some people are better than others. History has taught us this time and time again. Imagine how different the world might be if we simply believed that every person was a person of worth—including ourselves. Eating cats, indeed. Hem Hem!


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Independent Scholar and
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*The Power of Patronus:
Transforming the Subconscious Mind*

Imagine casting your very own Patronus, not just against Dementors, but against the shadows and darkness within your own mind. Beyond its spellbinding allure, the Patronus Charm is a profound metaphor for the subconscious mind, where your happiest—and most painful—memories, fears, and beliefs reside, often outside your conscious awareness. As a result, the subconscious mind governs your behaviors, needs, triggers, desires, avoidance, and even relationship patterns. Just as a witch or wizard summons their Patronus to ward off Dementors—manifestations of pain and fear—we Muggles can harness powerful imagery to reprogram and elevate our minds, alter fear-based patterns of behavior, and enhance our quality of life. This presentation dives into the workings of the subconscious mind, where the line between magic and psychology blurs. By learning to speak the language of the subconscious mind—much like conjuring a Patronus—you discover powerful evidence-based strategies that draw on imagery, imagination, and emotion to transform and reprogram your deepest fears and painful core beliefs.

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Independent Scholar

The Subtle Magic of Epithets in Harry Potter

Although the term often carries a negative connotation, epithets are just descriptive words or phrases that help to paint a more comprehensive image of a character, object, or location—Ser Jaime Lannister the Kingslayer (*Game of Thrones*), Anduril the Flame of the West (*Lord of the Rings*), etc. *Harry Potter* is no stranger to epithets; the author made extensive use of them throughout the seven-book series, appearing not just as descriptive terms or phrases within a narrative but also as chapter and even book titles. This presentation discusses the use and importance of epithets in the *Harry Potter* books, with particular emphasis on four characters: the eponymous wizard, Tom Riddle/Lord Voldemort, Severus Snape, and Albus Dumbledore. In addition to analyzing the individual meanings, this presentation also looks at the usage frequency and narrative significance of these epithets, ending by analyzing how Dumbledore's rather subtle epithet foreshadows one of the most climactic moments in the series, the duel between Dumbledore and Voldemort at the Ministry of Magic in Book 5.

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Harry, Gawain, Green Knights, and Goblets

Scholars have noticed the many parallels between the *Harry Potter* books and the 14th-century chivalric romance *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. In her 2017 book *Literary Allusion in Harry Potter*, Oxford scholar Beatrice Groves makes a compelling case that *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* strongly alludes to *Gawain*; other scholars have argued that *Deathly Hallows* draws deeply from the *Gawain* narrative. This presentation considers *Goblet of Fire* in terms of its strong, overarching parallels to *Gawain*. An analysis of the two stories' plots, events, side-bar narratives, narrative tones, and moral conclusions provides a better understanding of the importance of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* on the *Potter* series as a whole. Scholarship builds on scholarship in this presentation highlighting previously unrecognized ways *Potter* interacts with one of its most important literary sources.

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*"The Ministry Has Fallen":
Voldemort's Policies and Project 2025*

Focusing on the depiction of the Ministry of Magic in Book 7, this paper argues that Project 2025, the "blueprint" for "reforming" the U.S. government under a second Trump administration, echoes changes to the Ministry of Magic under Voldemort. There are five clear parallels: (1) completely overhauling staffing and thus the mission of government programs; (2) encouraging racist policies; (3) undermining the criminal justice system; (4) undermining what we in America would describe as First Amendment freedoms; and (5) undermining education. The paper also discusses resistance to Ministry "reforms."

Jackey Taggart, MEd (she) jackey.taggart@verizon.net Independent Scholar

Love, Guilt, and the Inner Struggles of Albus Dumbledore

Albus Dumbledore is often viewed as the champion of love in the *Harry Potter* series, yet beneath this persona lies a deep struggle with feelings of unworthiness. This analysis examines Dumbledore's complex character through his relationships with key figures in both the *Harry Potter* and *Fantastic Beasts* series, focusing on themes of guilt, sacrifice, and manipulation tied to his troubled past—the loss of his sister, Ariana, and the betrayal by Gellert Grindelwald. Using Karpman's Drama Triangle, this study highlights how Dumbledore's shifting roles as victim, rescuer, and persecutor reveal the internal conflicts that define him. The analysis seeks to unravel the enigma of Dumbledore, whose advocacy for love is deeply entwined with unresolved guilt and a profound sense of unworthiness.

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Key Chapters in Harry Potter II

Whited (moderator) discusses chapter 37 of *Order of the Phoenix*, “The Lost Prophecy.” After his godfather’s death at the Ministry of Magic, Harry returns to Dumbledore’s office, distraught and volatile. Dumbledore finally answers questions concerning Harry’s past and future: why Voldemort attacked him, how the attack marked the two as mortal enemies, why Harry must return to the Dursleys each summer, and how Voldemort’s interpretation of the prophecy has shaped his interactions with Harry and their destinies. Dumbledore also confesses that his own interactions with Harry have been influenced too much by his own emotions.

Aaron discusses chapter 11 of *Deathly Hallows*, “The Bribe.” Remus Lupin brings Harry, Ron, and Hermione a copy of the *Daily Prophet* and the news of their friends, their family, and what is going on in the outside world. He appears at his worst, as he reveals the extent of his identification as a werewolf and the depths of his toxic self-hatred. Finally, he makes Harry an appalling offer. In rejecting him, Harry makes a moral judgment that he claims is easy but is one more loss on his way to the Forbidden Forest and his death: the last of his parental figures.

Kim discusses chapter 24 of *Order of the Phoenix*, “Occlumency.” Dumbledore orders Snape to teach Harry Occlumency, so Snape attacks Harry’s mind while not explaining how Harry is supposed to defend himself. We’ll reread and understand everything in this chapter about one of the greatest defenses against the Dark Arts.

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Hermione Granger and the Relativity of Privilege

Much of Hermione Granger’s journey throughout the *Harry Potter* novels is colored by her experiences as a Muggle-born witch. This reality creates a strong lens through which we, as readers, understand her arc, her intentions, and her choices. While sitting at the bottom of the hierarchy for those magically endowed individuals, Hermione possesses an immense amount of privilege that we see her display numerous times across numerous hierarchies within the magical world. This paper will examine the various hierarchies within the magical world and track the instances where Hermione’s privilege manifests and how she wields it in different ways.

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Sex in the Harry Potter Series and the Symbolic Sexual Maturation of Harry in Goblet of Fire

In chapter 25 of *Goblet of Fire*, “The Egg and the Eye,” the author presents a symbolic sexual experience in which Harry Potter “loses his virginity” and symbolically experiences a sexual and masturbatory fantasy. *Goblet of Fire* is the middle of the series and serves as the turning point between a child’s perspective and a more mature world view—introducing some sexual tension in the magical world. Durmstrang and Beauxbatons—notably both single-sex institutions in the film—visit Hogwarts, where the issue of sex and sexual education are both ignored along with math and physical education. The educational environment is very immature, and male/female relationships are mostly described with the innocent activity of “snogging” and Freudian schoolboy jokes about wands and phallic symbols. Harry is an orphan and learns nothing of a sexual education from the Dursleys.

With the introduction of the Triwizard Tournament, sexual jokes stray into the area of innuendo in both the novel and the film. The level of sexual discourse is woefully immature. This paper argues that the text supports a very Freudian analysis and the environment that is described in the prefects’ bathroom is very suggestive of a woman’s sexual organs and supports the interpretation that Harry engages in a symbolic sexual fantasy. The entire scene is described in excessive and sensual language. It is also significant that Harry is forced to face the tasks of the Triwizard Tournament before he is ready by most standards.

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Hearing Written Magic in Harry Potter Films: Unlocking Questions of Truth and Power Through Music

This paper addresses how film underscore and sound design for the *Harry Potter* films support examples of the written word within the narratives. While viewer understanding of the magical world is shaped by how we hear the films, the characters gain understanding for themselves by reading and seeing. For instance, we learn that Harry is magical when he speaks to a snake at the zoo because the music tells us so, but Harry learns for himself when he sees his letter(s) of acceptance from Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Once enrolled, he and his classmates are instructed using textbooks of spells and histories, correspond through magical letters, read news through newspapers and tabloids, and encounter both mischievous and malevolent magic through inscriptions, marginalia, maps, diaries, and messages in blood. This creates a meta relationship between the HP written books and the written words in the world the characters inhabit; one that overlaps with both Muggle and our own world when readers/viewers recognize European folklore with which they may already be familiar.

However, not everything the characters read is true, and not every spell cast has the same power. By examining layers of utterances, diegetic sounds, underscore, and sound design using the metaphors we

use to describe the alignment of music, word, and film, we find implicit value systems of the filmmakers that may or may not align with interpretations of the books alone. Words matter, and with music, the filmmakers show us which words matter most.