

No Greater Love: Recognition, Transformation, and Friendship in the *Harry Potter* Series

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**Introduction:****Of House-elves and Children's Tales: Reading *Harry Potter* Rhetorically and Poetically**

In the final book of the *Harry Potter* series, Harry, Ron, and Hermione visit Xenophilius Lovegood to inquire about a sign they have repeatedly seen. Believing the symbol pertinent to their quest of locating and destroying Voldemort's Horcruxes, Hermione proposes that she, Harry, and Ron call on Xenophilius, who has displayed the symbol on a pendant during the wedding earlier in the novel. He informs them it is the sign of the Deathly Hallows, whose legend originates in "The Tale of the Three Brothers," a children's fairy story. After Hermione reads the tale, Xenophilius and the children discuss the actual existence of the Hallows and the reliability of the story. Hermione rejects the Hallows' existence and declares the story's function as merely a morality tale meant to persuade readers to choose "which [Hallow] is best" (*Hallows* 414). Ironically, Harry, Ron, and Hermione answer differently which Hallows each would choose. Ron, the passionate, quick-tempered red head, chooses the wand because of his desire to gain advantage over others. Hermione chooses the cloak because she believes that the wand and the stone personify violence and arrogance, but the cloak embodies wisdom. Harry, because he seeks closure for the death of his parents and his loved ones, chooses the stone because of its power to reunite the living and the dead. However, the children come to the wrong conclusions about the tale's meaning because they misunderstand part of its literary function. Instead, they should have looked at the aesthetics of the series, its moral component, to understand the full meaning.

Harry's subsequent adventures lead him to judge rightly the moral component of "The Tale of the Three Brothers." As Dumbledore explains in his purgatorial interview with Harry at King's Cross, Harry survived Voldemort's curse again because he, like the third brother,

willingly “greeted Death as an old friend” (*Hallows* 409) without any thought of gain or return. Further, the third brother is also the only brother that has a child. Therefore, because the brother exemplifies the virtues of love, friendship, and sacrifice, he discerns Death’s intentions and asks for the cloak, which allows him to continue his line and sacrificially give his cloak to his son and his body to Death. Harry makes a similar decision to give himself for his friends, but only because he, like the third brother, embraces vulnerability, represented in his decision to sacrificially die for his friends. Hermione in her selection of the cloak over the wand and the stone comes closest to discovering the meaning of the story. However, if the story were about the Hallows, then the moral is moot because it offers really no connection between the choice and the virtues that lead to the decision and subsequently no reflection about one’s own virtues that could lead to the same choice. Upon reflection of his own virtues, Harry begins to see the actual moral purpose of the tale: the story is not about which Hallow is the best gift to choose but which brother is the best person to emulate.

Harry’s understanding of the tale’s meaning via his discovery of its intended moral component mirrors what we must do to extrapolate another function of literature related to the elevation of morality: aesthetics. Aesthetics in this regard refers to a work’s personal demeanor and character because of its presentation of truth or virtue, something Plato and Aristotle discuss in their respective works, *The Republic* and *Poetics*. Many readers praise Rowling’s mystical world, its intricate detail, history, zany characters, and moving pace. As well as entertaining, the stories offer moral instruction shown through Harry’s relationships with his friends and classmates, and their emphasis on these relationships becomes the crux of the series’ aesthetic value. Primarily, Harry’s recognition and cultivation of his friendship with Ron and Hermione lead to the progression of his moral character. Thus, the series follows a specific line of criticism

which measures the series' literary value<sup>1</sup> based on its portrayal of character development. Criticism measures the literary value of a work based on its aesthetic value, its meaning, and its application to culture. Some literary frameworks measure all three at once. The trio, in their examination of the fairy tale, look for the meaning based on the moral, which Harry inevitably discovers. I purpose in this thesis to measure the aesthetic value of the series solely as a testament of literary value, though I understand my theory has implications on the series' meaning and application to culture.

Nevertheless, not every person who has read the novels has appreciated the moral growth in the series. One critic, Jack Zipes, primarily criticizes the series for its problems in cultural application. Zipes, a Marxist critic, has written extensively on the relationship between fairy tales and psychological development, and he acknowledges fantasy tales hold a moral. This moral, though, bolsters the psychological welfare of the child reading the tale, including the social, racial, or sexual identity of the child. He and other critics of fantasy literature sometimes accuse stories and books of conforming characters—and thus the readers who identify with them—to a set of stereotypical roles in class, race, and gender. As for *Harry Potter*, Zipes considers the works particularly racist and sexist and believes Hermione should have had a more dominate role in the works to give female readers a character to empower them and to whom they can relate. So, while he acknowledges the presence of a moral lesson these works, this lesson does not correctly aid in the improvement of a child today. Zipes, essentially, believes this lack of aesthetic value comes from its lack of social freedom and promotion.

While Zipes correctly show the relationship between aesthetics and morality, he remains distracted by the morality he thinks the books should display rather than looking at the morality

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<sup>1</sup> Value here means worth and importance based on its own existence as a work of art, excluding prescribed claims of usefulness.

that enforces the aesthetics of the works. Therefore, he incorrectly assumes the series displays bad aesthetics because it does not align with his social-psychological ideology. According to Zipes, the stereotypical roles that Rowling places her characters hinder the cultural progress of modern readers, thus thwarting the aesthetics because of the skewed morality. However, he does not consider the impact of friendship on character development. The virtues Harry develops in the series are virtues that people of every class, race, and gender can cultivate—the formation of friendship despite social barriers and possible marginalization from combatants and the reflection and ownership of the relationship between sacrifice and friendship. So, through an examination of Harry's moral progress because of his friendship with Ron and Hermione, critics can see the aesthetic depth and quality of these works.

However, in order to measure the literary value based on aesthetics, we must read the series ethically, or rhetorically, to ascertain character development based on the virtue of friendship. To read ethically, readers must understand that the term *ethics* pertains to the character, personality, or credibility of the work (the voice of the author)<sup>2</sup> to communicate virtuous living or actions either through the narrator or a character. In the case of *Harry Potter*, we look at the works' aesthetic worth through its portrayal of moral advancement through friendship. The theory does not, as William Booth explains in *The Company We Keep*, particularly look at the moral judgments of the characters unless pertinent in measuring morality. In *Poetics*, Aristotle states that the ethics of tragedy is the Character,<sup>3</sup> the revelation of moral purpose to the audience. Harry, the series' central character, experiences a revelation of Character appertaining to his friendships with Ron and Hermione. His growth and understanding of friendship then becomes his moral purpose which leads to his moral transformation.

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<sup>2</sup> Here the definitions of ethics and aesthetics overlap, as both describe the character or personality of the work.

<sup>3</sup> I am purposefully employing a double-meaning here: the speaker not only demonstrates moral purpose but also *is* the moral purpose. Aristotle implies this same meaning in *Rhetoric* in his discussion of Character.

Aristotle in *Rhetoric* expands the concept of Character by developing three essential elements needed to communicate virtue to the audience: the communicator's *ethos*, the medium's *logos*, and the audience's *pathos*. The *ethos*—the origin of the word *ethics*—is “the speaker's power of evincing a personal character” (3). According to Aristotle's two theories, ethics demonstrates the speaker's Character, the embodiment of moral purpose. The speaker reveals this character to the audience through the credibility of the speech (the *logos*), to which the audience responds emotionally (the *pathos*). The audience then experiences a purgation of these emotions (the *catharsis*) after observing the *hamartia* and downfall of the tragic hero, the main *ethos* of the tragedy. The audience walks away from the speech or tragedy having their own *ethos* changed upon reflection. This process of communicating virtue via a speech or tragedy is called rhetoric, the art of persuasion (*Rhetoric* 3), hence the connection between ethics and rhetoric. Though the two works seem distinct, Aristotle's *Poetics* and *Rhetoric* provide readers with the theories and means to read a work to discover the morality of the work, which further illustrates its aesthetic worth,<sup>4</sup> an aspect of Character the readers must judge.

William Booth takes Aristotle's theories in *Poetics* and *Rhetoric* and defines them for literary criticism. He names his theory ethical criticism, also known as rhetorical criticism. He defines his theory as “the discussion of what stories do to the [*ethos*] of those who respond to them with full attention” (“A Reader-Response Perspective” 289). Essentially, ethical or rhetorical critics judge the work's effect on the audience. According to this theory, the author is persuading the audience to believe, value, or act on something through the medium of literature. Ethical critics, thus, examine the relationship between the author via the text and the readers, looking specifically at what, why, or how the author communicates something to get the

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<sup>4</sup> According to Friedrich Solmsen's Introduction to *The Rhetoric and the Poetics of Aristotle*, Aristotle's *Poetics* and *Rhetoric* are companion pieces on aesthetics.

audience to accept the author's position. So, they are looking at author's ethics, the Character, or moral purpose of the author and how the author uses that Character to persuade the audience.

Because rhetoric includes the speaker's motives and methods in persuading the audience to share his *ethos*, then an examination of the author's ethics from the readers' perspective is appropriate. However, the audience's response is a means to an end, not the end itself. Zipes's theory assumes the opposite. While the audience's response is vital to evaluation and interpretation of a work, it does not always function as the end goal in rhetorical theory. Rather, a better understanding of the text's *ethos* is the primary concern of this theory; therefore, the audience's response is a means to that end. Thus, critics like Zipes should reconsider critical theories that primarily examine power struggles between classes, races, and sexes because these theories assume an outside imposed on the work rather than look at how the author persuades the reader from within the text.<sup>5</sup> Instead, critics should look at the Character of the author through the text and how it affects the audience in producing the same Character, which in turn illustrates the works' aesthetic quality. Booth further explains that critics must lay aside their assumptions and agendas to read and judge the works fairly because these theories look at the work's cultural application and judge its aesthetic value based on its usefulness to their agenda's promotion. Because Rowling illustrates the virtues of friendship as paramount to moral growth within the text itself, we can therefore examine the works' *ethos*, their aesthetics, by examining their treatment of this virtue without consulting the audience's response. Yet, the works apply to the audience as they emphasize the shaping of virtues readers of every age, gender, and race can exemplify.

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<sup>5</sup> Further, Zipes's theory razes literature's value down to usefulness for cultural construction. My theory appreciates literature's contribution to cultural construction, especially because the ancient rhetorical theory assumed literature should propagate moral knowledge in society. However, rhetorical theory primarily looks at literature as art independent of its cultural application.

Booth's theory, in conjunction with Aristotle's theories, is an appropriate framework to defend the aesthetic character of *Harry Potter*. For this study, Aristotle's *Poetics* will provide the specific rhetorical framework needed to properly examine *Harry Potter*'s aesthetics vis-à-vis moral development. Aristotle examines the aesthetics of drama, focusing mainly on tragedy and the elements that make for a good tragedy: recognition and transformation. He states, "A tragedy, then, is the imitation of an action . . . with incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish its *catharsis* of such emotions" (230). The tragedy, then, presents a situation, which should eradicate the emotions of pity and fear from its audience, mainly through observation and reflection on the suffering of the main character. Aristotle calls the eradication of these emotions the *catharsis*, which the audience, not the characters, experience as they watch the character suffer and sink into misfortune because of his mistakes. He develops this theory later when he states that good tragedies avoid plots that "may arouse the human feeling in us, but it will not move us to either pity or fear; pity is occasioned by undeserved misfortune, and fear by that of one like ourselves" (238). He says that the audience should instead feel pity and fear for the "man not preeminently virtuous and just, whose misfortune, however, is brought upon him not by vice or depravity but by some error of judgment" (238). This misjudgment, called the *hamartia* or the "tragic flaw"<sup>6</sup> leads to his misfortune. Recognition and renewal of the main character reverses the *hamartia*, an important phase in the moral change of the main character that relates to *Harry Potter*.

Harry's journey in character development illustrates Aristotle's theory of discovery, *peripeteia*,<sup>7</sup> and suffering from his *Poetics*. First, Harry makes a discovery, the "change from ignorance to knowledge" (237), about a person or event. In his case, Harry discovers the shared

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<sup>6</sup> Normally, a miscalculation on the character's part either about himself or some other person or situation.

<sup>7</sup> Ingram Bywater, the translator of the edition I cite, uses the English translation, peripety.

beliefs and values he holds with his friends, and he chooses to remain their friends despite the social suffering he may experience. After the discovery comes the *peripeteia*, “the change of the kind described from one state of things . . . to its opposite” (236). This change does not only necessarily include empirical knowledge, Aristotle suggests. Instead, this knowledge has more to do with virtue, as the moral flaw of the hero leads to his *hamartia*, which then results to his downfall. The discovery and the *peripeteia* produce the hero’s suffering, “an action of a destructive or painful nature” (237). Usually, Harry suffers socially because of his friendship with Ron and Hermione. He, the most highly recognized wizard, becomes an outcast in his society because he chooses to be friends with outcasts. His denunciation of the social and racial prejudices prevalent in the wizarding world’s social elite and central to Voldemort’s agenda allows him to transcend the moral failures of Malfoy and Voldemort. Rowling reworks Aristotle’s original theory: a virtue, not a tragic flaw, leads to Harry’s recognition, transformation, and suffering, something perhaps Aristotle did not consider when he wrote *Poetics*. Rowling’s inversion shows readers that they, like Harry, may suffer for their virtues as well as their vices. However, their adherence to these virtues, especially the virtue of friendship, leads to full moral transformation despite the suffering they may experience. This adaptation of Aristotle’s pattern of recognition and transformation<sup>8</sup> through virtue, therefore, provides an excellent framework to prove the aesthetic value of the series.

With this framework as the theoretical center, I plan to dissect the series’ attention to the friendship of Harry, Ron, and Hermione and confirm the novels’ aesthetics based on Harry’s moral growth through his virtue of friendship. Although the *Harry Potter* series has been spurned by many literary critics as not worthy of serious consideration, this overarching pattern

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<sup>8</sup> Throughout the thesis, I will show the willingness and acceptance of suffering a means and an end to recognition and transformation. I want to concentrate specifically on the latter two terms though at times acknowledging the presence or influence of suffering.

of moral recognition and resultant moral transformation founded on Harry's friendship and consummated in his final sacrifice, a pattern grounded in Aristotle's outline for measuring aesthetic worth but which substitutes virtue formation for moral vice as the catalyst for and driving force behind Harry's own moral recognition and transformation, proves the works' aesthetic value and qualifies Rowling's work as a major contribution to literature.

## Chapter One

### “The Right Sort”: The Origins of Friendship and the Prejudice of Community

In the first chapter of the first book, introduces a community that dresses in robes and cloaks, keeps owls as pets, and creates meteor showers in celebration. Indeed, this community has reason to celebrate because they have seen the end of a decade of fear and tyranny. Yet, within this celebration, there is tragedy. The infant boy responsible for the downfall of Lord Voldemort, possibly the most powerful and most evil of all wizards, has lost his parents and must live with his horrible relatives until the day he can return to this community. On his eleventh birthday, Harry receives his letter from Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry and learns he has a place not only within this school but also within the larger wizarding world. He soon discovers that wizards have their own pubs, shops and markets, bank, postal service, newspapers, government, sport—everything he could find in any Muggle community around the world. Harry becomes immersed in this world, and he finds his closest and dearest friends, people he fights for in practically all his adventures. Therefore, the series illustrates a pattern involving the formation of friendships: Harry’s social groups become narrower, from wizarding world to Hogwarts to Gryffindor, until he solidifies his relationship with Ron and Hermione. In the midst of choosing his friends, he faces opposition and scorn from Malfoy, who disdains Harry’s friends for their respective social statuses. Nevertheless, Harry’s recognition of Ron and Hermione as friends, despite their lack of social standing, commences his moral journey, the series’ initial illustration of Aristotle’s pattern and evidence of aesthetic value.

The beginning of Harry’s friendship with Ron and Hermione coincides with C. S. Lewis’s two criteria for friendship in *The Four Loves*: companionship and shared perspective. Lewis explains that the origins of friendships begin with a broader community, such as the

wizarding world, and funnels into their own smaller communities, called companionships, such as the student body of Hogwarts and more specifically students' House and year of education. Lewis states that common tasks (or interests, or hobbies, or goals) create "Companionship—or Clubbability"<sup>9</sup> (64). Companionship forms its own community in which all members share in their interests, tasks, or goals.

In *Harry Potter*, all young wizards and witches must go to school when they reach the required age. Every person within Hogwarts has a common task or goal, the development of magical skills and abilities, which creates a more specific set of companionships, the different year levels. As a first year, Harry must undergo a sorting of students into one of Hogwarts' four Houses, where students of like-minded thinking and talents can learn from each other and enjoy each other's company. Yet, the placement of a student in a particular House is not arbitrary, as Harry learns from the Sorting Hat. He chooses not to be placed in Slytherin because he does not share the values as those students. Instead, the Hat chooses Gryffindor because of Harry's obvious traits of bravery and loyalty, virtues shared by the students in that House.<sup>10</sup> Harry's companionship becomes particularly important to the formation of his friendships because his values will be strengthened by consorting with people who hold similar values.

However, Harry's mutual perspective with Ron and Hermione on the world around him leads to his friendship with them. Lewis continues explaining that "Companionship is . . . only the matrix of Friendship" (64). Friendship, as opposed to companionship, features another level

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<sup>9</sup> Lewis's term here plays off the idea of clubs, societies formed based on the common interests or social statures of its members. For instance, Lewis himself was an Oxford professor who met with a group of men, most of them professors as well, to read and critique fantasy stories they had written. This group was known as the Inklings, and Lewis's best friend, J. R. R. Tolkien, was also in this group. Thus, we see the formation of specific friendships based on the funneling of communities, or "clubs": first Oxford, then the Inklings (the club), and finally Tolkien.

<sup>10</sup> On an interesting note, Harry never actually asks to be put in Gryffindor. Harry's choice not to be put in Slytherin mirrors his rejection of Malfoy, as Harry disagrees with the virtues that the Slytherin students embody: ambition and power at the cost of others. Harry demonstrates his rejection of these values when he confronts Quirrell's paradigm at the end of the first book: "There is no good or evil, there is only power, and those too weak to seek it. . . . Since then, I have served him faithfully" (*Stone* 291).

of recognition that seals the relationship between individuals. “Friendship,” Lewis declares, “arises out of mere Companionship when two or more the companions discover that they have some insight or interest or even taste which the others do not share and which, till that moment, each believed to be his own unique treasure (or burden)” (65). Essentially, even within a community, such as Hogwarts or more specifically Gryffindor, two or three students can form even smaller communities based on a similar viewpoint which transcends mere interests, tasks, and abilities. Rather, “[t]he typical expression of opening Friendship would be something like, ‘What? You too? I thought I was the only one’” (65). Harry’s friendship with Ron and Hermione develops because of something more than the commonality of being students or Gryffindors. Instead, friendship, defined by Lewis as a love, “means *Do you see the same truth?*—Or at least, “*Do you care about the same truth?*” (66). Lewis does not specify his meaning for the term truth, but for Harry, Ron, and Hermione, their perception on each other’s beliefs and values establishes a relationship stronger than companionship. While they share in their studies and activities, the things that make them companions with other students in their year and House, their friendship forms from a more intimate understanding of each other’s perspectives.

This perspective at the core of the trio’s friendship begins with Harry and Ron’s mutual desire for companionship, which initiates Harry’s moral growth. Harry, feeling lost and confused, receives help from Ron’s family while boarding the train and shares an empty compartment with Ron. At this moment, Harry and Ron, according to Lewis’s theory, are companions:<sup>11</sup> both are first-year students headed to Hogwarts. When they begin their conversation about their lives, their friendship takes form as Harry, who knows nothing of magic, eagerly listens to Ron’s explanation of wizarding life, while Ron himself asks questions

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<sup>11</sup> Their inclusion into Gryffindor only serves to enforce the friendship between them. However, the community of their House instead helps them initially form their friendship with Hermione.

about Harry's life as a Muggle. Harry learns that Ron is the youngest brother of seven children, and he has five older brothers who have excelled at school or in their professions. Ron appears alone at the compartment because of Percy's responsibilities as prefect and the twin's popularity and penchant for mischief make them unavailable to accompany their younger brother. Further, Ron's family cannot afford new school supplies or items, so most of his possessions are hand-me-downs. Harry takes pity on him for his desperate situation and "found Ron just as interesting as Ron found him" (*Stone* 99) because of his experience from living with the vile Dursleys, who gave him oversized hand-me-downs and made him sleep in a cupboard under the stairs. Further, Harry, like Ron, has self-imposed expectations to excel (or at least to fit in). Thus, Harry and Ron become friends because of the similar perspective they share about each other—their shared inquisitive natures and their search for truth and understanding, which involves opening up to others, which Malfoy is unwilling to do.

Once Malfoy enters the compartment, Harry takes another step toward moral growth through friendship by defending his newly-formed friendship with Ron. I say *another* because Harry takes his initial step toward moral excellence through friendship during his and Draco's first encounter in Diagon Alley. After some rather rude remarks about Hagrid, Malfoy wonders why Harry should have such a companion and asks about his parents:

"They're dead," said Harry shortly. . . .

"Oh, sorry," said [Malfoy], not sounding sorry at all. "But they were *our* kind, weren't they?"

"They were a witch and wizard, if that's what you mean."

"I really don't think they should let the other sort in, do you? They're just not the same, they've never been brought up to know our ways. Some of them have never

heard of Hogwarts until they get the letter, imagine. I think they should keep it in the old wizarding families. (78)

Malfoy thus reveals the wizarding world's most prejudicial problem: the reluctance to accept "the other sort," Muggles, into their community as fellow witches and wizards. He believes that their ignorance of the wizarding culture is enough to keep them out of their society. Instead, he asserts that only those with a longstanding wizarding heritage should have admittance into the school and, thus, the community. His prejudice comes to the forefront in the second book as he boasts of his heritage and supports the mysterious Heir of Slytherin's agenda to purge Hogwarts of all Muggle-borns. Malfoy expresses the social prejudice that dominates the wizarding world.

Therefore, when Harry meets Malfoy again on the train, the former already has a distrust of the latter's beliefs and values. Malfoy offers his hand to Harry in an alliance.<sup>12</sup> Ron snickers at the gesture, but Malfoy spitefully remarks on Ron's family and their impoverished status in an effort to both humiliate Ron and enforce the power and advantage that his own heritage and wealth have in the wizarding world. Malfoy tells Harry, "You'll soon find out some wizarding families are much better than others, Potter. You don't want to go making friends with the wrong sort" (*Stone* 108). Harry rejects Malfoy's offer of friendship and simply tells him, "I think I can tell who the wrong sort are for myself, thanks" (109). This tense conversation between the boys reveals more about Lewis's ideas of the formation of friendship from surrounding communities. Harry sees Malfoy as "the wrong sort" of person to make to have as a friend, and he sides with Ron, the social outcast, because he himself grew up as a social outcast. He reflects Lewis's theory of the formation of a specific friendship because he recognizes in Ron the shared

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<sup>12</sup> I say "alliance" because Malfoy probably does not intend to be Harry's friend. I will demonstrate my reasons in a later chapter.

experience of being an outsider and he deduces that Ron harbors the same feelings.<sup>13</sup> Further, he rejects Malfoy because the latter does not recognize the value of Ron and his experiences outside the mainstream. Like the conversation in Diagon Alley about Hagrid, Harry defends Ron because he knows Ron personally and discovered Ron's value as a friend despite social influence. Therefore, Harry and Ron solidify their relationship because they both demonstrate a similar belief in each other's social condition and a common value in appreciating others.

Further, Harry's acceptance of Ron also shows that their joint beliefs and values at the basis of their friendship may conflict with the greater community's values concerning class and race. When Malfoy offers his hand of friendship to Harry, he implies that Ron's family is the "wrong sort" because of Ron's poverty and social background. First, Ron comes from a poor family who cannot afford to send their youngest son with new supplies. Further, his family's poverty gives them no influence in the wizarding community and actually becomes a point of ridicule from more wealthy wizards like the Malfoys. Harry later learns (in the next book) that Ron's father likes and defends Muggles and their way of life, further damaging his social influence and status in society. Although the Weasleys are a purely wizarding family, their association with Muggles makes them "traitors" and opponents to other purebloods. Therefore, their lack of money and influence, coupled with their tolerance of Muggles, make the Weasleys social outcasts in the wizarding community. Malfoy, conversely, has the influence and social prestige Harry needs to advance at Hogwarts because the Malfoys conform<sup>14</sup> to the social standard.

Harry, however, rejects Malfoy's offer and forms a friendship with Ron because Ron

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<sup>13</sup> I say this only because Harry has only met Ron and for all he knows can be as bad as Malfoy. However, Harry's encounter with Malfoy in Diagon Alley has given him enough information to deduce Malfoy's character while his conversation with Ron prior to Malfoy's entrance gives him enough information to confirm Ron's intentions.

<sup>14</sup> The second book implies that Lucius Malfoy actually controls the social norms as he uses dubious means of achieving his ends.

reciprocates Harry's desire for companionship and friendship despite social appearances. This recognition both demonstrates their concern for those maltreated by society and their openness to learning the truth behind appearances that most accept without question. In fact, their friendship builds from their mutual beliefs and values and will make possible future moral growth as they explore this commonality together. Further, Harry's choice in friends becomes more explicit to himself. By identifying Ron as "the right sort," he recognizes the perspective he and Ron hold together and thus begins his journey toward transformation. Therefore, Harry's new friendship with Ron provides initial evidence for the series' aesthetic value, as it teaches readers not only the manner in which people form friendship but also the social consequences and moral implications behind their choice of friends.

Harry's friendship with Hermione also demonstrates his moral development and initial support for the series' aesthetic quality. The boys' friendship with Hermione develops differently though it does center on the narrowing of communities from companionship and into friendship. When they first meet on the Hogwarts Express, the boys dislike Hermione (or, at least, Ron cannot stand her). She, however, becomes part of their community as a first year in Gryffindor. She shares the same classes and participates in the same activities with them. Of course, she does not endear herself to Harry and Ron—or any of her other classmates for that matter; she is fussy, bossy, and intellectually proud. Therefore, Harry and Ron initially reject her, as Ron remarks that "[i]t's no wonder no one can stand her. . . . She must've noticed she's got no friends" (*Stone* 172), he merely reflects the opinions of his fellow Gryffindor first years. Hermione is an outcast within her own companions, including Harry and Ron, but she holds partial responsibility for her own ostracism.

Things change on Halloween for the trio. Harry and Ron come to rescue Hermione from

the mountain troll, and, with all three of them working together, they subdue the troll successfully. Once the teachers arrive, Hermione takes the blame for the incident, though all three know the truth. Only when she lies, does Harry see the value of her friendship: “Hermione was the last person to do anything against the rules, and here she was, pretending she had, to get them out of trouble” (*Stone* 178). She lies to the teachers and risks their disapproval so the boys would not get into trouble. She, for once, points the finger at herself for breaking rules rather than constantly beleaguering others for their rule breaking. The risk she takes endears her finally to the boys, and she enters their friendship because they know the truth behind the appearance of the situation, foreshadowing of the larger pattern of recognition and transformation that governs the whole series: Hermione recognizes her frustrating behavior and treatment of others and changes, and Ron and Harry recognize Hermione’s worth and change their behavior toward her.

Harry’s friendship with Hermione continues to aid in the moral transformation because he defends her against the social prejudices leveled at her by Malfoy and wizards like him. Harry learns in the second book that Hermione does not have magical parents, and her birth status becomes a point of contention between her and Malfoy. She is, then, part of “the wrong sort” that Malfoy warned Harry about on the train. She, as a Muggle-born, holds no social prestige in the magical community, though she certainly rises above her classmates in academics. Nevertheless, Malfoy sees her birth status before he sees her actual talent.<sup>15</sup> In fact, Ron and Hagrid make this point about racial prejudice in the magical world after Malfoy calls Hermione a Mudblood:

[Ron:] “There are some wizards—like Malfoy’s family—who think they’re better than everyone else because they’re what people call pure-blood. . . . I mean, the rest of us know it doesn’t make any difference at all. Look at Neville Longbottom

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<sup>15</sup> Here again, we see the pattern of prejudicial blindness and an aversion to correction. Malfoy, despite observing Hermione’s abilities in class, cannot overcome his own bias against her.

—he’s pure-blood and he can hardly stand a cauldron the right way up.”

“An’ they haven’t invented a spell our Hermione can’ do,” said Hagrid proudly.

(*Chamber* 116).

So, Ron and Hagrid recognize that Hermione does possess the talent that makes her a better witch than most wizards, even if her parents are not wizards. Harry also recognizes Hermione’s capabilities and rightful place in their community of magical peoples. By becoming friends with Hermione, he risks his own social prestige—and at times his own life. He stands up for her when she becomes the object of scorn and ridicule from Malfoy and other prejudiced purebloods, and he risks his life to defend her and other Muggle-borns from the Heir of Slytherin. Therefore, he shows real moral transformation in his recognition of Hermione as a friend because he refuses to give into the social biases of his society despite losing influence and prestige socially.

The larger wizarding community also demonstrates similar social prejudices against Muggle-borns like Hermione. Throughout the series, Harry learns that the wizarding world has adopted certain social norms. As Ron and Hagrid mention above, many pureblooded wizards consider only wizards with a pure wizard genealogy the best and the brightest. While the Malfoys certainly embody the wider world’s bigotry, Dumbledore notes that this discrimination exists even in people who are not evil but certainly lack virtue, people like Fudge and Umbridge.<sup>16</sup> Dumbledore charges Fudge with this bias by pointing out the latter’s hatred of the giants, a magical race not considered great based on their blood status. Dumbledore tells Fudge, “You place too much importance, and you always have done, on the so-called purity of blood! You fail

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<sup>16</sup> One could argue that Umbridge is completely evil, but not in the same way as Voldemort is evil. She certainly holds the same prejudices as Voldemort, but she desires personal power, and she will use and manipulate whomever and whatever she can to exact her dominance over others.

to recognize that it matters not what someone is born, but what they grow to be!” (*Goblet* 708).<sup>17</sup> He then references Barty Crouch, Jr., the main villain after Voldemort in the fourth book. Crouch came from a pure-blood family but decided to follow Voldemort’s path of intolerance, deception, and murder.

Fudge’s own favoritism shows his and the Ministry’s failure to recognize their own bias and transform into people of action. Dumbledore rightly acknowledges blood status as irrelevant to moral virtue and integrity. Rather, pride in heritage leads to moral bankruptcy through prejudice, which leads to self-deception. Fudge and others in the Ministry do not see Hermione, who has extraordinary magical talent and moral integrity, as a person welcome in their society simply because of her parentage. Hermione is a talented young woman brave enough to face danger with Harry. Her skill and her intellect help him in his adventures, and her wisdom is often a voice of reason to Harry. Nevertheless, the Fudge and the Ministry disapprove of Hermione’s acceptance into the wizarding community because of her genealogy. Dumbledore warns Fudge that his failure to identify and transform will “allo[w] Voldemort a second chance to destroy the world [they] have tried to rebuild” (*Goblet* 708). Fudge’s refusal to reform causes trouble in the future: the Ministry falls and carries out its Nazi-like round-ups without anyone guessing or caring Voldemort’s involvement because of the embedded marginalization of Muggle-borns.<sup>18</sup> Fudge and the Ministry’s stubborn rejection of truth and correction leads to moral decay. Harry’s rejection of Malfoy and the Ministry’s prejudicial values truly shows he understands who “the wrong sort” is, and this acceptance as friends those deemed valueless, such as Hermione, by the socially affluent initiates his moral journey and proves the presence of aesthetics in the novels.

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<sup>17</sup> Fudge never actually directs his narrow-minded leanings toward Hermione herself, but Dumbledore’s statement implies Fudge harbors some feelings of genealogical superiority.

<sup>18</sup> The books also heavily imply that some people keep mum because of fear for their safety and the safety of their families. Either case, the books condemn this silence as a form of injustice.

Based on Harry's decision to deem Ron and Hermione as "the right sort" of friends, the books clearly show Harry's preliminary steps toward virtuous character. He wants their friendship because he sees their value as persons who demand respect and affection regardless of their lack of money, influence, or accepted parentage. In fact, their lack of social status endears them to him, and this shared condition not only initiates but also strengthens their relationship. Harry, in regards to his choice of friends, accepts Dumbledore's statement to Fudge: "it matters not what someone is born, but what they grow to be." His initial formation and recognition of friendship with Ron and Hermione become the catalyst for his moral transformation throughout the novels, which thus enforces their aesthetic quality.

## Chapter Two:

### Their Souls Knit Together: The Unity of Friendship

The books place a significant emphasis on the contributions of Harry's physical survival with his friendship with Ron and Hermione. Lewis believes that friendship "has no survival value; rather it is one of those things which give value to survival" (71). This claim may seem at first contradictory to Harry's quest to destroy Voldemort. Indeed, Dumbledore in the sixth book tells Harry that Ron and Hermione are essential to Harry's survival. Without all three of them working together, Harry certainly would fail. While the series does highly suggest that friendship is inconsequential to one's physical survival, Lewis here discusses the correlation to friendship and basic survival itself. Harry does not need Ron and Hermione in order to breathe or function properly as a person. Rather, Lewis suggests that friends add value to one's life, which echoes the series' aesthetic quality based on its concern for the moral character of Harry. In Harry's case, Ron and Hermione add quality rather than quantity to his life, as his friendship with them ensures his own moral growth. Therefore, Harry's friendship with Ron and Hermione will add both physical quantity to his life and moral quality to his character.

However, their mutual perspective on their world and their values must indeed adhere to the standard *mutual*—in this sense cooperative—for Harry to succeed physically or morally. Physically, they all share a similar outlook on the events surrounding the attempted theft of the Philosopher's Stone<sup>19</sup>—and the various attempts on Harry's life. Morally, this perspective remains at the heart of their friendship and "knits their souls" together.<sup>20</sup> This bond will not only assist them in their attempt to thwart the culprit but also foster their sense of unity, a virtue they

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<sup>19</sup> I will refer to Stone as the Philosopher's Stone, though I will cite from the American version of the novels which insert "Sorcerer" for "Philosopher."

<sup>20</sup> I am speaking metaphorically here. The Old Testament describes the souls of David and Jonathan as "knit together." I am using the same concept to describe the relationship between Harry, Ron, and Hermione, as their friendship leads to unity.

need to battle the evil machinations of Voldemort and lead Harry to his greatest act of friendship in the final book. This focus on collaboration and unanimity provides additional evidence for the aesthetic value of the series because the series follows Harry's growth in unity through friendship. Harry's acknowledgment of Ron and Hermione's contributions to their adventures fosters his union with them thus help him overcome the obstacles he faces and assures his continued transformation.

As stated in the last chapter, the children all see each other as misfits and outcasts and form their friendship around this precept. Their relationship strengthens once they start inspecting the mystery of the Philosopher's Stone, an investigation which sets them apart from their companions. On his first day of school, Harry sees Professor Snape across the dining hall and experiences pain in his scar. Percy informs Harry that "[h]e teaches Potions, but he doesn't want to—everyone knows he's after Quirrell's job. Knows an awful lot about the Dark Arts, Snape" (*Stone* 126). The next day, Harry has his first day of classes, and he meets Snape personally. He concludes that "[a]t the start-of-term banquet, Harry had gotten the idea that Professor Snape disliked him. By the end of the first Potions lesson, he knew he'd been wrong. Snape didn't dislike Harry—he hated him" (*Stone* 136). Harry has yet to understand why his Potions instructor hates him, but he confides his opinion to Ron, who immediately takes Harry's side. Already, Ron's friendship with Harry prompts him to accept Harry's conclusions; however, many of their companions hate Snape and adopt a mutual dislike for the teacher.

Harry and Ron's dislike of their teacher turns into suspicion when on Halloween, while rescuing Hermione from the troll with Ron, Harry notices Snape sneaking in the opposite direction from the dungeons. Days later, he observes the professor receiving treatment after his Halloween encounter with Fluffy. He relates this information to Ron and Hermione, who

unquestioningly share his mistrust. Ron and Hermione later see Snape trying to knock Harry off his broom during the Quidditch match. This action confirms their suspicions: Snape hates Harry, Harry saw Snape sneaking around on Halloween and receiving treatment for a bite he received on that night, and now Snape wants to kill Harry, possibly out of spite and to silence him for discovering his plans to sneak past Fluffy.<sup>21</sup> When the three learn of the Philosopher's Stone, Snape's particular hatred toward Harry, coupled with his knowledge of the Dark Arts and his rather distrustful behavior, makes Snape Harry's primary suspect as the trio investigates the many attempted thefts of the Stone. Further events solidify their qualms, and the trio disappears down the trapdoor to confront Snape. Once Harry reaches the end, however, he realizes that the Quirrell is the culprit, not Snape. In fact, Snape, despite what his mannerisms and actions lead Harry to conclude, does not necessarily wish Harry harm, and he actually fights to keep the Stone safe from Quirrell. Therefore, Harry, as well as Ron and Hermione, have made the wrong conclusion about the Potions Master based on presupposed impression heightened by circumstantial evidence.

Despite Harry's misdirection, the trio learns more about their friendship through their detective work, and this recognition bolsters the aesthetic quality of the novels. In their attempt to capture the real criminal behind the attempted theft of the Philosopher's Stone, the children's choices and actions spring from the question "How do we stop Snape from getting the Philosopher's Stone?" rather than "Is Snape really the culprit?" The trio presumes the answer to the latter question and treats it as irrelevant to their task, though they realize their error in the end. The former question appertains more to their task and their relationship because nobody else in Hogwarts (except, perhaps, Dumbledore) cares about that question. Lewis explains that in

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<sup>21</sup> By this time in the book, Harry and his friends have gathered enough information to conclude that Fluffy guards the trapdoor that leads to some unknown object and multiple theft attempts have occurred in inquiring this object.

friendship “seeing the same truth” more accurately means, ““Do you *care about* the same truth?” . . . He need not agree with us about the answer” (66). The trio reflects Lewis’s axiom in their drive to stop the presumed guilty Snape, a vision that separates their friendship apart from their closest companions: Seamus, Thomas, and most importantly Neville.<sup>22</sup> Seamus and Dean are best friends and share the trio’s dormitory, dining table, and classes. However, while they have a mutual dislike of Snape, they do not share the trio’s suspicions of his actions, disqualifying them from inclusion in the trio’s friendship.

This exclusion the trio’s other classmates as friendship becomes even more paramount in their relationship with Neville. Neville, like Harry, Ron, and Hermione, is also an outcast and marginalized by his classmates. Despite his blood status, he does not earn the friendship of Malfoy because of his incompetence. The trio pities Neville, but the latter does not hold the former’s perspective on Snape. They discover this when Neville stands up to them on the night they descend the trapdoor. Although Neville shares the trio’s respect and concern for outcasts, he cannot truly become their friend as he does not opine their belief in Snape’s guilt.

Neville’s stand against the trio shows a contrast in values, another element that enforces the trio’s friendship and bond. Neville confronts his classmates because he does not want them to bring more shame upon Gryffindor. The trio, however, holds a different value. They do not care about rules and points anymore; they want to stop the Dark Lord from returning again. Harry’s concern for the well-being of the school becomes so strong that he chances expulsion and public humiliation to achieve that end:

“SO WHAT?” Harry shouted. “Don’t you understand? If Snape gets hold of the Stone, Voldemort’s coming back! Haven’t you heard what it was like when he

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<sup>22</sup> Because we get the story from Harry’s perspective, I am focusing mainly on Harry’s relationship with the many circles of companionship. Other than Ron, Harry directly shares three circles (bedroom, classes, dining table) with these characters.

was trying to take over? There won't be any Hogwarts to get expelled from! He'll flatten it, or turn it into a school for the Dark Arts! Losing points doesn't matter anymore, can't you see? D'you think he'll leave you and your families alone if Gryffindor wins the House Cup?" (*Stone* 270)

Ron and Hermione agree with Harry and offer to accompany him down the trapdoor. They too are willing to suffer the same consequences because they share Harry's values: they want to stop Snape from acquiring the Stone and returning Voldemort to power. Neville neither understands their perspective nor holds their values, so he remains companions with the trio, though a strong and noble companion later in the series. Ron and Hermione, as Harry's friends, agree with his perspective and values, and he leads them to defeat the enemy, even if that enemy is not the person they originally concluded he was.

Their cooperation leads to Harry's moral progression through his acceptance of their company and their contributions. When he decides to go down the trapdoor, Ron and Hermione point out he cannot accomplish his task alone, as he needs their presence to overcome the dangers ahead. Once down the trapdoor, he recognizes his friends' contributions to their tasks and allows them to fulfill their roles rather than overriding them. When they arrive at the giant chess set, Ron takes over. He leads the others, calling and moving players into their positions. Soon, he realizes that the queen must take him in order to clear a way for Harry to checkmate the king. Harry objects, to which Ron says, "That's chess... You've got to make some sacrifices!" (*Stone* 283).<sup>23</sup> The queen takes Ron, and Harry wins the game. Ron's sacrifice disables him from continuing with his friends, but his own skill at chess and willingness to sacrifice allows his friends to continue.

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<sup>23</sup> Ron's sacrifice so that way Harry and Hermione have a chance to continue mirrors Harry's sacrifice in the final book so Ron and Hermione have a chance to defeat Voldemort.

Harry does not recognize the full implications of Ron's sacrifice until the penultimate task. After passing the unconscious troll, Harry and Hermione encounter the riddle of the potions. Hermione solves the riddle, but she decides to stay behind and allow Harry to go forward to face Snape. Before they part, Hermione tells Harry, "Me! . . . Books! And cleverness! There are more important things—friendship and bravery" (*Stone* 287). Here, Hermione admits that even her superior intelligence has its limits. The virtues of friendship and sacrifice have helped them in their quest: Ron, the person seeking self-glory, gives himself so his friends can continue, and Hermione, the smartest student at Hogwarts, passes on her chance to receive glory so Harry can stop the villain. His friends sacrifice for him prefigures his sacrifice for them at the end of the series, but its inclusion here in the first book initiates the link between friendship and sacrifice, an important theme that demonstrates the aesthetic value of the series. The point at which they must sacrifice starts with their cooperation and recognition of each other's roles. Harry learns their common beliefs and values have instigated their bond as friends, and his recognition of their roles has helped solidify their unity. Thus, his revelation about the unifying and sacrificial nature of friendship has been the true lesson that Harry learns on his trip down the trapdoor—indeed, throughout his whole adventure.

Harry's recognition of the roles Ron and Hermione and his development in the virtue of unity reflects the archetype of the tripartite soul, which underscores the "knitting of souls" the trio experiences and enforces the aesthetic value of the novels. In his book, *How Harry Casts His Spell*, John Granger, a staunch defender of the series' aesthetics, discusses the subversive archetype of the tripartite soul found in works of literature, television, and film. The archetype of the tripartite soul refers to Plato's allegory of the Charioteer.<sup>24</sup> In the allegory, the charioteer denotes reason and will while the horses refer to the soul's spirit and passions. The charioteer

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<sup>24</sup> Plato develops this allegory in *Phaedrus* and *The Republic*.

controls the horses through his reason. The white horse on the right of the charioteer represents the spirit, which obeys the charioteer's every command. The black horse on the left represents the ungovernable passions, which the charioteer whips into submission. Only when the charioteer has control of both horses and both horses work in unison, the right keeping the left in check, can the soul elevate to immortality. Plato notes that this allegory works within every soul, but Granger explains, "Rather than try to show how these three principal faculties respond to situations as a sum in every character, artists can create characters that represent *one* of these faculties and show in story how these powers of the soul relate to one another" (96).<sup>25</sup> Therefore, in art, the allegory works in groups of three working as one instead of representing one person functioning from three faculties.

The archetype fits well with Harry, Ron, and Hermione, as their recognition of the others' faculties allows them to develop morally through a unified friendship. According to Granger, Ron represents the body, or passions; Hermione represents the mind, or intellect; and Harry represents the spirit, or heart. Like Plato's allegory, each part places a different function that keeps the soul healthy and whole. Unlike the allegory, the soul archetype deviates in two areas. First, the archetype nearly levels the faculties, creating a balance of the faculties rather than a submissive hierarchy. Second, it makes the heart, not the intellect, the "leader" of the faculties, but even the heart must work in conjunction with the body and mind. In *Harry Potter*, the different functions of each member of the trio ensure the health and survival of the friendship. When each character operates within his or her role, the trio succeeds; when one of them acts independently or against role, tension enters and threatens the friendship.

In Granger's theory, Ron represents the passions. Like other passionate members of an

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<sup>25</sup> The allegory also appears in Freud's theory of the id, the ego, and the super-ego, representing the passions, the intellect, and the heart (morals), respectively.

artistic trio, Ron has a quick-temper and a disposition for cruelty and unkindness, and often relies on superstition to guide his decision-making, often leading to disastrous results.<sup>26</sup> In the second book, he tries to curse Malfoy for insulting Hermione, but the curse rebounds and hits him. He also admits his fear of spiders in the second book, a fear which he has to overcome to follow Harry into the Forbidden Forest to talk to Aragog. Of the three, he sometimes sacrifices his friendship out of anger and jealousy over petty, selfish things. He comes into contention with Hermione frequently. For instance, Ron stubbornly refuses to acknowledge that his rat Scabbers might have run away and accuses Hermione's cat of eating his pet based on circumstantial evidence. In the sixth book, Ron dates Lavender Brown out of spite for Hermione, and Luna (and Harry internally) observes the depths of Ron's cruelty. He breaks fellowship with Harry briefly in the fourth book out of jealousy of his friend's popularity, and his selfishness and temper cause him to abandon his friends during their search for the Horcruxes.

However, he always returns to the group feeling remorse and admitting his foolishness, and this fervent loyalty to his friends makes him an indelible part of the group. In the second book, Ron's devotion plays an important role in Harry's quest to stop the Heir of Slytherin. The boys' relationship grows over the book,<sup>27</sup> as they solve the riddle of the Chamber of Secrets (with Hermione's help, of course). During the climax of the novel, the heart and body operate without the mind present, as Hermione lies petrified in the hospital. However, by the time in book where Harry and Ron become separated from Hermione, she has solved the mystery of the Chamber. The boys discover her clues and continue the adventure themselves, as the tasks before

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<sup>26</sup> Because of Ron's talent for chess, a thinking game which requires strategy, intelligence, and patience, this archetype may not necessary apply absolutely to all aspects of the trio's friendship. In fact, Hermione, who Granger says represents the intellect, is not good at chess.

<sup>27</sup> Colin Manlove notes that the second book serves as a "boys' book" where the particular "absence of Hermion[e] can be seen as an expression of the fact that Harry is here at a stage of development where boys tend to seek other boys as companions" (129), or for our study, friends. For example, Harry spends his remaining summer holiday with Ron's family and both take the flying Ford Anglia to school.

them require courage and strength rather than stealth and intellect.<sup>28</sup>

Throughout most of the book, Ron lets Harry take the lead. According to Granger, when the passions follow the heart, the soul can act normally and healthily. When Harry allows Ron to take charge, such during their adventures with the flying Ford Anglia, the boys almost certainly get into trouble. When Ron lets Harry take the lead, the boys can accomplish their tasks successfully. For instance, Ron takes Harry's lead in their disguise as Crabbe and Goyle, and he follows Harry into the Forest and down the tunnel to the Chamber. As representing the passionate body, Ron fully supports Harry's decisions, even if he, Ron, feels fear and anxiety. Here, the parallel between the health of the soul and the health of the friendship emerges from the relationship between the boys: Harry, the heart and leader, makes the decisions and works with Ron, who actualizes emotions. Thus, Ron, as a true friend, suppresses his fear of spiders and his worry over his future enrollment at Hogwarts to follow Harry in order to rescue Ginny from the Heir of Slytherin.

Hermione represents the intellect and brings balance to the trio. As stated earlier, the literary version of the tripartite soul deviates from Plato's vision. Plato's version has the rational intellect as the highest faculty, the one that keeps the other two faculties in line. While Granger places the heart (Harry) above the mind (Hermione), Hermione's intellect remains an important influence on Harry's decisions. As the heart, Harry is the leader and moral center of Granger's vision of the artistic soul. He makes the decisions and acts based on his sense of loyalty and justice. He sometimes, though, forgets his role as the moral center and leads the group into

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<sup>28</sup> In the climax of the third book, we see the first time that the heart and intellect operate separately from the passions. Ron, this time, lies incapacitated in the hospital, and Hermione goes with Harry back in time to rescue Sirius. Harry, in this adventure, needs stealth and intelligence (so as not to interfere with events beyond their need to, as Hermione reminds him), rather than bravery and loyalty, so her presence with him is especially important because of her role as the intellect. In fact, Harry would have made many rash decisions had he not had Hermione with him.

danger based on his passions rather than his morals. Hermione, as the intellect, reminds him of his moral center, his duty to loyalty and justice. Her constant nagging about school rules illustrates her role as the intellect. Yet, her role as the intellect must confirm to the moral center of the heart. Thus, in the first book, Hermione willingly ignores school rules to follow Harry down the trapdoor. But she complies with Harry's decision because he, as the heart, had to make a choice to break rules to stop a culprit. Further, she reminds him that courage and friendship led them down the trapdoor, not her intelligence. Hermione's role as the intellect, then, acts subserviently to Harry's role as the heart, but Harry needs Hermione as part of the trio to remind him of his moral purpose and to keep him from making rash decisions.

However, Hermione cannot act independently of Harry or Ron either. In the first book, Hermione's intellectual pride drives her classmates away. Only when she becomes friends with the boys does her attitude become bearable. Throughout the series, though, when she acts independently from the boys, she becomes moody and fussy. Granger notes, however, that her moody and oftentimes weepy attitude while away from the boys "is not feminine weakness, but rather a picture of the fragility of an intellect that is disembodied and heartless" (98). Her subservient role to Harry does not picture feminine weakness either. Rather, she and Ron together picture the cooperative nature of the intellect and the passions to the heart. Both are necessary for good decision-making, and Harry must recognize and depend on both to achieve his goals.

As the trio's moral center, Harry makes the decisions based on his attention to his beliefs and values he shares with friends. However, when he ignores Hermione, acts passionately (usually following Ron's influence), or forgets his moral center, he gets into trouble. In the third book, Harry breaks fellowship with Hermione because the latter had his Firebolt confiscated.

Although her decision should have reminded Harry of the dangers of an escaped murderer with a mind for revenge, he still acts bitterly towards her. Because he ignores her and follows Ron's advice, he comes close to expulsion from school for leaving school grounds without permission. In the fifth book, Harry accepts the implanted vision of Voldemort torturing Sirius, and he receives confirmation of his vision from Kreacher, who loathes Sirius and Harry. Unfortunately, Harry has accepted the word of two immoral characters to affirm reality. First, he trusts the shared dream of Voldemort, not troubling for a minute to consider that the most evil person in the series could have implanted a false vision. Second, he trusts Kreacher, who lacks moral compunction at this point in the series. Harry ignores the rational pleas of Hermione to consider the situation, as Voldemort could not have entered the Ministry without workers noticing him (*Order 732*). Harry and his friends rush off to save his godfather, and his rash actions cost Sirius his life and endanger his friends. Harry, nevertheless, recognizes his faults and experiences transformation as he realigns his moral center, often with the help of his friends. Therefore, the trio's cooperative roles as members of a unified soul bolster Harry's own moral development as he becomes more aware of his and his friends' faculties and their contributions to his growth.

So, the trio's unifying friendship and their willingness to sacrifice to allow the others to fulfill their roles, as evidenced in the texts and Granger's theory, strengthens the aesthetic value of the series. The mutual input of all three faculties helps Harry make the right decisions, even if that decision requires allowing Ron and Hermione to fulfill their roles with their skills and abilities. As Hermione tells Harry, friendship is not regulated to the classroom where their companions are. Rather, their friendship takes risks, suffers consequences, and allows them to sacrifice for each other. Harry embraces this idea and thus develops morally through his virtuous union with Ron and Hermione.

## Chapter Three

### The Werewolf and the Rat, Or What Can a Friend Do for You?

Because of their mutual cooperation, Harry, Ron, and Hermione ensure the unity of their friendship. Nevertheless, the three friends must mutually submit themselves to the good of the group, which will encourage the moral growth of the other two members. Thus, one must give himself for the good of his friend without the expectation of a reciprocal return. The novels demonstrate this submission from the opening of the story and continue over the course of the series, and this continuity further reveals the series' aesthetic value. A friendship based on submission, like the friendship of the trio, reflects the criteria of friendship theorized by Aristotle: friends look after the good<sup>29</sup> of each other for their own sakes. Although the children naturally demonstrate this quality themselves early in the novels, they observe Aristotle's theory embodied in another band of misfits who learn to look after the good of their friends for their friends' own sake: the Marauders. Like the trio, they formed a community out of a community, and they thrived physically and morally when they work together. However, three of the members, James, Sirius, and Lupin, demonstrate Aristotle's definitions of a healthy friendship based on seeking the good of others for their sakes, and Wormtail illustrates his description of a false friendship based on utility. Therefore, an examination of the Marauders' friendship and the friendship of other groups in the series based on Aristotle's method of determining true and false friendships will enforce the quality of the Harry, Ron, and Hermione's own friendship with each other and further back the aesthetic value of the series by showing this theories' impact on other friendships in the series.

At the end of their third year, Harry and Hermione sneak into the Shrieking Shack to

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<sup>29</sup> This good could include, but not exhaustively so, the physical, social, psychological, or moral well-being of a person.

rescue Ron from Sirius Black, whom Harry believes evil and sinister. However, Lupin steps in and reveals the true identity of Voldemort's secret spy: Peter Wormtail, one of the Potters' closest friends, disguised for twelve years as Ron's pet rat. Sirius and Lupin transform their former friend back into a human, confront his cowardice, and threaten to kill him. Harry, however, intervenes before the men are able to kill Wormtail. When the craven traitor thanks Harry for his intervention, Harry responds, "I'm not doing this for you. I'm doing it because I don't reckon my dad would've wanted his best friends to become killers—just for you" (376).<sup>30</sup> Harry, though he heavily implies he does not want to, saves the life of Wormtail, not because Wormtail deserves it (indeed, Harry suggests they turn him over to the Dementors), but because he does not want his fathers' friends to commit murder, even though they see their act of killing Wormtail as justice.<sup>31</sup> Harry realizes the moral implications of Lupin and Sirius's actions. Even though Wormtail killed his parents and he has every inclination to see justice served, Harry interferes for the good of his fathers' friends. As Harry learns in his sixth year, murder is "the supreme act of evil. . . . Killing rips the soul apart" (*Prince* 498). So, Harry, though he does not realize it at the time, prevents damage to their souls.

Harry's appeal to his father's memory and friendship with Sirius and Lupin discloses his understanding of the physical and moral edification as demonstrated by three of the Marauders. Before Harry intercedes for Wormtail, he hears Lupin's testament of his friendship with James and Sirius during their school days. Lupin admits he feared his friends would desert him once

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<sup>30</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, all parenthetical references to the novels in this chapter will come from *Prisoner of Azkaban*.

<sup>31</sup> Granger states that Harry's act of intervention on Wormtail's behalf is one of the best examples of Harry's moral development within a single book. According to Granger, Harry, at the beginning of the novel, blows up his aunt at the smallest slight against his parents. Here, Harry saves the life of the man who betrayed his parents. Yet, Harry does not intervene for love of Wormtail; rather, he interferes for the sake of his fathers' friends. While Granger correctly identifies this action as one of the best examples of Harry's moral development, he implies that Harry steps in for the sake of Wormtail, which Harry does not necessarily do. However, Harry's act for the sake of Lupin and Sirius, rather than Wormtail, does not in any way detract from the moral development Granger identifies.

they discovered his condition, but he states, “[T]hey didn’t desert me at all. . . . They became Animagi. . . . It took them the best part of three years to work out how to do it. . . . [T]he Animagus transformation can go horribly wrong. . . . They would [transform] then slip down the tunnel and join me (354-55). As Lupin admits, James and Sirius<sup>32</sup> took great risks to join their friend on his monthly transformations, as Animagi transformation is quiet dangerous, even for a fully developed wizard. Yet, his friends understood this risk and mastered this complicated magical skill for their friend.

Further, James and Sirius risked legal trouble to transform. Naturally, they could have been expelled from school, not necessarily by performing advanced magic,<sup>33</sup> but because they wandered out-of-bounds at night with a dangerous werewolf, even going as far as to come onto the school grounds to explore Hogwarts. Their actions could also have landed them in trouble with the Ministry of Magic. By law, the boys should have registered themselves as Animagi, as Hermione points out, but, of course, they kept their secret to themselves. Lupin, though he in hindsight disapproves of his friends’ actions, nevertheless gratefully accepts their sacrifice for him. The Marauders display affection for their friend by tackling advanced magic and chancing expulsion and judicial punishment for the actions. Lupin benefits from their risks and learns to overcome some his more harmful instincts during transformation.<sup>34</sup> Therefore, the Marauders took great risks physically and legally to accompany their friend.

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<sup>32</sup> I exclude Wormtail though he fully complied with James and Sirius’s actions. According to Aristotle, a true, lasting friendship occurs between two virtuous people, or in the Marauder’s case, three. Wormtail, obviously not a virtuous character, does not fit into Aristotle’s maxim as a friend, and I will therefore exclude him from this group.

<sup>33</sup> Lupin never discloses if their accomplishment in learning the highly advanced Animagi transformation would actually lead to expulsion. In fact, Harry learns dangerously complex magic, the Patronus Charm, in his third year, but Harry learned the charm under the direct supervision of a teacher. He also had permission to do so. As implied in Lupin’s tale, James, Sirius, and Wormtail did not and could have obtained the knowledge to do so by breaking school rules (just as the trio broke school rules to make the Polyjuice Potion).

<sup>34</sup> Lupin’s physical transformation serves as a juxtaposition of his psychological transformation. He recognizes his friends, which thus leads to his transformation. Therefore, even the relationship between the Marauders illustrates Aristotle’s patten of moral growth via recognition and transformation.

Because of their company, Lupin gains psychological recognition of his friends despite his horrible transformation as a werewolf. As Lupin states, “[T]hey did something for me that would make my transformations not only bearable, but the best times of my life. . . . Under their influence, I became less dangerous. My body was still wolfish, but my mind was less so while I was with them” (354-55). Even as a dangerous werewolf, Lupin recognizes his friends and appreciates their company. He becomes somewhat normal, at least psychologically, so James and Sirius’s gift to Lupin for Lupin’s own sake echoes Aristotle’s pattern of recognition and transformation. Although Lupin transforms into a ravenous, dangerous beast every month, his recognition of their company produces his mental transformation.

While his friends risk everything to help Lupin cope with and take comfort in his transformation, Lupin can do very little to repay his friends. Yet, his friends never ask for Lupin to repay him; they face the danger to help their friend.<sup>35</sup> His friends’ willingness to help him though he cannot necessarily reciprocate affection properly demonstrates an extension of Aristotle’s definition of friendship by Lewis:

A Friend, will, to be sure, prove himself to be also an ally when alliance becomes necessary; . . . But such good offices are not the stuff of Friendship. The occasions for them are almost interruptions. . . . We are sorry that any gift or loan or night-watching should have been necessary—and now, for heaven’s sake, let us forget all about it and go back to the things we really want to do or talk about together. Even gratitude is no enrichment to this love. The stereotyped “Don’t mention it” here expresses what we really feel. The mark of perfect Friendship is

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<sup>35</sup> Of course, I am aware that the Marauders do not always have altruistic intentions. As Lupin explains, they foolishly wander onto campus, knowing the potential consequences of their actions. Thus, the Marauders’ actions do not necessarily represent absolute moral integrity, another example of Rowling’s adherence to realism in the books by having even virtuous, well-intentioned characters occasionally act unwisely.

not that help will be given when the pinch comes (of course it will) but that, having been given, it makes no difference at all. (69-70)

Lewis's definition solves a problem with Aristotle's definition. Though Aristotle states that friendship forms between two virtuous persons sharing mutual affection for the sake of the other, Lewis clarifies that true friendship does not mind if the one cannot truly reciprocate affection at the moment. Lupin cannot return any affection to James and Sirius worth deeming "reciprocated affection." However, the latter two never expected Lupin to give them anything in return. They, as Lewis states they should as true friends, happily help their friend in his time of need even if he cannot pay them back for the risks they had taken to help him. James and Sirius do not display any affection for their own selves and gladly take the risks for the sake of their friend. Lupin's needs far exceeds their own, they decide, and take the risks to meet those needs irrespective of reciprocation.

Yet, Lupin does not necessarily receive all the benefits without giving back. Lewis's definition only describes the giver's side to the display of affection for the good of the friend. Aristotle, however, says that friendship contains a mutual affection. While James and Sirius give willingly for Lupin's sake, the latter humbly accepts their sacrifice for their sake. Harald Thorsrud notes that "[t]his concern for the needs of another—that is, a concern for the sake of that person's needs and not just your own—seems to be crucial ingredient in genuinely good friendship" (41). Although James and Sirius jeopardized so much for their friend, Lupin would not have let them risk so much for him if they all did not actually display a mutual desire for the good of the each other. Thus, the exclusive actions of the giver and the receiver constitute mutual affection between friends. Certainly, both parties do not warrant either the gift or the need, but they give and accept based on their desire to see the good of the other whether or not any good

comes to them. The Marauders, then, benefit from helping Lupin, and the latter benefits from accepting their help. The friendship needs the mutual giving and receiving to ensure that good does come to the person giving or receiving. Nevertheless, all is done for the sake of the friend. James and Sirius transform for the sake of Lupin, and Lupin allows them to transform. Therefore, all of them illustrate a transformation morally because of their recognition of their mutual willingness to give and receive. This distinction becomes important because the fourth member of the Marauders, Wormtail, displays certain properties that disqualify his affection for the Marauders as a condition of friendship.

Although James, Sirius, and Lupin have a relationship based on mutual affection through giving and receiving, recognition and transformation, Wormtail only associates with the group for his own selfish needs. Primarily, he desires the companionship of James, Sirius, and Lupin for his own social protection rather than out of a true affection for the others. In the Shrieking Shack, Lupin and Sirius force Wormtail to transform back into a man. Wormtail tries to plead for his life and accuses Sirius of following Voldemort. Sirius sees through this ploy and tells Wormtail, “When did I ever sneak around people who were stronger and more powerful than myself? But you, Peter—I’ll never understand why I didn’t see you were the spy from the start. You always liked big friends who’d look after you, didn’t you? It used to be us...me and Remus...and James” (*Prisoner* 369). Wormtail, it seems, became friends with the rest of the Marauders for their popularity and offer of protection socially. They snuck around school, played jokes on other people, and genuinely experienced a certain amount of social prestige because of their carefree—and rather dangerous—lifestyle. Everyone in school liked them—except probably Snape and Lily—and Wormtail saw his chance to share in this popularity and live a socially secure life. Yet, he really did not want friends he could invest in, to seek their good for

their own sake. As Sirius says, he wanted friendship with only those who could help him. Thus, Wormtail chose to follow the philosophy of friendship that Harry himself rejected on the Hogwarts Express his first year.

Further, Wormtail's selfish need for physical protection stands out in his allegiance to Voldemort. Again, Sirius states he should have suspected Wormtail as the traitor; apparently, even Wormtail's closest friends had some doubt as to his motives. His friends did not think him witty or brave enough to serve as Voldemort's secret agent, but their oversight cost one of them his life and another a twelve-year stint in Azkaban. However, Sirius, in an answer to Hermione's question about Wormtail's failure to kill Harry and return to his old master, replies to Wormtail, "Because you never did anything for anyone unless you could see what was in it for you.... You'd want to be quiet sure [Voldemort] was the biggest bully in the playground before you went back to him" (*Prisoner 370*). Thus, Wormtail initially shifted his allegiance to Voldemort because of the latter's rising strength; he feared the Dark Lord and wanted to align with the seemingly winning side: "You don't understand! . . . He would have killed me, Sirius!" (*Prisoner 375*). Sirius angrily replies, "THEN YOU SHOULD HAVE DIED! . . . DIED RATHER THAN BETRAY YOUR FRIENDS, AS WE WOULD HAVE DONE FOR YOU!" (*Prisoner 375*). Wormtail wanted protection; he did not want to sacrifice his own life for his friends though they would have willingly done so for him. As a result of his need for physical protection, he delivers his closest friends to the murderous Dark Lord so he may live a little longer. Because Wormtail never rightly understood the giving nature of friendship, it could not for him serve the same moral function that it does for the others. Therefore, Wormtail's relationship with the Marauders serves as a counterexample to the moral growth experienced in true friendships.

Wormtail's need for protection, as well as the other antagonists' reasons for friendship, serves to juxtapose both the Marauders and the trio's reasons for seeking friendship. Aristotle explains that two motivations that seem to lead to friendship actually disqualify any relationship as true friendship: utility and pleasure:

[W]hen people love each other on the ground of utility their affection is motivated by their own good, and when they love on the ground of pleasure it is motivated by their own pleasure; that is, they love the other person not for what he is, but *qua* useful or pleasant. So these friendships are accidental,<sup>36</sup> because the person loved is not loved on the ground of his actual nature, but merely as providing some benefit or pleasure. (261-62)

According to Aristotle's paradigm, Wormtail seeks friendship for the sake of utility. He wants friends for protection, and they are only useful to him as such. According to Aristotle, "Consequently such friendships," like Wormtail's friendship with the Marauders and his allegiance to Voldemort, "are easily dissolved if the parties do not continue to show the same kind of qualities, because if they cease to be pleasant or useful the friendship comes to an end" (262). He becomes friends with the Marauders for social esteem but turns quickly to Voldemort upon threats against his life. However, when Voldemort falls, he abandons his master, dissolving that "friendship" and seeking refuge in a wizard home for, of course, safety. Even the Dark Lord himself makes this observation about Wormtail's loyalty after the latter's return to his master: "You returned to me, not out of loyalty, but out of fear of your old friends" (*Goblet* 649). Therefore, the inconstant traitor has no desire to invest in the good of any friend or partner with whom he associates but becomes friends with those whom he can reap some selfish benefit.

The self-fulfilling motives of utility do not only occur in Wormtail; in fact, perhaps all of

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<sup>36</sup> According to Thomson's footnote, *accidental* means "based on a non-essential ground" (262).

Voldemort's followers, and the Dark Lord himself, display this motive. Thorsund discusses the various servants of Voldemort and their reasons for following him. According to Thorsund, "Quirrell's loyalty and devotion to Voldemort were undeniable. Going about with a foul-smelling turban wrapped around your head to cover a grotesque companion is a bit inconvenient after all. . . . Should we admire Quirrell's courage? At best we might admit a grudging admiration, but we would be right to see his friendship with Voldemort as corrupt" (39). As Quirrell tells Harry himself, the Dark Lord has taught him, "[T]here is only power, and those too weak to seek it. . . . Since then, I have served him faithfully" (*Stone* 291). Therefore, Quirrell follows Voldemort only to achieve power and goes to great lengths to achieve this power, including bringing a curse upon himself for slaying a unicorn and drinking its blood. Thorsund even notes Wormtail's lengths to demonstrate his allegiance, but "[his] sacrifice was just as great as Quirrell's, though most of us wouldn't want to have to choose between severing our own hand and drinking unicorn blood. But in neither case should we think Voldemort's agents were motivated exclusively, or even primarily, by a desire to help their master" (39). Indeed, each individual act of devotion by Voldemort's servants comes from a desire, not for the sake of their master, but for whatever benefit they receive in his service.

Of course, Voldemort rarely refers to his followers as friends; as Dumbledore points out to Harry, he calls them servants instead. Voldemort, probably the greatest example in the series of seeing "friends" as utility, needs followers to assist him in his quest for dominance and immortality. For example, Thorsrud points out, "Voldemort probably sees Barty[,probably the only follower for whom Voldemort holds any admiration,] as a tool or instrument that he can use to achieve his ambitions. No one would be a bit surprised if Voldemort sacrificed Barty to get what he wanted [just as he did Quirrell and Wormtail]" (40). Voldemort and Crouch's

relationship falls short of true friendship and affection because of Voldemort's treatment of his servants.<sup>37</sup> Voldemort, in his anger, punishes Bellatrix Lestrange and the Malfoys for their ineptitude, and even sacrifices Snape—a servant he thinks of most highly, going as far as to teach him how to fly, for killing one of his most feared enemies—so he can gain the power of the Elder Wand. As Thorsund states, “This is pretty much what we find going on with Voldemort, who never expresses any interest in the well-being of his followers. They are merely instruments to be manipulated, punished, and rewarded insofar as they fulfill his needs” (43).<sup>38</sup> Voldemort and his servants have no genuine affection or friendship. They base their relationship on utility, what good the other can bring to the individual, rather than a sacrificial affection that seeks the good of the other for the friend's sake.

While Voldemort and his servants demonstrate friendship as utility, Harry's peers, Malfoy, Crabbe, and Goyle, illustrate the other faulty motivation for friendship: pleasure. Pleasure contrasts with utility in that pleasure accords for taste and not usefulness. According to Thorsund, “It's not quite fair to offer the same account of Malfoy's friends [as with Voldemort and his followers]. . . . They're not in it for the rewards, but rather for the pleasure of hanging out with sharp-tongued Malfoy. They obviously enjoy Malfoy's malicious humor, and it seems that they really like him for who he is. No accounting for taste, we might say, but there it is” (40). Nevertheless, friendship for the sake of pleasure derives some benefit for the individual to the exclusion of good for the sake of a friend. Certainly friends may enjoy each other's company, but

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<sup>37</sup> Crouch does mention rewards and honor that Voldemort has promised him, but he dies before anyone can see their interaction. Therefore, Crouch's motives could disqualify his actions as acts of friendship.

<sup>38</sup> Some have argued that Dumbledore also seems to express these tendencies too. While Dumbledore himself admits that he formerly used others to achieve his ends, he no longer does so. In fact, Dumbledore “uses” others who themselves are willing to trust and follow his plans, such as Snape and Harry. Dumbledore, as opposed to Voldemort, seeks the good of his friends and followers for their own sakes. He not only uses Snape as a spy but also encourages Snape's moral growth and devotion to Lily in the process. He does the same for Harry, encouraging his understanding of death and sacrificial love before Harry realizes he is the final Horcrux and Dumbledore has basically kept him alive to die. Thus, Dumbledore, though a leader who demands danger and sacrifice from his friends, does care for and invest in his friends for their own sakes.

friendship based solely on pleasure cannot lead to moral development. As Thorsund states, “Crabbe and Goyle have this sort of friendship with Malfoy. In return, Malfoy enjoys a receptive audience for his malicious humor along with the benefit of their protection. Although we can imagine that they might genuinely enjoy each other, it would be too much of a stretch to imagine them trying to improve each other in any way” (43-44). Malfoy is friends with Crabbe and Goyle for both utility and pleasure. He, of course, seeks their approval as he bullies Harry and other schoolmates for their blood status or their lack of wealth or influence, but he also needs them for protection. When Malfoy does not have his thugs around, he is vulnerable. Harry makes this observation during their first flying lesson: “‘No Crabbe and Goyle up here to save your neck, Malfoy’ Harry called. The same thought seemed to have struck Malfoy” (*Stone* 149). Malfoy, then, does what he can to ensure his own protection as he evidently fears Harry’s skill on a broomstick. Nevertheless, with their basis of friendship in pleasure, Malfoy, Crabbe, and Goyle do not demonstrate true friendship because they do not seek the good of each other.

Because Voldemort and his followers and Malfoy and his friends base their relationship on self-fulfilling motives, their friendships cannot hope to survive or contribute to any moral transformation. In fact, Aristotle guarantees their failure because these characters base their friendships on these things. Once they stop seeing each other as useful or pleasurable, their friendship ends. As stated above, Wormtail abandons his friends and his master when they are no longer useful to him for protection. Voldemort sacrifices his followers if their death ensures his survival (Quirrell and Snape) or they cease to be useful to him (Wormtail).<sup>39</sup> Malfoy’s friendship with Crabbe and Goyle falls apart in the seventh book when they corner Harry in the Room of

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<sup>39</sup> Wormtail makes the mistake of hesitating to kill Harry at Malfoy Manor in the seventh book because Harry reminds Wormtail of the time he spared his life from Lupin and Sirius. As Dumbledore explains to Harry, Voldemort has no use for followers who show mercy. Therefore, Wormtail’s hand, a gift from his master because of his sacrificial act of service, becomes the instrument of his own death.

Requirement: “Crabbe turned on Malfoy with undisguised ferocity. ‘Who cares what you think? I don’t take your orders no more, Draco. You an’ your dad are finished’” (630). Because Malfoy and his family are disgraced, Crabbe does not appreciate Malfoy anymore. To Crabbe, Malfoy has become the “lower class” of Voldemort’s social hierarchy because of their ineptitude. Crabbe, therefore, rejects Malfoy’s leadership, much to his own demise. Thus, the friendship based on utility and pleasure cannot last; once the need or desire have expired, the friendship ceases to exist, as demonstrated by Voldemort, the Death Eaters, and Harry’s peers.

Of course, Harry, Ron, and Hermione do not base their friendship on utility and pleasure. They, like James, Sirius, and Lupin, seek the good of the others. Harry, obviously, seeks justice for his friends, defending them even if it costs him convenience or injury. Ron, although rash at times, displays loyalty to his friends despite the many times he disagrees with them or the situation. Hermione, ignoring the exasperation of the boys and her classmates, reminds them of their duty to the school rules and their academic success while championing the same justice Harry seeks (or should seek). Each member of the trio seeks the good of the other two, though they may not receive it or receive it well. Nevertheless, because they seek the good of each other and do so despite the consequences, their friendship thrives. Aristotle says, “Friendship . . . seems to be the bond that holds communities together” (258). Harry, Ron, and Hermione, as a community of three close friends, survive not only because of the roles they play in their group but because they use their roles for the sake of the other two in the group.

Although the friendship of Harry, Ron, and Hermione survives because each person willingly seeks the good of the others, they are able to seek the good of each other because of their own moral character. Harry, through his adventures with Ron and Hermione, learns to invest in his friends because he himself desires good. If he does not recognize good, then Ron

and Hermione teach him or learn along with him. Still, the desire for the good of the friend speaks to the character of the individual. Harry does not see his friends as people who can benefit him socially or physically but as people who he shares beliefs and values and cares for socially and physically. Therefore, he transforms morally because he wants to bolster their wellbeing for their sakes. This vision of friendship, like that one of the Marauders, will help Harry make one of his greatest decisions for his friends, which will show the culmination his growth and offer the best evidence of the novels' aesthetic value.

## Chapter Four

### The Greatest of These: Friendship and the Greatest Act of Love

Although Wormtail fails to protect his friends, Harry, Ron, and Hermione willingly protect and sacrifice for each other. Each year, they put aside their personal comforts and fears to eradicate the dark forces that secretly pervade their school. However, though none of them actually admit it, they would actually die for each other if the circumstances warranted such a sacrifice. Harry, though, is the only one of the trio who has to make this decision, but he has to recognize and embrace death in order to make the decision. He does so, only to discover that not only has he survived the Killing Curse again, his sacrifice has led to his own moral maturity because he willingly gives his life charitably for his friends. Self-sacrifice transforms Harry into an adult, a fully-fledged moral agent, and Harry's escalation in friendship and his acceptance of death and suffering enables him to reach this moral pinnacle. This transformation through self-sacrifice is the ultimate measure of the aesthetic value of the series, as Harry reflects his own mother's sacrifice for him to bring protection, salvation, and restoration to the wizarding world. His sacrifice for his friends at the end of the seventh novel demonstrates this connection between charity and friendship and their influence in the culmination of Harry's moral growth and his transition into adulthood.

In this final scene, the series primarily shows the connection between charity and friendship. The most explicit evidence of this connection outside the texts comes from the Bible. In John's gospel, Jesus Christ tells his disciples, "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jn. 15.13).<sup>40</sup> Jesus here explains that giving one's life for his

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<sup>40</sup> Many *Harry Potter* scholars, including John Granger and Connie Neal, have recognized Christ's connection between charity and friendship and the series' demonstration of his paradigm. Although Christ's purpose is to demonstrate the nature of charity and not friendship, his inclusion of friendship illustrates the intended recipient of any charitable act. Further, friendship leads to charity, as I will demonstrate in this chapter.

friends demonstrates the greatest example of charity, translated *agape*,<sup>41</sup> the same word Paul uses in his first letter to the Corinthians and identifies as the greatest virtue to possess. He illustrates sacrificial charity for his friends by his death on the cross, and Harry too illustrates this virtue by giving his life for his friends so they can defeat Voldemort. Christ's statement of charity and its connection to friendship extends Aristotle's claim that true friends seek the good of their friends for their friends' sakes. Because life itself, both in quality and in quantity, is part of the good we should seek in our friends. However, Christ's statement about charity and friendship implies a preservation of a friend's physical life for their own sakes while Aristotle refers to the moral good of a friend. Although Christ certainly wants friends to look after the moral good of each other for their own sakes, his suggestion of giving one's life for one's friends far exceeds Aristotle's theory that friends only look after the moral good for each other. According to Ari Armstrong, the ancients would not have considered physical sacrifice as containing any virtuous value. To sacrifice one's own life would be wasteful, not virtuous. Thus, Christ's statement to his disciples concerning charity and friendship challenges Aristotle's theory of the moral value charitable sacrifice has on the individual.

The *Harry Potter* series itself shows two examples of Christ's paradigm. The most commonly recognized and discussed amongst critics and readers is Lily's sacrifice for Harry. When Harry wakes up in the hospital bed after his encounter with Voldemort and Quirrell, he asks Dumbledore why Quirrell received great pain upon direct contact with Harry. Dumbledore explains that Lily's sacrifice is responsible for protecting Harry:

Your mother died to save you. If there is one thing Voldemort cannot understand, it is love. He didn't realize that love as powerful as your mother's for you leaves

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<sup>41</sup> C. S. Lewis refers to this love as a distinctively Christian virtue because only God, who is *agape*, can demonstrate this love. However, we can still use it for our examination of Harry's moral development through friendship by looking at the connection between the two loves.

its own mark. Not a scar, no visible sign . . . to have been loved so deeply, even though the person who loved us is gone, will give us some protection forever. It is in your very skin. Quirrell, full of hatred, greed, and ambition, sharing his soul with Voldemort, could not touch you for this reason. It was agony to touch a person marked by something so good.” (*Stone* 299)

This protection, says the headmaster, keeps him safe at present that also kept him alive during Voldemort’s attack on his family. Lily died to save Harry, forming a magical shield of protection over him. Therefore, when Quirrell, who disregards love like Voldemort, tries to kill Harry to get the Philosopher’s Stone, he dies in pain and agony for his troubles. His master escapes without a body and without a follower to help him. Ten years earlier, Voldemort could not injure, let alone kill, the infant Harry because of Lily’s sacrifice. Dumbledore reveals more of the mystery and magical implications of Lily’s sacrifice throughout the series, but he ultimately wants Harry to see the connection between sacrificial charity and his friendship with Ron and Hermione.

Although many critics and scholars have noted the connection between Lily’s sacrifice and Christ’s charitable sacrifice for sinners, Armstrong disagrees with this parallel. He argues that Lily’s sacrifice does not truly mirror the charitable sacrifice of Christ because of the intended recipients of their sacrifices. According to Armstrong, “Lily’s death is, at best, superficially similar to Jesus’s death. While God sent his son to die, Lily tried to save her son’s life. . . . She did not give her life for strangers, the undeserving, or her enemies. Lily’s goal was to protect the innocent, not to generate some sort of mystical force or institution through which others can be forgiven their sins through blood sacrifice” (74-75). Further, “Lily was not trying to sacrifice her life or any of her other values; she was instead trying to protect her highest value, her son” (75). Thus, Armstrong’s vision of charitable sacrifice comes in conflict with those of

John Granger, Connie Neal, and other Christian critics who draw the parallel between the sacrifices of Lily and Christ. As Armstrong explains, while Christ's sacrifice was intentional with the purpose of offering redemption and salvation to his enemies, Lily's sacrifice was unintentional and meant only to protect her son. He adds, "The meaning of sacrifice is not merely to surrender any value. . . . [but rather] to give up one's 'greater value for the sake of a lesser one or of a nonvalue,' in the words of . . . Ayn Rand. By this meaning, sacrifice is the opposite of achieving real, life-sustaining relationships. For Lily, the true sacrifice would have been to abandon her son to the Voldemort's terrors" (75). Therefore, Lily does not demonstrate the same charitable sacrifice for Harry as Christ shows on the cross for his friends, and her sacrifice shows a disparity rather than a connection between charity and friendship.

Armstrong rests his argument on Aristotle's theory of friendship and the ethical life. In *Ethics*, Aristotle explains, "Life is in itself good and pleasant (as appears from the fact that it is sought after by all, especially by those who are virtuous and truly happy, because their life is in the highest degree desirable, and their existence the truest felicity)" (306). Later, he states, "The good man feels towards his friend as he feels toward himself, because his friend is a second self to him" (306). Essentially, one should value his own life as good and strive to experience it ethically and thus happily. Further, a man who experiences life happily has friends that enforce this happiness because the person has someone to treat morally. Aristotle's theory mirrors somewhat Christ's second greatest commandment: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mk 12.31). As Aristotle says previously, a good man seeks the good of his friend for his friend's own sake, but in doing so, the good man seeks the good of his own life. So, Armstrong believes that "[o]nce we realize that one's values, including one's friends, are of critical importance to one's own life, then there is no conflict between the good of one's own life, then there is no

conflict between the good of one's self and the good of one's friends and allies" (75). Lily's charitable sacrifice for Harry conflicts with her own values; according to Armstrong and ancient rhetorical theory, she should have saved her own life than give it wastefully for Harry.

However, Armstrong misses Christ's meaning in loving one's friend as oneself and giving one's life for his friends. Further, he fails to recognize Granger and Neal's Christian framework in their approach to the novels and specifically Lily's sacrifice.<sup>42</sup> While Lily's death has no real value in atonement, she certainly does demonstrate genuine charitable sacrifice for her son<sup>43</sup> by exchanging her greatest value, her own life, for Harry's life. Christ instructs his followers to love their friends as they do their own lives and demonstrate this love through sacrifice. He essentially means that they must hold their friends as equal in importance to their own lives, but in saying so, he implies that the greatest value a person possesses is his own life. He illustrates his intentions by going to the cross himself and dying to redeem his enemies—who he also calls his friends. Thus, to give one's greatest value, his life, for a friend exactly shows charitable sacrifice. So, while Harry might be Lily's son and she gives her life like any willing mother would do for her child,<sup>44</sup> he is not exactly her greatest value. Her life is her greatest value, which she exchanges for Harry's life (his highest value) so he will survive. To sacrifice Harry to save herself, as Armstrong suggested, would not have been a genuine sacrifice, at least not in the Christian sense of charitable sacrifice. Although not a perfect Christ-figure, Lily acts charitably for her son, thus affirming the parallel between her and Christ.

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<sup>42</sup> Armstrong seems to operate under a completely Aristotelian framework, which holds physical sacrifice has hardly valuable, but Granger and Neal hold to a Christian worldview, which extends ancient rhetorical theory to include physical sacrifice vis-à-vis Christ's sacrifice.

<sup>43</sup> Both Aristotle and C. S. Lewis state that friendships can occur between non-peers, including, as in Lily and Harry's case, between parent and child.

<sup>44</sup> Armstrong argues that Lily died for innocent Harry while Christ died for his rebellious enemies, another distinction between the two sacrifices. Yet, Harry's inability to save himself connects the two, not the condition of innocence. Both Harry and Jesus's enemies do not have the power to save themselves from destruction, but the sacrifice of Lily and Jesus respectively ensures their salvation.

Armstrong's argument against the implications of Lily's charitable sacrifice becomes particularly important because of Harry's own sacrifice, the novels' second example of Christ's statement concerning charity and friendship. Lily's charitable sacrifice for Harry serves as the watershed moment of the whole series, and Dumbledore focuses Harry's moral development on her sacrifice so he may, in the end, willingly make the same decision. Although he encourages Harry's other virtues—courage, loyalty, and justice—the headmaster in the last three books reminds Harry of his mother's sacrifice and its magical and moral implications. In the fifth book, he tells Harry, “[Y]our mother died to save you. She gave you a lingering protection [Voldemort] never expected, a protection that flows in your veins to this day” (*Order* 836). In the same conversation, Dumbledore and Harry discuss the prophecy Voldemort targeted, which states Harry contains a “*POWER THE DARK LORD KNOWS NOT*” (*Order* 841), a power that “took [Harry] to save Sirius . . . . That power also saved [him] from possession by Voldemort, because he could not bear to reside in a body so full of the force he detests” (*Order* 844). The headmaster reminds Harry of this power in the sixth book after they receive confirmation of Voldemort's Horcruxes. Finally, Harry understands the full weight of the prophecy, the Horcruxes, and Dumbledore's constant reminder of love when he walks into the forest. While the prophecy states that neither Harry nor Voldemort can survive while the other lives, Harry, realizing he is the final Horcrux and meant to die anyway, walks into the forest ready to give his life to remove one more Horcrux so his friends can destroy Voldemort.

In giving his life for his friends to ensure their own survival and success in defeating Voldemort, Harry demonstrates the seemingly unrelated connection between *agape* and friendship. Harry primarily shows “no greater love” by giving his greatest value, life, for his friends with no thought of any return. As Aristotle says, he seeks the good of his friends for their

own sakes, and he, like Christ, willingly gives of himself to ensure further life of his friends. Harry receives no benefit from his sacrifice. While he would rid his soul of the fragment of Voldemort's soul through his sacrifice, he does not initially decide to die because he will become whole again. He would be dead: he would not enjoy being a whole person, fight alongside his friends to free the world of Voldemort's tyranny, and enjoy a lifetime of peace. Rather, he gives himself in charitable sacrifice for his friends to protect them and give them a chance to defeat Voldemort without him.

Thus, all of Harry's magical and moral education culminates in his recognition of the connection between charity and friendship, which results in his transformation into adulthood. After Harry receives the Killing Curse from Voldemort once again, he wakes up in what he later identifies as King's Cross Station. There, he meets two figures: One, a small creature, which "had the form of a small child, curled on the ground, its skin raw and rough, flayed-looking" (*Hallows* 706), and the other Dumbledore, his deceased mentor. As Dumbledore approaches Harry, the former addresses the latter as "[y]ou wonderful *boy*. You brave, brave *man*" (*Hallows* 707, emphasis mine). By addressing Harry as both a boy and a man, the former headmaster reiterates an important, yet subversive theme pervading the series: the maturation of Harry into adulthood. More importantly, the teacher and student further discuss the latter's current condition:

"I'm dead . . . ?"

"Ah," said Dumbledore, smiling still more broadly. "That is the question, isn't it?"

On the whole, dear boy, I think not."

. . .

"But I should have died—I didn't defend myself! I meant to let him kill me!"

“And that,” said Dumbledore, “will, I think, have made all the difference.”

*(Hallows 707-08)*

The maturation of Harry and the theme of death come together in this conversation. Neither Harry nor Voldemort realize that Harry cannot die while Voldemort lives because the latter has taken the life-sustaining power of the former's blood, but the fact that Harry willingly goes forward and have Voldemort himself kill him to destroy the soul within him shows not only his love for his friends but also his transition into adulthood.

Essentially, Harry learns from Dumbledore that the act of love includes embracing death and suffering. Harry expresses genuine surprise at his condition; he has believed that walking into the forest and offering himself to Voldemort defenselessly would have certainly ended his life. Yet, as Dumbledore explains, Voldemort's curse only destroyed the Horcrux within Harry but kept Harry alive because of their magical blood bond. Dumbledore tells him his actions “made all the difference” because they demonstrate true courage but also true love in embracing death and suffering. Voldemort, states Dumbledore, fears death and suffering, hence his obsessive work to guarantee his immortality with the Horcruxes and his invincibility with the Elder Wand. Harry, on the other hand, shows love by embracing death and suffering, something Dumbledore has been trying to get Harry to understand throughout their lessons. Dumbledore gives evidence to this quality in Harry by referring to the Deathly Hallows and implies a similarity between Harry to the third brother. Harry, like the third brother in the original tale, removed any defenses and exposed himself to Voldemort (representative of the brother removing his cloak) and “embraced Death as an old friend,” *(Hallows 409)*. He walked into the forest for his friends, symbolized by the brother giving his cloak to his son. Both give without any notion or promise of a return or a reprieve. Dumbledore states Harry became the worthy possessor of

the Deathly Hallows because he, Harry, found himself in possession of the Hallows but decided not to use them because Harry loved his friends enough to ensure their victory over Voldemort by giving his life for them, something Dumbledore himself admits he himself could not do.

As Dumbledore explains to Harry the mystery of Harry's survival, he reminds Harry of Voldemort's rejection of death and suffering because the Dark Lord fears vulnerability.<sup>45</sup> Dumbledore, though, has discussed Voldemort's weakness with Harry previously. During Harry's sixth year, the headmaster shows Harry the memory of his first encounter with Voldemort. During Dumbledore's visit to the orphanage, the young Tom Riddle confesses he believes his mother could not have been a witch "or she wouldn't have died" (*Prince* 275). Once he discovered his father is a Muggle and his magical mother "succumbed to the shameful human weakness of death" (*Prince* 363), Riddle changes his name to Lord Voldemort, which many critics believe means "flight from death." Although Voldemort changes his name to reflect his own life's ambition of achieving immortality, he ultimately still harbors the childish understanding of death as a human weakness. Voldemort fails to love because he cannot abide the human vulnerability of death and suffering. As Christ establishes, love includes charitable sacrifice for friends, and, as Paul states, charitable sacrifice includes a genuine willingness to embrace death and suffering for those friends without any consideration of return or reprieve.<sup>46</sup> Therefore, the Dark Lord rejects death and suffering because he sees them as evidence of

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<sup>45</sup> Harry learns through Ron and Hermione, especially the latter, that one aspect of friendship is correction. Voldemort does not have true friends who will guide him and enable him to see the truth because he cannot allow himself to be vulnerable enough to receive their correction. Harry, conversely, receives correction however reluctantly or spitefully at times and he learns and grows because of it.

<sup>46</sup> Paul's chapter on love states, "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing" (I Cor. 13.4). Though one could give his body in sacrifice, he must do with charitable intentions or he renders the sacrifice meaningless.

people's vulnerability and thus rejects love because of its relationship with susceptibility.<sup>47</sup>

Harry's willful acceptance of death and vulnerability, conversely, has a direct effect on his moral maturity and assists him in his transformation into adulthood. When Dumbledore initially appears at King's Cross, he addresses Harry as a boy and a man, a comment which illustrates the maturation of Harry into adulthood because his adult decision to charitably sacrifice himself for Ron and Hermione. According to Madeleine L'Engle, "When we were children, we used to think that when we were grown-up we would no longer be vulnerable. But to grow up is to accept vulnerability. . . . To be alive is to be vulnerable" (n. pag.). The inevitability of death, as shown in the *Harry Potter* series, is probably the most vulnerable potion one could face. Yet, Harry willingly embraces it because he loves Ron and Hermione enough to see them succeed in defeating Voldemort without him. Therefore, his love for his friends and his acceptance of vulnerability has resulted in his transition into an adult. Dumbledore acknowledges this transition with another reference to the Deathly Hallows. He calls Harry "the better man" (*Hallows* 713), referring not only to Harry's ability to find the Hallows because his rejection of personal power to sacrifice himself for others but also his moral transition into adulthood because Harry could embrace death instead of power or personal survival. Therefore, Dumbledore's address to Harry affirms not only the bravery of the latter's actions but also his complete transition into adulthood because of his loving acceptance of vulnerability.

Voldemort's soul, represented as a grotesque child whimpering and quivering under a bench, illustrates the moral stagnation of rejecting love. The apostle Paul states in his first letter to the Corinthians, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (I Cor. 13.11). Voldemort reflects

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<sup>47</sup> Incidentally, Voldemort cannot truly possess the Deathly Hallows because they represent invincibility, the opposite of vulnerability. However, in order to achieve the invincible Hallows, one must accept vulnerability. Therefore, the Dark Lord, because of his rejection of vulnerability, can never truly possess the Hallows rightfully.

Paul's and L'Engle's observations about vulnerability and maturity. Children fear death and vulnerability, as Voldemort does, and thus never learn to love. As evidenced by Harry's love for Ron and Hermione, friendship can aid in the moral growth of a person, especially when one dies sacrificially for the good of his friends. Because Voldemort both fears death and rejects love, he thus remains stagnant in his moral growth. As Colin Manlove states, "Voldemort's 'growth' is in constant contrast to Harry's, for he spends almost the whole series trying to get back to what he was. In contrast to goodness, which can only grow, his evil is in this sense static" (121). Both Dumbledore and Harry enforce this image when they address the adult Dark Lord as Tom Riddle, Voldemort's childhood name, not in mockery but in full acknowledgement of Voldemort's moral state. Thus, Voldemort, in his rejection of death and any kind of weakness, shows his lack of moral progression and thus appears as a helpless child in this scene.

Conversely, because Harry embraces this inevitability of death, he puts away childish fears of death and learns to accept friendship as vulnerability. As a result, he grows morally because his acceptance of his own frailty prompts him to live a good and wholesome life in service to the common good of ourselves and others. Michael W. Austin, in his discussion on Plato and the common good, expands this idea of living in devotion to the common good:

There is something very important about the individual's commitment to the common good, rather than to mere self-interest (understood as the pursuit of power, pleasure, comfort, or wealth). . . . The lesson here is that we live best when we live for a cause greater than ourselves. This is something of a paradox. Those who, like Voldemort, put self above all else end up worse off than those who often put the common good above the self. The best life is the moral life. (266)

As evidenced in the series, Harry learns to live morally by suppressing and eradicating the fears

and vices that hinder him from living a moral life and contributing to the common good. He jumps down the trapdoor to save Hogwarts from Voldemort's theft of the Philosopher's Stone and slides down the pipe to rescue Ginny from the Heir of Slytherin and his monster. He saves Sirius and battles the newly resurrected Voldemort. He faces the Death Eaters at the ends of his fifth and sixth years. Finally, he, though terrified of death, walks into the forest to embrace death. His acceptance of the mortality of life allows him to die charitably for not only his friends but also the common good.

He cannot, however, accomplish his goals without Ron and Hermione. Both of them descend the trapdoor with him. Ron follows him into Aragog's Lair and then down to the Chamber of Secrets, and Hermione takes him back in time to save Sirius. Both go with him, against their better judgment, to the Ministry of Magic and fight the Death Eaters, and they travel with him to collect and destroy the Horcruxes. Without their help, Harry could not have grown morally because they remind him of his reasons for sacrificing his safety and enrollment at the school to defeat the enemy. Ultimately, Harry goes into the forest to die for them. He, the seventh Horcrux, must be destroyed in order for them to achieve victory. Though the novels do not express Ron and Hermione's understanding or appreciation of Harry's sacrifice, Harry, nevertheless, tells Voldemort the full weight of his sacrifice for them: "I've done what my mother did. They're protected from you. Haven't you noticed how none of the spells you put on them are binding? You can't torture them. You can't touch them" (*Hallows* 738).<sup>48</sup> Ron, Hermione, and those fighting Voldemort cannot be harmed or killed because of Harry's love for them. Thus, friendship connects charity and vulnerability because to have friends is to be vulnerable, and to have friends implies a willingness to suffer and die for them. Harry, then,

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<sup>48</sup> Another evidence of the magical power of Harry's sacrifice is the protection of Neville from the flames Voldemort releases on him (*Hallows* 733).

learns to be vulnerable for his friends, to embrace suffering and death for them, and Ron and Hermione give Harry a reason to love and grow morally.<sup>49</sup>

Voldemort, although he has followers who call themselves his friends, cannot actually have friends because his fear of death and vulnerability causes him to reject not only charity but also friendship. As Dumbledore tells Harry during one of their conferences in Harry's sixth year, Voldemort left for Hogwarts alone and kept to himself at Hogwarts. He collected followers, but he only valued them as means to an end. He allows Quirrell to suffer and die in order to escape his failed attempt at retrieving the Philosopher's Stone and kills Snape, a person he holds in high regard and most loyal of his servants, to acquire ownership of the Elder Wand. Thus, he allows his servants to suffer and die so he can remain immortal and powerful. Voldemort's fear of vulnerability results in his avoidance of friends for whom he can charitably sacrifice himself and thus hinders his progress to maturity. Therefore, Harry finds him as a child under the bench at King's Cross. Though Plato, Austin, or the series never advocate the senseless giving of our lives and bodies to a specific cause, they encourage a rational suppression of death and vulnerability to ensure moral maturity, which will benefit that cause. Thus, one must accept vulnerability, the possibility of pain and death, in moral service to others. By doing so, even the child, in this case Harry, can develop into an adult.

Thus, all of Harry's magical and moral education culminates in this connection between charity and friendship and results in his transition into adulthood. His decision to willingly sacrifice himself ensures not his victory but his friends' victory over Voldemort. Jeffery Weiss

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<sup>49</sup> Harry's sacrifice also leads to a type of self-knowledge, reflecting Paul's statement about seeing things "through a glass darkly" (I Cor. 11.12). Harry slowly progresses in his knowledge of his love and friendship and leads him to sacrifice himself. He returns as an adult with full knowledge of the protective power of his own sacrifice and his rightly possession of the Elder Wand. His adult self-knowledge contrasts with Voldemort's childish ignorance of the implications of Harry's sacrifice and ownership, as evidenced by his own attempt, again, to kill Harry in the Great Hall. Therefore, the series shows that the transition into adulthood includes the revelation of self-knowledge.

states, “Harry believes that only his demise will save his friends. Like his mother, Harry chooses that death without fighting. [As a result, t]he final battle includes death and resurrection, spiritual power carried by blood, and an apparent total loss followed by ultimate victory” (n. pag.). Harry, like his mother, willingly gives his greatest value, his own life, in charitable sacrifice for the good of his friends for their own sake—and survival. In doing so, he survives the Killing Curse and “puts away the childish things,” Voldemort’s soul, representing the childish fear of love, friendship, and vulnerability. He then “becomes a man” morally and returns again to lead his friends against Voldemort. So, while the “[*Harry Potter*] books . . . offer an easily understandable image of love that risks itself for the salvation of another, that creates a bond between two people that even death cannot break, that forms the identity of the beloved before he or she is even aware of it” (Johnston para. 34), they ultimately encourage their audience to seek moral maturity through the acceptance of the vulnerability of death and friendship shown through charitable sacrifice.

## Conclusion

### The Aesthetic Journey from Platform Nine and Three-Quarters

Since he first appeared on American bookshelves in 1998, *Harry Potter* has charmed and dazzled so many readers, child and adult alike. His popularity and cultural significance cannot be denied, even by his critics who pose an important question about the aesthetic quality of these novels and readers' perception of this aesthetic quality. According to these critics, the popularity of the novels really only proves the lack of aesthetic value in the series as readers cannot really gage the elements in the stories that make a story beautiful. Yet, Aristotle and other ancient and modern literary critics state aesthetic quality includes the presence of moral revelation and development in the main character, one that includes an eradication fatal flaw based on suffering and self-revelation. The *Harry Potter* series contains Aristotle's criteria but demonstrates that a virtue, not a moral flaw, and the recognition of this virtue lead to the main character's moral transformation. Harry's transformation begins when he accepts Ron and Hermione's friendship despite the socially affluent Malfoy's actions of ostracism. Their common beliefs and values as friends leads them to the virtue of unity, and their mutual affection for each other's needs leads them to sacrifice for each other's own sake. Harry, however, makes the choice to sacrifice himself physically for his friends, but his relationship with them helps him accept vulnerability and death for them. Everything culminates in his charitable sacrifice for them, which results in his final transformation into an adult. Therefore, the elevation of virtue of friendship and the subsequent moral growth of Harry enforce this aesthetic, which shows the series' literary value.

This study has opened up two possible implications concerning further scholarship in rhetorical theory and children's literature. Primarily, many critics use literature, including *Harry Potter*, to examine major social power struggles. However, the novels and others like them

deserve more attention than a stepping-stone to other the reading and study of other works or a mere examination of power struggles. Instead, scholars should consider works of literature as aesthetic in their own right, reading it rhetorically and seeing their moral depth in addition to its power to entertain makes it worth of serious study.

In addition, the connection between aesthetics and morality and their obvious presence in the series can engender further significant scholarship in children's literature using rhetorical theory. The series has already experienced certain notoriety amongst scholars in children's literature, including bringing a revival in children's literature scholarship. However, rhetorical theory will expose some of the aesthetic and moral conversations and concerns embedded in many children's novels normally seen in many works of adult literature. Themes such as friendship, vulnerability, death, and charitable sacrifice appear in both children's literature and adult literature, and their thoughtful treatment in the former genre will alert scholars to the gravity of children's literature. Rhetorical theory can help scholars concerned for the treatment of children's literature in the academic world now have another theory that can expose the importance of their respective field of study.

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