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The Good, the Bad and the Magic:

*Comparing the magical worlds of Harry Potter and
The Chronicles of Narnia*

B.A. Thesis

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Abstract

The discovery of a magical world can be exciting, as it was for the siblings who discovered Narnia, or it can be a series of horror, pain, evil deeds and death as it was for Harry Potter and his companions. This essay will examine C.S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia* and J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series. The works will be compared and contrasted and viewed from different perspectives.

The *Chronicles of Narnia* and *Harry Potter* share a common theme of magic, secondary worlds and battles between the forces of good and evil. The constant battle between good and evil is displayed in various ways as is the notion of death and grief. The use of a secondary world to enchant the reader creates a new exciting world filled with opportunity and an escape from reality. Since its publication the *Harry Potter* series has had some intense reactions as a result of the use of evil magic and relatable surroundings in the novels. The series has been criticized by religious groups, mainly Christians. The series has been seen as occult literature and going against the word of God and therefore not suitable for children, whereas the *Chronicles of Narnia* have not had the same criticism and are considered to be acceptable literature for children. What displeases many readers about *Harry Potter* is the fact that the secondary world is familiar to the primary world and therefore not an escape. The use of magic in *Harry Potter* is both accessible in the primary world and the secondary, while in *Narnia* it is only accessible in the secondary world and therefore the magic there is seen as pure and natural. This essay will perceive the notion that magic can be classified as only good or bad, and how the struggle protagonist face in fantasy novels affects the readers in a positive way.

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INTRODUCTION

J.K. Rowling and C.S. Lewis are both acknowledged and cherished authors, their works have been favored by children and adults alike. In Rowling's *Harry Potter* series and Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia* series, both authors explore the mysterious and fascination of a magical world different from the one we are familiar to. While C.S. Lewis' books have been praised by many, Rowling's series has not had the same welcoming experience and have even been classified as "some of the most challenged children's literature in recent years" (DeMitchell 160). Despite the fact that the *Harry Potter* series has had some negative reception since its first publication in 1997, the positive recognition of the series has been visible in recent years and it has become one of the most known and beloved fantasy series. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia* series has also experienced some negative criticism since its publication but none as evident as the *Harry Potter* series (Oziewicz 43).

When comparing the two series together it is evident that C.S. Lewis' work had considerable influence on Rowling's writing of the *Harry Potter* series. Although there seem to be no apparent similarities between Rowling's seven *Harry Potter* novels and Lewis' seven *Narnia* novels there underlies a trait that links the two-fantasy series together. Both series include a child protagonist, magic and magical creatures, the battle between good and evil and a common theme of loss, those are just a few things that be associated with both authors. When studying J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* novels it is clear that not only she has been inspired by C.S. Lewis but also from the widely known works of J.R.R. Tolkien. Although these works were published almost fifty years apart, over the years some readers have had the need compare the works and discuss their similarities and differences, as they are both beloved children's stories and have been on both accounts adapted into successful films over the years. While Rowling's books resemble in some details both Tolkien's and Lewis' writings there are some aspects that suggest that Rowling was more impressed by the writings of Lewis. Even with these similarities many Christian groups and public schools, mostly in the USA, seem to feel that the *Harry Potter* series is unfit for children as the magic that is preformed there could allure children to try occult things and convert to satanism (DeMitchell 160). Christian parents consider that the series goes against the word of God and the objections are based on the Bible teaching that practicing witchcraft or other occult acts is a sin. Alongside with the magic, what seems to be upsetting those same groups about the *Harry Potter* series is the fact that the story takes place in modern day London, and Rowling writes about the daily struggles of teenagers as they experience puberty, arguments, love and loss. In exploring both authors and their works,

I will compare how their series are similar and different from one another, why one is disliked while the other praised. The important purpose of magic and magical beings in fantasy writing, the battle between good and evil, and how death in fantasy novels can affect the reader in a good way.

I. SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCE

Rowling and Lewis' writing show an immense talent for taking the mundane and turning it into the magical. A cupboard under the stairs was Harry's home for the first years of his life (Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* 20), even though he did not enjoy his time there it gave him a way of escaping his aunt and uncle and live in a world of his own. When Harry discovered he was a wizard he had a whole other way to escape his horrible life in Privet Drive by staying at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry (Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* 126). The same way the wardrobe in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* gave the Pevensie siblings a way to escape their mundane life and experience something new like the "possibility of being a king or queen in a fantasyland, the existence of fauns, dryads, and unicorn" (Miller 113).

Focusing on the first book of both series to begin with, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* and *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, there can be seen many similar themes. The recognizable similarities in both series is that they contain seven books that occur in a magical state that differs from everyday life and both have a child protagonist who discover a new magical world filled with things one can only imagine. Although the plot of the stories bears no resemblance to one another, they share a similar theme of bravery and unlikely friendship. As young Harry and the Pevensie siblings embark on their adventures, they experience a whole new world different from their own, filled with magical beings, villains and unlikely friends. What is most notable in both series is the battle between good and evil, the use of the lion and how the power of magic can affect a person. In both series there is an overwhelming struggle between the forces of good and evil and it shows how the characters deal with this conflict through magic and their new surroundings.

I.I GOOD MAGIC AND BAD MAGIC

The existence of magic appears to be the main aspect Rowling's writing is criticized for by fundamentalist Christian parent associations, particularly in the USA. Richard Abanes, author of *Harry Potter and the Bible: The menace behind the Magick*, states that Rowling's magic is "occult-based/contemporary-pagan magic" (Abanes 235) while in Narnia the magic "involves two opposing forces of entirely different origins" (242). Though the appearance of magic is less noticeable in Lewis' the *Narnia Chronicles* it is there none-the-less. Regardless of the *Harry Potter* series' huge success, there are active vocal minority groups that show their

dislikes for the franchise, mainly owing to the fact that the magic that is wielded there is thought to give young readers ideas of their own about experimenting in the dark arts and Satanism (DeMitchell 163-164). The magic in *Harry Potter* demonstrates to readers the different uses of magic, both good and evil, the students of Hogwarts learn to defend themselves from curses as well as experience them firsthand in the classroom. In *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, Professor Moody uses visual teachings as he demonstrates on an insect how the curses have an effect on living creatures (Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* 209) and Amycus Carrow makes the students practice curses on detention students (Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* 462). Another difference between the *Harry Potter* series and the *Chronicles* is that many can perform magic in the *Harry Potter* world; children, adults and magical beings, and there is no knowing who will turn over to the dark side and who will not. Some seem to show a clear sign of it from a young age; for example Voldemort, he knew that there was something different about him and used it to torture and control people around him even as a young boy, from his first meeting with Voldemort Dumbledore was intrigued by him and knew that there was something not right about him (Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* 271-276). Some characters like Severus Snape and Draco Malfoy are believed to be evil, as they were both sorted into Slytherin house and have known to be followers of Voldemort, but they show a moral side to them in the end of the novels that shows the reader that not everything is always as it seems. In *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* Severus Snape reveals to Harry that his love for Lily, Harry's mother, was what made him betray Voldemort and work for Dumbledore as a counterspy (Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* 552). Therefore, nothing overtly marks a person good or bad in the *Harry Potter* series, just their moral code: "In Rowling's novels moral ambiguity and relativism abound, while at the same time no one really seems to know exactly who is and who is not evil." (Abanes 234)

In *The Chronicles of Narnia* only a select few are equipped with magic and there it is natural magic; not something that is learned but something that is within. The White Witch in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is a good example of that as "she is evil and based on age-old and widely accepted symbols and illustrations of evil" (Ford 334). The White Witch is the offspring of a giant and the demon Lilith. The fact that she looks human but has not a drop of human blood in her makes her even more evil (Ford 334). The good magic is seen in the lion Aslan as he uses his powers to save the trapped animals of Narnia. In contrast, the witches and wizards in *Harry Potter* are children who have numerous characteristics in common with young readers, "including age, attitudes, thoughts feelings and experiences" (Abanes 241). What

makes the magic “real” in the *Harry Potter* series is that “Rowling’s line between fantasy and reality is extremely thin...many children believe Hogwarts is a real place” (Abanes 241). There are even some readers who are still “waiting” for their letter to Hogwarts, even though they know it is not real, the thought of there being some kind of a magical world just outside of their grip excites them (Abanes 129). There seems to be no rule when it comes to magic in Rowling’s world and the use of some spells may seem ignorant and useless; “there is no system of magic, no sense of what each kind of magic can achieve, the choice of potions versus wand spells versus magical objects is frequently arbitrary and prevents planning” (Mendlesohn 63-64). That is yet another reason why the magic in the *Harry Potter* series is frequently criticized. The chaos that is magic and witchcraft in Rowling’s writing is seen by the more fundamental Christian groups to be “against the word of God” (Buck) and is represented as “corruption and perversion of the good” (Partridge 182). The magic in the *Narnia Chronicles* is not as obvious and when it comes forth it is very clear what is good and what is evil; hence it is easier for children to side with the good side and to recognize what is good and what is evil. Lewis has in later years been considered a Christian writer as his novels, especially the *Chronicles of Narnia* have Christian imagery and themes in them. The central imagery is the lion Aslan and his actions in the novels. The creation of Narnia can be associated with Christianity’s creation of the world. As God created the heaven and the earth and everything in between, Aslan created the magical land of Narnia with his song and growl (Lewis, *The Magician’s Nephew* 66-69). The magic that Aslan uses for his creation is considered to be of the pure and natural kind that comes from the earth and is therefore not affiliated with the occult. In Lewis’ last book of the series, *The Last Battle*, Lewis describes the destruction of Narnia and the deaths of the children that have throughout the years come and assisted Aslan in saving Narnia. In this final chapter of the novel, the children are welcomed into Aslan’s country, which is their heaven, where they can live for ever in the land of Narnia free of all worries and pain. The way Lewis ends the children’s lives is carried out in a calm and untroubled way that gives young readers a notion of the existence of a happier life after death, showing once again that Aslan’s good magic is one of a kind and something that cannot be considered as evil (Lewis, *The Last Battle* 109-112).

I.II THE MAGICAL WORLD VS. THE REAL WORLD

Lewis' first publication in the *Chronicles of Narnia* was five years after the end of World War II. The time period in that book was very relatable for readers who experienced the horror of the war and the blitz. Although there are numerous comparable aspects to Rowling's and Lewis' writings, the *Harry Potter* series has received much criticism when it was first published as the parents of readers found the setting to be too relatable to real life. With Lewis' novels the relatable aspect of the novel was only in the beginning of the story, while in Rowling's writing it lingers on throughout the series. One of the fundamental causes of that seems to be the time period in the *Harry Potter* novels, amongst the use of magic and Christian allegories. Many Christians readers have judged the *Harry Potter* books to be detrimental to children, some without ever reading them (Neal 11). Their only knowledge of the series stems from hateful articles, information and stories from other Christian groups and parents (Neal 11,63). What seems to concern these groups and parents most when regarding the *Harry Potter* series is that it is set in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries; a time children and young adults reading the novels can relate to. The fact that Rowling suggests in her novels that the magical world is also modern-day London will make children reading the books believe that what they are reading is real and they might then try and find it and experience it. The wizarding world of *Harry Potter* co-exists with the non-magical world, also known as the muggle world, while Lewis' realm of Narnia is completely separated from reality where there is no element to combine the magical and un-magical worlds together. While "in Lewis' and Tolkien's works there is no confusion in the child's mind ... that these are mythical characters in a mythical place." (Abanes 230) Because of the fact that Narnia is a fictional fantasy land only accessible through a wardrobe, young readers cannot relate to it and in that sense will not believe that it is a real place and will therefore not try to pursue it.

In various communities in the USA there have been petitions for the *Harry Potter* books to be removed from school libraries as they were believed to promote witchcraft. It was also said that irreligious content was being forced upon the students who read the books (DeMitchell). In contrast to the *Harry Potter* books being petitioned to be banned "[n]obody makes a fuss about C.S. Lewis' The Chronicles of Narnia series, which are based on Christian theology, but there are also witches and the dark side" (Abanes 241). Despite their religious content, the *Chronicles of Narnia* have not been petitioned to be banned from public school libraries in the USA (DeMitchell). The reason for this is that the content of the *Chronicles* is considered to be good content that has positive input on the young readers mind. In even

further discussions promoting the series there have been efforts made to explain the seven books in the *Narnia* series in terms of Christian numerology: the Seven virtues, the seven deadly sins, even the Seven Sacraments” (James 71). The same cannot be said about the *Harry Potter* series, even though many believe that Rowling used Christian themes in her writing. Many parents around the USA would have no problem against the *Harry Potter* series “if the books ‘promoted Christianity’” (DeMitchell 164). Even with all this negative criticism the *Harry Potter* books were only banned in a few public libraries and are still widely popular around the world.

II. THE ROLE OF THE WHITE STAG AND THE LION

The role of animals in fantasy literature often says much about the work and what the authors are trying to convey to the reader. Both *Harry Potter* and *The Chronicles of Narnia* share the symbol of the lion. Rowling has in her *Harry Potter* series a number of Christian esoteric symbols, for example the lion for bravery and righteousness (Murphy 192-3). The wizarding school of Hogwarts splits its students into four houses, all with their own emblematic animal. The eagle for Ravenclaw, the badger for Hufflepuff, the snake for Slytherin and the lion for Gryffindor. The lion that represents the house of Gryffindor is considered to be greatly more valued than the other houses as it stands for daring, bravery, nerve and chivalry and because “a lion embodies power and majesty” (Granger 123). Rowling’s choice to place Harry Potter in the house of the lion can be foreshadowing to Harry’s choice to sacrifice himself in the last book of the series, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. The lion is often associated with Jesus as he has often been called the “Lion of Judah” (Murphy 196) therefore, there is no wonder that the lion is used in both series to represent all that is good, honest and brave. Aslan the lion in the *Chronicles* is Narnians version of Christ; “he is the very figure of the greatness of God” (Ford 39) Three of the seven books even provides its readers with Narnian versions of Christian mythology: the Creation (*The Magician’s Nephew*), the death and resurrection of a god (*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*) and the end of the world (*The Last Battle*) (James 71). For example, in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* as soon as Aslan returns to Narnia the White witches spells begin to decrease and order is set to the realm again.

The White Stag, another animal associated with Christ, also appears in both series. Because of its antlers the stag has come to be a symbol of immortality, as it’s “meaning is linked with that of the tree of life” (Granger 131). In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* the

children only return to the real world from their Narnian kingdom because they pursue a White Stag into thick woods (Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 98) where beyond the reach of the branches lies the wardrobe. Lewis points to their search for Christ as the cause of their return, “because Christ is to our world what Aslan is to Narnia” (Granger 131). In the *Harry Potter* series wizards can produce Patronuses by focusing on good and happy memories. Patronuses resemble a white mist that take the forms of animals and are used to defend the caster from Dementors, which draw from the human body happiness, spirit, and soul. The White Stag appears in Rowling’s writings as Harry’s Patronus and as Harry’s father as James Potter, who had the ability to turn himself into a great stag at will. Comparable to the *Chronicles* the White Stag also guides Harry and helps him conquer his fears and accept his calling. The symbolism of rebirth is shown in both novels; in the *Chronicles* the Kings and Queens follow the stag and are reborn as their former younger selves and in *Harry Potter* it shows the rebirth of James Potter and how he lives on as a memory through his son. The Lion and the Stag in both novels represents guidance, safety and a feeling of home.

II.I THE ROLE OF OTHER ANIMALS

In both series many different animals make their appearance. In the *Chronicles of Narnia* series animals are more humanized. On her first visit to Narnia young Lucy encounters a faun with “a red woollen muffler round his neck”, carrying an umbrella and Christmas shopping (Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 4). What gives the illusion that the *Chronicles of Narnia* series is categorized as children’s literature is the aspect of giving animals voice and clothes. They celebrate Christmas, talk and act like humans do except they are still just animals. Even though animals in the *Harry Potter* series are just animals, they also have human aspects. The owls play a considerable role in the series as they seem to understand the wizards and inhabit a great intelligence when it comes to delivering letters, but still keeping to their regular owl aspects.

Other animals apart from the owls that show human like qualities as well, such as Hermione’s cat Crookshanks shows an immense intelligence in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* when he realized from the start that Ron’s rat was in fact Peter Pettigrew (Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* 42) and seems to have knowledge of a great many things that Harry, Ron and Hermione have no knowledge of, as for instance that their professor Remus Lupin is a werewolf, that Sirius Black is roaming the Hogwarts grounds, and the

entrance to the Shrieking Shack. Noticeable animals apart from the lion and the stag in *Harry Potter* are for example; Aragog, the talking Acromantula, who Harry and Ron barely escape from in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, the snake Nagini and the two werewolves Remus Lupin and Fenrir Greyback. With Aragog Rowling plays with the humanization of a giant spider, who mates with a regular spider creating enormous spider offspring, giving him the mind and actions of a spider with the thought process and ability to express itself and feel as a human.

Nagini, Voldemort's pet snake has as well qualities that differ from regular snakes. Her bond with Voldemort appears to more advanced than a normal pet-owner relationship and it is clear that she [Nagini] understands the world around her and can act according to it. Even though Nagini seems to be Voldemort's pet, their relationship is so advanced that one might even call them partners in crime rather than owner and pet. In *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* Nagini takes the disguise of Bathilda Bagshot (Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* 274) to lure Harry into the arms of Voldemort. In *Harry Potter* some characters can turn themselves into animals, some by choice others by force. Harry's father James, Peter Pettigrew and Sirius Black were Animagi, meaning they could "transform at will into an animal" (The Wizarding World Team). Their use of this talent was mostly to have fun and to aid Remus Lupin in his monthly werewolf changes. The main difference between Rowling and Lewis when it comes to animals is that Lewis' animals are friendly and humanized and help the Pevensie siblings while the talking animals Harry and his friends encounter threatens them. That is partly why the *Harry Potter* novels skate on the line of being for children and appeal more to the minds of young adults. It is certain though that the role of animals in both series is important.

III. DIFFERENCE IN TIME

In Lewis' first book in *The Chronicles of Narnia* series, the four Pevensie siblings travel through a wardrobe to the magical world of Narnia. The realm of Narnia is perfectly cut off from the real world, no magic can travel from Narnia to the real world and vice-versa. The only thing that can travel back and forth are the children that entered from the real world. In fantasy literature it is usual that "the events that occur in the secondary world take months; however, in the primary world, only moments have passed" (Senior 192). As with many quest-fantasies stories time moves differently in Narnia from the real world. The four siblings spent their whole

lives in Narnia, they grew up and became beloved kings and queens (Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 97-98). When they returned through the wardrobe door, they arrived at the same moment they had left so many years ago. *The Chronicles of Narnia* series can be considered a portal-quest fantasy as “in both portal and quest fantasies, a character leaves her familiar surroundings and passes through a portal into an unknown place” (Mendlesohn 1). Although the *Harry Potter* series can also be classified as a portal-quest fantasy the elements are far different from the ones in the *Chronicles of Narnia*. Rowling’s magical world starts in Surrey, a county in the UK. In the first chapter of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* Harry’s uncle notices weird things and oddly dress people dancing and shouting around the streets (Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* 8). In that one moment the wizarding world was celebrating the disappearance of Lord Voldemort. In this happy moment the wizards and witches forgot to hide their true identity. Even though the magical world is hidden from the muggles (non-magical people) it still exists right in front of them. The main difference between the world of *The Chronicles of Narnia* and the magical world of *Harry Potter* is that Narnia is completely closed off from the non-fantasy world. There is no easy access to it and children can only access it when Narnia needs their help. In *Harry Potter* there are many multiple ways to enter the magical world for example the entrances to Knockturn alley and to the Hogwarts Express that are right in the middle of London. Wizards can travel through floo powder, on a broom or other magically enhanced vehicle, or by apparating, so the travel between worlds is easy and accessible to anybody that has magical powers. As the series progresses the connection of the two worlds becomes more notable and “Rowling emphasizes the ways in which magical and Muggle communities interpenetrate, and the extent to which events in one have important effects on the other” (Butler 233). The magical world is able to enter into muggle world and vice-versa. Fantasy is a way for children, young adults and even adults to escape from reality and emerged themselves into a new fantastic world, where for a short while you have no worries or problems just the enjoyment of being somewhere different than your normal life. The “problem”, as some might call it, with *Harry Potter* is that the escaped world is very similar to the regular world so the fear of children misinterpreting that and raising havoc and that “might promote disobedience and disrespect for authority” (DeMitchell 163).

As has been mentioned before the relativity of Rowling’s writings has had negative effects on some groups as they seem to feel the setting too close to reality. Fantasy novels play with the notion of time and surroundings, therefore the reason why the *Chronicles of Narnia* series is so popular is because children relate to it on another level than in the *Harry Potter*

series. With Narnia it is not about surrounding but feeling, for children time goes by more slowly than for an adult “and this attitude is evident in the Narnian world of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, in which it is always winter, but Christmas never comes” (Ford 314). Young children experience time differently than adults do, as you get older the years go on by more quickly than they did when you were younger, so to young children reading each winter must sometimes seem like a hundred years (Ford 314). Therefore, Lewis plays with the notion of eternal winter in Narnia because children reading the stories can relate to the habitants of Narnia. Before discovering Narnia, the Pevensie siblings experience the horror of World War II, the Blitz and separation from their parents (Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 1). They are sent into the countryside to live with a professor and in his house they discover the magical wardrobe into Narnia. The only problem with the *Chronicles of Narnia* series is the notion that the children do not appear to show any interest of returning to their former lives. Even though the war is still occurring they do not show the slightest interest of wanting to have any contact with their parents or former life again. Time travelers are often ready to abandon their families and their former life for a new experience without hesitation as this new world offers exciting things while their own time rarely promises anything enjoyable (Nikolajeva 54). The Pevensie siblings spend their whole lives in Narnia as Kings and Queens ruling the kingdom, only to return back by accident to their former lives in England. This gives the notion that when escaping into a magical world there will always be a guidance to navigate you back home when you have forgotten your ways.

III.I WARDROBE VS. CABINET

The wardrobe in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* can be seen as a sign of something adventurous, good and different that excites young children. Lewis’ use of a common furniture such as a wardrobe to enter another world is a clever way to get children excited about the simple things around them. The illusion of an everyday thing being a gateway to another world is what entices children to keep reading on and maybe even hide in their own wardrobe and play make-believe. The use of a magical cabinet can be seen in Rowling’s sixth Harry Potter book, *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince*. There Draco Malfoy opens a gateway into Hogwarts for the Death eaters to enter, something that has never been done before (Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince* 586-587). It can be argued that Rowling’s use of a vanishing cabinet was a way to mirror Lewis’ writing. The wardrobe in *The Lion, the*

Witch and the Wardrobe creates a gateway into a world of excitement, joy, adventure and most thing good, while Rowling's vanishing cabinet opens a gateway filled with death, horror and vicious things. The way Rowling shifted the use of the cabinet from good to bad, shows how her writing is explaining to the reader that even though mundane things look innocent there is more than meets the eye.

IV. LOSS, DEATH AND GRIEF

The theme of loss and death is very prevalent throughout all seven *Harry Potter* books. Every book in the series approaches the difficult reality of the loss of loved ones and shows the reader how different emotions play into the feeling of losing someone. "Rowling offers explicit teaching of what death is, the importance of closure in grief, and the as great importance of recalling in gratitude the love of those departed whose love continues to protect us even in their absence" (Granger 49). Rowling shows in her writing that everyone has feelings and losing someone can be hard. Whether it was someone you knew very well, someone you never met or someone who recently came into your life. Rowling writes about the impact of death and how it affect everyone differently but also shows that there is someone that knows your pain and can help you get through it. This can be seen in *Harry Potter and Order of the Phoenix* after the death of Harry's godfather, Sirius. Harry's way of dealing with his godfathers' death is through rage, feeling like no one can understand him or his emotions. Dumbledore tries to reason with him by offering a common understanding of his feelings:

"I know how you are feeling, Harry," said Dumbledore very quietly. "No, you don't," said Harry, and his voice was suddenly loud and strong. White-hot anger leapt inside him. Dumbledore knew nothing about his feelings" (Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* 823).

Harry's emotions after his godfather's death turned into anger and complete loss, feeling like the world was over unable to accept that others in his life could have every experienced a pain like he had. In *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, Rowling shows the reader how to get closure through the importance of talking "you have to have the facts in the open before you can recover from a blow" (Granger 52). Rowling touches upon different ways in her series on how we experience grief differently and how it can be dealt with differently. As Dumbledore wisely says to Harry in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, "understanding is the first step to acceptance, and only with acceptance can there be recovery" (Rowling, *Harry*

Potter and the Goblet of Fire 680). The impact of having a child protagonist makes the reader connect more to the text and its meaning for “when these characters prevail over adversity, they affirm the human capacity for heroism” (Farmer 62).

The theme of loss is also evident in the *Chronicles* though not as descriptive as in *Harry Potter*. In Lewis’ third novel of the series, *Prince Caspian*, Caspian is orphaned by his uncle Miraz in his desire to rule the kingdom. When Miraz’s wife gives birth to a son, Miraz decides to have his nephew Caspian assassinated in order to prevent Caspian from taking the throne from him (Lewis, *Prince Caspian* 31-32). The subject of grief and sorrow is not discussed, Lewis rather displays the need for revenge and makes sure that Miraz gets what he deserves in the end, which is a stabbing in the back by his soldiers. In *The Silver Chair* Lewis also deals with the need for revenge. Prince Rilian witnesses the murder of his mother by an evil snake (Lewis, *The Silver Chair* 31). In a state of revenge Rilian spends endless time “hunting for that venomous worm, to kill it and be avenged” (Lewis, *The Silver Chair* 31) only to be trapped under its spell. In his search for justice Rilian is enchanted by the Green Witch (the snake), while his father King Caspian searches for Rilian. Near the end of the novel Rilian is saved and meets his father again, who then abruptly passes away after their reunion (Lewis, *The Silver Chair* 128). Similar to the deaths in *Harry Potter*, Lewis shows the importance of appreciating what one has rather than going down the regretful road of revenge. The main difference of loss in the series is that as the children get older in the *Chronicles*, they “lose their success to Narnia ... and finally they witness the destruction of Narnia itself” (Farmer 56), while in *Harry Potter* as the protagonists get older they become stronger and have a great impact on saving the magical world from destruction.

Though the series is written for children the *Harry Potter* series has also had an impact on adult readers, especially when dealing with loss. Many have found reading the series help them get over their grief, like many people do with their faith and the bible (Granger 46-47). Where Rowling touches upon the topic of grief and loss “Lewis enchants and teaches his Narnia audience...bravery, sympathy, perseverance, obedience, loyalty sacrifice, love of nature and play, dislike of the wicked, self-important, and selfish” (Granger 82). The theme of death, love and loss can be considered a sensitive point as well when reading the *Harry Potter* series to young children as they are not used to such graphic descriptions of death and strong emotions and may not fully understand what is happening in the story. However, that same theme can also be rewarding for children reading the books as it teaches the reader so much about how to deal with loss and that it is rather okay to show and feel your feelings rather than to hide them away.

IV.I FANTASY FOR CHILDREN OR ADULTS?

The main differences between fantasy for children and fantasy for adults is that in most cases the protagonist in children's literature is a child (Nikolajeva 60). In the *Chronicles of Narnia* children are "the heroes and heroines brought to Narnia time and again to clean up the messes made by adults" (Ford 82). This excites the children reading the stories as they feel superior to the adults in their world. The fantasy series "provides moral and spiritual guidance for young people, addressing an audience that has yet not any firm distinction between reality and imagination" (Nikolajeva 60). In the *Chronicles of Narnia* series there is no doubt that the intended readers are children as Narnia, as a world of adventure, is "a mild and slight creation that is dumbed down: written deliberately for children as a conversation between the reader and the writer" (Jones 63). During *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* the author addresses the reader through his text as they were having a mere conversation, making the children reading the text feel more connected to the story. While "[Lewis'] *Chronicles* are art of the soul of both child and adult, Rowling has crafted books that engage the minds and nourish the spirits of readers of all ages" (Farmer 54).

The theme of Rowling's books becomes darker as Harry and his friends get older and take on more responsibility far too complex for their young age. The characters grow as persons and have to deal with more mature scenarios as they get older, they discover a thing or two about love, friendship and betrayal. So, the novels not only teach us about how to cope with death and loss but also the struggles of everyday teenagers. It is important to young readers to feel and know that the author understands them and as well to read about things that they themselves are experiencing and to know that they are not facing these things alone. Rowling started writing her books for children, but she also expected that the children who read the books would grow up alongside the characters and as the characters grew the reader would as well.

V. THE BATTLE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL

The underlying theme of Rowling's and Lewis' series is the constant battle between good and evil. In all of Rowling's seven *Harry Potter* novels we follow Harry, the good, battling Voldemort, the evil, in his attempts to destroy Harry. Harry and his companions eventually overcome the evil that is Voldemort, leading to his destruction, saving both the magical- and the muggle world. With every novel Harry becomes wiser and learns how to

defeat Voldemort once and for all in the final novel of the series, indicating that the good will eventually prevail if there is shown patience and bravery. The same can be perceived in Lewis' use of bringing children back to the magical world of Narnia to save it. In Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia* Aslan relies on the help of human children repeatedly to save Narnia from evil and destruction. Despite the fact that both series experience a great deal of the battle between good and evil "it may be less disturbing, yet more persuasive, when described within an imaginary world than in the readers immediate surrounding" (Nikolajeva 60-1).

If mortal creatures did not die horribly in wars, no one would take warfare seriously. Thus, for Lewis as for Rowling, the realistic depiction of evil's consequences becomes a way to diminish what both writers acknowledge as evil's innate seductiveness (Farmer 57).

The power evil leaders like Voldemort and the White Witch have, comes mainly from their loyal followers. The more powerful a person is the more followers it has. J.K. Rowling claims that evil is attractive and that is the reason why evil leaders have many loyal soldiers. "The evil in Voldemort assures him that his disciples the Death Eaters will reassemble at his command" (Farmer 58), if you remain a loyal servant of the higher power "you know that you are safe, and he will protect you" (Farmer 57). Even though the evil in Voldemort kept most of his followers loyal to him, it was also the reason why many of them fled when they heard the rumors that he had returned. By ruling with fear alone Lord Voldemort acquired followers who chose to go over to the dark side rather than die. The same can be said about the White Witch in the *Chronicles*. Even though some of their followers were pure evil and wicked many were too afraid to refuse and suffer a worse fate than death. What is evident in both series is the appearance not only of magical evil present but also of ordinary human evil, such as child abuse, schoolboy and sibling rivalry, jealousy, deception and deceit. The series also show themes of temptation, free will, and sin. In *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* young Harry is forced to live in a cupboard under the stairs, barely given any food or clothes, taunted by his nephew, aunt and uncle. The evil Rowling conveys in her writing can be seen throughout the whole series in wizards mistreating of magical creatures, racism, bullying and pure loathing. Similar aspects can be seen in Lewis' writing with betrayal between families, and mistreating of the peculiar habitants of Narnia, that are different than the humans that overtook the land after the reign of King Peter and his siblings.

CONCLUSION

Although J.K. Rowling's series has been considered by many to be writing that encourages satanism and goes against Christian religion it is apparent that that is not the case. The *Harry Potter* series has been compared to the *Chronicles of Narnia* as both series touch upon magic, magical creatures and worlds different than our own and both series have the same underlying theme of good vs. evil, magic and unlikely friendships. What seems to be the concern with *Harry Potter* on all aspects is how close to reality it is. Even though the books explore mostly the magical world, magic and things unknown to the real world, they also touch upon subjects and themes that every reader can relate to, making them more relatable than the *Chronicles of Narnia* series and therefore by default less liked by the public of Christian parents and groups. What many readers do not comprehend about Harry Potter is that the series is not mainly about the occult and evil magic, but about the battle between good and evil, death and hard decision people sometimes must make in their lives. Even though the good almost always wins in some way or another in the end, J.K. Rowling's works were still criticized. C.S. Lewis on the other hand was depicted a Christian writer because of his religion and how the character of Aslan is displayed as a figure of Christ. Therefore, his series has been classified as good and honest writing, though it displays many of the same aspects as Rowling's writing. The difference in the time of publishing effects how both series are portrayed by readers. The magical world of Narnia is an escape from reality while the magical world of *Harry Potter* is mirrored with present day London which is uncomfortable to some readers as it is too close to reality. The *Harry Potter* series is not merely about teenagers having fun in a magical school, but a series that enlightens readers of all ages about the way of life and how to deal with the many difficult aspects of it. J.K. Rowling's writing does not encourage the occult but rather a way to help readers connect with something magical inside of them while still dealing with the realness of everyday life.

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