

FIGHTING FOR HOPE: THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA AND THE HARRY
POTTER SERIES AS TRANSFORMATIVE WORKS FOR CHILD READERS
TRAUMATIZED BY WAR.

by

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my daughters, Mackenzie and Maisie, both of whom were born during this scholarly journey. It is for you, my sweethearts that I endured and completed this thesis, even when I felt it was impossible. I pushed myself to not give up, but to persevere so that my example will hopefully serve as an inspiration to you in the future. You are the joys of my life, and it is my dream that my determination will stand as an example that with patience, endurance, and the grace of God, you can accomplish anything! I love you both beyond measure!

Philippians 4:13

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INTRODUCTION

“Since it is so likely that [children] will meet cruel enemies, let them at least have heard of brave knights and heroic courage. Otherwise you are making their destiny not brighter but darker.”

—C. S. Lewis (“Three Ways” 1079)

Whether victims, aggressors, or observers, most children in the world have had exposure, in one way or another, to the devastating effects of war. Children’s literature depicting war, with children filling the roles of warrior heroes, serves not only to entertain and inspire, but also to help readers make meaningful connections between their own individuality and their culture, community, and circumstances. In “Ghosts, Gremlins, and ‘the War on Terror’ in Children’s Blitz Fiction,” Kristine Miller says, “Because children bring to their reading a much less developed sense of either the self or its social communities than adult readers do, they need fiction not to shock and awaken them to possibilities but instead to teach them how to construct both personal and social identity in an unstable and war-torn world” (274). Such novels can assuage the trauma incurred through the child readers’ firsthand experiences of warfare, or help alleviate the fear and confusion that lurk in the hearts of children exposed to violent conflict through more common means such as television.

In *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis and the *Harry Potter* series from J.K. Rowling, tales of child warriors battling evil are set within a buffered fantasy world, creating a safe haven for child readers to explore, frame, and define their own fears. In “On Fairy Stories,” J.R.R. Tolkien claims that fairy stories allow children to set sail on an

“appointed journey” through which wisdom and dignity are gained by confrontations with “peril, sorrow, and the shadow of death” (67). The Chronicles of Narnia and the Harry Potter series take child readers on just such an “appointed journey,” bringing them face to face with violence and bloodshed perpetrated by not only by villains, but by child characters in the fantasy worlds of Narnia and Hogwarts, where children are considered worthy and capable of becoming warriors who battle the forces of evil. In these novels, child characters are driven by the knowledge that only they can save their worlds from destruction, and because they are placed in positions of authority and leadership, their examples ultimately offer the possibility of empowerment to child readers lost in feelings of helplessness in the real world.

Although they were written for children, these novels are not for the faint of heart, as they are filled with violence perpetrated by child warrior characters. There are four novels in Lewis’s seven book series in which war is featured and children become warriors: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950), *Prince Caspian* (1951), *The Horse and His Boy* (1954), and the final book in the series, the aptly titled *The Last Battle* (1956). When the children in these novels fight, the violence is often intense and surprisingly graphic for a children’s book. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Peter fights a wolf and, “he had just time to duck down and plunge his sword, as hard as he could, between the brute’s forelegs into its heart” (128). In *The Last Battle*, Eustace combats the enemy Calormenes and, “The Fox lay dead at his own feet, and he wondered if it was he who had killed it. The Bull also was down, shot through the eye by an arrow from Jill . . .” (118). These are but two examples of many bloody melees in the series, which ends in an all-out war.

In Rowling's seven-book Harry Potter series, Harry and his friends continuously fight the evil Lord Voldemort in a dangerous and often violent crusade. Each novel ends with a battle between the children and Voldemort, with the final novel, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (2007), culminating in a massive war that even encroaches upon the primary world of England. In "The Unexpected Task: The Journey of Maturation in *Harry Potter* and its Significance in Fan Speculation," Linda Jardine states, "The series may also be said to be an entire war story as well, given that Harry's goal is to defeat Voldemort . . . culminating in Harry's final confrontation with the Dark Lord" (86). Harry and his friends become warriors, even creating a child militia called Dumbledore's Army, and the novels are filled with descriptions of their perilous and frequently violent campaign. For example, in the sixth novel, *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince* (2005), Harry and his student nemesis, Draco Malfoy, are engaged in a vicious battle when Harry throws a Sectumsempra curse: "Blood spurted from Malfoy's face and chest as though he had been slashed with an invisible sword" (522). In both series, ordinary children grow in strength and agency to become powerful warriors. They battle bravely, and sometimes violently, in order to overcome evil and save their worlds.

Traumatized children, often feel helpless and unimportant, are given the opportunity through these novels and these characters to view themselves in a new light, giving them a chance to obtain new hope. In "Harry Potter and Friends: Models for Psychological Resiliency," Angelea Panos says, "Despite the challenges that they face, these characters become people who reach their potential and are able to contribute in a positive manner to society, as well as live well-adjusted and meaningful lives. Young readers can use these characters' examples to learn about and develop resiliency in their

own lives” (169). While speaking specifically about the characters in the Harry Potter novels, this statement can be applied to the characters in the Narnia series as well. Both fantasy series contain efficacious secondary worlds and child warrior characters that model strength and courage in the face of adversity, all underpinned by solid spiritual and moral foundations and thus offers empowerment and consolation to child readers adversely affected by war.

Every war leaves a trail of devastated and traumatized children in its wake. In 1944 Herbert Hoover said, “Older men declare war. But it is youth that must fight and die. And it is youth who must inherit the tribulation, the sorrow, and the triumphs that are the aftermath of war” (Hoover). When Lewis was writing *The Chronicles of Narnia*, the world and its children were still reeling from the massive destruction and trauma of WWII. Homes and lives were lost and two million children were evacuated from Britain during the air raids. American Japanese children were sent to internment camps, and 1.5 million children were murdered in the Holocaust. Over half a century later, in 1998, the year after *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* was published in England, it was estimated that more than three hundred thousand children under the age of eighteen were serving in wars in forty-one nations (Goodenough and Immel 1). In “Representing Child Soldiers in Fiction and Film,” Sarah and David Rosen state, “The child soldier has become the ubiquitous icon of modern warfare—the symbol of nearly everything that is wrong with war” (305). However, the twenty-first century has composed its own variation of warfare—terrorism. A conflict without traditional battles or armies, terrorism is often the source of childhood fear in modern society. According to Janice Nicholson

and Quinn Pearson in “Helping Children Cope with Fears: Using Children’s Literature in Classroom Guidance”:

September 11, 2001, and the subsequent war on terrorism have heightened our fears and sense of vulnerability to future attacks. Although typically considered adult concerns, the constant media coverage in the immediate aftermath of these events and the continuing emphasis on terrorism have heightened our children’s fears about death . . . While earlier studies indicate that real-life fears . . . do not begin to emerge until early adolescence, more recent evidence now suggests that these fears are occurring at earlier ages, in the elementary school years. (15)

Nicholson and Pearson go on to suggest that literature can be used as a therapeutic solution for the easing of children’s fears of war: “Bibliotherapy can be a powerful tool for helping children identify internal and external resources as well as develop subsequent coping strategies” (15).

Modern bibliotherapy is a branch of psychotherapy that focuses on the ability of both fiction and non-fiction literature to transform and heal when used as treatment for emotionally or mentally disturbed people. The idea that books can be therapeutic is nothing new. In fact, the library of Thebes in ancient Greece displayed a sign over the entrance that proclaimed it as “the healing place of the soul” (Weise). In the Introduction to *Under Fire: Childhood in the Shadow of War*, Elizabeth Goodenough asserts, “our culture [has] faith in bibliotherapy to touch battered heart and mind, reanimate hope, and kindle the desire to strike truce with the past so that something like a normal life can

resume” (14). Examining the theory and practice of bibliotherapy can provide ideas and structures for considering the portrayal of war and trauma in children’s literature.

While there are a variety of definitions for the term “bibliotherapy,” the most helpful one for this discussion comes from “Bibliotherapy: A Resource to Facilitate Emotional Healing and Growth”: “[Bibliotherapy using] children’s literature is a therapeutic tool for facilitating emotional growth and healing” (Money 1). Additionally, psychologist Carol Berns of The Children’s Bereavement Center in Miami, Florida states, “Reassurance is found in the awareness that children in other places encountered parallel sorrows, and were able to live through their pain and heal. Stories may also offer a child some ideas about how to approach his or her own situation . . . Bibliotherapy offers resources for comfort, healing, and growth” (326-327). The potential then exists for children who have been affected by war to identify with the child warrior characters displaced into the fantastic worlds of Narnia and Hogwarts. This identification is the first step in a therapeutic process that can lead a child to catharsis, or the emotional release of repressed feelings, and finally to insight—a new understanding of a situation with motivation to make positive behavioral changes (Rozalski 1).

The Chronicles of Narnia and the Harry Potter series contain elements for practical for use in bibliotherapy, especially if used to help children exposed to war to heal. Kathryn and Marc Markell, in fact, use the Harry Potter series in a guided bibliotherapy effort through their book, *The Children Who Lived: Using Harry Potter and Other Fictional Characters to Help Grieving Children and Adolescents*. The Markells focus on loss and suggest that grieving children are, “like Harry Potter in the novels by J.K. Rowling, the boys and girls ‘who lived’ . . . Children and adolescents often

identify with the fictional characters in the stories they read, and the way that these characters handle their problems may help children to cope with similar issues in their own lives” (xiii). The authors suggest that the Harry Potter stories are particularly well suited for bibliotherapy as, “The magical world of Hogwarts provides Harry, and the children who read the books, with the possibility that the world is not always what it seems to be. In terms of grief and loss, the books repeatedly show children that these are issues that can be talked about and dealt with, even though it is never easy” (2).

Children also wrestle with grief and death in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Lucy and Susan witness the White Witch murder their beloved friend and leader, Aslan. The children’s grief is poignant and realistic: “And down they both knelt in the wet grass and kissed his cold face and stroked his beautiful fur—what was left of it—and cried till they could cry no more” (154). With the depiction of their mourning and the resurrection of Aslan that follows, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is ripe with talking points and stands to be a valuable tool for bibliotherapists and the children they aim to help.

Just as their books provide a wealth of thought provoking information that can be explored by “the children who lived,” so are the actual lives of Lewis and Rowling worth delving into, in order to understand the literature, history, and experiences that influenced their work. Their personal journeys offer a chance to better interpret the wellspring of their novels, as well as the real world they reflect, from which escape and consolation is offered. Their personal and historical-cultural contexts suggest that the fantasy adventures they wrote have roots in the reality they transformed.

Clive Staples Lewis, called “Jack” by his friends and family, was born in Belfast, Ireland on November 29, 1898. When Lewis was ten years old his mother died, beginning a downward spiral in a life that had previously been full of happiness. Lewis said that after his mother passed, he had no security in his younger years, feared abandonment, hated emotion, and had a distaste for all that is public, all that belongs to the collective (*Surprised* 20, 33, 39). His only friend, for much of his younger years, was his brother, Warren. The loneliness and insecurity that Lewis felt, that many children feel, perhaps engendered in him a desire to create a world in which child characters were not helpless and scared, but brave and powerful. The Pevensie children are separated from their parents, Prince Caspian is an orphan, and little is known about Jill Pole’s parentage, but she is a victim of bullying at school. It is only Eustace Scrubb who appears to have parents that are a part of his life, although they are not present in the books. Therefore, like Lewis himself, all his child warrior characters are quite without consistent parental authority. While creating characters that offer empowerment to child readers, perhaps Lewis was also soothing his own inner child.

In his autobiography, Lewis details his school experiences in a way that suggests he felt he was at war with his environment and his peers, which no doubt influenced the way he depicted his child warrior characters fighting back against authorities and powers that make them feel helpless. He often felt he was standing alone against the world. Lewis had trouble understanding and socializing with his peers, saying, “Hardly any amount of oppression from above takes the heart out of a boy like oppression from his fellows” (31). While Lewis was unable to fight back as a child, as a writer, he conquered his long ago enemies by creating heroic children unafraid to stand up to those who would

steal their strength and self-reliance. He offered empowerment to child readers by creating characters represented as normal, unremarkable children, with issues of fear and violence similar to their own. Through these “real children,” Lewis used their journeys to put the characters into situations wherein they must find courage, strength and faith within themselves, traits enabling them to become warriors and thus overcome the evil without, as well as the conflict within.

Soon, however, school became less of an issue for Lewis as WWI pressed upon him, and in 1917, he enlisted, facing the terror of battle.¹ He dealt with this trauma by losing himself in books, and perhaps later saw this avenue as one he could use to help other children of war escape from their equally painful traumas. In his biography, Lewis states:

Accordingly I put the war on one side to a degree which some people will think shameful and some Incredible. Others will call it a flight from reality. I maintain that it was rather a treaty with reality, the fixing of a frontier. I said to my country, in effect, ‘you shall have me on a certain date, not before. I will die in your wars if need be, but till then I shall live my own life. You may have my body, but not my mind. I will take part in battles but not read about them. (*Surprised* 158)

Lewis was barely more than a child when he entered the war at the age of 18. He tried every means possible to escape going to war, but in the end, experienced horrors in the trenches, including, “every misery a human could possibly face on earth” (*Letters* 320). Lewis used books both as a grieving child and as a young adult at war to distance himself

¹ As he was studying for entrance exams to Oxford, Lewis, his father, his tutor, and family lawyers looked tirelessly for a way to keep Jack out of the war.

from reality and find consolation. These experiences undoubtedly enabled Lewis to craft his stories in such a way that generations of children looking to escape the harsh realities of war, or its painful memories, are offered a way and a place to do so.

A devout Christian in his youth, as an adult Lewis eschewed his beliefs for a time. His eventual return to religion in 1931, after becoming a professor at Magdalen College, Oxford, and later Cambridge, is notable not only for the central moral theme found in the Narnia books, but in the way his renewed faith influenced his creation of child characters fighting for a righteous cause and whose violence in doing so was thus justified. While the Narnia books may have exemplified some of his own experiences on the battlefield, he was, at the same time, giving child readers a different view of the war they may have experienced. Disillusioned by war, Lewis went back to an older, medieval model of child warriors in the creation of the Narnia books, a model that gave the children agency and power. Lewis created powerful characters that are not children hiding in basements, or young soldiers cowering in foxholes; instead, the Narnia books depict the child warriors as a force with which to be reckoned.

Many have asked what led Lewis to write *The Chronicles of Narnia*, a story of children fighting a war against overwhelming odds and remaining victorious. In *A Guide Through Narnia*, Martha C. Sammons poses the question, “Why would a bachelor Professor of Medieval and Renaissance Literature at Cambridge University write seven children’s stories when he was in his fifties?” (14). Like all good fantasies, the Narnia books find their roots in reality. Lewis’s inspiration for the main characters of Narnia may have been found in the presence of four young school girls, WWII evacuees from London, who came to live with him in 1939. After all, this is how *The Lion, the Witch*

and the Wardrobe, begins, “Once there were four children whose names were Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy. This story is about something that happened to them when they were sent away from London during the war because of the air-raids. They were sent to the house of an old Professor . . .” (1). Or maybe it was simply a tale written for his god-daughter Lucy Barfield, as Lewis maintains in the dedication at the beginning of the story. Others suggest his purpose was to entertain children while imparting Christian morals and virtues. Lewis himself claimed that, “in a particular year of my life, [I felt] that not only a fairy tale, but a fairy tale addressed to children, was exactly what I must write—or burst” (Sammons 22).

The influence of fellow writers, however, must not be discounted in the creation of Narnia. In 1936, the “Inklings” group was formed between Lewis, Charles Williams, and J. R. R. Tolkien, and to a lesser extent Owen Barfield and Hugo Dyson. The group was created to uphold and encourage its members’ writings, as well as being the “Christian Voice” on campus (Manlove, *Patterning* 4). Without the Tolkien/Lewis friendship, some scholars believe there never would have been a Middle-Earth or Narnia. Notably, Tolkien and Lewis fostered in each other a continued love for, and deeper exploration of, the genre of fantasy. Additionally, Tolkien is said to have led Lewis back to Christianity, resulting in Lewis’s return to his former beliefs (Cline). This fact would naturally lead to the assumption that perhaps it was Tolkien’s understanding and encouragement that led Lewis to write and publish *The Chronicles of Narnia*, an undeniably metaphorical look at the foundations of Christianity. The Narnia books are the work of a man with memories of a bitter and helpless childhood and of a devastating war in which he fought while just a teen. Lewis said he had to write *The Chronicles of*

Narnia or burst—and what better way to document his own struggles with life, war, and God, than in a book that would not only satisfy his need to justify his deeds on the battlefield, but offer solace for the children who lived through it, in a sense, with him?

While we cannot know exactly what propelled Lewis to write the series, one must take all of the above purposes into account, in addition to the important influence of his own history. Lewis lived in stories, as a child, as a soldier in WWI, and even as an adult. In *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Patterning of a Fantastic World*, Colin Manlove states, “books, and the mental life they stimulated became a substitute for experience . . . MacDonald, Milton, Spenser, Homer, Virgil—these were influences on Lewis akin to marriage, divorce, war, and bereavement: they were events to him” (5). Manlove also suggests, “Practically all his fiction expresses the desire to escape from the world; this is especially true of the Narnia books, which combine a wish to reenter childhood and a yearning for a simpler, more pastoral realm” (3). Lewis hid away in books throughout a lonely childhood and during the terrors of war. It is not a stretch to suggest that these deep psychological traumas caused him to identify with the girls evacuated to his country home and sparked a creative commiseration within him that led him to create a fantasy world in which children could escape the horrors of the world.

As Lewis’s life inspired his writing, a look at J.K. Rowling’s background can similarly unearth the roots of the Harry Potter novels and finds much of the fantasy’s inspiration in Rowling’s real world. Less can be said about the history of J.K. Rowling than about Lewis as she has not written an autobiography, and while the media has provided dozens of interviews, we do not have the same copious amount of very personal documents and letters pertaining to her life as we do with Lewis. Born Joanne Kathleen

Rowling in England on July 31, 1965, Jo, as she is known to her friends and family, grew up in a small town near Chepstow, Wales. A comparison can be made to Lewis in that Rowling experienced cruelty in public school (just as he experienced cruelty in boarding school) which may have led her to dream of an idyllic boarding school like Hogwarts.

Like most writers, Rowling's real life experiences are no doubt responsible for certain characters, settings, and events in her books. At the age of nine, she had a cruel teacher who became the inspiration for the character of Severus Snape, and much of the inspiration for the settings of the Harry Potter novels seems to have come from her childhood hometown of Tutshill, which has been described as "a town dominated by a castle on a cliff, which might explain a lot" (Fraser 3). Rowling has said that she and her sister spent most of their time "wandering unsupervised across the fields and along the river Wye" (qtd. in Nel 16). In his guide, *J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Novels*, Philip Nel says, "While we cannot know the degree to which the countryside nurtured her imagination, it may bear noting that in this same valley Wordsworth wrote 'Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey,' which recalls wanderings along 'the deep rivers, . . . the lonely streams, . . . the tall rock/The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood'" (12). Additionally, Rowling said that she identified with E. Nesbit's claim, "I remember exactly how I felt and thought at 11" ("J.K. Rowling's Bookshelf"). Rowling's statement reveals not only her empathy for the unique feelings of an eleven-year-old, but the Harry Potter books would arguably seem to be a reflection of her own struggles as a child. It must also be noted that because Rowling remembered how she felt and thought at eleven, she was able to write well-rounded and believable characters, which are more

likely to draw a child into the novels, creating a safe haven where they feel protected from the battles of life.

As an adult, Rowling had other experiences which can be found in the Harry Potter novels. Hermione's strong moral center is partly what enables her to be such a powerful warrior. Influence for this strength of character can be found in Rowling's work as a research assistant for Amnesty International while writing in her spare time. Nel suggests, "One wonders whether Hermione's Society for the Promotion of Elfish Welfare (S.P.E.W.) parodies the earnestness of Rowling's political activism at this stage of her life" (17). Additionally, the influence of Rowling's activism can be seen in the Harry Potter books as they deal with racism in the rampant hatred of "Muggles" and "Mudbloods."

Many children who have lost their parent(s) due to war are offered solace in the Harry Potter novels through identification with Harry, a character who lost both of his parents in the First Wizarding War. Rowling has said that losing her mother to multiple sclerosis greatly affected her writing and that she introduced much more detail about Harry's loss of his parents in the first book because she knew how it felt (Hattenstone).

Rowling's losses didn't end with the death of her mother, and those losses perhaps led to the dark and often twisted turns taken in the Harry Potter series. Rowling moved to Portugal to teach English as a foreign language, but continued to work on her Harry Potter idea. She met a Portuguese journalist, married him, and gave birth to a daughter, Jessica. The marriage crumbled, and Rowling moved with her daughter to Edinburgh, to be nearer to her sister. At this point Rowling was an unemployed single mother, and she had to live on public assistance. There is little doubt that Rowling put

much of the angst she was living through at this time into the first Harry Potter novel.

The poverty of the Weasley family and Harry's depression come to mind, as well as Harry's loss, his banishment to a meager bed under the stairs, and his loneliness.

Although details are scarce, Rowling's life must have reached a place of torment, because she became clinically depressed, and even contemplated suicide. However, with her sister's encouragement, Rowling finished her first Potter novel and finally sold it in 1996. This not only changed Rowling's life forever, but perhaps the lives of countless children who are now offered an escape into Hogwarts. The Harry Potter novels are a unique success, and the life experiences of Rowling undoubtedly helped her craft the novels into the havens of hope currently available to child readers.

The epic fantasies that Lewis and Rowling constructed reflect the worlds in which they were living and writing. The influence of their personal histories can be seen throughout the novels, enriching the characters and worlds, and ultimately creating a space wherein children affected by war can conceive a new imaginative reality in which to face their fears and foster hope.

While no one has specifically examined child warrior characters in the Narnia and Harry Potter series with a focus on the consolation and empowerment they make available to child readers traumatized by war, there is work that touches on aspects of this argument. A variety of scholars have provided research that informs elements of my argument. In looking at children who have been traumatized by war, *Under Fire: Childhood in the Shadow of War* (2008), edited by Elizabeth Goodenough and Andrea Immel, contains a collection of essays that "revisit[s] the questions about the representation of war's horrors through children's literature" (2). In "Appointed

Journeys: Growing Up with War Stories,” Maria Tatar asks a question that is fundamental to this thesis:

What about the child who is . . . trapped in the real-life menace of war? What is the function of storytelling for that child? Can it serve as an antidote to the feelings of defenselessness that are magnified—indeed doubled—in times of war? War is, after all, precisely the situation in which even adults lose a sense of agency, becoming as vulnerable and powerless as children. (283)

Tatar’s suggestion, that storytelling can serve as an antidote and offer children a sense of agency and hope for the future, is a foundation of this discussion. In *The Gift of Story: Narrating Hope in a Postmodern World* (2006), Emily Griesinger’s, “The Search for ‘Deeper Magic’: J.K. Rowling and C.S. Lewis” establishes

a relationship between the genre of fantasy and a Christian theology of hope. Combining insights from Christian theology with ideas found in two fantasy writers well known in the Christian community, C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien, [she argues] that despite potential problems associated with witchcraft, Rowling’s magic, like the magic of Tolkien and especially the ‘deeper magic’ of Lewis, is best understood as a narrative device that articulates hope. (318)

Griesinger’s essay supports the hypothesis that fantasy literature for children can offer empowerment and hope: “A special form of imaginative self-transcendence, children’s fantasy and fairy tales equip children to transcend difficult circumstances in their present lives and to hope for something better in the future” (320). She presents further

endorsement for this idea from child psychologist Bruno Bettelheim's book, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (1989):

Fairy tales help children deal therapeutically with the psychological problems of growing up. Through fairy tales children learn to cope with 'narcissistic disappointments, oedipal dilemmas, and sibling rivalries'; they are enabled 'to relinquish childhood dependencies, gaining a feeling of selfhood and of self-worth, and a sense of moral obligation' (6).

Bettelheim agrees that the primary purpose of fantasy and fairy tales is to give children hope. (320-321)

Griesinger's article is the closest I've found to my own connections between Lewis and Rowling; however, she focuses her arguments on theology, morality, and magic, while my analysis includes linking the Harry Potter novels and The Chronicles of Narnia in an investigation of hope offered to child readers through fantasy worlds and empowered, moral child warrior heroes.

Of course, The Chronicles of Narnia and the Harry Potter series have often been compared to one another. Scholars and critics have pointed out that both authors crafted seven-book children's series that remain popular with both children and adults. Both series deal in magic and fantasy, and have a common theme of good versus evil. The Chronicles of Narnia and the Harry Potter series are similar in that they both start in the real world, an unhappy place from which the child characters want to escape, and escape they do, into a magical world where they find their way to empowerment. Chapter One of this thesis looks more closely at these worlds and the "real worlds" they reflect and from which escape is offered. In the introduction to *Under Fire*, Goodenough says that the

young need “secret spaces . . . to frame, interpret, and relieve atrocious anxieties . . .”

(vi). The magical, fantastic worlds of Narnia and Hogwarts present just such “secret space(s),” and offer them to child readers to confront, escape from, and process the horrors of the real world. The fact that Lewis and Rowling’s novels are of the fantasy genre is integral to creating these spaces. In “On Fairy Stories,” Tolkien proclaims:

There are also other and more profound ‘escapisms’ that have always appeared in fairy-tale and legend. There are things more grim and terrible to fly from than the noise, stench, ruthlessness, and extravagance of the internal-combustion engine. There are hunger, thirst, poverty, pain, sorrow, injustice, death . . . fairy stories offer a sort of escape . . . a kind of satisfaction and consolation. (83)

Tolkien’s essay helps delineate the ways that fairy stories offer such consolation. He says they provide, “examples and modes of . . . the genuine escapist, or (I would say) *fugitive* spirit” (85). This spirit can enrapture child readers who have lived through the “things more grim and terrible” and invite them into the fantasy world where they can safely experience warfare as a powerful child warrior who is not a victim, but a savior.

One of the ways in which The Chronicles of Narnia and the Harry Potter series excel in creating opportunities for empowerment and hope for child readers is through their richly crafted, secondary fantasy worlds. Chapter One explores the idea that the fantasy genre is necessary for this creation of a safe haven, and I have found support for this idea in Tolkien’s, “On Fairy-Stories,” in which he details the required ingredients for successful fantasy. Ann Swinfen’s *In Defence of Fantasy*, adds to this discussion, listing important elements for achieving an “inner consistency of reality” within fantasy worlds.

Another reason the worlds of Hogwarts and Narnia are able to conjure havens of hope is that they mirror the real worlds of the authors. In the section “The Politics of Harry Potter: Issues of Gender, Race, and Class” of *Reading Harry Potter Again: New Critical Essays* (2009), edited by Giselle Lieze Anatol, the essays inform my arguments in Chapter One that the Harry Potter books are reflective of modern British society; however, my chapter goes further, illustrating the benefits of presenting these difficult issues to children within the safe haven created by the novels.

Chapter Two of this thesis delves deeper into comparisons between the characters of the two series and explores the significance of varying depths of characterizations and character growth. This discussion is framed by Goodenough’s suggestion that “Each adolescent protagonist must, in the societal stress of war, piece together an understanding of himself and the world” (*Under Fire* v). In “The Magician’s Niece: The Kinship between J.K. Rowling and C.S. Lewis” (2001), Joy Farmer purports:

By creating ordinary human saviors rather than Supermen and Wonder Women, Rowling and Lewis reflect and embrace our everyday world . . . [they] plunge us into the corporeality of struggle and triumph, not only in the case of Harry Potter and High King Peter but also in the case of weaker characters like Eustace Scrubb and Neville Longbottom. (62)

Because these characters begin their journeys as average children, readers are enabled to easily identify with them, see them as role models, and imaginatively step into their shoes.

Also important to this study is the difference in the way the authors crafted their warriors. Lewis was writing during the aftermath of WWII, while Rowling’s more recent

writing reflects a generation that faces warfare on a completely different battlefield.

Therefore, their novels handle child warriors in different ways for different generations of children.

On their quests, the child warrior characters of the Narnia and Potter series grow in power, wisdom, and courage. In Chapter Three, I propose that it is the moral and spiritual cores of these characters that give strength to their agency, and suggest a path for child readers to follow. In *Reading Harry Potter Again: New Critical Essays*, five essays deal with religion and morality in the Harry Potter novels. However, these essays do not deal with the hope that is made available to child readers through this morality, and that is a point I focus on. In “Images of Good and Evil in the Narnian Chronicles,” Kath Filmer-Davies says, “Narnia [is] a magical parallel universe in which the children’s perceptions of themselves and their own world are challenged through encounters with the Lion, Aslan, and with the various forms of evil which arise, either in Narnia itself or in the hearts of the visiting children” (150). I include the hearts of the child readers as well in this challenge.

Furthermore, Farmer suggests that the Harry Potter novels are as much of a religious allegory as the Narnia books: “In Rowling’s books, much of the religious allegory centers on Harry, whose life seems modeled on Christ’s” (58). She adds, “Through the religious allegories of the Harry Potter books and *The Chronicles*, readers learn the profound theological truths that give Aslan’s words to Lucy such resonance ‘This was the very reason why you were brought to Narnia, that by knowing me here for a little, you may know me better there’ (*Voyage* 209)” (59). It is common knowledge that Lewis’s series is a Christian allegory, but some people may be surprised to learn that

Harry Potter may be one as well. In an interview with *The Earth Times*, Rowling said, “I believe in God, not magic” (“J.K. Rowling Wants to See”). In an interview with *The Times* she said that early on she felt that if readers knew of her Christian beliefs, they would be able to “guess what is coming in the books” (Rowling, “Single Mother”). Chapter Three compares and studies the moral and spiritual cores of these series that are ultimately the foundations that propel and enable the child warriors to triumph over their enemies.

An investigation is here made into the worlds of Narnia and Hogwarts where an offer of consolation and escape is presented to children who have been affected by war. The child warrior characters are examined—whose agency through violence propels them to heroism—and finally, the moral and spiritual cores of the two series are studied. The varying aspects of these series are looked at through the lens of children and war. Goodenough and Immel point out in their Introduction, “Children will always be hostages to fortune” (15). Because children are hostages to fortune, they are subjected to fear, anxiety, and dread, among other emotions; however, they need not be trapped in these emotions as long as they delve into literature that helps them to create a safe haven in which to escape and evolve and therein discover moral child warrior models to empower them.

CHAPTER I:
FANTASY WORLDS

Hope, like the gleaming taper's light
Adorns and cheers our way;
And still, as darker grows the night,
Emits a brighter ray.
—Oliver Goldsmith (*The Captivity*)

The genre and settings of the Narnia and Harry Potter series are key to their ability to provide hope and comfort for readers. In “Appointed Journeys: Growing Up with War Stories” Maria Tatar states, “What becomes clear . . . is that stories can serve as a protective layer, building intimacy and warmth. The bomb shelter may be the first line of physical defense, but reading provides an emotional sanctuary. . .” (240). The Narnia and Harry Potter series provide this protective sanctuary through their layered fantasy structures, and thereby offer readers a chance to create their own imaginative space, a safe haven from which to confront, escape, and process the horrors of the real world, described by Tolkien as, “hunger, thirst, poverty, pain, sorrow, injustice, death,” just to name a few (83). Tatar stresses the importance of the use of the fantasy genre to provide or create these safe havens:

Beginning at home, a site of danger, distress, and trauma, the fairy tale takes advantage of the ‘liberating potential of the fantastic’ to produce a second home, one that functions as a place of permanent safety and security (Zipes 1983, 170-92). Danger, distress, and trauma are located, not in the here and now but in ‘once upon a time,’ at a vast remove from

reality . . . Fantasy allows children to enter other worlds, where they encounter desires and fears—for which they may not yet have names As they navigate a world of mystery and magic, they explore an alternate reality that creates a certain friction with real life but also models what could be. (242)

As fantasy worlds removed from reality, Narnia and Hogwarts help create safe emotional sanctuaries for readers, in spite of the fact that they are not safe places for the fictional characters. The novels achieve this goal by beginning the stories in real world settings similar to that of the readers. From there the plot moves into a secondary world, a fantasy environment in which anything and everything is possible. Because these spaces are well rounded and believable, they entice and draw readers into the book. This invitation allows readers to enter a space where they may embrace a newfound freedom, which enables them to confront their own very real issues, all within a safely distanced haven of hope.

In order to clarify the definition of a safe haven, the layers of the novels must be clearly defined. The first layer is the “real world” of the readers or what I call “extratextual reality.” The extratextual reality is the tangible world in which the child readers actually live, and begin their reading journeys, and the reality in which their pain, trauma and memories exist. The next layer is the “primary world,” or the world in which the novels begin. This primary world is not a fantastic one, but a setting that often mirrors the extratextual reality of the readers, creating opportunities for a deeper level of identification between the readers and the story.² The third layer of the novels is what I

² Tolkien uses the term “primary world” to refer to our “real world” or what I have delineated as “extratextual reality,”

term the “secondary world.”³ These are the fantasy realms to which the child characters in the novels are magically transported—the finely crafted arenas of Narnia and Hogwarts.

The secondary world layer is crucial, as it displaces readers into a fantasy environment where the child characters, in the midst of turmoil and war, are able to achieve empowerment as a result of the imminent danger they must face and overcome through their newfound strength and courage. As these characters overcome conflicts, which can often mirror the child reader’s real world circumstances and fears, the readers are presented with fantasy role models by which he or she may learn to develop confidence, coping skills, and hope.

The final, and most important layer of these novels does not exist on the written page, but in the minds of the readers. It is the safe haven—the place where readers cocoon themselves in an “imaginative reading space.” Tolkien says:

Children are capable, of course, of literary belief, when the story-maker’s art is good enough to produce it. That state of mind has been called “willing suspension of disbelief.” But this does not seem to me a good description of what happens. What really happens is that the story-maker . . . makes a Secondary World which your mind can enter. Inside it, what he relates is “true”: it accords with the laws of that world. You therefore believe it, while you are, as it were, inside. (36-37)

This imaginative reading space is the ultimate layer of the reading experience, the true safe haven, wherein children traumatized by war can open themselves to an appointed journey, lessons can be learned, and hope obtained.

³ Tolkien uses the term “secondary world” to refer to the entire world of the novel, whether the setting is reality or fantasy.

Fantasy stories can change the way young readers relate to themselves and the world, and the fact that the Narnia and Harry Potter series are of the fantasy genre is essential to their successful creation of hope. In “From Elfland to Poughkeepsie,” Ursula Le Guin suggests that reading fantasy literature is like psychoanalysis and that “*it will change you*” (90). This intrinsic change is detailed in “On Fairy-Stories,” in which Tolkien emphasizes the importance of the fantasy genre in facilitating Recovery, Escape, and Consolation for readers.

Recovery is, “a regaining of a clear view . . . seeing things as we are meant to see them—as things apart from ourselves. We need, in any case, to clean our windows; so that the things seen clearly may be freed from the drab blur of triteness or familiarity” (77). All of the individual elements in the worlds of Narnia and Hogwarts are not necessarily new, and in fact, to many people, riding on trains, attending boarding school, taking exams, and arguing with siblings are mundane, everyday issues. However, in a fantasy world, mundane realities take on new meaning when coupled with the fantastical.

Tolkien next defines the Escape aspect of fantasy, an important element in the development of readers’ imaginative reading spaces:

There are also other and more profound ‘escapisms’ that have always appeared in fairy-tale and legend. There are other things more grim and terrible to fly from than the noise, stench, ruthlessness, and extravagance of the internal combustion engine. There are hunger, thirst, poverty, pain, sorrow, injustice, death . . . from which fairy stories offer a sort of Escape, and . . . offer a kind of satisfaction and Consolation. (83)

Furthermore, Tolkien explains that fantasy provides assistance with “the oldest and deepest desire, the Great Escape: the Escape from Death” (85). This is the beauty of the fantasy genre. Traumatized children who feel scared or helpless can escape into stories and there find courage and hope. Escaping into the medieval-esque world of talking beasts in Narnia, or the magical halls of Hogwarts, can free children, if only momentarily, from their extratextual reality of ugliness and heartbreak.

Tolkien emphasized that the greatest joy in fairy stories must come from his third requirement: Consolation. Here he asserts that the reassurance and safety ensured by the happy ending of a fairy story is the fantasy’s highest function. Bettelheim suggests, “Without such encouraging conclusions, the child, after listening to the story, would feel that there is indeed no hope of extricating himself from the despairs of his life” (144). This Consolation offers readers the chance to imagine that the happy ending of the story can be translated into reality, giving them the “joy of deliverance” (Tolkien 86). Filmer-Davies says in “On Fantasy Stories”:

Stories which provide these elements provide for their readers a sense of safety and security to be found in story if nowhere else. In today’s troubled world, there are many instances of psychological practitioners using works of fantasy to empower young readers whose domestic situations are dysfunctional; in such cases, the provision of Escape, Recovery, and Consolation by fantasy stories becomes a most practical outworking of the usual benefits of reading. The element of hope is missing from many aspects of contemporary life; and it might be postulated that the high suicide rates for young males correlate with the

statistical records that they read less often and less well than do young females. (65)

Both series of novels end after horrific battles, but conclude with Consolation, the welcome resolution of joy fulfilled. The Recovery, Escape, and Consolation aspects of fantasy described by Tolkien, found in both series, enables them to be vehicles capable of ushering children trapped in traumatic or helpless situations, such as war, into their own safe and necessary havens where they may find comfort and hope.

The displacement within the novels from the primary world to the secondary world is an important step in creating a safe haven of the readers' imaginative reading spaces. Both Rowling and Lewis begin their protagonists' adventures in the primary world of England from which the children (or child) are taken by surprise and flung into the secondary fantasy worlds of Narnia and Hogwarts. At first, the characters find refuge from their primary world troubles in the secondary worlds, and this encourages readers to dive deeper into the literature and become comfortable in their imaginative reading spaces. As the stories progress, the secondary worlds become dangerous places for the characters, which enables readers to face trials and tribulations alongside the characters from a distanced space.

The Narnia books quickly displace the characters from their primary world into the secondary magical land of Narnia. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is set during WWII and the Pevensie children have been removed from their London home because of the German air-raids. From the beginning, the fact that the novel is set during a period of war in the primary world presents an opportunity for readers who have been affected by war to identify with the characters. The Pevensie children are sent to stay

with an elderly professor in his large, old house, and while playing hide and seek, Lucy, the youngest sibling, hides in a wardrobe. The wardrobe, of course, is the singular wardrobe of the title—the portal into Narnia:

And then she saw that there was a light ahead of her; not a few inches away where the back of the wardrobe ought to have been, but a long way off. Something cold and soft was falling on her. A moment later she found that she was standing in the middle of a wood at night-time with snow under her feet and snowflakes falling through the air.

Lucy felt a little frightened, but she felt very inquisitive and excited as well. She looked back over her shoulder, and there, between the dark tree-trunks she could still see the open doorway of the wardrobe and even catch a glimpse of the empty room from which she had set out. (13)

This important move from primary world to secondary world introduces readers to fictional characters presented as ordinary children, coming from a world not unlike their own. The familiarity of their primary world and their humanity allows the child readers to more easily identify with these budding heroes.

This displacement also paves the way for Tolkien's Recovery aspect of fantasy, and because the characters are from the primary world, everything new and exciting they experience by entering the secondary world can be experienced by readers as well, creating an opportunity for the secondary world to be fully described through the fresh viewpoint of the fictional character. As Lucy journeys into Narnia and, "[feels] a little frightened, but she felt very inquisitive and excited as well," readers are encouraged to also become inquisitive and excited about this new world into which they too are

journeying (113). While a real war is raging in the primary world of Lucy and her siblings, the secondary world of Narnia soon reveals forces of evil unique to the fantasy realm. In the primary world, torn by World War II, the child characters are powerless to change anything, but in Narnia, they gain an agency and opportunity to fight against, and overthrow, evil. As child readers follow the fictional characters on their journey, they observe these new role models finding their own innate courage and using it to win battles for the forces of good, and this offers readers an opportunity for discovery concerning their own agency and power.

Characters in the Harry Potter series are likewise displaced from their primary world of England into the secondary world of Hogwarts. Harry Potter is born and becomes an orphan during the First Wizarding War, a major conflict lasting over a decade which marked the reign of the Dark Lord, Voldemort. Written during the rise of terrorism, the Harry Potter novels echo the fear and uncertainty that permeates a society at war with terrorists. Harry's uncle, Sirius Black, explains the horror of the First Wizarding War:

Imagine that Voldemort's powerful now. You don't know who his supporters are, you don't know who's working for him and who isn't; you know he can control people so that they do terrible things without being able to stop themselves. You're scared for yourself, and your family, and your friends. Every week, news comes of more deaths, more disappearances, more torturing . . . Terrors everywhere . . . panic . . . confusion . . . that's how it used to be. (*Goblet* 526-527)

Harry is born into a terrifying world at war, and as such, his character can strike a note of understanding and identification in the hearts of traumatized child readers affected by war. He is not thrust into the world of Hogwarts abruptly; however, his introduction to the wizarding world is quite sudden and unexpected. One ordinary day Harry goes to fetch the mail and spies a letter for himself: “The envelope was thick and heavy, made of yellowish parchment, and the address was written in emerald-green ink. There was no stamp” (34). However, the Dursleys thwart Harry’s attempts to open the letter, and the many letters that come afterward. Eventually, the Dursleys take Harry and flee to a shack, reachable only by boat. There Harry finally learns of his acceptance into Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Hagrid, the half-giant groundskeeper of Hogwarts arrives, and despite the outcries from the Dursleys, the moment of discovery comes:

‘STOP! I FORBID YOU!’ yelled Uncle Vernon in panic.

Aunt Petunia gave a gasp of horror.

‘Ah, go boil year heads, both of yeh,’ said Hagrid. “Harry—yer a wizard.’ (*Sorcerer* 50)

Furthermore, Hagrid tells Harry the truth about his parents’ death, as well as the facts about the evil Voldemort, Harry’s lightning bolt scar, and his notoriety as “the boy who lived.” Although Harry has yet to arrive in the new world he is about to enter, this is Harry’s passage through the wardrobe, so to speak. In this case, it was necessary that the secondary world intrude upon the primary world, to ensure that Harry does indeed pass through into the magical realm of Hogwarts. As readers learn with Harry that he is a wizard, a connection with his character is formed, and child readers have access to the Recovery aspect of fantasy that Tolkien deemed necessary.

For the Escape aspect of fantasy to work for readers, the secondary world must be believable. Ann Swinfen states in her book, *In Defence of Fantasy*, “the secondary world, like all fantasy, requires a firm basis in primary world reality” (76). This basis of reality in the Narnia and Harry Potter books is grounded by the fact that the central characters are from the primary world. Beyond this, however, Swinfen suggests that there are certain qualities necessary in the creation of a secondary world to give it an inner consistency of reality (75). These qualities include “involving the natural world, history and legend, culture, language and literature, religion and belief” (91). The worlds of Narnia and Hogwarts are convincingly constructed by those very details.

Although the two series deal differently with the natural world, both include this important quality required by Swinfen. The world of Narnia is permeated with detailed descriptions of nature. With few exceptions, the creatures the children come upon and befriend are animals, either real or mythical, but easily recognized by child readers. Rarely are scenes situated indoors in Narnia. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, nature itself is the first indication that not all is well in Narnia. The evil White Witch has come to power and engulfed Narnia in an endless winter, but Aslan returns, bringing spring with him. In “Spoiled Goodness: Lewis’s Concept of Nature,” Kathryn Ann Lindskoog states:

Lewis’s wonder at the fresh exuberance of nature is expressed in his first description of the real Narnia, as the great thaw occurs in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. The sudden rejuvenation of the forest is recorded with great delicacy and sensuous detail. Finally, as the trees begin to come

alive, the larches and birches in green, the laburnums in gold, a dwarf stops and announces with horror. ‘This is no thaw; this is spring.’ (97-98)

Fulfilling one of Swinfen’s qualities for an inner consistency of reality, nature plays an important role in the otherworld of Narnia and almost becomes a character itself. The magical descriptions of what lies on the other side of the wardrobe are so tantalizing that readers are eager to be transported through the portal into Narnia and the adventure waiting beyond. All of the Narnia books are similar in their reverence for, and Lewis’s symbolic use of, nature. When Evil prevails, endless winter, or death, is the result. Symbolic of Good (and Christ), Aslan saves the day, and a joyous rebirth of the world—spring—occurs. Within this easily understood natural landscape, confused children are offered hope: winter (war and its fallout) will not last forever; spring (peace and/or normalcy) will always return.

The natural world is considered differently in the Harry Potter series. In contrast, these books take place primarily inside Hogwarts; however, the grounds of Hogwarts, especially the Forbidden Forest, are the sites of many significant scenes in which nature plays an important part, both in Harry’s journey to becoming a warrior hero, and in the world of magical fantasy. While there are conventional animals in the Hogwarts world such as dogs, cats, frogs, owls, rats, and other pets, the world also contains dragons, unicorns, centaurs, monster spiders, and other magical creatures. Many exciting battles actually take place either against or at the side of these otherworldly beings.

Interestingly, the atmosphere of the story is often set, not by nature outside, but rather by how Rowling brings nature inside Hogwarts, specifically through the ceiling of

the Great Hall, which reflects the weather outside the castle. In *A Guide to the Harry Potter Novels*, Julia Eccleshare says:

[T]he detail within the Great Hall provides a valuable emotional indicator. On Harry's arrival at Hogwarts and first sighting of the Great Hall it is calm and benign with its own stars glittering in it. As Christmas is celebrated . . . it produces a gentle fall of soft, dry snow. A quite different mood is created on Harry's first night back at school at the beginning of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* when the Great Hall imitates the storm raging outside which has already soaked Harry, Ron and Hermione and presages the far greater danger that threatens Harry in this story. (53)

When full-blown war ensues in the final novel, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, most of the action takes place inside the castle, emphasizing that while nature plays an important part in this world, it is the inside spaces that define the story. Schools, homes, and government buildings provide more appropriate settings for novels in which terrorism is the predominant type of warfare encountered, creating the inner consistency of reality that Swinfen suggests is necessary for a believable fantasy, which is, again, crucial for child readers to inhabit their imaginative reading spaces.

Swinfen's next requirement for an authentic otherworld is that it have its own history and legends, which abound in both series. These aspects of fantasy are important because, as Swinfen purports, "The historical dimension of a secondary world leads naturally to a definition of the period of culture against which the narrative is set . . . authors of secondary world fantasies tend to base their cultures on those known to Western Europe between the Bronze and the Middle Ages" (82). Narnian culture is

medieval in pattern throughout the series. Taken as a whole, *The Chronicles of Narnia* give a detailed history of the Narnian world, starting from creation and ending with the destruction of Narnia. However, this destruction is, in a way, a new creation as the children enter a third world, the “true” Narnia.

As mentioned by Swinfen, legends are another avenue of historical placement for an otherworld and abound throughout the Narnia series. Referenced in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *Prince Caspian*, and *The Horse and His Boy*, according to Narnian legend, “The Emperor Over The Sea,” is the father of Aslan. Supposedly, his divinity was present before the creation of Narnia, and he created the laws governing that world. There are also legends of a Great Serpent that is really a Witch Queen, and the Pevensie children themselves become legendary after they return to their world at the end of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. In *Prince Caspian*, Caspian says that he has heard about the old Kings and Queens of Narnia in Narnian legends. Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy Pevensie, common, easy-to-relate-to characters who walk alongside readers into the secondary world of Narnia, become extraordinary heroes, and part of the world itself, after their bravery and triumph against evil is recorded in history and legend.

The Harry Potter series also details a rich history full of legends. Ghosts and spirits roam the halls of Hogwarts, eager to share their stories. The Sorcerer’s Stone, treasured object of the first novel, was a legend. The Chamber of Secrets is the titular legend that features prominently in the second novel of the series. The History of Magic is taught by the ghost of Professor Cuthbert Binns, who, according to Hogwarts folklore, has failed to notice he is dead: he simply got up from his chair in the staff-room one morning and left his body behind. Hermione asks, “Professor, I was wondering if you

could tell us anything about the Chamber of Secrets” to which Binns answers, “My subject is History of Magic . . . I deal with *facts*, Miss Granger, not myths and legends” (*Chamber* 149). Throughout the Harry Potter series there are so many instances of detailed descriptions of the history and legends of Hogwarts, that they are, in fact, too numerous to list. Because the narrative includes history and legends, an inner consistency of reality is achieved, creating an otherworld that is filled with magic as well as believability.

Another requirement, according to Swinfen, for an inner consistency of reality in fantasy novels is culture, which can also be found in both series. The culture throughout the Narnia series is mostly medieval. Swinfen says,

despite its long span of history, Narnian culture is of a medieval type throughout. Weapons are swords, spears, knives, and bows and arrows. Light armor is worn, and battles are fought on foot or on horseback. The Calormenes use curved scimitars and ride warhorses trained for battle. Dwarfs fight with axes or bows, giants with clubs, while the Talking Beasts use their natural weapons of claws, hooves or teeth. (82)

Additionally, after the children are made royalty, they live in the castle of Cair Paravel, and ships driven by sails and oars do long distance travel. Setting the culture of Narnia in the far flung past is beneficial because it causes a farther separation from the readers’ present, thus creating an even safer environment in their imaginative reading spaces in which to experience Recovery, Escape, and Consolation.

The culture of Hogwarts is less simply defined. In “Philosopher’s Stone to Resurrection Stone,” Kate Behr suggests, “The wizard world exists only in relation to the

‘real’ world, echoing/mirroring all its customs and discourse, and thus reflects our Muggle world—transformed by narrative” (261). She goes on to say,

Although the wizarding world seems to be the shadow side of the Muggle, mimicking its concerns, bureaucratic structure, and weaknesses, narrative transformation makes it more concrete than the culture whose discourse, traditions, and customs it mirrors . . . Magic does not create an egalitarian society, however; the social and financial differences between the Weasleys and the Malfoys mirror class divides in the Muggle world. (261)

Therefore, the culture in Hogwarts is basically that of modern British society, with a bit of medieval and Victorian culture thrown in. Hogwarts is housed in a castle, creating a medieval-like setting from the start. As Harry ventures into Hogwarts for the first time he notices, “The entrance hall was so big you could have fit the whole of the Dursley’s house in it. The stone walls were lit with flaming torches . . .” (*Sorcerer* 113). Later “the Gryffindor first years followed Percy through the chattering crowds, out of the Great Hall, and up the marble staircase . . . [and] twice Percy led them through doorways hidden behind sliding panels and hanging tapestries” (130). In addition, the use of Latin, spells, curses, dragons, and swords harkens back to the medieval era. In “Dumbledore in the Watchtower,” Susan Reynolds suggests of Rowling, “She merges two worlds and reveals herself as the ultimate neo-Victorian writer. She composes a postmodern version for a Victorian bildungsroman that evolves into a contemporary commentary about the education and supervision of orphans” (273). Interestingly, the Hogwarts secondary world remains intertwined with the primary world, as opposed to the adventures in Narnia, which remain completely separated from the primary world of England in which

they begin. This becomes frighteningly apparent toward the end of the Harry Potter series as Voldemort and his Death Eaters begin invading and causing destruction in the primary world of England. While the Narnian child warriors fight to save the world of Narnia, the children of Hogwarts fight to save the whole world, both their secondary world of Hogwarts, as well as the primary world of modern England.

Why does Lewis separate his secondary world more completely than Rowling? Perhaps the answer lies in the type of war the authors had personally experienced that influenced their writing. Not long before the publication of the Narnia books, WWII had ravaged England. The children reading these books may have required a safe haven more distanced from reality than Rowling's generation of readers facing the continuing aftermath of the War on Terror. The war experienced by Rowling's readers is a new breed of conflict, and while most children in the western world have not been directly involved in a terrorist attack, as evidenced by 9-11, terrorism is possible anywhere at any time. A clandestine attack is unforeseeable, much as the return of Voldemort is unforeseeable at the beginning of the Harry Potter series. Perhaps because the Second Wizarding War is interwoven between the primary and secondary worlds as the series progresses, benefit may be achieved by faithful readers following the series, who have come to view Harry and his friends as role models. Through the narrative, these readers have the opportunity to stretch the boundaries of their imaginative reading spaces as they cross the borders of the secondary world, into the primary world. This invasion into a land which perhaps mirrors the child readers' own reality, may create a chance for them to experience a closer confrontation with warfare than when it occurs in a secondary world at a safer, more buffered distance.

The culture sculpted in the worlds of Narnia and Hogwarts is highly developed and enriched through the use of language and literature. Swinfen notes, “An essential element in the definition of culture is language, and its corollary, literature” (85). Although Lewis did not create new languages for his world, there are different accents, styles, and dialects of English. For example, Calormen is an empire south of Narnia featured in *A Horse and His Boy* and *The Last Battle*. The inhabitants use a formal dialect and are often quoting poets: “Another poet has likewise said, ‘He who attempts to deceive the judicious is already baring his own back for the scourge.’ do not load your aged mouth with falsehoods. This boy is manifestly no son of yours, for your cheek is as dark as mine but the boy is fair and white like the accursed by beautiful barbarians who inhabit the remote north” (*Horse* 5). In *Lord of the Elves and Eldils: Fantasy and Philosophy in C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien*, Richard Purtill states:

Lewis’ Calormenes talk a stately dialect reminiscent of some English translations or imitations of Persian or Arabian authors. Now if Narnia were like our world, the Calormenes would presumably speak a different language than the Narnians; this is what Lewis wants to suggest by his use of the dialect, at the same time avoiding complications unnecessary in a story of the sort he is writing. (44-45)

There are also “talking beasts” that use sophisticated verbal communication while regular animals do not. The literature of Narnia comes in the shape of oral tales, records and messages sent in writing. One Narnian artifact that mysteriously combines language and literature is the stone table. Created by Aslan’s father, the Emperor Over the Sea, the stone structure was carved with numerous symbols and characters. The White Witch

claimed the characters on it describe the rules of the Deep Magic from the Dawn of Time. Here we find the unknown original language of Narnia transcribed for eternity.

On the other hand, the world of Hogwarts contains five languages that are specific to the wizarding world: Parseltongue, Gobbledegook, Mermish, Latin, and Runes. Parseltongue is the language of serpents and those who can converse with them. An individual who can speak Parseltongue is known as a Parselmouth. Gobbledegook is the native language of the Goblins. Mermish is the native language of the Merpeople. Latin is considered a dead language by Muggles, while wizards use this language in their everyday life. Latin has a strong influence in wizarding culture, arts and rhetoric. Wizards use a kind of mutation of the Latin language when designing new spells. Lessons in Ancient Runes are given at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry and students are taught how to identify and translate them. Languages from the primary world are included in the secondary world of Hogwarts as well. There are seven known magical schools, including Hogwarts, and some of these schools are located in foreign countries such as France, Brazil, and Norway. When the characters come into contact with these students, their languages become part of the world of Hogwarts as well. The existence of these languages creates well rounded and believable secondary world, which is necessary for the inner consistency of reality to be achieved.

In addition to a plethora of languages, the literature of the wizarding world is extensive, as well. Students of Hogwarts are required to buy many textbooks such as *Advanced Potion-Making* by Libatius Borage, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* by Newt Scamander, and *A History of Magic* by Bathilda Bagshot. Other literature mentioned in the series includes letters, comics, diaries, periodicals, plays, reports,

pamphlets, and more. The secondary worlds of Hogwarts and Narnia are filled with references to language and literature, enriching the cultures therein. Overall, the cultures depicted in the Narnia and Harry Potter series craft a realistic environment for the secondary world—a requirement for the formation of a successful fantasy—and ultimately the construction of a successful imaginative reading spaces for young readers.

Finally, Swinfen requires a secondary world to have aspects of religion and belief in order to be believable. The backbones of the two series are morality and faith, and these elements go further than just creating a believable secondary world. These particular requirements of an inner consistency of reality are the wellspring of hope within the novels, and the child warriors battling within the secondary worlds can be considered good role models for traumatized child readers because of the strengthening presence of these virtues within the characters.

The Narnia books are widely considered to be a Christian religious allegory and therefore, are laced with religion and belief. There are two major belief systems in Narnia, Calormene and Narnian. The official belief system of Calormen, an imperial country in the Narnian world, is Calormene—a polytheistic faith. The patriarch god, Tash, plays the biggest role in the series, especially in *The Last Battle*. While Narnian is not an organized religion, per se, most inhabitants seem to have faith in Aslan as the ruling spirit or god. This religion mirrors Christianity, with Aslan's sacrifice and rebirth symbolizing the death and resurrection of Christ.

While religion itself is rarely mentioned in the Harry Potter books, God is mentioned throughout the series in exclamations such as, “Thank God you inherited your mother's brains” (*Hallows* 756). Also both Muggles and Wizards sing Christmas carols

and churches are mentioned throughout. In *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, Harry and Hermione discover the grave of Dumbledore's mother and sister on which Dumbledore has had inscribed "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (325). This is a biblical quote from Matthew 6:21. Harry and Hermione then come upon the grave of Harry's parents and on that tombstone too is an epitaph, another word-for-word quotation from the Bible, 1 Corinthians 15:26: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (328). The overriding theme of goodness prevailing dominates in the world of Hogwarts. Formerly a Harry detractor, Linda Keller of the Christian group, Focus on the Family, reviewed *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* saying,

In Rowling's world, characters embrace many of the same values Christians in the real world espouse. But as Harry, Ron and Hermione struggle to choose between right and wrong, and sort out gray areas, it is the human heart that decides, rather than a divine authority or maxim. Still, *Deathly Hallows* has a feel for spirituality that comes across as very believable at times. It is even sprinkled with Scripture. (qtd in Stephens 20)

Therefore, although religion is much less of a focus in the Harry Potter novels than in the Narnia books, Christianity is subtly present, and morality underpins much of the important decision making by the characters.

According to Emily Griesinger's article, "The Search for 'Deeper Magic,'" Christian eschatology seeks to "answer the questions, what can I know about tomorrow, about the day after tomorrow, and on into eternity? What can I hope for?" (320). These are the questions that child readers face, particularly those affected by war. Children

dealing with war, either in reality or as reflected in a series such as Narnia or Harry Potter, are also facing their own mortality and the question of what lies beyond death.

Both authors are professed Christians, and Rowling seems to agree with Lewis, who “saw the glimpsing of otherworlds as a form of imaginative activity that nurtures hope, both for dealing with the present and taking hold of the future, which for Christian believers means eternity, Heaven, and Christ”(Griesinger 322). For believers and non-believers alike, the increased dimension provided to the worlds of Hogwarts and Narnia via religion and morality creates an even deeper level of realism. This is the element that introduces goodness and love as part of the ideal makeup of these worlds, and because of it, the characters are imbued with morality and faith that enable them to be excellent role models for child readers.

Endowed with rich and deeply embroidered details, the secondary worlds of Narnia and Hogwarts are complex tapestries, which creates a true inner consistency of reality within the novels. This consistency is extremely important because, as Swinfen says, “The inhabitants and affairs of a secondary world will awaken an interest in the reader only if he can feel some underlying comprehension of and sympathy for them” (77). Because the secondary worlds are so vividly drawn and expertly crafted, readers seem to have no trouble understanding and conceptualizing the scenes portrayed within. Whether they have been traumatized by war or need escape for another reason, children around the world try to find the real entrance to Hogwarts or Narnia. Many a real-life wardrobe has been searched in an effort to find Narnia, and London is flooded with tourists trying to find places from the Harry Potter novels. In fact in 2009, “British Tours gave 200 to 250 Harry Potter tours to about 1,000 people last year,” said Doll-Steinberg,

“About 600 people went on the Stonehenge tour” (Ho). Rowling herself has said, “I get letters from children addressed to Professor Dumbledore [headmaster at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry], and it’s not a joke, begging to be let into Hogwarts, and some of them are really sad. Because they want it to be true so badly they’ve convinced themselves it’s true” (Jones). These are truly worlds children want to escape into, and thus Tolkien’s “Escape” requirement of fantasy is fulfilled.

Finally, Tolkien suggests that in order for a fantasy novel to be a success, Consolation must be offered to readers, and this is especially true when considering the safe haven children torn by war seek in the pages of the Narnia and Harry Potter books. In fact, he claims, “Far more important is the Consolation of the Happy Ending. Almost I would venture to assert that all complete fairy-stories must have it . . . It denies universal final defeat . . . giving a fleeting glimpse of Joy, Joy beyond the walls of the world, poignant as grief” (85-86). Children of trauma desperately need to glimpse that joy and the hope that comes with it. This Happy Ending Consolation is critical for the novel to be a success; after all, if in the end the safe haven provided by the novels proves as unsafe as child readers’ extratextual reality, then the opportunity for an uplifting infusion of hope may be lost.

In *The Uses of Enchantment*, Bruno Bettelheim says, “Consolation requires that the right order of the world is restored; this means punishment of the evildoer, tantamount to the elimination of evil from the hero’s world—and then nothing stands any longer in the way of the hero’s living happily ever after” (144). Both series, though filled with violence and death, have this all-important Consolation/Happy Ending. The last book in the Narnia series, *The Last Battle*, depicts a great war in Narnia. Many are killed,

and at the end Aslan appears and takes all of the animals and people who have been loyal to him into a new world. The old Narnia is destroyed, and is grieved by the children.

However, as they journey “further up and further in,” Lord Digory explains:

Listen, Peter. When Aslan said you could never go back to Narnia, he meant the Narnia you were thinking of. But that was not the real Narnia. That had a beginning and an end. It was only a shadow or copy of the real Narnia which has always been here and always will be here: just as our own world, England and all, is only a shadow or copy of something in Aslan’s real world. You need not mourn over Narnia, Lucy. All of the old Narnia that mattered, all the dear creatures, have been drawn into the real Narnia through the Door. And of course it is different; as different as a real thing is from a shadow or as waking life is from a dream. (169-170)

The children have entered Heaven, if you will, and have, in fact, all perished in the primary world in a railway accident. At the very end of the novel the narrator states, “And for us this is the end of all the stories, and we can most truly say that they all lived happily ever after” (184).

While the Pevensie children and friends have entered an eternal state of bliss, there is the question of whether or not child readers may share the consensus that this is, indeed, a happy ending. Children do not always have a clear understanding of either death or an afterlife, they only know that a beloved person has left them. When faced with the loss of treasured characters they have followed so faithfully, it is not a far stretch to imagine that perhaps in spite of Lewis’s intentions, the conclusion of his series is not always perceived as ‘happy’ by all readers. However, because the characters live on in a

beautiful and wondrous new secondary world, I find it more likely that traumatized readers can gain hope from this ending that someday they will be reunited with loved ones in Heaven, and that in the end, goodness will prevail and only beauty will remain.

More than fifty characters die at the end of the Harry Potter series during a vicious battle against Voldemort's army, and yet the series still ends on a happy, uplifting note. Would this be possible if Harry, Ron, or Hermione had died, as did the main children in the Narnia book? The majority of the deaths in the Harry Potter novels are those of secondary characters, some quite beloved, but there are a few losses of main characters as well, such as the death of Dumbledore. However, the happy ending is still available, for when Harry defeats Voldemort and is honored by the applause of the previous head masters and mistresses of Hogwarts via their portraits, including Dumbledore, it would seem the child readers are being assured that the great wizard does indeed, in a sense, live on.

In the Epilogue, set nineteen years after the final defeat of Voldemort, Harry has married Ginny Weasley and they are seeing their three children off on the train to Hogwarts. A married Ron and Hermione, and their two children, who are also setting off for Hogwarts, join the Potters. The last line in the novel reads, "The scar had not pained Harry for nineteen years. All was well" (*Hallows* 759). Ximena C. Gallardo and C. Jason Smith analyze this happy ending in "Happily Ever After: Harry Potter and the Quest for the Domestic," and state that it is "not as much about the hero as about the *future* this hero, Harry Potter, has helped to create" (105). This happy ending offers children hope that they too can change the future. As Griesinger states,

Specifically, *Harry Potter* articulates the hope that goodness will triumph over evil, that wrongs done to the small and the weak will be righted, that courage, loyalty, and friendship will overcome hatred, bigotry, and fear. We gain hope from *Harry Potter*—hope that in an age where moral goodness does not seem that important and evil is on the rise—that one little nerdy person, not terribly smart or good-looking, can make a difference. (330)

Therein lies a hope offered to readers, a hope that they too can make a difference and experience a “happily ever after.”

Narnia and Hogwarts are secondary worlds full of war and danger; however, from their safe havens of imaginative reading spaces, traumatized children can observe inspiring child warrior characters face the difficulties head on. The distancing caused by the creation of secondary fantasy worlds further enables readers to deal with their feelings concerning difficult circumstances in their extratextual reality. This is successfully accomplished because the worlds are so detailed and smartly crafted that they can facilitate Recovery, Escape, and Consolation in readers, and attempt to re-animate hope.

However, in order for readers to become encouraged and empowered by the stories, there must be a conflict to overcome. The conflict in both series is the rise of evil and resulting war, which mirrors the extratextual reality of the authors, as well as readers. Therefore, while the novels can cultivate a safe haven for readers’ minds and imaginations to search for respite, the characters within the novels are not experiencing the same degree of safety. Those characters prevail in harrowing circumstances in order

to give readers a sense of empowerment. If a beloved character in a book can overcome what seems an impossible obstacle, this provides an empowering example to readers, and perhaps influences what they might be able to accomplish in their own, very real lives.

The conflicts experienced by child readers in their extratextual realities are translated into the novels they are reading; thus, the books are able to help assuage trauma or confusion the children may have. Child readers can face the very real problems that engulf their lives from a safely distanced space, made possible by use of the fantasy genre. The troubles of twentieth-century Britain are reflected in the lands of Narnia and Hogwarts. In “Ghosts, Gremlins, and ‘the War on Terror’ in Children’s Blitz Fiction,” Kristine Miller says, “Magnifying and generalizing present-day problems in the imaginative space of history or fantasy, children’s war literature trains young readers to make at a distance the same meaningful connections . . . that more experienced readers can make at close range” (273). These meaningful connections are made possible in the Narnia and Harry Potter books, because on some level they magnify and reflect the societal problems with which child readers are familiar and need help understanding. The coping strategies, agency, and perseverance demonstrated by the child warrior characters give the series “potential as an emotional survival strategy based on its ‘anticipation of a better world’” (Haase 361). Through the influence and guidance of the fictional role models in these novels, young survivors of war are given the opportunity to process their experiences and build personal coping methods for the future. Using their heroes’ examples, readers are enabled to find their way out of the darkness and to a vision of a brighter tomorrow, filled with hope.

Children reading the Narnia books when they were originally published would have experienced the trauma of World War II. As Miller explains, “The bombing of Britain during the Second World War damaged or destroyed 3,500,000 homes, killed at least 60,000 civilians and injured more than 86,000 people on the home front (Dear and Foot 1136). In an effort to protect children from this violence Britain evacuated more women and children than any other embattled Allied or Axis nation” (272). These children escaped immediate danger, but what kind of toll did it take on their minds and hearts? Miller goes on to say, “In [Lewis’s] novels, children can identify with heroes thrust into magical realms, where archetypal battles against evil reveal something more than the children are able to discover in the contemporary conflict between the Allied and Axis powers” (276). In the world of Narnia, child evacuees could find a path to creating their own safe haven in which to process their fears and rebuild their hope.

Likewise, the Harry Potter novels also address issues of its time. In “Specters of Thatcherism: Contemporary British Culture in J.K. Rowling’s Harry Potter Series,” Karin E. Westman says, “Rowling’s books and their wizarding world offer not simply a fantasy of Escape, but a radical way to explore very real issues in contemporary readers’ lives” (308). The evil Lord Voldemort attempts to invade and conquer the wizarding world with an army of his followers. By the end of the series he extends his imperial desires to include the Muggle, or primary world. His encroachment results in a bloody war. In “The Replication of Victorian Racial Ideology in *Harry Potter*,” Anatol points out, “[The wizarding world] serves as an accurate reflection of British society—a space where racism and xenophobia might be officially declared counterproductive and outdated, but proliferate nonetheless” (109). This statement can easily be applied to both the Harry

Potter and The Chronicles of Narnia series. As a result, the fantasy worlds of Narnia and Hogwarts were both written, and can be read through, the lenses of the wars of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Through that framework, both fantasy worlds can be seen as reflections of British society, of the primary worlds in which they begin. If the novels were to begin and end in magical, fantastical worlds, it would be difficult for child readers to make a close connection with the characters therein; however, because of the intertwining of realities in the Narnia and Harry Potter books, readers can more easily find a kinship with the characters.

An important difference between the two series lies in the fact that Lewis wrote his books within ten years after WWII, which was an entirely different England, and an entirely different audience than the one Rowling was writing for during the rise of terrorism. In *Radical Children's Literature*, Kimberley Reynolds looks at Harry Potter through this lens, and suggests, "from its light-hearted beginnings the [Harry Potter] series has become an important barometer of public response to post-9/11 circumstances" (144). She goes on to suggest that Voldemort "increasingly resembles a Bin Laden type," and speaks of, "the climate of uncertainty and paranoia which pervades *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* as the extent of Voldemort's network of the undead and potential martyrs becomes clear" (144). Miller echoes this conclusion and highlights the difference between war fiction of Lewis's generation and today: "Thus, even as terror proliferates, the possibilities for heroism grow: the battlefield itself has expanded after 9/11, but so too has the fictional space within which children can shape identities increasingly under siege. In our current times of almost unimaginable terror, it is perhaps more important than ever before that this imaginary 'war goes on' (Greene 322)" (282).

The worlds of Narnia and Hogwarts are indeed places children may retreat to in order to gain understanding, comfort and hope from the real, and really terrifying, worlds in which they live. Beginning as fantasies in a familiar, primary world before merging into a secondary world, these believable spaces contain an inner consistency of reality and reflect the modern world of the reader, allowing child readers to face real issues within distanced, safe havens, as they read about worlds inhabited by children able to defeat any evil that may beset them.

CHAPTER II:
CHILD WARRIOR CHARACTERS

“Writes nine-year-old Rachel Johnson, ‘The HP books have taught me that I will find my own special powers. I can’t do magic, but I can believe in myself. I can’t fly on a broomstick or become invisible, but I will stop staying I Can’t.’”

—Joy Farmer

“The Magician’s Niece”

In the Narnia and Harry Potter books, child characters find power despite their powerlessness, acquire agency, and are propelled into acts of war and onto eventual heroism. As these characters find their strength and agency, they battle, often violently, to defeat an encroaching evil, and in doing so transform from average children into extraordinary warriors: “[T]he heroes of contemporary children’s fantasies often recall the heroes of Second World War fantasies . . . the children in Lewis’s Narnia . . . the wizard-in-training Harry Potter in J.K. Rowling’s books [both] model for young readers how seemingly insignificant characters can become surprisingly powerful in times of conflict” (Miller 282). Child readers who may feel lost and insignificant themselves, especially if they have been traumatized by war, can find hope, inspiration, and role models in these child warrior characters who exhibit courage, loyalty, and other heroic virtues.

The classic hero archetype is well represented in primary and secondary characters in the Narnia series, as well as the Harry Potter books. The titular characters of

their novels, Prince Caspian and Harry Potter, must grow from inexperienced orphans into powerful young men capable of saving their worlds. Female characters Jill Pole and Hermione Granger grow from damsels-in-distress to integral agents in the war efforts that rescue Narnia and Hogwarts from oppression and evil. In “Harry Potter and Friends: Models for Psychological Resiliency,” Angelea Panos says, “Despite the challenges that they face, these characters become people who reach their potential and are able to contribute in a positive manner to society, as well as live well-adjusted and meaningful lives. Young readers can use these characters’ examples to learn about and develop resiliency in their own lives” (169). While speaking specifically about the Harry Potter novels, this statement is true of the child warrior characters in the Narnia series as well. Male and female, primary and secondary, these characters are heroic child warriors who model an encouraging resilience for child readers affected by war and trauma.

Child heroes in fairy tales are often separated or cast out from their parents, as Bettelheim has discussed: “There is no greater threat in life than that we will be deserted, left all alone” (145). This absence is necessary for the characters to step into an unsafe, unsupervised environment where they can claim their agency and establish their independence and self-reliance, for without these qualities the characters would not be able to become inspiring child warrior heroes. The successes of these fictional, parentless children may resonate within child readers, making them aware of a possible well of strength and courage within themselves. Chappell says:

through identification with Harry and his friends, young readers may come to terms with the terrors in their own lives and the ways that adults respond to them. They may choose to accept or challenge the limits they

are given, depending on their own subject position and context of real or perceived threat to their safety and wellbeing. They may also judge the usefulness of the adults around them—in terms of providing leadership—Dumbledore tells Harry that “perhaps those who are best suited to power are those who have never sought it” (DH 2007 p 718) and mitigating that danger. (290)

One of the reasons the child characters in the Narnia and Harry Potter novels are able to acquire agency and transform from ordinary children into powerful warriors is because they are without parents or parental presence. Forced to stand on their own two feet, they must look inside themselves for strength and resolve. In *Prince Caspian*, the eponymous prince is orphaned, raised by his greedy Uncle, and then must flee in order to save his life. Nothing is known of Jill Pole’s parents, except that they are absentee, as she is enrolled in an experimental and dangerous boarding school where the children are allowed to do as they please. Neither has parents that are present or influential in their lives.

In the Harry Potter series, Voldemort kills baby Harry’s magical and loving parents, leaving the child orphaned, to be raised by his cruel and non-magical aunt and uncle. Later his beloved godfather, Sirius Black, becomes Harry’s guardian and father figure, but he is killed as well. Hermione has loving parents, but when she leaves home to attend boarding school she essentially is on her own. The fact that Hermione’s parents are Muggles places them even further from the familiarity of her daily life. In “Harry Potter: Fairy Tale Prince, Real Boy, and Archetypal Hero,” M. Katherine Grimes claims, “Because young children are completely dependent for the very existence upon their

caretakers, usually their parents, their first great fear is of abandonment, or being separated from their parents in some way” (92). Through the examples of the children in the texts becoming self-sufficient and triumphing over loss and adversity without their parents at their sides, children who have lost one or both parents to war, or those who fear the loss of their caretaker, are given role models to emulate. Grimes says:

Bettelheim notes . . . that children must often go out on their own to establish their independence. ‘Being “cast out,”’ Bettelheim writes, ‘can unconsciously be experienced either as the child wishing to be rid of the parent or as his belief that the parent wants to be rid of him. The child’s being sent out into the world, or deserted in a forest, symbolizes both the parent’s wish that child become independent and the child’s desire for, or anxiety about, independence.’ [Fairy Tales] help young children cope with the fear of abandonment. (92)

Parents are absent from the lives of all the child characters previously mentioned, and additionally, all of the characters, are “cast out” from their families either literally or figuratively. Harry is cast out of the Muggle world and into the magical one of Hogwarts when he is invited to attend the school. At the end of *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince*, Harry decides to leave the safety and familiarity of Hogwarts in order to pursue Voldemort. This action proves that Harry has truly become a fully empowered young man pursuing independence and heroism. Hermione’s parents are Muggles and are rarely mentioned; however, as the war grows more dangerous, Hermione must protect her parents by erasing herself from their memories. She then, in effect, becomes an orphan. Harry and his friends spend most of their youth at Hogwarts, leaving them basically

without parental supervision or support (aside from the occasional Howler or gift delivered by owl). In order for child readers to find empowerment in these novels, it is imperative that the children portrayed find their own core of identity and strength, and thus their ability to become independent and courageous. Although they may occasionally require adult assistance or advice along the way, in the end, the child characters must save the day (or the world) — not the adults around them.

Just how does one go from being an ordinary child to the savior of the world? The children in these novels do not start as great heroes, but as normal boys and girls. Joy Farmer notes, “Both series derive their extraordinary impact precisely from having such ordinary protagonists, for when these characters prevail over adversity, they affirm the human capacity for heroism” (61). Once they are cast out and on their own, their character arc begins, and through struggles, both emotional and physical, they find a reason and a way to become warriors capable of defeating evil.

Prince Caspian, title character of the second novel in the Narnia series, is heir to the Narnian throne under Telmarine rule, and one of the greatest child warriors in all of Lewis’s Chronicles. Although he is royalty, Caspian still has many qualities of an “ordinary” child. What he craves the most (and has least) is human interaction and affection, which is what all children need and desire. About three hundred years before Prince Caspian was born, his ancestors, the Telmarines, invaded and colonized Narnia, forcing all the “Old Narnians” into hiding. Under Telmarine rule, no one believes in, or is allowed to believe in, the Old Narnia, which encompasses tales of talking animals, the Pevensie children’s reign, and Aslan. Caspian is orphaned when his Uncle Miraz kills his father in a plot to usurp the throne, and his mother dies as well. When his beloved nurse

is replaced for telling him stories of Old Narnia, Caspian finds an unexpected friend in his new tutor, Doctor Cornelius. Cornelius finishes what Caspian's nurse began, telling the young king the truth about Old Narnia, a truth which has been kept from Caspian and the rest of the Telmarines for hundreds of years.

Even as a boy, Caspian displays the wisdom and the qualities of a just king: "As a little boy he had often wondered why he disliked his aunt, Queen Prunaprisma; he now saw that it was because she disliked him. He also began to see that Narnia was an unhappy country. The taxes were high and the laws were stern and Miraz was a cruel man" (53). When Caspian is about fourteen years old, his tutor wakes him in the night and tells the boy he must flee for his life. His aunt has given birth to an heir and his Uncle Miraz will surely murder Caspian to ensure the new prince sits on the throne. Caspian rides away from the castle alone, and

though tears had come into his eyes at saying good-bye to Doctor Cornelius, he felt brave and, in a way, happy, to think that he was King Caspian riding to seek adventures, with his sword on his left hip and Queen Susan's magic horn on his right. But when day came, with a sprinkle of rain, and he looked around him and saw on every side unknown woods, wild heaths and blue mountains, he thought about how large and strange the world was and felt frightened and small. (59)

Prince Caspian has lost everything and is alone in the world. Child readers who have lost loved ones or who have been abused can perhaps identify with Caspian as he sheds tears, feeling afraid and small. Hopefully, this identification will take root with child readers following Caspian on his journey, and in the process they may find that his strength

inspires their own to grow. As Christine Klingbiel suggests, “By identifying with the hero in the story, a child can feel powerful even if he or she is not in real life. This good feeling also lasts longer than the duration of the tale; it is like a promise to the child, he or she can feel that, like the hero, he or she might be small and powerless now, but the future can hold good things” (170). Caspian begins his journey as an orphaned and emotionally neglected child, but he grows in courage, strength, and wisdom throughout the series, offering hope to child readers that they may do the same in the story of their own lives.

As Caspian makes his way through Narnia, he grows as a character and a warrior, discovering a world he never dreamed existed. In addition to the talking animals of Old Narnia he befriends, Caspian’s every experience is new and exciting:

To sleep under the stars, to drink nothing but well water and to live chiefly on nuts and wild fruit, was a strange experience for Caspian after his bed with silken sheets in a tapestried chamber at the Castle, with meals laid out on gold and silver dishes in the ante-room, and attendants ready at his call but he had never enjoyed himself more. Never had sleep been more refreshing nor food tasted more savoury, and he began already to harden and his face wore a kinglier look. (79)

Caspian matures, becoming a leader of the Narnians, and in spite of his painful childhood and frightening escape from the castle he called home, embraces his independence and successfully makes his way in a strange world. This can be encouraging for child readers who have been through crisis and have had to fight their way through similar

abandonment and loss issues. Hope can be found through the character of Caspian who “wore a kinglier look” and soon would wear the look of a warrior.

Caspian and his new animal companions raise an army to take back Narnia from the Telmarines and are promptly set upon by his greedy, murderous uncle. Miraz wages what amounts to genocide on the remaining inhabitants of Old Narnia. As Caspian and Miraz’s armies begin to battle, the violence intensifies and “there were few in Caspian’s party who had not lost blood” (88). In reference to one particularly difficult battle, one of Caspian’s animal friends, Trufflehunter, says, “We all did as much as the Dwarfs and none more than the King” (157). Caspian is only fourteen years old, and yet he commands the loyalty of the Old Narnians, fights beside them in battle, and is shown to be a wise leader during war council meetings. During one such meeting “the voice of King Caspian [rose] like thunder” (165). Still a child himself, Caspian can be inspirational to child readers as he commands an army and bravely battles the forces of evil.

Caspian’s maturity and wisdom are attributes that make him a great warrior. The four Pevensie children from *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* are pulled into Narnia and join Caspian in his plight. When High King Peter learns of the army’s position he says:

“Very well, then . . . I’ll send him a challenge to single combat.”

No-one had thought of this before.

“Please,” said Caspian, “could it not be me? I want to avenge my father.”

“You’re wounded,” said Peter. “And, anyway, wouldn’t he just laugh

at a challenge from you? I mean, we have seen that you are a king and a warrior but he thinks of you as a kid.” (170)

Caspian does not argue with this plan. It is notable that High King Peter calls Caspian a king and a warrior, and although he has the desire to fight Miraz himself and avenge his father, Caspian respects Peter’s command as the legendary High King Peter of Narnia. In *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Patterning of a Fantastic World*, Manlove points out, “For in this book it is pride and selfishness that divide, and in particular the desire to control. Here Caspian lets his victory over Miraz be won for him by another” (53). In this, Caspian shows his wisdom as a king and a warrior. It is not fear or cowardice that keep him from arguing with Peter about who should kill Miraz, but rather his obeisance for the High King.

By the end of *Prince Caspian*, Miraz is felled, the war with the Telmarines is won, and Caspian, the orphaned boy who dreamed of meeting the Old Narnians, is now their leader and king. Three years later we meet Caspian again in *The Voyage of the ‘Dawn Treader’* where he is as noble and courageous as ever. When Edmund, Lucy and Eustace are pulled magically from their primary world into the Eastern Sea of Narnia, King Caspian dives off of his ship and rescues them. Caspian, surrounded by a loyal crew, could easily have ordered one of the deck hands to rescue the children from the cold water, but in a heroic act, he instead chooses to go after them himself. It is then revealed that in the three years since the events of *Prince Caspian*, the young king has seemingly solved all of Narnia’s problems. He says, “There’s no trouble at all now between Telmarines, Dwarfs, Talking Beasts, Fauns and the rest. And we gave those troublesome Giants on the frontier such a good beating last summer that they pay us

tribute now” (15). Caspian has grown into a successful military leader, making peace with one hand while “beating” the Giants with the other. Eventually he marries, has a son, and lives to be an old man, and in *The Last Battle*, Caspian is reunited with his human friends in the Narnian Heaven, “Aslan’s Country.” A heroic child warrior who grows from a frightened, lonely orphan into one of Narnia’s greatest and wisest kings, Caspian can be a great symbol of hope for child readers who identify with him and his struggle amidst a world filled with chaos.

Harry Potter is a completely different kind of child warrior than Prince Caspian, both in action and representation. There is little question that Harry Potter is a heroic character, one who can offer hope to child readers, as Lena Steveker notes:

Maria Nikolajeva identifies Harry Potter as the romantic hero of fairy tales (Nikolajeva, 2003, pp.127– 8). . . He ambivalently functions not only as both epic and postmodern hero, but also as Gothic hero(ine) and as gentleman hero. . . a bildungsroman hero . . . In accordance with the structural patterns of this genre, Rowling’s heptalogy tells the story of the formation of Harry’s identity as hero, which ‘begin[s] with Harry’s point of origin, [...] mature[s] [...] through his formal training and increasing experience’ (Pharr, 2002, p.53) and eventually culminates in his final victory over Voldemort. (69)

However, at the beginning of his journey, Harry is powerless and abused. An orphan left on the doorstep of his unsympathetic and magic-hating aunt and uncle, Harry sleeps in a spider-filled cupboard under the stairs. Treated with only derision and anger by his “family” and used as his cousin Dudley’s “favorite punching bag,” Harry is rarely

allowed to leave the house and is made fun of at school for his “baggy clothes and taped glasses” (*Sorcerer* 24). His sad physical appearance is described in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*:

Perhaps it had something to do with living in a dark cupboard, but Harry had always been small and skinny for his age. He looked even smaller and skinnier than he really was because all he had to wear were old clothes of Dudley’s . . . Harry had a thin face, knobby knees, black hair, and bright green eyes. He wore round glasses held together with a lot of Scotch tape because of all the times Dudley had punched him on the nose. (20)

With this inauspicious introduction, child readers who have been traumatized by war, or who have suffered parental abandonment of any kind, are offered a character with whom to identify. Harry does not spend the rest of his days under the stairs—small and powerless—but grows in power and strength throughout the series. In “The Magic of Harry Potter: Symbols and Heroes of Fantasy,” Sharon Black notes, “Harry’s growth and development come at a price. The reader is left to understand that she, like Harry, will have to strive and struggle, but she can overcome challenges—even without classes in potions and spells” (244). And struggle he does, both mentally and physically, as the series progresses.

Harry’s first important choice in his journey toward becoming a warrior-hero is made once he leaves the prison of the Dursley household and escapes into the magical, secondary world of Hogwarts. When it comes time to be divided into houses by the Sorting Hat, Harry refuses to be put into the notoriously nasty Slytherin house, which is where the hat believes he “could be great” (121). Mary Pharr points out,

The temptation posed by the Hat scares Harry, and many months pass before Dumbledore is able to convince the boy that it was choice rather than potential that mattered on the sorting day, that . . . Harry's character is not a fixed preexistent thing, but something that he has the responsibility for making. Gradually, Harry comes to know . . . that good and evil do exist, with choice the thin but crucial wall between them, and power the charm that can make that fragile barrier disappear. (63)

This is an important message to child readers, presenting the fact that human beings, whether real or fictional, are responsible for their choices. Personal growth and the development of virtue and character traits become things that are no longer a result of the whims of fate, but something child readers can see as the consequence or reward of their own actions. What happened to them in the past does not control their future selves. This is an empowering concept, especially for a young person who has experienced war and the helplessness it entails for children.

By the end of his first year at Hogwarts, Harry has learned not only how to use magic and fly on a broom, but confronts a troll, and with the help of his friends, traverses seven underground obstacles used to protect the titular Sorcerer's Stone. These actions all take courage and sacrifice, but it is only the beginning of his heroic journey. At the end of the novel, Harry must face his nemesis, Voldemort, who is sharing a body with Professor Quirrell:

Quirrell raised his hand to perform a deadly curse, but Harry, by instinct, reached up and grabbed Quirrell's face—
“AAAARGH!”

Quirrell rolled off him, his face blistering, too, and then Harry knew: Quirrell couldn't touch his bare skin, not without suffering terrible pain—his only chance was to keep hold of Quirrell, keep him in enough pain to stop him from doing a curse.

Harry jumped to his feet, caught Quirrell by the arm, and hung on as tight as he could. Quirrell screamed and tried to throw Harry off. . .

(*Sorcerer* 295)

This is Harry's first violent battle on his hero's journey, and it is significant, not only because of his heroic and violent actions but, because while he stops Voldemort from attaining the Sorcerer's Stone, the villain still escapes. The characters know that Voldemort will return, and return he does—again and again for seven novels. As Harry grows older, his skills improve and he grows stronger, but he also must wrestle with an identity crisis as he discovers many aspects of himself that parallel those of Voldemort.

As the series progresses, Harry deals with common adolescent issues such as complicated friendships, dating, and teachers who are not fond of him. These storylines give Harry a completely rounded personality, making him believable and enabling the child readers' continued identification with Harry throughout the series. However, Harry is not a typical teenager, but a heroic child warrior, and by the fourth book in the series, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, he is wrestling with his deepest feelings, greatest fears, and the death of his beloved friend, Cedric. At the end of the novel, Harry must duel Voldemort once more and bravely defies him, refusing to "let Voldemort play with him before killing him . . . he was not going to give him that satisfaction." (660). Harry

endures the torturous Cruciatus Curse, but still refuses to bend to Voldemort's will. Harry hides behind a tombstone and as Voldemort approaches, he:

knew the end had come. There was no hope . . . no help to be had. And as he heard Voldemort draw nearer still, he knew one thing only, and it was beyond fear or reason: He was not going to die crouching here like a child playing hide-and-seek; he was not going to die kneeling at Voldemort's feet . . . he was going to die upright like his father and he was going to die trying to defend himself, even if no defense was possible. (*Goblet* 662)

Harry could not act more courageously as he faces Voldemort and shouts out “*Expelliarmus!*” which is one of the only spells he knows how to cast, but also one that is easy to deflect as well. As he stands up from behind the tombstone, Harry knows that he is about to die, yet he faces evil head on. Harry is a warrior using his agency to face death honorably. The ghosts of people that Voldemort previously murdered appear, including Harry's mother and father, and surround Voldemort so Harry can take Cedric's body and summon the port-key to return to Hogwarts. Harry survives the ordeal. After this crucial turning point, Harry begins to experience heightened internal struggles and deeper emotional issues.

The remaining books in the series are a march to war for Harry Potter and his friends, with the final book, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, culminating in the Second Wizarding War and many casualties. Harry learns of the prophecy made before his birth by professor Trelawney, which forecast that a boy would be born who would have the power to defeat Voldemort; however, the prophecy also projected that “neither can live while the other survives” (*Phoenix* 844). Harry realizes that in order for

Voldemort to be destroyed, he, Harry, must also die. There is no second guessing or weighing of options, instead Harry immediately goes about the business of sacrificing himself so that everyone else may be saved from Voldemort: “He envied even his parents’ deaths now. This cold-blooded walk to his own destruction would require a different kind of bravery” (*Hallows* 692). While the battle for Hogwarts rages on, Harry heads into the forest to find Voldemort, and there uses the Resurrection Stone to call up the ghosts of his parents and his substitute father figures Sirius and Lupin. They commend his bravery and walk with him as he nears Voldemort and his own certain death. However, when he faces Voldemort and death, he does so without the aid of his dead loved ones: “The Resurrection Stone slipped from between his numb fingers, and out of the corner of his eyes he saw his parents, Sirius, and Lupin vanish as he stepped forward into the firelight. At that moment he felt that nobody mattered but Voldemort. It was just the two of them” (703). Harry again meets his fate with courage and resolve, knowing that his own death will be the ultimate weapon against Voldemort.

Harry, the child warrior, has reached the pinnacle of heroism as he sacrifices himself for the greater good. In the end, however, Harry survives, Voldemort is destroyed, and the day is saved. In the Epilogue, entitled “Nineteen Years Later,” Harry has married his love, Ginny, and is still good friends with the now married Ron and Hermione. Most importantly, they are delivering their children to the Hogwarts Express. While Voldemort, war, and evil had torn their world and their families apart, in the end, because Harry exhibited the courage of a heroic warrior, Hogwarts, and their way of life, continues. Harry Potter is a fantastic role model for child readers who feel powerless or

helpless. He is an ordinary boy who is able to overcome a terrible early childhood and save the world. Harry offers hope.

Lewis and Rowling have not forsaken the agency of girls in their novels, but have presented child readers with powerful young female warriors, with whom they may identify and admire. As Helen Berents points out, “In our increasingly global society, those girls who participate in or are affected by violence are almost always overlooked. Often cast as victims, passive in the face of uncontrollable adversity, the resilience and agency of girls in these environments is frequently sidelined” (142). While Jill Pole and Hermione Granger are not the lead protagonists of their series, they are still indispensable role models who act not as victims, but as heroines. Without the bravery, wisdom and skill of these young women, the male heroes would likely fall short of their goals, and good would almost certainly fail to triumph over evil. These female characters do not remain the stereotypical “damsel in distress” models of femininity that girl readers have found in many fairy-tales both ancient and modern, but grow into passionate warriors who use their wits in addition to violence to overcome their enemies.

The Silver Chair introduces readers to Jill, the strongest female warrior in the Narnia series; however, like her male counterparts, she does not start off brave or heroic. Instead the story begins, “It was a dull autumn day and Jill Pole was crying behind the gym” (1). Child readers are immediately put in the position of feeling concerned for Jill, an ordinary girl who is cruelly bullied, and those who have been traumatized by war can identify with her fear and desperation. Jill meets Eustace, who traveled to Narnia in *The Voyage of the ‘Dawn Treader,’* and agrees with him that she hates the school they are in, “about as much as anyone can hate anything” (4). The children decide to attempt to

escape into Narnia, a choice which Manlove suggests causes them to, “go from being more or less at the mercy of a system to taking control of their own destinies” (*Patterning* 66). Jill has taken the first step on her journey to becoming a warrior, a brave step into the unknown.

Jill’s character growth is often linked to themes of choice and action. Soon after the children arrive in Narnia they approach a cliff, and Jill has an experience that enacts a positive change in her character. Endowed with more bravado than wisdom, Jill, “didn’t mind in the least standing on the edge of a precipice. She was rather annoyed with Scrubb for pulling her back—’just as if I was a kid,’ she said—and she wrenched her hand out of his. When she saw how very white he had turned, she despised him” (11). Having had no adult supervision or protection in the terror and chaos of her school, Jill has had to grow up quickly and no longer sees herself as a child. Child readers who have similarly had to become independent ahead of their time can find a kindred spirit in Jill. She despises Eustace’s fear, which demonstrates that Jill is a tough girl who has high expectations of others; however, Jill’s reckless actions cause Eustace to fall off the cliff and her bravado quickly disintegrates. While she reacts as a child reader probably would—with complete fear—it is still not long before she knows she must pull herself together and move on: “Crying is all right in its way while it lasts. But you have to stop sooner or later and then you still have to decide what to do” (15). Jill then becomes extremely thirsty, but when she finds a stream to drink from, Aslan is lying beside it and she must conquer her fear of this unknown lion in order to quench her terrible thirst: “her mind suddenly made itself up. It was the worst thing she had ever had to do, but she went forward to the stream, knelt down, and began scooping water in her hand. It was the coldest, most refreshing

water she had ever tasted” (18). Jill meets Aslan and is given the task of finding the lost Prince Rilian. As she pursues this goal, she changes from a girl wearing a brave mask into one with true courage, and child readers can be encouraged by her transformative journey.

During her quest, Jill’s strengths as a warrior and role model begin to grow. She bravely faces her claustrophobia in the narrow underground tunnels of Underland, and cleverly outwits several giants. When she finally finds Prince Rilian, he is under an enchantment and the control of the evil Queen of Underland. He is only his true self for one hour a day, and during this hour he is bound to a silver chair and begs for his release. The children are told that this is actually a “fit” he has every night, and if they release him, he will take the form of a snake and kill them. However, during his “fit” he mentions Aslan, causing Jill to realize that he may, in fact, be telling the truth about his identity. Jill decides that he must be set free, even if it means her death. “It was a sickening moment. ‘All right!’ said Jill suddenly. ‘Let’s get it over. Goodbye everyone . . .!’ They all shook hands. The Knight was screaming by now; there was foam on his cheeks” (146). They release Rilian and he destroys the silver chair, then thanks them for rescuing him. Because Jill courageously risks her life in deciding that he should be liberated, the rightful king of Narnia is set free. As children read of Jill’s accomplishments and the way she overcomes her fears (and at times her own conceit), they have an example of bravely fighting for a greater good.

It is important, however, to note that Jill does not participate in the actual physical freeing of Rilian or in the violent killing of the evil Queen. Instead, “Jill had very wisely sat down and was keeping quiet; she was saying to herself, ‘I do hope I don’t faint—or

blub—or do anything idiotic” (161). It is a bit disappointing to see her character slip into a stereotypical damsel-in-distress, with Rilian even calling her “Damsel,” but fortunately Jill’s character growth does not end there. When Jill and Eustace return to their primary world and school, they do so with Aslan and friends in tow and, “Jill plied her crop on the girls . . . so well that in two minutes all the bullies were running like mad” (215). This is the first time that Jill’s interior strength has manifested in physical confrontation, but the violence is done so that wrongs can be righted, and the result is that Jill and Eustace’s school becomes a much nicer place.

In *The Last Battle*, Jill, returns to Narnia along with Eustace to aid King Tirian in the fight against the false Aslan, and in this novel her bravery evolves into a fierceness befitting a warrior. Jill has become an archer since she last visited Narnia, and Tirian also sees that she is the best pathfinder of the three, putting her in the front of the party as they head north. Jill is now guiding the two boys, and when they speak too loudly, she shushes them with the authority of a leader. Furthermore, it is Jill who finds and kidnaps (at knife-point no less) Puzzle the Donkey who is being made to assume the role of the false Aslan by Shift the Ape. She explains, “I drew my knife and told him he’d have to come along with me” (64). Jill has matured since *The Silver Chair*, and is now as much a part of the action as the boys. As Calormenes join the Ape in the fight against Tirian, the king orders Jill and Eustace to go home, declaring, “you are too young to share in such a bloody end as we others must meet tonight” (93). Jill has developed into a strong, independent warrior and angrily refuses to leave: “We won’t, I don’t care what you say. We’re going to stick with you whatever happens. . .” (93). She tells Eustace, “Even if we are killed. I’d rather be fighting for Narnia than grow old and stupid at home . . .” (96). Loyal warriors,

Jill and Eustace bravely stand their ground and are willing to sacrifice their lives for Narnia.

Jill joins the battle, and she does so valiantly and violently: “The Bull also was down, shot through the eye by an arrow from Jill” (118). As the Narnians move in to attack the Calormenes, Jill approaches the enemy alone, her archery the first wave of attack: “Then one of her own arrows hit a man, and another hit a Narnian wolf, who had, it seemed, joined the enemy” (123). During the combat, Eustace is captured by the enemy, and in spite of her fear and sorrow, Jill does not crumble, but remains a warrior focused on the fighting, “Even if I can’t stop blubbing, I won’t get my string wet” (126). During the heavy battle, Jill, Eustace and Tirian are thrown through the door of the stable where the god Tash will supposedly eat them. Instead of being eaten, however, they find themselves in a lovely place: “the deep blue sky was overhead, and the air which blew gently on their faces was that of a day in early summer” (136). Here they are reunited with Peter, Edmund, Lucy, Polly, and Digory, and consequently, all of the human “Friends of Narnia” learn that in the primary world, they have all been killed in a train collision. Aslan stands with them as Jill and the others witness Narnia being “unmade”. They then follow Aslan into “his own country,” which is essentially Heaven. Jill Pole began her journey as a scared and bullied girl, but grows throughout the books into a fierce child warrior full of bravery, skill, and determination. Child readers who feel small or helpless can look to Jill’s example and perhaps find a comparable strength in themselves as they face their own enemies and trials.

Likewise, in the Harry Potter books, Hermione Granger proves to be a particularly wise child warrior, and like Jill, grows in maturity and agency throughout the series.

Introduced in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* as having, “a bossy sort of voice, lots of bushy brown hair, and rather large front teeth,” Hermione does not fit in (*Sorcerer* 105). An ordinary girl, she is thought of as annoying and a know-it-all, and she struggles socially as a witch born to Muggle parents. The school bullies delight in calling her “mudblood,” a racial slur in the magic world. Marginalized readers may eagerly embrace the character of Hermione, a girl presented as ordinary, and something of a misfit.

Hermione certainly does not start out a hero. When a troll is loosed in the castle in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, she screams and freezes: “she couldn't move, she was still flat against the wall, her mouth open with terror” (175). Harry and Ron save her from the troll, and the three form a powerful friendship. By the end of the first novel, Hermione has grown in courage, strength, and agency. She does not hesitate to join Harry and Ron as they traverse a set of seven dangerous obstacles that protect the Sorcerer's Stone in Hogwarts' underground chambers. Hermione's weapon of choice is her vast store of magical knowledge, and as Klingbiel says, “In Rowling's world, knowledge is power” (172). Without Hermione's knowledge, Harry would not have made it to the final chamber to save the Sorcerer's Stone. She saves Harry and Ron from a Devil's Snare plant and later solves the puzzle Snape devises to protect the stone. When faced with the seven bottles, three of which are poison, Hermione says,

“This isn't magic—its logic—a puzzle. A lot of the greatest wizards haven't got an ounce of logic, they'd be stuck in here forever.”

“But so will we, won't we?”

“Of course not,” said Hermione, “everything we need is here on this paper.” (286)

And she uses her sharpest weapon, her mind, to help Harry advance to the next chamber.

As the fight against Voldemort intensifies throughout the series, Hermione's role as a child warrior intensifies as well. In "From Books to Battle: Hermione's Quest for Knowledge in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*," Karley Kristine Adney disagrees with a strongly feminist reading of the series by Elisabeth Heilman and purports:

Heilman also claims that 'at the height of action, females are not typically very involved, and they are fearful and emotional.' This proves untrue of Hermione, most notably in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, when she rushes into battle against Voldemort and his Death Eaters and nearly loses her own life in doing so; thus, Hermione transforms from a student in pursuit of knowledge that will warrant her top grades, to a leader fighting for knowledge in order to not only educate herself, but others, as well. (104)

By the time the children are in their fifth year, Hermione's agency has grown by leaps and bounds, and it is clear that without her help, Harry will never defeat Voldemort. She is the one who forms the DA, or Dumbledore's Army, and without her intellect, quick thinking and knowledge, Harry would not have been able to overcome many of the obstacles on his path to heroism.

Although Hermione wields her mightiest weapon, her intelligence, throughout the entire series, as her character gains agency and grows, she begins to participate in more of the physical confrontations as well. "I'm not staying behind!" Hermione says "furiously" when Harry wants to fly to the Ministry of Magic to rescue Sirius alone

(*Phoenix* 763). Luckily, for Harry, she does join him and practically leads the rescue mission herself. In the bowels of the Ministry the children are set upon by Death Eaters and a battle ensues. Hermione stays by his side, fighting with and for her friend. Harry felt “a hand [catch] him by the shoulder; he heard Hermione shout ‘Stupefy!’ and the hand released him at once” (*Phoenix* 787). In the battle at the Ministry alone, she uses her best weapon, her knowledge of magic, to seal doors, knock out homicidal Death Eaters, and find Harry’s wand. When one of the Death Eaters throws Hermione against a bookcase and then proceeds to call out to the others, she bravely jumps up and places a silencing spell on him, though he still hits her with a dangerous spell that knocks her out for the rest of the battle.

By the last book in the series, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, Hermione is essentially the glue holding the trio of friends together. She thinks quickly and clearly and possesses confidence and agency, traits that save their lives time and again in various fights and battles. As Ernelle Fife points out, “As Hermione matures, she becomes less bossy and much more perceptive and insightful, developing into a truly wise woman” (160). She becomes a prisoner of war in Malfoy Manor and is tortured for information, but she stays strong both physically and mentally, never giving in to Bellatrix Lestrange. In the Battle of Hogwarts, she shows courage and leadership in a time of terror and grief. Hermione becomes a source of strength for Ron after his brother has been killed and helps him stay focused on their plans. She says, “We will fight! . . . We’ll have to, to reach the snake! But let’s not lose sight now of what we’re supposed to be d-doing! We’re the only ones who can end it!” (640). Hermione’s concentration and bravery in the face of overwhelming fear and grief can be an empowering moment for child readers,

especially girls. Harry may be the only one involved in the big showdown with Voldemort, but without Hermione's vital role in the destruction of the Horcruxes, Voldemort couldn't have been killed.

Hermione does not hesitate to commit violent acts against her foes in the heat of battle. She kills or seriously injures two Death Eaters when she throws a spell and, "there were two loud, sickening crunches as the tapestry turned to stone and the Death Eaters pursuing them crumpled against it" (*Hallows* 644). When she comes upon a werewolf attacking a student she shouts, "NO! . . . and with a deafening blast from her wand, Fenrir Greyback was thrown backward from the feebly stirring body of Lavender Brown" (646). Adney offers proof of Hermione's impact on child readers: "There is no doubt that Hermione as a strong woman has impacted Rowling's audience, especially children. Ernie Bond and Nancy Michelson, in 'Writing Harry's World: Children Coauthoring Hogwarts,' have noted that 'Strong female characters are another hallmark of much of the fan fiction created . . . by adolescent females'; Hermione is a favorite for fan adaptations" (103). The courageous, brilliant, and completely human character of Hermione can offer child readers a vision of a better future made possible through self-empowerment and wisdom because, as Klingbiel says, "Hermione is accepted. She is not only accepted; she is needed because the world would not be saved without her" (175).

In the end, Hermione marries Ron and they have children who are headed off to Hogwarts. With this happy ending, the child reader is reassured that despite hard times, despite war, life goes on and some good and normal things do remain. Hermione, Ron, and their friends all seem well-adjusted and happy, and readers are reassured that Voldemort is not still waiting in the wings with the final line, "The scar had not pained

Harry for nineteen years. All was well” (759). By using her knowledge, loyalty, and fiery determination, Hermione becomes a role model of the utmost sort for child readers, exemplifying virtues they may seek to emulate in their own lives. Over the course of the series, Hermione grows from an ordinary child into a wise, courageous and powerful child warrior, offering hope to child readers, especially females, who are marginalized and in crisis.

Similarities abound between the heroic child warrior characters of the Narnia and Harry Potter series, including the possession of such virtues as bravery, skill, and loyalty; however, Caspian, Harry, Jill, and Hermione, are each crafted as distinct individuals and offer child readers empowerment and hope in different ways. While the child warriors share characteristics of valor, the wars in which they fight, the style and depictions of violence and warfare in the two series are drastically different, reflecting the eras and political climates in which the authors were writing.

Both Caspian and Harry are courageous heroes; however, they are two very different leading characters, each representing a particular type of child warrior. Where Caspian is wise, decisive, and respectful, Harry is reactive, headstrong and introspective. Caspian is more of a two-dimensional character leaning toward a symbolic child warrior archetype than Harry’s portrayal of a more realistic warrior. The same can be said for the female warriors, with Jill’s character presenting a more two-dimensional depiction than Hermione’s. Both girls grow immensely throughout the series; starting out as damsels-in-distress whose only weapon is knowledge, they evolve into courageous warriors, and ultimately join the physical fighting as the stakes become higher.

Comparing the characters of the two series based on depth and growth of characterization, as well as the different war-time eras in which they were written, reveals the differences in the way the authors crafted these child heroes. The characters in the Harry Potter series are so much more well-rounded than those of the Narnia books because the Narnia series highlights many different lead characters, each featured in only one or two novels a piece, whereas Harry—with Ron and Hermione by his side—is the singular lead character of all seven books in his series. This gives Harry and Hermione many more opportunities for facing dangers and character growth than Caspian and Jill; however, the differences go further than the quantity of material. Within the novels in which Caspian and Jill are primary characters (*Prince Caspian* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, and *The Silver Chair* and *The Last Battle* respectively), the scenes of war and battle are presented in very different ways from those in the Harry Potter novels.

In the Caspian books, most of the action takes place at a distance from the reader, happening “off stage,” and is later described in past tense, with generalized details. For example, when Caspian’s troops are fighting those of Miraz, “Caspian and the other captains of course made many sorties into the open country. Thus there was fighting on most days and sometimes by night as well; but Caspian’s party had on the whole the worst of it” (87). Specifics are not mentioned, and readers never actually witness Caspian fighting in battle. On the other hand, while Jill seems to take a back seat to the boys for most of *The Silver Chair*, she not only figures prominently in violent battle scenes in *The Last Battle*, but they are often described from her perspective, “With a horrible, cold shock Jill noticed a strange thing. Though Calormenes were falling at each Narnian sword-stroke, they never seemed to get any fewer” (124).

However, these scenes are still tame in comparison to the first-hand depictions of war in the Harry Potter novels, in which violence is described in great detail, and readers observe Harry committing these acts as a child warrior. In *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, Harry uses one of the unforgivable curses on a Death Eater who is threatening Professor McGonagall and his fellow students. The Cruciatu*s* Curse, which inflicts excruciating pain upon the victim, literally means “I torture” in Latin, and to produce the excruciating pain implied by the name, one must, according to the accomplished, evil witch Bellatrix Lestrange, desire to cause pain purely for its own sake:

. . . Harry shouted, ‘*Crucio!*’

The Death Eater was lifted off his feet. He writhed through the air like a drowning man, thrashing and howling in pain, and then, with a crunch and a shattering glass, he smashed into the front of a bookcase and crumpled, insensible, to the floor.

“I see what Bellatrix meant,” said Harry, the blood thundering through his brain, “you need to really mean it.” (593)

Harry has performed an illegal and extremely painful curse on Amecus, a Death Eater, and readers view this action first hand, as well as being privy to Harry’s thoughts and feelings leading up to and after the violent incident. It is as Klingbiel suggests, “a magic wand can function as a gun, both being symbols of power. In the world of wizards and witches, magic is strength. One does not need a large body with muscles as Uncle Vernon and Dudley do in the Muggle world” (172). Hermione is also front and center during many violent confrontations during the Battle of Hogwarts, such as when she, Harry, and Ron face off with Malfoy and his sidekicks, “Crabbe wheeled around and screamed,

‘*Avada Kedavra!*’ again. Ron leapt out of sight to avoid the jet of green light. The wandless Malfoy cowered behind a three legged wardrobe as Hermione charged toward them, hitting Goyle with a Stunning Spell as she came” (631). Caspian and Jill kill their enemies with swords and arrows—violent actions for anyone, much less children—however these battles are not described in as much detail as the magical ones Harry and Hermione are involved in. Therefore, the violence committed by the children in the two series is depicted in different ways, but the agency with which they battle as warriors offers the same hope and empowerment to child readers.

Lewis and Rowling’s differing warrior sensibilities result from the different war-time eras in which they were writing. Lewis’s Narnian battlegrounds reflect his deep moral and spiritual values, as well as the distaste for war he developed fighting in WWI and living through WWII. Meanwhile, Rowling’s writing is a product of a much smaller, more peaceful Britain, and her novels are meant for a generation that faces warfare on a completely different battlefield in the War on Terror.

Lewis was among the first wave of writers creating the modern fantasy genre. Miller says, “During and immediately following the Second World War, writers like . . . J. R. R. Tolkien, and C. S. Lewis adopted the genres of adventure and fantasy fiction to offer young readers a distinct alternative reality within which heroic protagonists could find marvelous ways of defending their lives and values against the forces of evil” (275). Lewis was writing the Narnia books for children who had lived through WWII, a terrifying war, with many displaced and orphaned. Miller goes on to say that Tolkien and Lewis, “created fantasy lands in which characters and readers could learn how to become heroes in times of trauma” (279). As discussed in the Introductory Chapter, although

Lewis did everything he could to avoid it, he did fight in WWI, but distanced himself from the chaos and violence by escaping into books and his own safe haven.

Additionally, Lewis was a scholar and the chair of the Medieval and Renaissance Literature department at Cambridge University. These experiences and their resulting ideologies can be seen in the medieval culture of Narnia, its warfare, and child warriors. Setting the novels in a medieval type culture distances the child reader from the violence which takes place in the Narnia series, because not only are the battles taking place in a secondary fantasy world, but a world whose culture is one of the distant past. This can be beneficial to those child readers who need more of a buffer between reality and the violence enacted in the fantasy land of Narnia in order to create their safe, imaginative reading spaces.

On the other hand, Rowling began writing the Harry Potter series just as the Cold War and the Soviet Union were dissolving, and continued writing through the beginning of the War on Terror. Rowling explained in her famous speech at Carnegie hall, "I wanted Harry to leave our world and find exactly the same problems in the wizarding world" (Edward). And that is exactly what Harry and his friends experience as they grow and battle through the books. Voldemort and his Death Eaters are very much a terrorist organization, causing the students of Hogwarts to be increasingly on guard and in danger, and Rowling has said as much herself, "I've never thought, 'It's time for a post-9/11 Harry Potter book,' no. But what Voldemort does, in many senses, is terrorism, and that was quite clear in my mind before 9/11 happened . . . but there are parallels, obviously" (Rowling Interview). Additionally, Rowling was writing the Harry Potter series during an era of increased media saturation, resulting in a generation of children who may not have

lived through bombings or evacuations, but who have witnessed online or on television the stark evidence of evil's presence in our world. Perhaps these children respond better to a different type of warrior-hero than the children of the 1950s. Harry, Hermione, and their friends fight not with traditional weapons, but with magic, and considering the current technological facets of warfare, is probably closer to reality, and easier for child readers to identify with this representation than the clashing swords of the Narnia series.

Time magazine reports that by *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*,

Harry is embroiled in a borderless, semi-civil war with a shadowy, hidden leader whose existence the government ignored until disaster forced the issue and who is supported by a secret network of sleeper agents willing to resort to tactics of shocking cruelty. The kids who grew up on Harry Potter—you could call them Generation Hex—are the kids who grew up with the pervasive threat of terrorism, and it's inevitable that on some level they'll make a connection between the two. (Grossman)

Rowling's novels had to compete with television, the internet, and video games to become the most popular children's novels of all time. Perhaps they earned that distinction because children are so easily able to identify with the well-rounded characters of Harry and Hermione, and consequently, while following the heroic arcs of the characters of Hogwarts, make meaningful connections to their own lives.

The Narnia and Potter novels obviously handle child warriors in different ways for different generations of children; however there is definite cross-over appeal. Modern children who have been affected by war can find hope and solace in *The Chronicles of Narnia* just as adults who grew up in the post WWII era enjoy the Harry Potter series. As

Farmer says, “Rowling’s and Lewis’s books are about many things, but especially they are about the potential for the life uncommon incarnate in each human being” (63).

Whether the characters are male or female, well-rounded or symbolic, fight with bows and arrows or magic, ultimately they offer child readers the same thing—the hope of healing their damaged souls and psyches by growing into powerful people capable of independence, personal agency, and joy.

CHAPTER III:
MORALITY AND SPIRITUALITY

Now for our consciences, the arms are fair,

When the intent of bearing them is just.

—William Shakespeare

Henry IV, Part I

(5.2.87-88)

The characters in the Narnia and the Harry Potter series embark upon varied and difficult journeys during their adventures, but perhaps the most important journey is that of their unconscious quest for moral and spiritual growth. That quest, both in its embryonic state, and through each step of its maturation, provides an example for traumatized child readers, and presents them with goals to strive for—recognizing and living up to a moral compass, acknowledging the possibility of spiritual wisdom, and pursuing these virtues in order to become child warriors in the realm of their own lives. Because of the differing eras in which they were written, the moral and spiritual codes of the two series differ; however, it is imperative that the child warriors of Narnia and Hogwarts develop strong personal understandings of morality and faith to justify their roles as children who become violent warriors, killing people and other sentient beings in combat, in order to defend their worlds from evil.

The complexities of the relationship between morality, spirituality, and war can be debated endlessly and dissected by as many viewpoints as there are individuals. While morality and spirituality often go hand in hand, they are not one and the same. Morality, in the context of this discussion, is concerned with a culture's ethical rules and prescribed

desirable virtues, while spirituality is related to a belief in something larger than oneself, often a higher power such as God. The choices one makes are guided by a personal understanding of morality and spirituality, which are often connected, such as the age-old Judeo-Christian directive, “Thou Shalt Not Murder,” accepted as both a secular and religious western cultural norm. This commandment creates an amalgamation of morality and spirituality that is accepted as natural human law; however, the moral waters become murky and the definition of murder blurs when applied to war, especially when children are added to the equation.

The moral and spiritual justification of children acting as violent warriors and eventual role models must be considered. Defining personal moral and spiritual truths in the context of war is a multi-layered philosophical endeavor, cloaked in shades of gray, and is difficult for adults to puzzle through, much less children. According to J. Glenn Gray in “The Warriors: Reflections on Men in Battle,” “The basic aim of a nation at war . . . is to distinguish as sharply as possible the act of killing from the act of murder by making the former into one deserving of all honor and praise” (132). Therefore, killing is not murder if it is a praiseworthy act, but what can make killing worthy of praise? The muddy line dividing murder from killing during wartime is more clearly defined by Tamar Meisels, who states in “In Defense of the Defenseless: The Morality of the Laws of War,” “Once the war has begun, the most fundamental moral principle of just combat mirrors a similar duty of protection by prohibiting attacks against the defenseless” (923). This is the key to making killing worthy of praise, and therefore morally and spiritually acceptable. The child warriors in these novels take on a heroic personal responsibility to equip themselves mentally and physically for battle, despite their status as mere children,

in order to protect their defenseless friends and family, and even their primary worlds. Becoming warriors forced to do violence, can in this case, given Meisels' criteria, be seen as being morally justified. Likewise, the child warriors in these novels can be seen as spiritually justified in their violent actions. During a WWII broadcast talk C.S. Lewis said, "The idea of the knight—the Christian in arms for the defence of a good cause—is one of the great Christian ideas" (*Mere Christianity* 176). This heroic image is crucial in order to justify the violent actions the child warriors commit, as well as their place as role models for child readers. Child readers facing moral and spiritual dilemmas in their own lives may be able to make meaningful personal insights as they witness the child warriors in the Narnia and Harry Potter novels develop a sense of right and wrong, choose between good and evil, and muddle through all the gray areas in between.

As noted in Chapter Two, the child warriors in these series are heroes whose courage and perseverance can provide hope to child readers. Susan Neiman examines the idea of a moral hero: "Learning to make moral judgments by examining heroic exemplars is so natural, and effective, that Kant recommends it even for 'businessmen, women, and ten year old children'" (Neiman). The fictional children of Narnia and Hogwarts construct their individual moral codes by following the example of moral adults, working through internal conflict, making difficult decisions, and experiencing the consequences of wrong choices. As previously discussed, the depth and characterization of child warriors in the Narnia series is constructed differently than in the Harry Potter books. Character growth in Lewis's novels is spread throughout several different child characters, creating a tapestried portrait of a morally and spiritually righteous child warrior, as Manlove proposes, "If, too, we were to think of the children not just as four

individuals, but also potentially as four parts of the one spirit, we might not always be wide of the mark” (*Patterning* 35). Additionally, because the Narnia books use blatantly Biblical symbolism, the moral and spiritual cores of the characters often arrive fully developed, as is the case with Prince Caspian. Clearer models for readers are imperfect and flawed characters such as Edmund and Eustace, still developing their moral compasses. In the Harry Potter books, Harry and Hermione too must struggle as they develop moral and spiritual strengths throughout the series, wrestling with a growing understanding that doing the right thing is rarely easy, and the correct choices are not always discernible, but exist in a gray area.

The Narnia series includes characters who are not immediately moral, but must undergo tests and trials in order to grow and transform into heroes: Edmund and Eustace represent this need for moral development. At the beginning of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Edmund, the youngest brother of the four Pevensie children, does not appear to be of the highest moral order as he is described as “grumbling” and “spiteful” and teases Lucy terribly when she tells them of the magical land she has found on the other side of the wardrobe (4, 23). Soon Edmund travels to Narnia through the wardrobe himself, where he meets the evil White Witch; the sorceress tempts him with enchanted Turkish Delight and convinces him to bring his brothers and sisters to meet her, although he complains, “There’s nothing special about *them*” (35). After his meeting with the Witch, Edmund’s sense of right and wrong is even further skewed, and when he returns to the primary world, “he decided all at once to do the meanest and most spiteful thing he could think of. He decided to let Lucy down” (41). He lies to Peter and Susan about

finding Narnia and, “was becoming a nastier person every minute” (41). Edmund is very clearly not yet ready to be a moral role model for child readers.

Eventually all four children venture into Narnia together, following a robin they believe is leading them to rescue the faun Lucy met on her previous journey. Edmund, who secretly wants to lead his brother and sisters to the Witch’s castle, tries to manipulate Peter while the brothers are discussing the difficulty of discerning right from wrong and good from evil:

“How do we know which side that bird is on? Why shouldn’t it be leading us into a trap?”

“That’s a nasty idea. Still—a robin you know. They’re good birds in all the stories I’ve ever read. I’m sure a robin wouldn’t be on the wrong side.”

“If it comes to that, which *is* the right side? How do we know that the fauns are in the right and the Queen (yes, I know we’ve been *told* she’s a witch) is in the wrong? We don’t really know anything about either.” (59)

Of course, Edmund is the one who is on the wrong side. His moral compass, which is not presented as particularly sterling to begin with, has been corrupted by the temptation of the evil queen, although “deep down inside him he really knew that the White Witch was bad and cruel” (86). While the group sups with their new beaver friends, Edmund sneaks away from his brother and sisters, betraying their whereabouts and plans to the Witch.

Edmund does not stay weak and corrupted, but begins to see the error of his wicked ways. The Witch takes Edmund prisoner and begins mistreating him. The boy’s first moral turning point happens when he realizes he has been deceived, and more

importantly, that he has deceived himself: “all the things he had said to make himself believe that she was good and kind and that her side was really the right side sounded to him silly now” (110). Edmund’s morality continues to rise to a higher level as he witnesses the Witch turn some small animals into stone statues, and “Edmund for the first time in this story felt sorry for someone besides himself” (113). Edmund then endures an arduous journey to the Stone Table with the Witch; she is about to kill him when he is saved by a rescue party sent by Aslan.

When his rescuers bring him to the Stone Table, before he is reunited with his brothers and sisters, Edmund has his most significant moral turning point during a private conversation with Aslan to which even the reader is not privy, “but it was a conversation which Edmund never forgot” (135). The result of this conversation (and symbolic conversion) with a trusted adult advisor elevates Edmund to a moral level befitting a heroic child warrior and role model; however, it’s not only Edmund’s moral code that has been changed, but his heart as well. A new spiritual element has been added to Edmund’s growth and success as a child warrior when he comes to know Aslan, and simultaneously the Christian doctrine of salvation is symbolically introduced. The Narnia books are famously infused with Christian influences, although Lewis denied that they were an allegory, saying:

If Aslan represented the immaterial Deity in the same way in which Giant Despair [a character in *The Pilgrims Progress*] represents despair, he would be an allegorical figure. In reality, however, he is an invention giving an imaginary answer to the question, ‘What might Christ become like if there really were a world like Narnia, and He chose to be incarnate

and die and rise again in that world as He actually has done in ours?’ This is not allegory at all. (*Letters* 283)

Regardless of whether or not the books are allegorical, the Christian symbolism is apparent and intentional. In *Jack: A Life of C.S. Lewis*, George Sayer asserts that Lewis explained to him that his intention with the Narnia books “was to make it easier for children to accept Christianity when they met it later in life. He hoped that they would be vaguely reminded of the somewhat similar stories that they had read and enjoyed years before” (318). It is unmistakable that Lewis is invoking the Biblical gospel when the Witch claims her right by the “Deep Magic” to kill Edmund because he is a traitor, but Aslan sacrifices himself in Edmund’s stead.

Not only is Aslan resurrected at the end of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, but Edmund, terribly wounded in battle when he heroically breaks the Witch’s wand, is “covered with blood, his mouth was open, and his face a nasty green colour” (176). Lucy revives him with the magic cordial that Father Christmas had gifted her, and “she found him standing on his feet and not only healed of his wounds but looking better than she had seen him look—oh, for ages; in fact ever since his first term at that horrid school which was where he had begun to go wrong. He had become his real old self again and could look you in the face. And there on the field of battle Aslan made him a Knight” (177). Edmund reaches the pinnacle of his moral journey as he redeems himself through heroism and acts of valor in battle, as well as of his spiritual journey when he is “born again” after Aslan dies in his place. Edmund maintains his high level of morality for the rest of his life. As the Pevensie children grow older in Narnia, “Edmund was a graver and quieter man than Peter, and great in council and judgment. He was called King Edmund

the Just” (181). Edmund grows from a traitorous and morally corrupt boy into a valiant warrior after suffering through trials, wrestling internally with the idea of moral right versus wrong, and becoming spiritually empowered by his trust in Aslan.

Eustace Scrubb is another child warrior of Narnia who begins his journey with a corrupt morality, but through trials, tribulations, and guidance from Aslan, becomes a hero. Chapter One of *The Voyage of the ‘Dawn Treader’* begins: “There was a boy called Eustace Clarence Scrubb, and he almost deserved it . . . I can’t tell you how his friends spoke to him, for he had none” (1). It is pointed out in many ways that Eustace is not a good child. He likes beetles, “if they were dead and pinned on a card,” and he dislikes his cousins, the Pevensie children (1). Eustace “liked bossing and bullying; and, though he was a puny little person who couldn’t have stood up even to Lucy, let alone Edmund, in a fight, he knew that there are dozens of ways to give people a bad time if you are in your own home and they are only visitors” (2). From the beginning Eustace is presented as morally flawed.

After Eustace, Lucy, and Edmund are swept, quite literally, into Narnia through a painting on the wall, the less than stellar character of Eustace is quickly made known. Rescued by Prince Caspian and his ship, the *Dawn Treader*, Eustace is obnoxious and rude to everyone on-board, and “would be pleased with nothing” (23). He torments the valiant talking mouse, Reepicheep, steals water when it is rationed, and when they dock at an island, sneaks away to avoid working. Traveling inland, he finds a dragon’s cave filled with treasure, and Eustace is consumed by greed. He places a diamond bracelet around his upper arm before falling asleep in the riches. When he awakes he realizes, “He had turned into a dragon while he was asleep. Sleeping on a dragon’s hoard with greedy,

dragonish thoughts in his heart, he had become a dragon himself” (75). Besides the horror of being turned into a dragon, Eustace also experiences excruciating pain in his arm because the bracelet had “sunk deeply into his scaly flesh and there was a throbbing bulge on each side of it” (75). This experience changes Eustace, and a great shift in his morality happens quite quickly: “He realized that he was a monster cut off from the whole human race. An appalling loneliness came over him. He began to see the others had not really been fiends at all. He began to wonder if he himself had been such a nice person as he had always supposed” (76). Eustace has been cut off from others all of his life because of his bad attitude and weak morality; but it takes being transformed into a beast and being truly divided from the human race for him to realize the error of his ways and to discover how much he truly longs for companionship.

After Eustace has this epiphany concerning his past mistakes, he rejoins the others on the beach, and even though he is now in dragon form, it becomes obvious that he has changed in more important ways:

He was anxious to help. He flew over the whole island and found that it was all mountainous and inhabited only by wild goats and droves of wild swine. Of these he brought back many carcasses for the revictualling of the ship. He was a very humane killer too, for he could dispatch a beast with one blow of his tail so that it didn't know (and presumably still doesn't know) it had been killed. (83)

That he kills the animals humanely is of note because it contrasts the original description of Eustace as being fond of dead bugs pinned to cards. As a dragon, Eustace is forced, for the first time, to look outside himself and because of this new aspect of his morality, he is

not driven to hopelessness: “The pleasure (quite new to him) of being liked and, still more, of liking other people, was what kept Eustace from despair” (84).

As Aslan does for Jill and for Edmund, he helps complete Eustace’s transformation. The greatest spiritual change in Eustace happens when Aslan painfully tears the dragon skin off of him, returning him to his former boy self. Aslan has literally made him new again, symbolizing his Christian rebirth. It is appropriate then that the first person Eustace approaches when he returns to the beach from this experience is Edmund. Eustace apologizes to Edmund for his former attitude, and Edmund forgives him readily, saying, “That’s all right Between ourselves, you haven’t been as bad as I was on my first trip to Narnia. You were only an ass, but I was a traitor” (91). This statement is a reminder of the reoccurring theme of Christ’s redemption throughout the series. Richard Sherry notes, “Lewis develops lessons of religious truth through the children’s adventures. The journey results in a literal transformation of Eustace, who must be freed from a physical enchantment and, simultaneously, from the enchantment of modern skepticism” (1546). Eustace has started his journey toward heroism, and, “It would be nice, and fairly nearly true, to say that ‘from that time forth Eustace was a different boy’” (93).

Eustace’s moral development continues when later in the novel a sea serpent tries to destroy the *Dawn Treader*, and Eustace takes his first step toward becoming a warrior by bravely attacking the serpent with his sword. Eustace, who at the beginning of the tale “couldn’t have stood up even to Lucy,” courageously attacks a monster (2). The novel ends with Eustace and his cousins returning home, and readers know that Eustace has kept up his new behavior, as the story ends, “back in our own world everyone soon

started saying how Eustace had improved, and how ‘You’d never know him for the same boy’” (216).

Eustace returns to Narnia twice more in *The Silver Chair* and *The Last Battle*. From the beginning of *The Silver Chair* it is apparent that Eustace has truly transformed after his adventures in *The Voyage of the ‘Dawn Treader’* when he is introduced: “His name unfortunately was Eustace Scrubb, but he wasn’t a bad sort” (3). This is in direct reflection of the first line of *The Voyage of the ‘Dawn Treader’* where it states that he almost deserves his name. Eustace has strengthened and improved his moral core, and his name no longer suits him, but rather is “unfortunate.” Eustace finds Jill crying because she has been bullied by Them, a mean pack of children at their school, and tries to help her. She flies into a rage saying,

“I suppose you mean we ought to spend all our time sucking up to Them . . . like you do.”

“Oh Lor! . . . Pole! Is that fair? Have I been doing anything of the sort this term? . . . wash out last term if you can,” said Eustace. “I was a different chap then . . .”

“Well, honestly, you were,” said Jill.

“You think there has been a change, then?” said Eustace.

“It’s not only me,” said Jill. “Everyone’s been saying so. *They’ve* noticed it. . . .” (*Silver Chair* 3-4)

The moral and spiritual transformation Eustace experienced in Narnia was so deep and lasting that it carried over into his primary world. He used to be a toady to the group of

school bullies before his fantastic conversion, but equipped with bravery and a new sense of right and wrong, he stands up to Them—even under torture.

Throughout *The Silver Chair*, Eustace continues to show signs of moral and spiritual improvement. Where he used to be cowardly, Eustace has grown braver. He is afraid of heights, but tries to keep Jill from falling off the edge of a high cliff. When freeing Rilian from the silver chair, Eustace demonstrates his spiritual growth, as he puts his faith in Aslan against all odds.

Eustace routinely makes good decisions and puts others before himself. Later, Jill, Eustace, Prince Rilian, and Puddlegum the Dwarf are trapped in the Underworld when they find a hole very high up in the rock. Jill climbs on the shoulders of the others to look out and is pulled to safety by some dancing Narnians. Meanwhile, Eustace and the others believe she has been captured, and from the outside Jill sees:

Eustace's face, very pale and dirty, projecting from the blackness of the hole, and Eustace's right hand brandishing a sword with which he made lunges at anyone who came near him . . . He thought the hole would lead only into some other cave . . . filled with goodness-knows-what evil creatures of the Underworld. So that when he had . . . drawn his sword, and poked out his head, he had really been doing a very brave thing. (196)

Eustace's second adventure in Narnia empowers him further, giving him more opportunities to improve his moral standing through acts of bravery and kindness. By the end of *The Silver Chair*, his moral and spiritual core has strengthened so significantly that he is prepared to fight as a heroic warrior in *The Last Battle*.

Eustace and Jill return to Narnia in *The Last Battle*, aiding King Tirian in the fight to preserve Narnia from invading Calormenes. The children begin to prepare for battle, and Jill notes that Eustace has become quite a good archer since their last adventure in Narnia. Tirian gives him a sword fighting lesson, and “Tirian found that he had a good eye and was very quick on his feet” (57). Soon they come upon a group of Calormene soldiers who have captured some dwarfs and in the battle that ensues, Eustace kills a man for the first time:

Eustace, who had drawn his sword when he saw the King draw his, rushed at the other one: his face was deadly pale, but I wouldn't blame him for that. And he had the luck that beginners sometimes do have. He forgot all that Tirian had tried to teach him that afternoon, slashed wildly (indeed I'm not sure his eyes weren't shut) and the Calormene lay dead at his feet. And though that was a great relief, it was, at the moment, rather frightening. (70)

Eustace is presented here in such a realistic way that it is easy for child readers to identify with him. Instead of being a perfectly fearless, skilled fighter, he is a child warrior who plunges into battle *in spite* of his fear—the true mark of bravery.

As the time for all-out war nears, Tirian commands Eustace and Jill to leave Narnia, but the children want to continue fighting evil and do not turn and run when they are given the opportunity: “In the end Eustace and Jill begged so hard that Tirian said they could come with him and take their chance” (94). Soon the war is upon them, and as the enemy line moves forward, Tirian chooses Eustace to stand at his right, historically implying that he is his second in command. This is a spiritually significant position as

well, a reference to the Bible's description of Jesus sitting at the right hand of God in Heaven. As the enemies draw near, "Eustace stood with his heart beating terribly, hoping and hoping that he would be brave. He had never seen anything (though he had seen both a dragon and a sea-serpent) that made his blood run so cold as that line of dark-faced bright-eyed men" (118). Through the character of Eustace, child readers are, in a sense, given permission to be afraid, and yet, are shown that true bravery is being fearful, yet acting in spite of that fear.

The Last Battle is a direct reflection of the book of "Revelation" in the Bible, and everything takes a decidedly spiritual turn as Aslan unmakes the old Narnia, and the world's evil along with it and all the characters enter the real Narnia, or Heaven. Eustace and the other six friends of Narnia stand renewed as kings and queens. Sherry notes, "It is clear that Lewis focuses in this last novel on consolation, both for the fears children have about death and for their anxiety at the scriptural theme of the end of the world" (1546). Eustace's ultimate fate is uplifting and can be encouraging to child readers, especially those afraid of death. Although he starts off the series as a morally corrupt and quite detestable boy, Eustace grows throughout the series into a courageous child warrior to whom child readers can relate.

Narnia is a world of black and white moral absolutes, with very little gray in-between, and the child warriors in the series must be punished for their moral mistakes before they are able to learn and grow from their failings, be renewed spiritually, and redeemed through heroic action. Edmund and Eustace follow this pattern to become great warriors and possible role models for child readers.

The Harry Potter series takes a different approach to moral and spiritual growth than the Narnia books. The line between good and evil in the world of Harry Potter is sometimes blurry, and the right choice can be much harder to ascertain than in Narnia. Where Lewis created a black and white world that operates on the principles of moral absolutism, Rowling's world often stands in the gray, more realistic arena of moral relativism. Perhaps these differing moral codes spring from the very different battlefields on which the child warrior characters must fight.

The great battles of Narnia happen on actual battlefields, where the combatants know who their enemies are. There is a good side and a clearly demarcated bad side, similar to the wars Lewis himself fought in and lived through. The same cannot be said for the battlefields in the wizarding world of the Harry Potter novels. As it was in the years when Rowling was writing the series, and still is today, our world is one in which any street corner, building, or school can become a battlefield, a place of terror. In "When Harry Met Osama: Terrorism comes to Hogwarts," Julia Turner says, "Voldemort takes up terrorism. The Dark Lord and his Death Eaters . . . use their new found power to spread fear in familiar ways. They destroy bridges. They murder innocents. They compel children to kill their elders" (Turner). Harry Potter's battle is against an evil mastermind of terrorism who fills the world with frightening shades of moral gray.

The child warriors' moral codes are derived from the world in which they live and fight, and the ambiguous world of terrorism creates morals that are sometimes muddled. In "Harry Potter's Magic," Alan Jacobs points out, "The clarity with which Rowling sees the need to choose between good and evil is admirable, but still more admirable, to my mind, is her refusal to allow a simple division of parties into the Good and the Evil. Harry

Potter is unquestionably a good boy, but . . . a key component of his virtue arises from his recognition that he is not *inevitably* good” (36).

Harry and Hermione both start with decent morals, but throughout the series they wrestle with difficult decisions in a world of moral relativism, for as Sirius tells Harry, “the world isn’t split into good people and Death Eaters” (*Phoenix* 302). The novels are rife with lies, secrets and rule-breaking, but these themes are not always presented as “evil.” Harry and Hermione must reach deep down into their moral cores and make hard choices regarding these deceptions in order to deal effectively with frequently dangerous situations.

From the beginning of the series, Harry is presented with difficult moral decisions, often resulting in unexpected consequences. As Drew Chappell says, “The child characters must decide what “rightness” means to them and when and how to bend rules in order to pursue it” (285). On his first day of flying lessons, Harry breaks the rules and instead of being punished, is rewarded. When the teacher must take Neville to the nurse she commands, “None of you is to move . . . You leave those brooms where they are or you’ll be out of Hogwarts before you can say ‘Quidditch’” (147). As soon as she leaves, Malfoy finds Neville’s Rememberall and flies to hide it in a tree. Harry protests and grabs his broom to rescue the Rememberall from the bully. Harry dramatically flies into the air and catches the ball before hearing Professor McGonagall’s voice yell, “HARRY POTTER!” (149). She orders him to follow her into the school and he is convinced he will be expelled; however, Professor McGonagall instead introduces him to the captain of the Gryffindor Quidditch team, explaining that Harry’s skill on a broom is outstanding and that he is a “natural. I’ve never seen anything like it” (151). They want to

give Harry the very important position of Seeker on the Quidditch team, a position first year students are not allowed to occupy. McGonagall, a stickler for rules in general, says, “I shall speak to Professor Dumbledore and see if we can’t bend the first-year rule” (152). Harry is hot-headed and chooses to break the no-fly rule, but he does it in order to help his friend, Neville, and to confront the bully, Malfoy. The fact that he is then rewarded with an important position on the Quidditch team sets up a moral quandary. Hermione is horrified and angrily says, “So I suppose you think that’s a reward for breaking rules?” Is it okay to break the rules in order to help a friend? Did Harry deserve his “reward”? What does it mean when even the most rigid teachers, such as McGonagall, want to bend the rules in order to have a better sports team? This excerpt is a perfect example of the frequent blurring of morality in the Harry Potter novels, and the questions these gray areas present are the very things that draw child readers into the story, making Harry identifiable and his world more realistic. In spite of the fantasy setting, the questions Harry and Hermione face are often the very questions child readers must wrestle with in their everyday lives.

As the novels progress, Harry faces many more situations in which “right” and “wrong” are not always clearly divisible. For example, in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, Fred and George Weasley give Harry the Marauder’s Map, which reveals all of the castle’s secret passages, as well as the whereabouts of everyone on school grounds. To make the map appear on the seemingly blank parchment, Harry must say “*I solemnly swear that I am up to no good*” and tap the paper with his wand (192). When he is done using the map, he must tap it again and say “Mischief managed” in order to make the parchment appear blank once again (194). These commands in themselves indicate an

intent to break the rules. Harry quickly gets up to “no good,” making use of the map right away to sneak through a secret passage into Hogsmeade, because, unable to get a signature on his permission slip, Harry has been forbidden to go on the field trips into the village with his friends. There is no life or death situation at hand to justify Harry’s rule-breaking, he is simply using poor moral judgment.

Hermione reprimands him for having the map, but in spite of her disapproval, Harry keeps the map and uses it to go into Hogsmeade again. This time Malfoy sees him in the village, and when he returns to the castle Harry is confronted by Snape: “Everyone from the Minister of Magic downward has been trying to keep famous Harry Potter safe from Sirius Black. But famous Harry Potter is a law unto himself. Let the ordinary people worry about his safety! But famous Harry Potter goes where he wants to, with no thought for the consequences” (284). Here, Snape, a complicated character readers love to hate, and who is not clearly on the side of “good” until the last book in the series, is absolutely correct in his admonition. Harry is supposedly in mortal danger from Sirius Black, and everyone is trying to protect him, yet he breaks the rules without considering the consequences and opens himself up to possible attack. Harry remains unfazed by Snape’s statement because he is too blinded by his hatred of him to hear the truth. Snape confiscates the map and gives it to Lupin who chides Harry, “Your parents gave their lives to keep you alive, Harry. A poor way to repay them—gambling their sacrifice for a bag of magic tricks” (290). Lupin is one of the good guys, respected and beloved by Harry, and his chastisement hits home. Harry feels remorse after Lupin calls him out, and hopefully child readers will also consider in that moment that perhaps Harry Potter is not

always right in his actions. However, when Lupin resigns from Hogwarts, he does return the map to Harry, proving that he trusts him to make the right moral choices in the future.

Harry uses the map throughout his school years to sneak about the castle, and in *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince*, when he realizes Malfoy is working for Voldemort, he uses it to obsessively follow his classmate. Harry begins to use the map in a moral way—studying it to follow Malfoy in a valiant effort in the ongoing fight against Voldemort. Eliana Ionoaia comments, “virtue ethics as expounded in these novels seems to be the solution for a world epitomized by moral relativism and the demise of the deontic age: individual virtues, not universal rules and norms, may prove to be our salvation” (27). In every situation Harry encounters, he must give consideration to the different choices before him and decide which path to take based on his developing personal moral code. Because he is courageous, Harry always chooses the path most likely to snuff out the evil threatening his friends and invading his world, but that path is often more dangerous to him personally

Harry’s rule-breaking is a theme that resurfaces throughout the series, though most of the time it is shown to be necessary for the cause. For example, in the very first chapter of *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, Harry breaks one of the most basic rules in the wizarding world: underage wizards are not allowed to do magic outside of school and never in front of a Muggle. The book starts, as most of the series does, with Harry staying at the Dursley’s house in Little Whinging for the summer. Harry and Dudley are arguing in an alley when Dementors suddenly attack, and Harry must use the Patronus charm to save Dudley and himself. After helping an almost immobile Dudley back to the house, an owl soon delivers a letter to Harry informing him that because he

has broken the rules regarding underage sorcery, and in the presence of a Muggle, he will be expelled from Hogwarts, his wand destroyed, and that a disciplinary hearing at the Ministry of Magic has been scheduled. In this instance, Harry broke the rules in order to save his own life, as well as Dudley's, but he is to be punished regardless. Harry grows angry and thinks, "Wasn't *anybody* going to say 'well done' for fighting off two Dementors single-handedly?" (35). Another owl arrives with a letter explaining that, thanks to Dumbledore, the Ministry will simply suspend Harry (and let him keep his wand) until the disciplinary hearing.

What happens at the hearing is quite important, not just to Harry and his future, but for the readers' understanding of the shifting sands of morality in the world of Harry Potter. Harry has twice before been given warnings concerning the use of underage magic, only one of which was truly his fault. In *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, Harry is brought before the Minister of Magic because while living with the Dursleys he lost his temper, causing his Aunt Marge to inflate and float out the window. On this occasion, the Minister informs Harry that no harm has been done:

"Hang on," blurted Harry, "What about my punishment?"

Fudge blinked, "Punishment?"

"I broke the law!" Harry said. "The Decree for the Restriction of Underage Wizardry!"

"Oh, my dear boy, we're not going to punish you for a little thing like that!" cried Fudge, waving his crummet impatiently. (45)

However, when Harry asks Fudge to sign his field trip permission slip, the Minister of Magic replies, "No. I'm sorry, Harry, but rules are rules" (47). This scene, comfortably

played out in the familiar atmosphere of the Leaky Cauldron, is sharply contrasted with the very formal hearing Harry is commanded to attend at the Ministry of Magic before the entire Wizengamot, or Wizard Court, after his run in with the Dementors. In actuality, the hearing is intended to silence Harry's claim that Voldemort has returned, in order to protect the Ministry and quell the rising fear of the wizard populace. Dumbledore comes to Harry's defense, argues with the aggressively nasty Fudge, and presents a witness on Harry's behalf. Fudge hypocritically brings up the previous times Harry used magic illegally, to which Dumbledore replies:

“And you very kindly did not press charges on that occasion, accepting, I presume, that even the best wizards cannot always control their emotions . . . The Ministry does not have the power to expel Hogwarts students Nor does it have the right to confiscate wands until charges have been successfully proven In your admirable haste to ensure that the law is upheld, you appear, inadvertently I am sure, to have overlooked a few laws yourself.”

“Laws can be changed,” said Fudge savagely.

“Of course they can,” said Dumbledore, inclining his head. “And you certainly seem to be making many changes, Cornelius.” (*Phoenix* 148)

Harry is eventually cleared of all charges, but more importantly for readers, the corruption of the Ministry has been exposed. The laws, or rules, in the wizarding world are not always a fixed thing, which mirrors how Harry treats rules as well. Chappell maintains,

As Strimel (2004) points out, through identification with Harry and his friends, young readers may come to terms with the terrors in their own lives and the ways that adults respond to them. They may choose to accept or challenge the limits they are given, depending on their own subject position and context of real or perceived threat to their safety and well being. They may also judge the usefulness of the adults around them in terms of providing leadership—Dumbledore tells Harry that “perhaps those who are best suited to power are those who have never sought it” (DH 2007 p 718) and mitigating that danger. (290)

Harry and his friends must challenge the limits set before them by the corrupt ministry, breaking rules in order to push forward with their battle against Voldemort and his followers. The dangers that wait in the shadows for Harry and his friends are not always acutely distinguishable. Dolores Umbridge is an evil, nasty woman, but she is not a Death Eater, she is simply a bad person. Snape is mean, hateful, and seems to be secretly working for Voldemort, but he is, in fact, a double agent working for Dumbledore. Almost nothing is as it seems, which is quite realistic for contemporary society, and modern child readers can identify with a world full of dark, unseen forces. As Miller points out,

On September 11, 2001, a similar change occurred in the US, and the territory of the “battlefield” has now expanded to include not only the American home front, but almost any place in the world. In this uncertain and fearful contemporary climate, young readers need and seek a protected imaginative space within which to build personal identity, a

magical space where characters can transform the anonymity of terror into a sense of a heroic self. (282)

Harry Potter lives and fights in a world full of terrorism, confusion and shadows, but he grows in moral maturity as he makes difficult choices in a morally relativistic society. As child readers follow Harry on his journey, they are offered a unique chance to encounter challenging moral decisions from the safety of their imaginative reading space where they can question what they would do in the given situation and thus begin to form their own moral code.

The biggest challenge Harry must overcome in the formation of his moral code is the fact that he and Voldemort are mirror images of one another, connected in a deep and mysterious way. This disturbing realization causes Harry to struggle with the decisions he makes, always mindful that he doesn't know the full extent of his connection to the Dark Lord, nor how it may be influencing him. As previously mentioned, Harry tends to bend the rules to fit his needs. Jacobs says:

Moreover, Harry's tendency to bypass or simply flout the rules is a matter of moral concern for him: he wonders and worries about the self justifications he offers, and often doubts not just his abilities but his virtue. He is constantly aware that . . . Voldemort . . . offers temptations to which he cannot simply assume that he is immune. And when Dumbledore mentions Harry's "certain disregard for rules" he does so in a way that links such disregard with the forces of evil, thus warning Harry. (36)

Harry's disregard for the rules is not the only way he is connected to the forces of evil. In *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, Harry learns that he is a Parselmouth (someone

who can talk to snakes in a language called Parseltongue). Ron and Hermione explain to him that being a Parselmouth is a bad sign because Salazar Slytherin, the dark wizard and one of the founding members of Hogwarts, was famous for speaking the snake language. Additionally, Voldemort, a Slytherin, is a notorious Parselmouth. Harry immediately starts second-guessing himself, lying awake and wondering:

Could he be a descendant of Salazar Slytherin? . . .

But I'm in Gryffindor, Harry thought. The Sorting Hat wouldn't have put me in here if I had Slytherin blood. . . .

Ah, said a nasty little voice in his brain, but the Sorting Hat wanted to put you in Slytherin, don't you remember? (197)

Harry questions his own basic morality, wondering if he is somehow connected with Salazar Slytherin and is also internally corrupt.

At the climax of *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, Harry faces the memory of Voldemort, or Tom Riddle, who explains to Harry how much they are alike: “There are strange likenesses between us, after all. Even you must have noticed. Both half-bloods, orphans, raised by Muggles. Probably the only two Parselmouths to come to Hogwarts since the great Slytherin himself. We even *look* something alike. . .” (317). In *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, a connection is formed between the minds of Harry and Voldemort. Harry begins to have frightening dreams of a door at the end of a corridor in the Ministry of Magic. He dreams he is a snake attacking Ron’s father and wakes, telling the others of his dream (463). Mr. Weasley is found at the ministry covered in venomous snake bites and is taken to the hospital. At times Harry’s scar burns “white-hot, as though the old wound had burst open again—and unbidden, unwanted, but

terrifyingly strong there rose within Harry a hatred so powerful. . .” (474). Harry feels terribly guilty, as if he had attacked Mr. Weasley himself, and when he describes to Sirius the feeling of hatred he experienced, he says, “It was like something rose up inside me, like there’s a snake inside me—” (481). At the end of the novel, Harry battles Voldemort once again and he is possessed by the Dark Lord, “They were fused together. . .” (816). His body wracked with excruciating pain, Harry welcomes death, comforted by the knowledge that at least he will be reunited with Sirius, who has just been killed. The love Harry feels in that moment drives Voldemort out of his body. As a child warrior, Harry’s greatest weapon isn’t his wand, but love. It was his mother’s love that shielded him from Voldemort when he was a baby, and it is Harry’s love for his friends that guides his morality and helps him in making the right choices—choices that make the difference between Harry and Voldemort.

Assisting Harry on his journey to defeat Voldemort is Hermione, a pivotal character who also experiences moral and spiritual growth as her independence and agency increase. One of Harry’s two best friends, Hermione displays traits that her counterparts, Harry and Ron, sometimes lack. She is compassionate, methodical, fair and brilliant, and has been described by Chappell as “the ethical center of the novels” (285). When Hermione begins school at Hogwarts, she views the world in terms of black and white. An overachieving lover of books and rules, Hermione finds comfort and safety in knowledge and obedience; however, she is also an annoying know-it-all. Hermione is introduced on the train to Hogwarts in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* and is described as having a “bossy sort of voice” (105). She immediately begins criticizing Ron’s attempt at magic: “Are you sure that’s a real spell? . . . Well it’s not very good, is

it? I've tried a few simple spells just for practice and it's all worked for me . . . I've learned all our course books by heart, of course . . ." (105). While Hermione has a head full of knowledge, the most important lessons Hogwarts has to teach her concern social skills and how to be a good friend.

From the beginning, Hermione has a great ethical conscience, but it lies in the realm of moral absolutism. When Harry breaks the no-fly rule during their first flying lesson it is Hermione who chides him for his rule breaking. As Harry prepares for a midnight duel with Malfoy, Hermione sticks her nose in saying, "I couldn't help overhearing what you and Malfoy were saying . . . and you mustn't go wandering around the school at night, think of the points you'll lose Gryffindor if you're caught, and you're bound to be. It's really very selfish of you" (154). Later the boys sneak out for the duel when Hermione waylays them:

"I can't believe you're going to do this, Harry." . . .

"*You!*" said Ron furiously. "Go back to bed!" . . .

Hermione wasn't going to give up that easily. She followed Ron through the portrait hole, hissing at them like an angry goose.

"Don't you *care* about Gryffindor, do you *only* care about yourselves, I don't want Slytherin to win the house cup, and you'll lose all the points I got from Professor McGonagall for knowing about Switching Spells."

"Go away."

"Alright, but I warned you, you just remember what I said when you're on the train home tomorrow." (155-6)

After their argument, Hermione can't get back into the Gryffindor room, and after a series of misadventures in the corridors she fumes, "I hope you're pleased with yourselves. We could all have been killed—or worse, expelled" (162). Hermione's priorities are clear—the worst thing she can imagine is being expelled from her new, magical world of knowledge, and she will doggedly pursue anyone who risks her success therein. In "Hermione Granger and the Heritage of Gender," Eliza T. Dresang notes, "Hermione's agency develops slowly. She refuses to be deterred from her purposes, whether it be learning, admonishing about rules, or, as I believe we will see, championing the underdog" (227). Hermione is such a good student and stickler for the rules that she is made a prefect in her fifth year, a position charged with making sure the younger students abide by the laws of Hogwarts.

Hermione's first moral challenge comes early in the series after Ron and Harry save her from a troll that has been released into the castle. The professors find the trio in the bathroom with the fallen troll and are furious that the children are not in their dormitory. Hermione steps forward, lies, and takes the fall for all three of them:

"I went looking for the troll because I—I thought I could deal with it on my own—you know, because I've read all about them."

Ron dropped his wand. Hermione Granger, telling a downright lie to a teacher? . . .

Hermione hung her head. Harry was speechless. Hermione was the last person to do anything against the rules, and here she was, pretending she had, to get them out of trouble. It was as if Snape had started handing out

sweets . . . from that moment on, Hermione Granger became their friend.
(*Sorcerer* 177-179)

Hermione makes a very difficult decision in this scene. She decides that it is better to tell a lie and make herself look foolish than to be without friends. Additionally, she wants to protect Harry and Ron from getting into trouble because they did, indeed, save her life. This is a moral quandary that does not tell child readers what to do in a similar situation, because they will never face a mountain troll in a bathroom, but it can inspire them to consider how Hermione's actions coincide with their own moral code. As Chantel M. Lavoie points out, "Lying—a vehicle for evil, is by no means *de facto* evil in the Harry Potter books, and some of the most important lies in the series are demonstrably reasonable and moral responses to unreason and evil" (77). As Hermione grows in agency as a child warrior she begins to see the value of a well-placed lie or broken rule when it is used as a weapon against evil.

In *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, Hermione takes a big step forward in her agency as a child warrior when she makes a definitive moral choice to subvert authority and organizes Dumbledore's Army, an underground student organization that prepares for the coming war by learning Defense Against the Dark Arts in secret. This all too important knowledge has been ripped away from the students of Hogwarts by the new DADA teacher, Dolores Umbridge. According to Adney, "Hermione proves herself to be most determined and independent by pulling her nose out of her books and putting her heart into battle: a battle for knowledge that will liberate herself and those she cares about" (103). Along with many other suffocating decrees, the nasty Ministry minion and High Inquisitor, Dolores Umbridge, posts Educational Decree Number Twenty-Four

which states, “All student Organizations . . . are henceforth disbanded Any student found to have formed, or to belong to, an Organization . . . that has not been approved by the High Inquisitor will be expelled” (351-2). Nothing is worse to Hermione than the thought of expulsion from Hogwarts, but she continues on with Dumbledore’s Army, in spite of the danger, because she knows that she must help Harry arm the students of Hogwarts for the coming war against Voldemort.

It is important to note that Hermione has not intrinsically changed how she views the rules, but has grown in moral maturity to an understanding of when to follow the rules and when to subvert them for righteous reasons. Her morality has shifted from that of a civilian with an exceedingly strict regard for the rules, into a warrior following a different set of rules for war. Hermione and her friends are battling to protect the defenseless against Voldemort and his Death Eaters, and new rules apply. In spite of this, she certainly strives to follow the given rules whenever possible, and still tries to keep Harry and Ron on the straight and narrow path. In *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince*, the three take the Potions course together, and Harry uses an old textbook found in the classroom’s cupboard. The textbook contains mysterious hand-written notes which, when applied, give Harry special knowledge, enabling them to perfect the potions. He even tries to share some of the books’ tips with a frustrated Hermione, telling her to “Add a clockwise stir—”, who responds in typical Hermione fashion: “No, no, the book says counterclockwise!” (191). Hermione is miffed that Harry is not doing his own work, but doesn’t go so far as to tattle, as she may have in earlier years. Harry offers to share the book with her; however, “Hermione, meanwhile, was resolutely plowing on with what she called the ‘official’ instructions, but becoming increasingly bad-tempered as they

yielded poorer results than the Prince's" (194). Coming to terms with the fact that books may not have all the answers is a difficult part of Hermione's growth as a child warrior.

As *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince* comes to a close, Harry has made the decision to not return to Hogwarts for his seventh year, but instead to go on a search for the remaining Horcruxes that Voldemort has hidden. Harry intends to take the dangerous journey alone, but Hermione says, "You said to us once before, that there was time to turn back if we wanted to. We've had time, haven't we?" (651). Hermione and Ron join Harry on his quest, releasing any dependence on Hogwarts as their home. The three have matured into child warriors, capable of making empowered moral decisions. From the beginning, education has been Hermione's priority and passion, but when she chooses to join Harry in his hunt for the Horcruxes instead of returning to Hogwarts, Hermione sacrifices all previous security and comfort in order to fight Voldemort. And it's a good thing she does, because as Berents notes: "By the final book, Hermione is central to holding the Trio together in their desperate and, for a long time, fruitless, search for the Horcruxes" (149). Berents goes on to make an important point that, "instinctive, clever responses such as Hermione's at several points of the seventh book, demonstrate young people's agency in choosing, if not the involvement itself, then the manner of their involvement in conflict and dangerous situations" (151).

Without Hermione, Harry's moral code would not progress to the level necessary to defeat Voldemort. According to Ionoaia, "Harry's relationship with his two best friends is essential for his moral growth. Whenever Harry is about to do something reckless or embark upon some adventure, they point out the extremes, thus allowing him to deliberate and make an informed decision. They help Harry make the virtuous, rational

choice . . . and encourage him to avoid extremes” (16-17). Hermione’s role in Harry’s growth as a hero is an important one. She not only plays the part of sergeant at arms, keeping Harry and Ron on task and out of trouble, but also provides most of the magical knowledge needed when the trio is faced with danger or a situation requiring problem solving. However, the most vital position she holds is that of moral advisor. Although she soon learns that her strict adherence to rules is not always possible or advantageous in the war against Voldemort, she is the one reminding Harry that there are indeed rules and they are indeed being broken.

Spirituality is represented differently in the Harry Potter novels than the Narnia series, but is nonetheless a crucial element in the empowerment of the child warriors therein. As noted, the Narnia books are intentionally infused with Christian symbolism, and the child warriors are spiritually renewed and therefore strengthened by the great lion, Aslan, the Christ figure of the stories. The spirituality of the Harry Potter series, on the other hand, has been hotly debated for years. Critics run the gambit from proclaiming the Harry Potter books to be satanic, to seeing them as a retelling of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Rowling is, in fact, a member of the Church of Scotland and was quoted as saying, “To me [the religious parallels have] always been obvious But I never wanted to talk too openly about it because I thought it might show people who just wanted the story where we were going” (Adler). Parallels between the Harry Potter series and the Bible can be drawn at length; however, the virtues of love and sacrifice are the divine elements that most empower the child warriors within the novels. When Voldemort attacked the infant Harry Potter, the killing curse rebounded and Voldemort was defeated for the first time. Because of his mother’s love and sacrifice, Harry survived

and was endowed with a special protection against evil. Her sacrifice also serves as an example to Harry, and throughout the series he bravely faces death many times. In the end, Harry sacrifices himself to Voldemort, and in Christ-like (and Aslan-like) fashion, rises from the dead to finish off his evil foe. The spiritual power of love gives Harry the ability to be a child warrior hero who saves the people he loves, as well as both the wizarding and Muggle worlds.

Hermione is empowered by the spiritual influences of love and sacrifice as well. In “God, the Devil, and Harry Potter,” John Killinger says, “As Christ’s sacrifice was infectious among his followers, several of whom were supposedly slain for their faith, Harry’s bravery rubs off on Ron and Hermione” (84). In order to join Harry on his quest to find the Horcruxes and defeat Voldemort, Hermione must sacrifice her parents (erasing their memories of her so that they will be safe), her beloved Hogwarts education (she does not return to school but joins Harry and Ron in the woods), and in the epic battle of Hogwarts, fights bravely alongside her friends and fellow child warriors, risking her very life in order to destroy evil.

The child warriors in the Narnia and Harry Potter series develop individual agency, spiritual strength, and unique moral codes, all of which are based on their experiences, environment, and most importantly, choices. As these warriors grow, courageously fight, and sacrifice for love, they give child readers a framework in which to start building their own moral and spiritual codes, as well as a glimpse of hope for the future. This empowerment and hope is accessible because the characters battle in the safely distanced fantasy realms of Narnia and Hogwarts, creating an imaginative reading space for readers to inhabit. The fictional child warriors are tremendous role models for

readers affected by war, because of their character growth and heroic actions, enabled by strong moral and spiritual cores. Hope is offered to child readers as they journey with their fictional counterparts, over the pages of battlegrounds, into the heart of evil, and out the other side into the light of a bright and promising future

CONCLUSION

Fairy tales are more than true: not because they tell
us that dragons exist, but because they tell us that
dragons can be beaten.

—G.K. Chesterton

(as qtd. by Gaiman)

The right book in the hands of a child can make an astounding impact on the way they think about themselves, their world, and the power they possess to create their future. The Chronicles of Narnia and The Harry Potter series are excellent examples of novels that can offer hope and empowerment to children—especially children traumatized by war, whether through direct involvement or observation. These books are able to influence child readers because they are essentially stories of war set within the fantasy genre, featuring child heroes who grow in agency, strength, and morality to battle and overcome evil. These fictional children lay out paths for child readers to follow, if they so desire, that will enable them to define their fears, identify their strengths, and make sense of their place in the world.

Children across the globe have been exposed to the terrifying realities of war. Some children experience the trauma of war first hand, while others battle anxiety and fear caused by watching events unfold on the evening news. According to UNICEF:

Between 1945 and 1992, there were 149 major wars, killing more than 23 million people . . . Children have, of course, always been caught up in warfare. They usually have little choice but to experience, at minimum, the same horrors as their parents—as casualties or even combatants

Recent developments in warfare have significantly heightened the dangers for children. During the last decade, it is estimated that child victims have included: 2 million killed, 4-5 million disabled, 12 million left homeless, more than 1 million orphaned or separated from their parents, and some 10 million psychologically traumatized. (“Children in War”)

War is no longer confined to the battlefields, and the on-going rise of terrorism strikes fear into the hearts of children around the world, as well as in the United States.

According to the American Psychological Association, “A recent study found that six months after September 11th, approximately 75,000 New York City public school children in grades 4 through 12 were suffering from PTSD, including children who were not directly affected by the event” (“How Much News”). While the children of New York City were undoubtedly traumatized by the proximity of the 9/11 disaster, children across the U.S. watched the events of 9/11 unfold on their televisions and were filled with fear and confusion. The National Association of School Psychologists suggests,

Children may be especially fearful that threatened or actual military action overseas will result in more personal loss and violence here at home.

Because repeated scenes of destruction of lives and property are featured in the news media, they understand that “enemies of the United States” can cause harm in this country. . . All children, however, are likely to be affected in some way by war or terrorism involving our country.

(“Children and Fear”)

These examples and statistics highlight the surprising extent to which children today are being traumatized by war. Children who have experienced this trauma need a safe space

in which they can process their fears and work through their anxieties. The Narnia and Harry Potter books offer children just such a space, and strong child warrior role models can help guide them out of the darkness of terror. This empowerment is made especially accessible because the series are a part of the fantasy genre. In “Fantasy: Why Kids Read it, Why Kids Need it,” young adult fantasy author Tamora Pierce claims, “Fantasy, more than any other genre, is a literature of empowerment. In the real world, kids have little say. This is a given; it is the nature of childhood. In fantasy, however short, fat, unbeautiful weak, dreamy, or unlearned individuals may be, they find a realm in which those things are negated by strength” (51). The genre of fantasy provides child readers the chance to deal with war, death, and evil from a safely distanced space through the creation of magical worlds that are set apart from the primary world or extratextual reality. In these magical worlds, child characters grow in strength, agency, morality and spirituality in order to become warriors, and then heroes, not just for the benefit of their enchanted secondary world, or even their own primary one, but also for child readers that follow them on their journeys.

Children affected by war are in particular need of comfort and guidance to help them process confusing emotions and losses; however, because of incurred trauma, child readers may need the uniquely cushioned and detached spaces offered by fantasy novels to properly work through their feelings. In “Representing Child Soldiers in Fiction and Film” Sarah Maya Rosen and David M. Rosen propose that, “given the general public concern about child soldiers, fantasy may be the only setting in which the appearance of heroic child warriors is culturally acceptable” (311). In this space, the child warrior characters in the Narnia and Harry Potter novels are complex and fascinating role models

for children battling their own demons, and these heroic characters have blazed a path for child readers to follow to hope.

Although both the Narnia and Harry Potter books are equipped to help child readers in similar ways, Lewis and Rowling wrote during different eras, sculpting two very different universes in their respective series. Miller highlights some of the similarities:

As we have seen, children’s fiction written during and immediately following the Second World War often created fantasy lands in which characters and readers could learn how to become heroes in times of trauma . . . We too now live in “numbing” and “horrifying” times. It is no accident that since 9/11 we have seen a proliferation of fantastic and magical children’s literature; even historical novels . . . recall a trend toward fantasy in children’s fiction written during and immediately following the London blitz. (279-281)

Hailing from the United Kingdom, Lewis and Rowling, and their literature, share similarities beyond the popularity of their respective seven book fantasy series for children. Although the authors were writing in completely different eras, both wrote at a time when young audiences had been affected by war. We can see the battlefields of WWII in Lewis’s *The Last Battle*, while throughout the Harry Potter series terrorism stalks the halls of Hogwarts, attacking from the shadows. Both series take child readers on an “appointed journey” from their extratextual reality into a safely distanced imaginative reading space wherein they can work through their troubles and face their fears. Both series could be considered war stories with their brave child warrior heroes

and violent battles between the forces of good and evil. In both worlds the characters grow and mature into courageous heroes with strong moral and spiritual foundations, gain agency, and ultimately defeat evil in order to save their respective realms.

The differences in the two series are worth noting as well. The characters in the two series are exceedingly diverse from each other, with those in Narnia series not being as well developed as those in the Harry Potter novels. Instead, Peter, Susan, Edmund, Lucy, Jill, and Eustace seem to work as separate pieces in one symbolic representation of Man. However, most notably, there simply is not as much time for character development in the approximately 768 pages of the Narnia series, in which the characters are not present in every book, as there is in the 4100 pages of the Harry Potter series, wherein Harry and his close friends are the focus of every novel. The settings of the two series differ as well; within their secondary worlds, Lewis sets most of his adventures in nature and outdoor spaces, whereas Rowling tucks most scenes away in the magical rooms of Hogwarts castle.

The reception of the two series are often separated by issues of faith. While the Narnia books are steeped in the messages of Christianity and are beloved in Christian circles, the Harry Potter novels are hotly contested and even considered satanic by some. The spirituality within the two series differs significantly. The Narnia books are unmistakably filled with Biblical symbolism, from the creation of the world in *The Magician's Nephew*, to the sacrifice and resurrection of Christ in *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*, to the end of the world (the book of "Revelation") in *The Last Battle*. While many scholars see Christian symbolism in the Harry Potter novels, more often the characters' spirituality takes the form of love, courageousness, and self-sacrifice for a

different kind of higher good—the lives of their friends, family and the whole world, wizards and Muggles alike. In spite of their differences, both series contain positive messages that can help child readers find hope in dark times.

In *An Introduction to Children's Literature*, Peter Hunt states it may be “impossible for a children’s book . . . not to be educational or influential in some way” (3). The Narnia and Harry Potter books have been so enormously successful, both critically and commercially, that they have undoubtedly influenced millions of child readers. The Chronicles of Narnia is a series that has been popular with children and families for over half a century. While no formal reader response study has been done with the Narnia books, there are clues as to its impact on children. Edited by Lyle W. Dorsett and Marjorie Lamp Mead, *C.S. Lewis: Letters to Children* is a collection of correspondence between Lewis and child readers. This collection gives key insight into the way children of the 1950s and 1960s responded to The Chronicles of Narnia. In the many responses he sent to letters he received, Lewis shares his thoughts with children on school, animals, writing, and of course, the world and characters in the Narnia stories. In “‘Indefinable Stirrings and Longings’: Research on Writing through Student Letters to Authors” David Ward notes the collection “is a powerful portrayal of how children have felt ‘indefinable stirrings and longings’ resulting from their engagements with the land of Narnia. The collection is also a remarkable sample of children’s unaided responses to a text and the author” (49). The book does not contain the child readers’ original letters to Lewis beyond a few small excerpts; however, his return letters make clear that readers were entranced with Narnia and wanted to know more. Some children delved into the religious aspects of the books and wanted to understand their link to Christianity. Responding to a

letter from a girl named Patricia he writes, “All your points are in a sense right. But I’m not exactly ‘representing’ the real (Christian) story in symbols . . .” (92). Lewis then goes on to explain his intended symbolism for each of the novels. Other children wrote letters telling Lewis how much they loved the Narnia books. Eight year old Jonathan said, “I hope . . . you are going to write another one soon. If you don’t what am I going to read when I am nine, ten, eleven and twelve?” (99). Lewis received thousands of letters from children and most were concerned with the Narnia books. Perhaps children, equating the personality of the jovial narrator in the Narnia books with Lewis himself, felt a kinship with him which compelled them to write to the author. As Ward attests, “Lewis was the voice of Narnia. I felt I knew him personally and that, with him, I had experienced remarkable adventures” (51). Lewis wrote for children, not because he had many children in his life (he in fact knew very few children) but because he remembered so well what it was like to be a child, yearning for an escape. In the Introduction to *Letters*, Dorsett and Mead say, “A kind man, he was never more compassionate than when he wrote to young people. He remembered well the fears, questions, and joys of childhood and he understood his young correspondents. Lewis met them on ‘common, universally human, ground’ and they responded” (6).

The Harry Potter novels have been banned, boycotted, and burned by groups of Christians who feel that the books are satanic and are leading their children into lives of moral corruption; however, the findings of two reader response studies have proven that children find positive messages in the Harry Potter books. In “Children’s Moral Reading of Harry Potter: Are Children and Adults Reading the Same Books?” Mary P. Whitney, Elizabeth C. Vozzola, and Joan Hofmann, “examined the influence of education,

expertise, and gender on child, college student, and postgraduate level readers' moral understanding of the themes and characters of the Harry Potter books" (1). The study showed that the Harry Potter novels model virtues such as courage, compassion, and perseverance for children. Children were shown to identify strongly with Harry, and understand that when he breaks the rules, it is primarily to save lives. When the children were asked about the magic in the novels the researchers "found no evidence that reading the Harry Potter books was leading the children to the occult or confusing them about the use of magic. In fact . . . the moral messages children are actually taking away from these books are lessons of courage and friendship" (13). In short, Whitney et al. show that children are receiving a strongly positive moral message from the Harry Potter novels.

Amie Senland and Elizabeth Vozzola build on the study by Whitney et al. with research into the moral message sent by Harry Potter from the differing perspectives of fundamental and liberal Christian families. Their study, "Christian Perspectives on Harry Potter: Tool of Satan or Christian Parable?" ultimately concludes that the books can be used as a positive moral tool by Christian parents who are troubled by the boy wizard: "By reading the series with children and adolescents, concerned parents and moral educators can promote moral growth and development by guiding youth in understanding the moral dimensions of Harry's decisions and actions" (161).

Looking back over the two series and my experience studying the approximately five-thousand pages therein, I am pleased that findings have supported my original hypothesis; however, there have been some surprises along the way. I originally expected the Harry Potter series to be the more violent of the two series—and in some ways it is—but the force used is almost always magical in nature. This fact alone places a buffer

around the violence, softening its focus. The brutality in the Narnia novels may come less often, but when it does, there are knives and swords and arrows involved, causing more bloodshed and a stronger, more realistic impression of violence. Another surprise was learning that there is already an established branch of psychology, called Bibliotherapy, dedicated to helping people work through their problems and traumas through the use of literature. I was so pleased to find reader response studies conducted on the Harry Potter books, but was surprised to find that no such studies have been done on the Narnia stories.

There is more research to be done on these series, child readers, and war. More reader response studies of the Narnia and Harry Potter series would yield further information on what child readers gain from reading the stories, and studies geared toward children affected by war would be particularly helpful. Additionally, both series could be studied as effective selections for Bibliotherapy in general, or as a more focused therapy for child readers traumatized by war. I suspect that such studies would show that child readers affected by war are positively influenced and given hope by the child warrior characters in the Narnia and Harry Potter series.

What I have discovered through this work is that in spite of their differences in style, spirituality, and types of violence, both *The Chronicles of Narnia* and the *Harry Potter* series are poised to offer child readers, especially those who have been traumatized by war, a safe place to work through their fears and find a pathway to hope. This hope is attainable because the stories are placed in the fantasy genre, feature excellently constructed secondary worlds, and focus on the positive examples set by heroic child warriors empowered by their strong morality and faith.

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