

Harry Potter and the Quest for Values:

How the boy wizard can assist young people in making choices

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STATEMENT OF SOURCES

This thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

This thesis contains no material extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma.

To the best of my knowledge, this thesis contains no material previously published or written except where due reference is made in the main text and references.

All research procedures reported in the thesis received the approval of the relevant Ethics/Safety Committees (where required).

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ABSTRACT

The *Harry Potter* series has been a phenomenal publishing success for their author J. K. Rowling. This thesis argues for the use of these books as a worthwhile teaching asset, especially in the promotion of values in our schools. It particularly focuses on the use of these books for Values Education in the curriculum area of Religious Education.

While the world continues to change and evolve there are some aspects of our societies that remain unchanged and the power of stories is one of these stable forces. This thesis looks at the importance of stories in teaching our youth about values, especially Christian values. It also provides research on how critics and youth have responded to the stories about Harry Potter through undertaking a review of critical comments and by actually asking young people what they feel about aspects of the novels.

Comment is made on what Christian values can be found in the *Harry Potter* series and how they are shown through the choices characters make. This thesis also looks at how the power to choose is a fundamental basis of Christian religion and that through our choices we live out our humanity. Mention is made of Values Education in both State and Catholic schools and how, in recent years, we have seen increased moves by both Federal and State Governments to instigate Values Education programmes in Australian schools. This study also looked at how curriculum changes in Tasmania, at both State and Catholic levels, encourages the teaching of values through the use of resources that connect with our young people and teaching strategies that encourage higher-order thinking skills.

An analysis is also made regarding the connection between the *Harry Potter* series and the hero journey motif. This connection provides some answers as to why the series is so popular and why our youth feel some connection to the characters in the books.

Through research and analysis this thesis found that the *Harry Potter* series is popular with our youth and that they are connected to the characters in the books and the choices they make. This study also found that the series, through the characters and choices they make, provides itself as a valuable teaching tool because it is able to be used in both secular and Catholic schools regardless of attacks on the books by Christian groups. Studies undertaken indicated that the values presented in the books are compatible with our Australian societal values and that with the use of good teaching strategies the books can assist students in developing their higher-order thinking skills.

The *Harry Potter* series can be used to assist youth in acquiring values that will assist them in their personal development and to help them become useful contributors to our modern world. Through the character of Harry Potter and his experiences students can learn more about themselves and the values they need to overcome those difficulties that they, like all of us, face in life.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone:</i>	<i>PS</i>
<i>Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets:</i>	<i>CoS</i>
<i>Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban:</i>	<i>PoA</i>
<i>Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire:</i>	<i>GoF</i>
<i>Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix:</i>	<i>OoP</i>
<i>Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince:</i>	<i>HBP</i>
<i>Good News for Living (Document/Framework):</i>	<i>GNFL</i>

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION:

HARRY POTTER AND THE QUEST FOR VALUES:

HOW THE BOY WIZARD CAN ASSIST YOUNG PEOPLE IN MAKING CHOICES

“[Harry is] a virtuous agent whose commitments will inevitably lead to conflicts with the evil that threatens his world”

(James Smith, 2005, ¶ 17)

Stories, like the *Harry Potter* series, have been part of humankind for thousands of years and part of the classroom scene as long as schools have existed. They are multi-dimensional teaching tools that can be used in various areas of education including the teaching of literacy skills, belief systems and critical reflective skills. Stories are still used in our classrooms each day whether through the written word, oral presentations, audio tapes, CDs, video tapes or DVDs. How teachers use the stories depends on the curriculum framework they follow and their own teaching techniques and belief systems.

The education system has a duty to teach its students values. As Maureen Carroll (2004) states, “Education must support the development of well-rounded individuals who are able to feel deeply with compassion for others, to think penetratingly and clearly and act justly for humanity” (p. 2). Schools must not indoctrinate students into a particular value system but provide the opportunity for students to gain a set of personal values. Through teaching methods that allow students to be critically reflective of competing values, students should be able to gain a set of values that are beneficial to both themselves and society.

This thesis argues that the *Harry Potter* books are useful resources for the teaching of values in our schools because the series’ central character, Harry Potter, lives out values that are generally regarded as worthwhile by contemporary Australian society. The popularity of

the series with youth, and the familiarity of their content, provides an opportunity for teachers to instruct students in values. These values will assist students in living their lives and also in benefiting society as a whole in a time when our value systems are under strain due to rapid changes in our societies and the influence of forces such as the media.

Part of this thesis deals with elements that have influenced the creation of the *Harry Potter* stories and asserts that the series draws from the “hero journey” or “monomyth” described by Joseph Campbell, David Leeming and others (Campbell, 1949/1993, Leeming, 1973): “The monomyth itself is an expression of the journey of the hero figure and a reflection of our own journey from birth to the unknown” (Leeming, p. 6). The hero is seeking to understand how they and the world operate and they need to establish a personal value system that will provide guidance for them to operate effectively in their world. Harry Potter and other characters in the books are shown developing value systems which guide their lives and it is through the illustration of these values that the series presents itself as a useful learning tool. These values include goodness, kindness, selflessness and hope.

Values Education is particularly relevant in Religious Education because all religions have a set of values. This thesis argues for the use of the *Harry Potter* series of books in the teaching of values espoused in Religious Education as well as general Values Education. It particularly centres on Values Education in Catholicism and draws on the use of the *Harry Potter* books to assist in the instruction of values relevant to this Christian-based faith. The thesis also mentions how the series offers itself as a resource in teaching higher-order thinking skills that will assist students throughout life.

Definitions

It is important to clarify the meaning of some of the key terms used in this thesis so that a fuller understanding may be reached.

Harry Potter

Harry Potter is the hero of the *Harry Potter* series of books by J. K. Rowling. He is aged eleven when he enters his first year at “Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry” and in each subsequent book after *PS* he ages one year.

Quest

A quest involves a search for something, which can be a person, an object, an idea, an eradication of a problem, etc. It is a search that is never easy, and always involves challenges and obstacles along the way. These challenges are necessary because, through undertaking these challenges, the quester discovers more about himself or herself. Also, to succeed at these challenges, the quester needs to build up their knowledge, skills and understandings in both a practical and intellectual sense and also to increase their personal attributes such as confidence, determination and perseverance. Often a person undertaking a quest needs assistance from others. This is a reflection on real life where people require assistance from others if they are to fulfil their potential. In reality the quest search becomes as important as the object or knowledge sought. The quest is central to the monomyth/hero journey, which will be commented on later in this thesis.

Values

The Federal Government’s *Values Education study: Final report* (2003, p. 2) has

adopted a broad definition of values from Halstead and Taylor (2000). It defines values as “the principles and fundamental convictions which act as general guides to behaviour, the standards by which particular actions are judged as good or desirable” (p. 169). However, the author of this thesis agrees with Brian Hill (*Values Education in schools: Issues and challenges*, 2004) that the Federal Government definition does not place adequate emphasis on the motivational aspect of values (Hill, p. 4). The author has chosen Hill’s 1994 definition of values as that which most defines the term “values” when referred to in this thesis. This definition defines values as “the priorities individuals and societies attach to certain beliefs, experiences, and objects, in deciding how they shall live and what they shall treasure.” (Hill, 1994, p. 7). This definition also takes into account morals, which are a particular type of value. Many people may have different ideas of what morals are defined as but in this thesis they refer to values that are held in special significance by people (Haydon, 1997, p. 33).

Values Education

In this thesis the term “Values Education” refers to explicit, conscious attempts to teach values in our schools. This limited definition is used for this thesis because the thesis is only centred on the use of the *Harry Potter* series of books as a teaching resource in the explicit teaching of values. In using this limited definition of “Values Education” the author of this thesis acknowledges the wider meaning of “Values Education” as recognised by *The National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools* (2005). It states “Values Education is any explicit and/or implicit school-based activity to promote student understanding and knowledge of values, and to inculcate the skills and dispositions of students so that they can enact particular values as individuals and as members of the wider community” (p. 8).

Youth

The term “youth”, as used in the research undertaken for this thesis, requires more clarification than that provided in a dictionary definition, which outlines it as “the term of life between childhood and maturity” (*The new Merriam-Webster dictionary*, Mish, 1989, p. 855). The “youth” in this study refers to students between the approximate ages of nine to fourteen.

Religious Education

Religious Education, in this thesis, refers to the process of educating people in religious values. These religious values may vary depending on a person’s religious beliefs and one’s understanding of the values would be dependent on factors including one’s age, experiences, knowledge, capabilities, etc. This study focuses on Christian religious values as espoused by the Roman Catholic Church.

Who is Harry Potter?

As stated above, Harry Potter is the chief character in a series of books written by English author Joanne Rowling. Rowling created the character of Harry Potter while travelling on a train in 1990 but did not actually complete the first Harry Potter book, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone (PS)* until 1995. It was published in 1997 by Bloomsbury Press, London and in 1998, in the United States of America, by Scholastic as *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* (Nel, 2001, pp. 7-22). Since then five other Harry Potter novels have been published. They are: *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets (CoS)* in 1998, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban (PoA)* in 1999, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire (GoF)* in 2000, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix (OoP)* in 2003 and *Harry*

Potter and the Half-Blood Prince (HBP) in 2005. Rowling has always aimed to have seven books in the series since she began the first one (Eccleshare, p.18, Schafer, p.27) and is currently writing the seventh book.

The series of books is centred on the fictional character of Harry Potter who was born on July 31, 1980, in England. He was born to wizarding parents, Lily, from a non-wizarding family, and James Potter, from a wizarding family. On Halloween night in 1981 the evil wizard, Lord Voldemort (Tom Riddle), who was trying to kill the young Harry Potter, murders Harry's parents. Harry survives Voldemort's killing curse, the only known person to survive such a curse, but is left with a lightning-bolt shaped scar on his forehead and a life-long link with Voldemort. Harry ends up being left with his mother's sister's family, the unpleasant Vernon and Petunia Dursley and their repulsive son Dudley Dursley. At eleven years old Harry discovers his true identity as a wizard as well as the fate of his parents. From then on he becomes actively involved in the wizarding world, spending much of his time at the "Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry". He makes good friends with wizards such as Rubeus Hagrid, Hogwarts' groundsman, and Albus Dumbledore, its Headmaster. He also becomes friends with two young wizards close to his own age, Hermione Granger, from non-wizarding parents, and Ron Weasley, from a well-known but apparently poor, pure-blooded wizarding family. They have numerous adventures, many involving saving Harry from the clutches of Voldemort.

Voldemort's close connection with Harry is emphasised in the fourth book, *GoF*, when Voldemort uses Harry's blood to resurrect himself (p. 557). They are also closely connected in other ways. Both are half-blood orphans, conceived from a union between a muggle (non-wizarding) born and a wizard-born parent, both are Parselmouths (able to talk to snakes), both have wands that contain feathers from the same phoenix and they both looked

similar to each other in their youth: “We even *look* something alike ...” (*CoS*, p. 233) (Schafer, pp. 41-45).

Throughout the series we witness Harry growing from age eleven to seventeen. During that time we are witnesses to his growing struggle with Lord Voldemort and his allies, the Death Eaters, as well as Harry’s personal struggle with adolescence issues. Predominantly these struggles occur at Hogwarts but we are told, at the end of the sixth book, *HBP*, that Harry does not intend to return to Hogwarts for his final year but that he will be going on a quest to find and destroy the three remaining Horcruxes, which store parts of Lord Voldemort’s soul, and then to kill Lord Voldemort (p. 606).

The series has been a commercial success. The Nielson BookScan, for the best-selling books in Australia in 2005, placed *HBP* in first place with sales of 805,075 copies (Bantick, 2006). There have been over 300 million *Harry Potter* books sold all over the world (BBC News, 2005). The first four books have also been released as movies, and have achieved success at the box office. Each of the four films has grossed over a billion dollars Australian in sales so far (Box Office Mojo, 2006). This success has ensured that the books, and the key character of Harry Potter, are so widely known that even newspaper cartoonists appreciate the drawing power of the books:



(Brookins, G. (n.d.). Used with permission. Retrieved October 22, 2006, from <http://cagle.msnbc.com/news/HarryPotter4/5.asp>).

Literary influences on *Harry Potter*

The *Harry Potter* series draws from many literary traditions and themes, including detective/mystery stories (Alton, 2003), comical works (Beck, 2001), gothic novels (Alton, 2003), adventure novels and serials (Granger, 2002), fairy, folk and fantasy tales (Nikolajeva, 2003), boarding-school fiction (Elster, 2003) and hero quests, myths and legends, especially the Arthurian legend (Schafer, 2002). Rowling has professed to being studious in her youth (Imbornoni, 2006) and also studied French and Classics at the University of Exeter (Wikipedia). This provided her with a solid literary background from which to create her *Harry Potter* novels.

Harry Potter is portrayed as a heroic figure throughout the series and many of the plots draw from the hero journey motif. This motif will be commented on later in this thesis because critics feel that it “underlies all human experience and, consequently, is found in stories about those experiences” (Harris & Thompson, 2005, p. 4), including the *Harry Potter* series. Elizabeth Schafer (2002, pp. 148-149) draws attention to many of the parallels between Harry’s adventures and those of King Arthur, including dragons and chess pieces. Rowling draws many of her characters and key aspects of her plots from legends and myths. Mythical creatures are mentioned including giants, witches, a hippogriff, a phoenix, centaurs, a basilisk as well as mythical objects such as the “Philosopher’s Stone”, from the art of alchemy, playing key parts in her plots. She also places Harry and his friends in the role of detectives as they search for clues to solve various puzzles.

The series is set in a boarding school, which situates it in a long tradition of boarding-house fiction in England. Each book covers one year of Harry’s life from the age of eleven. While most of the action occurs at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry there are also incidents mentioned which occur outside the school. Each year Harry and his friends are

involved in solving a mystery or preventing a catastrophic event. The plot build up is similar to that portrayed in literature serials (Alton, 2003, p. 141). Each book has a similar plot structure and style beginning with Harry unhappily living with the Dursleys, fleeing from the Dursleys, eventually ending up at Hogwarts, solving a mystery involving the evil Voldemort and ending with the end of the school year (*ibid.*, p. 146). It also possesses some of the elements of serial works published by authors such as Dickens and found in comics such as the “The Phantom”. This is to say that the ending of each episode is one that stimulates a reader’s curiosity to know what will happen next because something has been left unsolved (*ibid.*, p. 147). In Harry’s case it is the continuing problem of Voldemort trying to destroy him and take over the world. Each episode of this continuing serial is of book length.

Rowling also makes aspects of the books comical through humorous magical concoctions and through some of the situations that characters find themselves in (Beck, 2001, p. 52). Examples of comical moments are Dudley ending up with a pig’s tail attached to his behind (*PS*, p. 48), Dumbledore eating an earwax-flavoured jelly bean (*PS*, p. 218), Ron burping up slugs when his damaged wand upsets his magic (*CoS*, p. 88), Dudley suffering from a Ton-Tongue toffee (*GoF*, p. 47) and Draco Malfoy being turned into a ferret by Mad-Eye Moody and being bounced around like a yoyo (*GoF*, pp. 180-181). There is also scatological humour to be found in the books. A good example is when the Professor Trelawney is taking a class where they are studying the stars. Lavender Brown sights a star and excitedly squeals out:

‘Oh, Professor, look! I think I’ve got an unsuspected planet! Oooh, which one’s that, Professor?’

‘It is Uranus, my dear,’ said Professor Trelawney, peering down at the chart.

‘Can I have a look at Uranus, too, Lavender?’ said Ron” (*GoF*, p. 178).

Rowling has also professed her love for the *Narnia* series by C.S. Lewis (Shapiro, 2000, p. 25) and she draws consciously or un-consciously from this and other fantasy/fairy stories in the series. This is particularly noticeable in her use of a parallel world, the wizarding world, occurring alongside our human one. This reminds us of the other world found in the secret entranceway through the wardrobe in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (Lewis, 1950).

Rowling, like most authors, has drawn her writing from those traditions that most appeal to her and with which she is most comfortable. She is well-read in English literature and classical works and this influences her writing. Indeed, it has resulted in many people feeling comfortable with the books because they are familiar with the structure adopted by Rowling, which draws from a predictable form (Nikolajeva, 2003). This form includes the use of the monomyth and romantic hero motifs, the solving of mysteries and the continuing struggle of good against evil (Nikolajeva, pp. 126-140).

Children's Literature and *Harry Potter*

The *Harry Potter* series of books has been placed in the category of children's literature. Rowling feels that they are best suited to readers aged eight and over (Scholastic, 2000) which targets them at a wide audience. The books have been categorised as children's literature possibly because well-known American children's publisher, Scholastic, picked up the American publishing rights to the first book, *PS*, and because this book won the Nestlé Smarties Book Prize in 1997 and the British Book Award for Children's Book of the Year in early 1998. Other children's book awards have followed (Wikipedia). The books also portray Harry Potter from the age of eleven so this may have contributed to the children's literature tag being labelled on the series. However, adults have also been avid readers of the book to

such an extent that there have been versions of the books with more adult-looking covers published (*Appendix 1*).

The books do contain instances of death and suffering which have caused concern regarding their appropriateness for children, (Taub & Servaty, 2003, pp.62-67). Some critics have classed the series as inappropriate for children because of their use of magic, which the critics feel encourages occultism (Abanes, 2001, Dollins 2002). Generally, bookstores have placed the books into the strand of literature entitled “Children’s Literature” although, with Harry getting older in recent instalments of the series, many bookstores now place the books in their teen-reading section. Each book contains a struggle between good and evil and, in that struggle, the characters discover things about themselves and others. The characters undertake growth experiences. In each book Harry and his friends progress through a number of situations that lead towards a climax that, while dealing with the current situation, is limited in its overall effectiveness because readers are aware there will be further conflict in a future volume. The characters, like their readers, have to make choices as circumstances change in their lives. These choices reflect the personal values they hold and become more difficult to make, and the consequences of those decisions greater, as the series moves on. As some critics have noted the choices Harry makes can be useful in assisting children in their own moral reasoning (Kern, 2003, pp. 121-127, Whited & Grimes, 2002). In reality Harry Potter is growing up with the books and, to a large extent, so are many of the books’ readers.

Books have also been published to assist with teaching aspects of the series (*Scholastic Professional Books*) and Internet sites have become available which encourage written contributions from children. A large variety of commercial products are commonly found in our shops and the first four of the books have been turned into feature films. In addition Rowling, and characters from her books, have appeared in popular television shows such as “The Simpsons”. Terms used in the books, such as “muggle”, “quidditch” and

“Hogwarts”, and what they mean, have become commonly recognised. In short, the books have become a popular part of Western youth culture.

About the title of this thesis

This thesis has the title *Harry Potter and the Quest for Values* for a number of reasons. The *Harry Potter* books all contain individual quest stories but the whole series is also one long quest. In each book Harry is always searching for something. It can be for an object such as the Philosopher’s Stone or a Horcrux, or for a piece of knowledge such as how Harry is to overcome a challenge in the Triwizard cup or what his parents were like. Harry undertakes these lesser quests but each of leads up to the ultimate quest of trying to defeat Voldemort. In his quest/s Harry has assistance from his friends, grows as a person in his skills, knowledge and talents, and learns more about himself and those around him. As part of the quest/s Harry learns personal values through his experiences and from those people around him. He lives out these acquired values through the choices he makes but he is also on a quest to discover new or modified values as his choices become more difficult.

All of us engage in quests throughout our lives and most of us are on one great quest, to achieve fulfilment in our life based on our understanding of what we feel will fulfil us. The *Harry Potter* books, like most hero journeys, reflect our own struggles through life, a struggle against outside forces as well as an internal struggle to understand ourselves. Education systems also have quests. The effective teaching of values is one quest but there is also the quest to assist students in understanding themselves and the world around them so that they can make meaningful contributions to that world. These quests, like Harry’s, can be difficult or frustrating, but they are worthwhile quests just as Harry’s quest to defeat Lord Voldemort is worthwhile. Our youth, like Harry, seek values, they seek a way to live, which brings them

moral satisfaction and, like Harry, they will face their boggarts on the way and they are manipulated and misled by people such as Rita Skeeter. However, like Harry, the quest for values will make them better people and better citizens because if students have an education in the values that are predominant in their society then they should be able to deal more effectively with their fellow citizens on a day-to-day basis. This quest will ultimately assist students to learn more about themselves and those around them.

Stories and their importance

“... stories allow the child a vicarious experience of a much wider moral world”

(Paul Vitz, 1990, ¶ 72)

We live in a society that is immersed in stories, from those we tell our partners when we talk to them after a day at work to the great narratives of our time. As Christopher Booker (2004) states:

They are far and away one of the most important features of our everyday existence.

Not only do fictional stories play such a significant role in our lives, as novels or plays, films or operas, comic strips or TV ‘soaps’. Through newspapers or television, our news is presented to us in the form of ‘stories’. Our history books are largely made up of stories. Even much of our conversation is taken up with recounting the events of everyday life in the form of stories. These structured sequences of imagery are in fact the most natural way we know to describe almost everything which happens in our lives. (p. 2)

How people interpret stories and their importance can depend on a number of aspects which include their religious beliefs, their educational background and their socio-economic background. As Campbell (1993) states, in discussing mythologies, they can be:

interpreted by the modern intellect as a primitive, fumbling effort to explain the world of nature (Frazer); as a production of poetical fantasy from prehistoric times, misunderstood by succeeding ages (Muller); as a repository of allegorical instruction, to shape the individual to his group (Durkheim); as a group dream, symptomatic of archetypal urges within the depths of the human psyche (Jung); as the traditional vehicle of man's profoundest metaphysical insights (Coomaraswamy); and as God's Revelation to His children (the Church). Mythology is all of these. The various judgements are determined by the viewpoints of the judges. . . . mythology shows itself to be as amenable as life itself to the obsessions and requirements of the individual, the race, the age. (1993, p. 382).

These and other theories of story interpretation affect how people explain the popularity of stories. If a reader or listener adopts a psychoanalytic approach, based on a Freudian stance, in responding to stories then they would feel that people relate to stories because they identify consciously and unconsciously with the characters, symbols and actions in stories. Bruno Bettelheim (1989), in discussing fairy tales, states that if we apply "the psychoanalytic model of the human personality, fairy tales carry important messages to the conscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious mind, on whatever level each is functioning at the time" (p. 6). This example explains that, as Perry Nodelman (1996) states, "We all read the same texts in different ways - partly because of our differing tastes and interests, partly because each of us has responded to our different experiences of life and literature by developing different *expectations* and *strategies* for determining meaning" (p. 1).

Over time many people have sought to understand why stories are so popular. John Stephens and Robyn McCallum (1998) found that retelling of myths were “metaphorical expressions of spiritual insights, and that they address archetypal aspects of the human psyche” (p. 10). Grace Nolan (2002), in discussing folktales, declares that they are:

all about living in and making sense of our world. They grapple with all the problems that people have encountered in the workings of nature, man’s relationship with God, the difficulties of living within a society – all the things that have troubled or amused or stirred curiosity in people ever since the very beginning of man’s life on earth (p. 29).

Nodelman (1996) suggests that “the act of entering into communicative acts with others” (p. 22) is the one basic pleasure that is derived from text. This may be communicating with the text itself or with others who have read that text. Some forms of this one basic pleasure include:

- The pleasure of story - the organized patterns of emotional involvement and detachment, the delays of suspense, the climaxes and resolutions, the intricate patterns of chance and coincidence that make up a plot.
- The pleasure of formula - of repeating the comfortably familiar experience of kinds of stories we’ve enjoyed before.
- The pleasure of finding mirrors for ourselves - of identifying with fictional characters.
- The pleasure of escape - stepping outside of ourselves at least imaginatively and experiencing the lives and thoughts of different people.
- The pleasure of understanding - of seeing how literature not only mirrors life but comments on it and makes us consider the meaning of our own existence.

(pp. 20-21).

Stories link us with our human race. No matter where a story comes from we can find something in it to relate to. “Narrative binds humankind together and engages us wholly – our intellects, minds, bodies and emotions. We love a good story because it resonates with ‘the basic narrative quality’ of our human experience” (Green, 2003, p. 19). Stories also allow us to experience new ways of being, through the experiences of others. “Reading is one of the main psychological tools available to us in the process of becoming a person because of the access it gives us to other and wider ways of being” (Barrs, 2000, p. 289).

However we decide to study stories there is no doubt of their importance to humankind. We are continually immersed in stories both our own and others. Due to our continuing relationship with stories of all varieties they provide an important influence on our life.

Stories and values

“It is easier to teach a child the difference between right and wrong through imaginative stories because they speak to young people more eloquently than a teacher with a list of rules”

(Carroll, 2004, p. 26)

“We don’t need lists of rights and wrongs, tables of do’s and don’ts: we need books, time and silence. Thou shalt not is soon forgotten, but Once upon a time lasts forever”

(Pullman, 1996, ¶ 8)

Throughout history stories have been an important aspect of all cultures especially in the transmission of values. The stories that we come in contact with help to shape who we are. Louise Welbourne (2005) states that this is because “Stories (both secular and biblical) are, and have always been, forms of engagement and communication that evoke response. They are texts of one kind or another where interaction of the learners with the text can activate prior knowledge; generate insight, experience and response. . . . Stories are a bridge to one’s culture and tradition that deal with values, beliefs and practices about ultimate questions, rather than a set of propositions” (Welbourne, 2005, p. 1). As Margery Hourihan (1997) states “They are the most potent means by which perceptions, values and attitudes are transmitted from one generation to the next” (p. 1).

The *Harry Potter* series offers itself as a potent means for the transmission of values because they are stories which deal with the importance of having a set of personal values which guide one’s choices. Carroll (2004) emphasises how important stories are in the enculturation of values. She states that stories, such as *The Hobbit*, provide scope for the imagination, and that imagination is one of the keys to virtue (pp. 10-12): “For whilst a child may know what is right, the child must also have the desire to do what is right and this is guided by imagination” (p. 12). She then quotes Kilpatrick, Wolfe and Wolfe (2004) who contend that while our moral choices should be guided by reason they are, in practice, guided to a greater degree by imagination (p. 23). The author of this thesis believes that the *Harry Potter* series offers itself as a tool for the imagination, which can be constructive in developing worthwhile values in our youth rather than being a hindrance to this development.

Renowned children’s literature scholar, Peter Hollindale, in his classic essay, *Ideology and the children’s book* (1988), states that children’s books transmit cultural values. He remarks that ideology works on three different levels in children’s books. There is explicit or overt ideology, where the values and beliefs of the author are consciously disclosed in their

work. Secondly, there is implicit or passive ideology, in which the author's unexamined assumptions, including values, are conveyed in their work and, thirdly, there are values and beliefs from the dominant culture, displayed in the author's work through aspects such as the words they use and the rule systems that are part of their text. In reality a large part of any book is written by the culture that the author writes from (Hollindale, pp. 14-15).

Stephens and McCallum (1998), in referring to the importance of retold stories, make the statement that:

retold stories have important cultural functions. Under the guise of offering children access to strange and exciting worlds removed from everyday experiences, they serve to initiate children into aspects of a social heritage, transmitting many of a culture's central values and assumptions and a body of shared allusions and experiences (p. 3).

They also comment that a retelling often becomes a re-version, "a narrative which has taken apart its pre-texts and reassembled them as a version which is a new textual and ideological configuration" (Stephens & McCallum, 1998, p. 4).

These observations are particularly relevant when one takes into account the number of critics who have noted the literary traditions and themes from which the *Harry Potter* series draws, particularly hero stories, and stories which themselves encourage certain traditional moral perspectives (Kern, 2003, Killinger 2002, Granger, 2002, et al.). In this regard it is plausible to see the *Harry Potter* stories as retold stories because of the way in which they draw heavily from literary traditions, including their plots. They, like other retold stories, can transmit the central values of a culture (Stephens & McCallum, p. 3).

Stories, both orally presented and in written form, including recounts, myths, narrative, legends, parable and poetry, have been commonly used in the teaching of values to children. Many critical works have been produced which comment on the use of story-books

in both secular and religious Values Education. Maria Dibella and Julie Hamston (1989) stress the need for teachers not only to teach procedural values through their daily interaction with students, but also to specifically teach substantive values (p. 1). They provide guidelines on the use of children's literature in assisting in this task as they feel that literature provides teachers with a solid basis to begin the exploration of values with their students (p. 2). They stress that literature reflects themes that are relevant to human experience, therefore literature is valuable in exploring experiences and values integral to human life (p. 2). By reading literature the reader can reach a better understanding of themselves, those around them and the society they live in (p. 2).

Literature enables children to:

- identify and clarify their values;
- reflect upon their own experiences;
- compare situations in stories with their own experiences;
- become involved in new experiences via the literary medium;
- come to terms with sensitive issues, by identifying with and relating to the characters in a story (p. 2).

Colleen O'Sullivan states that story books are valuable in introducing aspects of cultural life, which would include a culture's beliefs and values, and that they provide a focus for a variety of subject areas, including Religious Education (p. 10). Gina Burkart makes particular mention of the use of stories in teaching morality and assisting in a child's moral development (Burkart, 2005, pp. 27-28). Bettelheim values the use of fairy tales in the moral education of children (1989, p.5). Margot Hillel and Jill Holmes also feel that literature can "provide children with an opportunity to fully explore concepts and issues so that not only the meaning of a text is enhanced but their sense of the world is enriched" (1995, p. 2).

O'Sullivan suggests that Anglo-Saxon children's literature is almost always attempting to teach, instruct or promote a strong personal belief (1987, p. 43). Wendy Michaels and Maureen Walsh (1990) also mention that many books provided to students uphold moral values that are considered by that culture to be important to human beings (p. 58). This perception of the importance of narratives in the transmission of values is also supported by Jan Kiernan (2005) who provides a list of books that can be used to support the learning and teaching of values connected with the *Essential Learnings Framework* (2002) being used in Tasmania (pp. 66-81).

Paul Vitz (1990), drawing on psychological research, argues that "narrative material is an essential component of effective moral education" (§ 4). Referring to Theodore Sarbin's (1986) research Vitz claims "that a person's life (or periods of it) can be interpreted as a story and that this model has a rich relevance to social psychology. The story or narrative model allows psychology to make contact with the historical context of individuals and with the insights into human social behaviour found in stories" (§ 13). This infers that since people look at their own lives as a narrative they are able to relate to other narratives (§ 12-15, § 54). Vitz's analysis of research revealed that the use of narratives in teaching morals was far more effective than simple instruction in moral rules and guidelines (§ 16, § 28). This is what English author Philip Pullman (1996) refers to when he states that stories "teach the morality we live by. They teach it much more effectively than moral precepts and instructions" (§ 7).

Stories are a key component in the moral education of young people; they provide guidance and assistance for children to understand how to live morally. These stories need to be combined with other influences, including the example set by the adults they come in contact with and the rules that bind their society together, for effective moral education to occur.

Stories and Religious Education

In teaching religious beliefs many religions rely on story texts to teach about their beliefs, including values. The Jews place particular emphasis on the importance of the Torah (Smart, 1989, p. 264), while Moslems preach the importance of the Koran/Quran (Cragg, 1975, p. 6) and other religions preach the importance of their own sacred texts or scriptures. The reasons for the use of stories in teaching religious values are the same reasons for their use in teaching secular values. Religious stories help religious communities to identify and clarify their values, to explain a certain perspective on human life. Religious people, of all persuasions, have used their experiences and the reflections of other people to assist their followers to reflect on their own experiences. Many people often compare situations that they find themselves in with situations familiar to them from religious texts. Many readers have come to identify with the characters that they have heard and read about in religious texts. This is because religious texts centre on the questions of life that haunt most of us and are relevant to the human situation: Why am I here? What happens to me when I die? Why am I jealous of that person? Why don't riches make me happy? What is love? etc.

Stories have always been central to the Roman Catholic faith. It is from the scriptures, the Old and New Testament or Hebrew and Christian scriptures, and the interpretation of those scriptures, that the Catholic faith is founded on. The stories about Jesus as well as the stories Jesus told provide a guide as to how Catholics should lead their lives. The scriptures, along with the sacraments, are the cornerstones of the Church but they are interrelated as the sacraments arose from the scriptures (Moore, 2004, p. 45).

Over many centuries the scriptural stories have been interpreted to suit the desires of those in leadership positions. In past times most people did not read the scriptures so that they had little chance of understanding them (Lawson, 2004, p. 52). However, in recent years,

since Vatican Council II, there has been a return to reading the scriptures as they are written and to reflect deeply on what Jesus meant rather than what the hierarchy of the Church thought He meant (Lawson, p. 57). While there can never be a completely correct interpretation of the scriptures, because they were written down to suit the needs of their authors and because we understand that we interpret our own meanings based on our own ideologies, we can gather some reasonable understanding of Christ's beliefs through the Gospel stories.

From our studies of the scriptures we see that Jesus chose stories as one of his key teaching tools along with his actions. Jesus' stories told of happenings around him, of violence and injustice, and he used his imagination to create stories that taught particular values. His parables illustrate the power of his imagination and the value of stories as a teaching tool. Stories such as the Good Samaritan, the Lost Sheep and the Prodigal Son are common to a large number of the world's population. They are familiar with the actual story and they are familiar with the deeper meaning in these stories.

The Roman Catholic faith has made use of non-Gospel stories to teach about its faith. These are often stories that illustrate people living out their faith. These include the Acts of the Apostles and stories about the saints. Religious Education has always drawn heavily from these types of stories but in recent years we have seen an increasing use by Religious Education teachers of fictional stories that draw from the Christian tradition. This may be because, as Carroll (2004) remarks, "the Gospel stories are not artistic or imaginative enough to compare with modern stories" (p. 73). These 'modern' stories are often allegories of the scriptures such as the novel *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (Lewis, 1950), which deals with the death and resurrection of Jesus through the character of Aslan, the lion. In recent years Religious Education teachers have been using fictional stories in their teaching that contain Christian values and are not allegorical in nature. These include books such as

Enora and the black crane by Arone Meeks (2001), which examines the need to protect and care for the creatures found in nature, and *The rabbits* by John Marsden and Shaun Tan, (1998), which looks at the treatment of Indigenous Australians and the Australian environment by the “settlement” of Australia and asks the question what can we do to assist the Aboriginal people to survive. From this basis the author feels that the *Harry Potter* series can also be a valued resource in teaching religious values.

***Harry Potter* series as retold stories**

As stated previously it is possible to see the *Harry Potter* series as retold stories because they draw so closely from literary traditions. Booker (2004), in his book, *The seven basic plots: Why we tell stories*, asserts that the majority of stories can be analysed around seven basic plots:

Obviously it was not true that every story fits neatly and with mechanical regularity into one or another category of plot: . . . There are extensive areas of overlap between one type of plot and another. Indeed, there are many stories which are shaped by more than one ‘basic plot’ at a time . . . There are still other stories which are shaped only by part of such a plot (pp. 5-6).

Based on Booker’s analysis of plot the *Harry Potter* story draws strongly from the “Quest” plot structure (pp. 69-86), and, to a lesser degree, on the “Rags to Riches” (pp. 51- 68) and the “Voyage and Return” (pp. 87-106) plot structures. In the “Quest” plot a hero learns of a certain goal he/she has to achieve and sets out on a journey to achieve that goal facing a number of hazards and obstacles on the way (pp. 69-86). This plot structure and its relevance to the *Harry Potter* series will be commented on later in this thesis.

Conclusion

Stories have always spoken to humankind because people find that they are able to relate to characters in stories. People often feel that they are part of the adventures that occur in narratives, that is why we see children imitate characters that they have experienced in stories. For one generation it might be Tarzan or Superman for another Luke Skywalker or Wonder Woman. Through this connection with a character and their story we are able to undertake experiences that we would not normally come across in our own lifestyle and these experiences come without the dangers that would occur if they were real life experiences. Stories, through the connections that people have made with them, have been used to educate people, particularly young people, for generations particularly in the area of values.

The *Harry Potter* series describe the adventures of a boy who exists in a world that has much in common with our world even though it contains wizards, witches and mythical creatures, because the world is drawn from the experiences of J. K. Rowling. It also draws from a long line of characters and stories that humankind have found comfort in. While the series contains creatures, people and magical beings we will never come across, these characters do provide the books' readers with experiences that, while exaggerated and embellished, are reflective of experiences that we all come across. Jealousy of others, feelings of powerlessness, moments of anger, encounters with bullies, encounters with prejudice and other experiences are found throughout the series. They are universal predicaments and ones that all humans are able to relate to and learn from.

Our young people, through the high sales of the series, seem to have found a connection with the character of Harry Potter and with other characters in the series. This connection, if meaningful, offers the opportunity of using the *Harry Potter* series in an educational setting. However, it is only a useful educational tool if it has something

worthwhile to offer, something that will enhance the educational opportunities of our youth.

It is necessary to undertake research to confirm whether young people do substantially connect with the books and if the series offers itself as a worthwhile tool in our educational institutions, particularly in the area of Values Education.

CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

“The art and science of asking questions is the source of all knowledge”
(Thomas Berger, n.d.)

Introduction

This research contains both a bibliographic study and an empirical study as outlined in *Table 1* below. The thesis uses collected data from published scholars on children’s literature and other areas, from Federal and State Government bodies, from religious institutions, educational institutions and some Internet sites. It also contains collected data through the undertaking of interviews and focus group discussions with students in both Grade Seven and Eight in the Tasmania Catholic Education System, aged between twelve and fourteen. These resources have been used throughout the thesis to support its arguments.

Theoretical framework

The research used in this thesis was a qualitative study because much of the study sought to inquire into people’s perspectives and experiences of the *Harry Potter* series and this involved going out into the field. An essential part of this thesis was seeking to know what people think of the series.

The research used in this thesis was centred on a methodological paradigm of a constructivist reality view of the world, believing that, “human beings have evolved the capacity to interpret and construct reality - indeed, they cannot do otherwise - the world of human perception is not real in an absolute sense, as the sun is real, but is “made up” and shaped by cultural and linguistic constructs” (Patton, 2002, p. 96). Our interpretation of the

world is based on a variety of influences including our social and cultural background. In the case of the *Harry Potter* series our interpretation of the text would be based, in part, on the ideologies we bring to the reading of the text.

Research used in this study favoured a “constructionism” framework, as defined by Michael Crotty, as it takes into account the importance of our culture’s hold on us as paramount to our perceptions (1998, p. 58). In studying the responses of critics to the *Harry Potter* books, youth responses to the *Harry Potter* books, and how valuable the books are for Religious Education, this study considered the different perspectives that the collected data, documents and interviews are coming from and what may have caused people to interpret the text in a particular way.

In studying the *Harry Potter* novels, the meaning of the work depends on the cultural context in which Rowling created the series and the cultural context in which it is subsequently interpreted (Patton, pp. 113-114) by critics, youth and myself. The researcher’s personal history, one must accept, will also affect the interpretation of data collected and its subsequent analysis.

Design of the study

The research used three prime areas of study which, between them, use two research methods. This is illustrated in *Table 1*, below.

As illustrated in *Table 1*, the research centres on three key areas:

- 1) How have critics responded to the *Harry Potter* books?
- 2) How have youth responded to the *Harry Potter* books?
- 3) Are the *Harry Potter* books of use in the teaching of values specifically in the area of Religious Education?

Table 1. Design of study table

Research Focus	Specific Questions	Sub-questions	Data sources	Strategies
Critical Response to books.	What do critics think of the books?	Specific critical responses to books (categorise). Critically appraise responses to the books. What could be the ideologies that cause different responses to the books?	Publications: Books, Journals, recognised Internet sources on responses to <i>Harry Potter</i> . Books on children's literature and its ideology including Nodelman, Stephens, McCallum, McGillis and Hollindale.	Literature and Internet research.
Youth's response to books.	How have youth responded to the books?	Do youths read the books? Do youths get recognise values in the books? Do the books espouse suitable values and morals?	Interviews with youth. Other opinions. Focus Groups with youths. Youth comment on books from Publications, Journals and recognised Internet sources.	Interviews Focus Groups Literature and Internet research.
Books usefulness in teaching values, specifically in Religious Education.	Can the books be used in teaching values particularly in Religious Education in our schools? How should they be used?	Are the books of useful in teaching values? Why are they valued? Are they Christian-based values? What are their limitations? What Values Education is there in Australian schools? Are the books relevant to modern teaching practices?	Current Values Education teaching documents/ strategies. Current Religious Education teaching documents/strategies.	Literature and Internet research. (Possible sample lessons with interview follow up.) Text analysis

Specific research methods/data collection techniques

There are three key data sources used in this study. There was a document analysis, a collective case study and a focus group study. It was essentially a multiple strategy research project due to the different types of data obtained. The reason for choosing these specific research methods is stated below.

Document analysis

In trying to ascertain how critics and youth have responded to the *Harry Potter* series and if the books can be of use in teaching values it was necessary to undertake an analysis of documents written about the *Harry Potter* series. This involved studying literature published on the novels and comments published on the Internet. Document analysis supports the theoretical approach to this research because it enables the study of a variety of interpretations of the series. Some critics also provided insight into how they have constructed their particular view of the series. This analysis examined two key issues:

- 1) How have critics responded to the books and why this response?
- 2) How have youth responded to the books and why this response?

1) A variety of remarks by critics have been made about the *Harry Potter* books regarding their strengths and weaknesses. These are commented on in the thesis. Many critics also provide input into the criteria for making their judgments of the books.

2) In undertaking a *Literature Review* for this area of research it became clear that there was little researched information on how youth have responded to the books. Young people seem to have obtained the novels, although no sales figures illustrate who actually bought the books and associated merchandise. Some books have reproduced limited letters written by children about the books. There appears to be no structured research with young people into why they have responded to the books, therefore it was necessary for the author of this thesis to undertake some case study research with youth about their responses to the books and their reasons for those responses to the books.

In the study of these documents it was necessary to place the documents in the context in which they were written. Documents written about the *Harry Potter* books by a Baptist minister from the Bible belt of southern United States of America may differ greatly to a document written by a Catholic priest from New York City. A document written which takes a Jungian view of the text will differ from a cultural studies examination of the text. Ian

Hodder (2000) makes this clear when he highlights that methods of interpretation of any material culture centre, “on the simultaneous hermeneutical procedures of context definition, the construction of patterned similarities and differences, and the use of relevant social and material culture theory” (p. 714). In studying the critical response to the *Harry Potter* series the author’s task was made easier as the majority of the documents being interpreted are of recent publication, and produced generally within the English speaking, Christian-based, Western cultures.

A collective case study

As stated previously the author of this thesis felt the need to undertake research into how young people have responded to the *Harry Potter* books because of the lack of any useful researched data in this area. To achieve the required information it was necessary to commit to a collective case study. While it is often difficult to attain an accepted definition of exactly what a case study is due to varying interpretations, (Mason, 1996, p. 129, Stake, 2000, p. 436), this thesis research involved a collective case study, involving interviews, based on Robert Stake’s definition of a case study. Stake stresses that a case study is simply where we choose to study a case (p. 435). The case involved in this study was how youth have responded to the *Harry Potter* series of books. The interviews provided access to young people’s responses to the books and why they have these responses to them. This type of case study actually refers to the study of a number of cases in order to investigate the *Harry Potter* series. Through this limited research it was hoped “that understanding them will lead to (a) better understanding, perhaps better theorizing, about a still larger collection of cases” (Stake, p. 437).

This collective case study looked at a voluntary sample of students from twenty different classes of Grade Seven and Eight students in two Roman Catholic co-educational

high schools in southern Tasmanian. These students were aged between twelve and fourteen. Twenty-five students received parental permission to be interviewed made up of fifteen girls and ten boys (*Appendix 2*).

A focus group study

The second part of this case study utilised a focus group study after the initial larger case study. A focus group study is "... conducted to get a variety of perspectives and increase confidence in whatever patterns emerge" (Patton, p. 385). The focus group study centred on two groups of six to eight students from a similar background to the larger sample group, who also volunteered and were given parental permission to take part. This focus group was studied in an effort to reach a better understanding about how youth had responded to the *Harry Potter* series and why they have these responses to the novels (*Appendix 3*).

The interview format was used in the case studies for a number of reasons. Firstly, interviewing the students enabled those students who may be literacy challenged to have a greater chance of taking part in the study than if a written questionnaire was used. Also, the interview format, though structured, may provide information that may not have been attainable by a written questionnaire and provides the option of probing a respondent for more information if an answer appears, at first, inappropriate. There is also likely to be a higher response rate than with a questionnaire due to more motivation because of the face-to-face interaction that occurs with interviews (Burns, 1990, pp. 302-3). The use of the interview format was also very cost effective.

The focus group interviews also offered additional advantages. They were timely and effective in providing a variety of views, the interaction amongst the group provided improved quality of data as participants tended to provide checks and balances on each other,

and the focus group sessions were social occasions that provided greater chances of enjoyable interaction (Patton, p. 386).

However, there were disadvantages to this format. The researcher was not a trained interviewer so it was necessary to be extremely careful moving through the process so that the reliability of data attained was not corrupted. The researcher had structured interview questions to assist in performing a professional interview and maintaining consistency as well as to avoid manipulation of responses given.

Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations were central to this study particularly because it involved the interviewing of children. Ethical permission was received to undertake the study from the Australian Catholic University (*Appendix 4*). The Australian Catholic University's guidelines (2001) influenced the Interviews and Focus Group work with the children. These guidelines helped protect the dignity and rights of those being interviewed. Suitable permission forms were sent out seeking candidates for the research project (*Appendix 4*).

Limitations of research

The aim of this research was to ascertain whether the *Harry Potter* series is useful in teaching values to young people. The research methods used provided the means to assist in making a judgement in regards to this area. Any research results are limited and the research for this thesis is no exception. Efforts were made to ensure that the types of research methods implemented were used as professionally as possible. This included a competent and fair document analysis, as well as a fair interview and focus group process.

The validity and reliability of this research was dependent on basing the conclusions reached on accepted criteria, previously mentioned. This means that any claims made in this thesis are only valid in regards to the limited research undertaken and the interpretations applied to that research. Like any study, many factors affect its validity and its value to society. In this research this includes factors such as the time at which the study was undertaken, the dynamics between the respondents and interviewer, the cultural background of the students being interviewed, the documents available for analysis, the chosen definitions of terms, the interpretation of interview and focus group answers, and the researcher's personal history. It is always necessary for both the creators and readers of research to remember that, regardless of how efficient and effective one's research is, there is not a single method, or collection of methods, that provides "the royal road to ultimate knowledge" (Guba & Lincoln, 2000, p.178).

The study of literature

In studying any literature it is always important to remember that our view of that literature is governed by the ideology we bring to our reading of the text and the ideology that the author him/herself writes from. Anyone writing about the *Harry Potter* series or reading the novels makes assumptions about the books characters, themes, style, structure, meanings, etc, based on their view of the world, what they value in the world and what they value in literature. Nodelman (1996), John Stephens (1992), Roderick McGillis (1996) and others have written extensively on the importance of understanding ideology and literature. As McGillis states: "no one interpretation of a work of the imagination is perfect, and that interpretations are the work of individual readers at particular times and in particular places" (McGillis, 1996, p. 4).

Literature Review

In reviewing the literature written about the *Harry Potter* books it is apparent that critics feel that the series, like many other narratives, is “radically intertextual because it has no special discourse of its own” (Stephens, 1992, p. 86). Rowling draws on traditional narrative forms and genres, specialized contents (including biblical and Arthurian legends), and other discourses drawn from fiction, which come with their own ideologies (Stephens, pp. 86-87). Critics, writing on the novels, also draw from their own ideologies and comment on that aspect of the *Harry Potter* series that speaks most relevantly to them.

The *Harry Potter* series of books has generated an immense amount of comment. Observations regarding the series have been published in scholarly books, other types of books, journal articles, Internet articles, papers, magazines and other documents. There has also been the need to look at texts in other areas to support the arguments of this thesis. Any texts reviewed in this study have been chosen for their relevance to this study. Sometimes this involves sources that, while published, are not necessarily of a scholarly nature, however the majority of texts chosen are from recognised authors or institutions.

The texts are reviewed based on the particular area of the *Harry Potter* series that they comment on. These are:

- *Youth responses to the Harry Potter series*
- *Religious/spiritual debate/comment over the Harry Potter series*
- *General guides about the Harry Potter series*
- *General literary criticism of the Harry Potter series*
- *Academic publications critically examining the Harry Potter series*
- *Internet and Journal resources about the Harry Potter series.*

1) Youth responses to the *Harry Potter* books

There are numerous web sites both commercial and non-commercial, which allowed or previously allowed youth the chance to make statements on their thoughts about the *Harry Potter* books and the characters depicted in them. However, some sites have closed since the author began to write up his thesis document, due to pressure from AOL-Time Warner's legal department (Ingram, 2001), which is concerned with protecting its investment in the *Harry Potter* series and the money it makes from movies and various consumer products based on the books. AOL-Time Warner has acquired the "Harry Potter" intellectual property rights, including the trademark to certain words appearing in the novels, including the word 'quidditch'. Web sites, including <http://www.bloomsbury.com/harrypotter>, <http://www.dprophet.com> and <http://www.forum.discover.tased.edu.au/webforum/student/Board/forum2>, provide an audience for the viewing of fictional stories, written by fans, based on the *Harry Potter* series.

It is necessary to remember that generally these sites are set up by fans of the novels, businesses that gain revenue from the series or by groups that view the series in a positive manner. They therefore naturally contain overwhelmingly positive comments regarding the series, possibly because negative statements may not make it onto the site due to screening procedures. Children indicate, through responding to these web sites, that they relate in some way to the *Harry Potter* series. The positive response to the novels, by children's opinions on such websites, indicates that the discourses in the *Harry Potter* novels are attractive to children - this is also apparent in published books expressing children's responses to the series.

There have been three specific books published which reflect positive views regarding how youth value the books. The authors/editors are admirers of the books but they may also seek to gain some financial benefit from publishing a book on a popular topic. Two of these books are, *We love Harry Potter! We'll tell you why* (Moore (Ed.), 1999) and *Harry Potter you're the best: A tribute from fans the world over* (Moore (Ed.), 2001). Both books were edited by the same person, Sharon Moore, and contain positive statements regarding the books even in the chapter entitled "What we like (or dislike) about the books"(2001) there are no negative comments made regarding the books. We are never specifically told how the letters were collected or chosen for publication and most contain nothing particularly revealing as they have only blanket praise for the books. Nevertheless, there are some reasons given by children as to why they enjoy the books. These reasons included the suspense and excitement in the books (2001, p.16), they feel moved by the emotions in the books (2001, p. 21) and that they enjoy the humour in the books (1999, p. 35). The opinions published are taken from youths aged six to nineteen.

Bill Adler's book, *Kids' letters to Harry Potter: An unauthorized collection* (2001), is very similar to Moore's books, although Adler does interview some of the children who had letters published in his book. These interview comments indicate that children respond positively to the novels and especially to the characters. Children state that they identify with Harry Potter in a number of ways, particularly with people not understanding him (p. 1), his getting into mischief and being in a different type of school than he was familiar with (p. 11-12), the loss of his parents (p. 46), and the problems he experiences with his relatives (p. 114). Once again the letters are only positive in their observations about the series as it is aimed at expressing children's views of why they like the books. The book is designed, like Moore's books, to be read by children.

2) Religious/spiritual debate/comment over the *Harry Potter* series

This was one of the most prominent discussion areas regarding the *Harry Potter* series. Many and various books and articles have been written regarding the *Harry Potter* books and their relevance or lack of relevance to religious groups, specifically Christians (Abanes, Bridger, Cherrett, Furst & Heilmann, Granger, Houghton, Killinger, Neal and Plyming). It is important to note that in these books the authors approach the novels predominantly based on their relevance to children's Religious Education/Instruction. They view children's literature as a means of instructing children in relevant Christian values and they interpret the relevance of the books on this premise. These books are all written by Christians but draw on a variety of Christian ideologies in their analysis of the novels

The critics mentioned in this section study the *Harry Potter* series from a Christian viewpoint, but one that varies from fundamentalist to liberal. Edmund Kern (2003) is most noticeable in this area as he justifies the series as being non-Christian but he also has no objection to the books being read "as a form of Christian allegory" (p. 219). The works cited in this section tend towards three main views which are based on the interpretation of the *Harry Potter* series by the different critics. The main views expressed in these works are:

a) That all *Harry Potter* books should be avoided, where possible, as they encourage children to join in satanic forms of witchcraft and they present an un-Christian worldview which is unsuitable for children to read about.

b) That the *Harry Potter* series, while presenting a non-Christian world view in a number of areas, are suitable literature for children provided that the young readers are supervised and guided by responsible adults to ensure Christian guidance.

c) That the second view, stated above, is acceptable but that people should also seriously encourage the reading and study of the novels because of the spiritual and religious

values that may be found within. This view sees the series as valuable educational resources for the spiritual and religious development of young students.

The majority of these critics believe the *Harry Potter* series itself draws strongly from a Christian viewpoint in the values and morals common to the stories. Rowling was raised in a Christian family and a predominantly Christian society, and still considers herself a Christian (Granger, 2002, p. x). Therefore, it is not surprising that the books might draw strongly from Christian beliefs and traditions. The series also expresses societal values that Rowling feels are relevant and they may work to encourage children's unconscious agreement with these values (Nodelman, 1996, p. xii). Critics recognise this and express agreement with the primary views detailed above, and expanded on below.

a) *Harry Potter* is dangerous to our youth.

Some critics have the perception that the *Harry Potter* books are dangerous to children. These critics feel that the books encourage children to participate in satanic forms of witchcraft and that the books offer a non-Christian view of the world which is unacceptable. Richard Abanes in his book, *Harry Potter and the Bible: The menace behind the magick* (2001) is strongly of these views. Abanes appears to come from a religious tradition that views the use or advocacy of magic as leading directly to occultism, Satanism and anti-Christian beliefs. His book is primarily occupied with attacking the *Harry Potter* series as containing dangerous messages that will corrupt our young people. It takes an extremely fundamentalist Christian perspective. Abanes seems to view all books as of little value unless they espouse a fundamentalist Christian world view including detailing the existence of the one true God. He also misconstrues the *Harry Potter* books because he tends to see them as being a false truth rather than works of fiction. Abanes also seems to misunderstand that the

Bible is itself not the literal word of God but a narrative compiled by a group of authors based on human resources and cultural traditions.

Perhaps an even more disturbing attack on the series comes from Stephen Dollins' publication, *Under the spell of Harry Potter* (2002). Dollins informs us that he was himself a former Satanic High Priest who was saved by the Lord and then given a mission to tell others of his experiences, (Dollins at [http://www. Hollywood California.com/TheOccult03.htm](http://www.HollywoodCalifornia.com/TheOccult03.htm)). He is fundamentalist in his viewpoint and holds that involvement in magic will lead to Satanism. His book is simply a continuous attack on the *Harry Potter* novels because he sees the books as teaching children to be occultists. This book is particularly persistent in pushing his perspective that it is very easy for our youth to become occultists.

b) The *Harry Potter* series is suitable for reading under adult guidance.

In *Hogwarts or hogwash*, authors Peter Furst and Craig Heilmann (2001), accept this view. They appear to be fundamentalist Christians in their views, and criticise the *Harry Potter* series because the worldview in the books is contrary to that of the Bible (pp. 9-10), as they include references to magic, divination and witchcraft. This is also Abanes' (2001) main argument against the series. He is concerned that the books include no explanation of where we come from (p. 17), no mention of God (pp. 20-26), and no suggestion on where we go after death. It is important to remember that when Abanes' book was published the character Sirius Black had not been killed and had not moved through the mysterious archway in the Department of Mysteries (*OoP*, pp. 710-711). Abanes also makes mention of the fact that no acknowledgement of the supernatural powers of God is mentioned in the series (p. 95). It appears that Furst and Heilmann, and Abanes would find little literature completely suitable because most literature would have a non-Christian view of the world based on their criteria. Connie Neal, a fundamentalist Christian, also raised the same concerns as Furst and

Heilmann in her book, *What's a Christian to do with Harry Potter?* (2001) but she is less judgemental in her outlook. John Houghton, in his book, *A closer look at Harry Potter: Bending and shaping the minds of our children* (2001), also raises such concerns. However, Houghton's book is predominantly about children, religion and fantasy fiction rather than the *Harry Potter* series.

Furst and Heilmann (2001), Houghton (2001) and Neal (2001) do realise that one need not always have recourse to Gospel stories in order to teach Christian values and that the *Harry Potter* series of books might assist in teaching Gospel values (Furst & Heilmann, Houghton, Neal). Houghton (2001), in a very limited section, finds useful comparisons between Christian practices and beliefs and aspects of the *Harry Potter* novels. Neal was so taken with the need to relate non-Gospel stories to Gospel messages that she then published a second book, *The Gospel according to Harry Potter: Spirituality in the stories of the world's most famous seeker* (2002), specifically designed to assist people in teaching Gospel values through values that arise in the *Harry Potter* novels.

Many critics (Furst & Heilmann, Houghton, Neal) categorise themes raised in the series that can be used to assist with a person's Christian education. Neal, drawing on Internet research, mentions many values in the *Harry Potter* books (2001, pp. 15-27). Values found in the *Harry Potter* series which Furst and Heilmann mention specifically include sacrificial love (pp. 104-05), grace (p. 108), death (p. 136), suffering (pp. 138-40), relationships and friendships (pp. 142-144), betrayal (p. 111), salvation (p. 119), the need to be good (pp. 119-12) and how not to live as a Christian (pp. 129-131). Neal (2002), in her book, *The Gospel according to Harry Potter: Spirituality in the stories of the world's most famous seeker*, more fully covers these themes and others and how they can specifically be used to explain Gospel themes/values.

A strength of Furst and Heilmann's (2001) book is its comments on magic. While the authors state that the Bible is against magic (p. 91), they stress that the magic in the *Harry Potter* series is not the same as that mentioned in the Bible. It differs from the magic mentioned in the Bible because Harry's magic does not draw on a supernatural force. It is a natural thing in Harry's world (Furst & Heilmann, pp. 92-93). Abanes (2001) feels that the magic is occultist, which is why he calls it "Magick" after the Wicca term, (p. 96).

Houghton (2001) also fails to separate the magic in *Harry Potter* from occultism (Houghton, p. 55). How any person interprets the magic in the *Harry Potter* novels will have an important bearing on how they interpret the text. Furst and Heilmann (2001), Abanes (2001) and Houghton do emphasise the danger that children may become interested in the occult after reading these books and therefore suitable adult guidance should be available for the children (Furst & Heilmann, p. 95, p. 103, Abanes, p. 173, p. 271, Houghton, p. 56, p. 87). Neal (2001) also states the need for adult guidance for any book children are reading (p. 20, p. 97) and Houghton specifically calls on parents and guardians to ensure that their children are thoroughly versed in "the Christian Gospel and the worldview that flows from it" (p. 87).

Furst and Heilmann (2001) also attack Harry and his peer group for often doing wrong for the right reasons (p. 132-135). An example of this is when Harry, Ron and Hermione enter a forbidden part of the Hogwarts building in their quest to protect the Philosopher's Stone (Rowling, 1997, pp. 196-200). Furst and Heilmann feel children believing in this will have no moral difficulty sinning (p. 135). Neal (2001) takes a more reasoned approach to this by stating that doing wrong for the right reasons follows Christian-Judeo ethics as Jesus performed unlawful actions (Mark 2:23-28) (p. 167).

- c) The *Harry Potter* books should be read because of their moral and spiritual values, preferably with adult supervision.

This view is held by numerous authors including Neal in her second book, *The Gospel according to Harry Potter: Spirituality in the stories of the world's most famous seeker* (2002), which specifically promotes the *Harry Potter* series as a valuable teaching aid to teach Christian-based morals and values. Francis Bridger's book, *A charmed life: The spirituality of Potterworld* (2001), John Killinger's book, *God, the Devil & Harry Potter: A Christian's minister's defense of the beloved novels* (2002), Philip Plyming's book, *Harry Potter and the meaning of life* (2001) Di Archer, Caroline Puntis and Tony Watkins book, *What does the Bible say about Harry Potter* (2001), and Burkart's book, *A parent's [sic] guide to Harry Potter* (2005), all provide a variety of guidance and discussion on the value of the *Harry Potter* books in both religious and spiritual development. They also provide a more balanced view of Christianity and its beliefs as well as providing a defence against some of the attacks that have been made on the novels.

Some publications, including *What does the Bible say about Harry Potter* (Archer, Puntis & Watkins, 2001), offer specific lessons and how to teach them while others provide more general information. Archer, Puntis and Watkins, Bridger, Killinger, Plyming and Neal note that the *Harry Potter* books are not "specific Christian" books but they are books that contain consistencies with a Christian understanding of the world. Killinger (2002) states: "the world of Harry Potter would be inconceivable apart from the structures of Judeo-Christian theology and a very traditional Christian conceptualisation of human existence and the way it should be approached by every follower of Jesus" (p. 14). Bridger (2001) also states that the series "while not overtly Christian, the values it espouses resonate at critical points with Christian morality...The Christian belief in the vindication of the Good finds itself reflected, albeit in non-religious terms" (pp. 83-84). Killinger makes a point of emphasising the similarity between Christ and Harry (p. 16).

Another interesting text that refers to the Christian values found in the *Harry Potter* series is John Granger's book, *The hidden key to Harry Potter: Understanding the meaning, genius and popularity of Joanne Rowling's Harry Potter novels* (2002). Granger, a committed Christian, also sees the *Harry Potter* books as profoundly Christian books that draw on "classical philosophy, medieval and patristic theology, and the esoteric symbolist tradition of the East and West" (p. xiii). He views them as being very similar to the Christian morality plays of the middle-ages (pp. 196-200). He never states that Rowling sets out to write Christian books, as Rowling herself has never stated this, but he competently shows how Rowling draws on a predominantly Christian tradition in her writing especially through her interest in writers such as C. S. Lewis and the other "Inkling" writers (pp. 82-83).

Granger makes a number of somewhat tenuous assertions, such as that Rowling characters Albus Dumbledore and Nicholas Flamel created the Philosopher's Stone for "the purification, illumination, and salvation or perfection of their souls" (2002, p. 97), or that Rowling uses her conceited character, Gilderoy Lockhart, as an attack on her fellow writer, Philip Pullman (pp. 192-196), but overall his book is particularly informative on the subject. He provides great insight into many areas, especially on the Christian and Platonic symbolism within the books, the Aristotelian scholastic model of the soul and its relevance to the series, and alchemy and its spiritual importance.

Lisa Cherrett has produced *The triumph of goodness: Biblical themes in the Harry Potter stories* (2003), a work that is very similar to those described above. It concentrates on making observations on the suitability of the *Harry Potter* series for children. Cherrett provides a number of instances where she shows connections between what occurs in the *Harry Potter* stories and stories in the Bible. Her book is centred on her belief that "the Harry Potter stories have the potential to produce 'a body of people familiarized with certain ideas' that can re-lay a foundation for Christian faith" (p. 11). Burkart (2005) follows a similar line

of argument stressing the importance of fantasy works like the *Harry Potter* novels, in helping children to work “out their unconscious struggles and conflicts” (p. 39).

Another critical text which discusses the *Harry Potter* books in relation to religion/morality is Edmund Kern’s book, *The wisdom of Harry Potter: what our favorite hero teaches us about moral choices* (2003). This book is similar to Bridger’s book in that it closely considers the morality illustrated in the *Harry Potter* series as well as themes that are apparent in the books. Kern rejects the books as being religious because they do not offer a message of transcendence through religious beliefs yet he acknowledges, as Bridger does, that they provide an ethical system consistent with many belief systems, including Christianity (pp. 158-177). The central concern of the book is to explore Kern’s view that Rowling offers modern readers, through the actions undertaken by the characters of Harry Potter and others, an updated version of Stoicism (p. 19), which he then explains and provides examples of in the series. It is both impressively researched and very persuasive, providing much information on the history of stoicism and the moral development that occurs in the character of Harry Potter throughout the books. Kern also highlights the point that Abanes (2001) and some other critics, including Jack Zipes (2002), fail to notice, which is that:

Rowling’s books do not offer children a utopian vision of the way things should be. Instead, to some extent, they reflect the way things are, and by doing so, they address some of the issues valued by proponents of social realism in children’s literature. The books may not have the gritty texture of other works for adolescents, but they hardly return kids to the days of greater cultural conformity or overt bigotry and the nuclear family ruled by the stern paterfamilias. They also put on display the effects of economic disparity and a moribund self-satisfied political administration. (Kern, 2003, p. 209)

Many of the critics mentioned previously comment on the *Harry Potter* series and its importance as a Christian text. They view the series as important in the values and attitudes which it may instruct/educate its readers consciously or unconsciously in. All these critics seem to come from a viewpoint where they understand the importance of Harry Potter as an instructional hero and the *Harry Potter* series as an instructional resource. Most view the *Harry Potter* series as being of value in Religious Education. In this sense they all place Harry Potter within the traditional “hero” model, perhaps best explained by Campbell (1949/1993). It is possible to see the critics interpreting Harry on the same levels as those outlined by Stephens and McCallum, (1998) in their discussion of the hero Beowulf:

At one level, this involves depictions of qualities popularly associated with the heroic: courage, loyalty, strength, endurance, passionate attachment to causes and a willingness to sacrifice oneself for them, an altruistic concern for the well being of independents, and a strong feeling of obligation towards anyone who has acted in such a way as to further the hero’s cause. When this is put together with the idea of myth, the meaning of the text moves into that space where heroes exemplify a particular human role within a permanent cosmic struggle between good and evil (p.93).

3) General guides about the *Harry Potter* series

A number of general guides have been published which provide further insight into the books, particularly in the creatures and names Rowling uses in the books. The authors of these texts provide information for the readers of the *Harry Potter* series so that they may get more meaning from the text. These writers generally have the ideological presupposition that the readers of the *Harry Potter* series will gain more from the novels by comprehending more obscure details including the apparent meaning of characters’ names in the book, the history of alchemy and the myths that involve creatures mentioned in the books. These guides stress

the importance of intertextuality, which is “The production of meaning from the interrelationships between audience, text, other texts, and the social –cultural determination of significance” (Stephens, 1992, p.84). They assume, perhaps rightly, that modern youth are not as well educated in the classic literature as older readers may be and therefore they want to assist readers in gaining more from the *Harry Potter* series. Through this intertextuality we gain greater meaning for ourselves (Nodelman, 1996, p. 22).

These books include *The sorcerer’s companion: A guide to the magical world of Harry Potter* (Kronzek & Kronzek, 2001), *Ultimate unofficial guide to the mysteries of Harry Potter* (Waters & Mithrandir, 2002-2003), *New clues to Harry Potter: Book 5: Hints from the ultimate unofficial guide to the mysteries of Harry Potter* (Waters & Mithrandir, 2003), *The magical worlds of Harry Potter* (Colbert, 2001) and *A muggle’s guide to the wizarding world: Exploring the Harry Potter universe* (Boyle, 2004). David Colbert’s book is the most useful in amplifying meanings that can be found within the text of the *Harry Potter* series. He is particularly vehement in stressing the literary traditions Rowling draws upon - the tales, myths and legends that are relevant to her work, and the literal meaning of Latin words used in the books. His notes on the real-life alchemist, Nicholas Flamel, and the use of the Archetype hero story plot structure found in Rowling’s works are particularly valuable. Granger (2002) also mentions this connection (p. 26-27), as does Houghton (2001, pp.16-18, pp. 35-36). Houghton also comments on the importance of myths in assisting us in reaching an understanding of some profound truths about human existence (pp. 36-41). Allan and Elizabeth Kronzek (2001) are particularly emphatic regarding magical connections in the *Harry Potter* narratives, while Galadriel Waters’ and Astre Mithrandir’s books (2002-2003, 2003) are aimed at the youth audience, as they call their readers “Harry Potter Sleuths”. Their books provide a chapter by chapter guide to each *Harry Potter* novel offering clues,

Rowlingistics (names used by Rowling that originate in French, Latin and other languages), and miscellaneous curiosities and oddities.

A more specialist guidebook is Roger Highfield's book *The Science of Harry Potter* (2002). While limited to the area of science it is useful in that it provides insights into topics such as astrology, the history of witchcraft, alchemy, etc. It also provides an understanding of the connection between science and much of the magic exhibited in the book series.

4) General literary criticism of the *Harry Potter* series

There is also another class of books written about the *Harry Potter* series and these provide general information on and about the *Harry Potter* novels and Rowling. They are designed for the general reader and discuss strengths, weaknesses, themes and issues raised in the narratives. Authors offer varied perspectives on the series because of the ideologies that affect their appraisal of them. As McGillis (1996) states: "all reading demands a theoretical position on the part of the reader" (p. viii). McGillis also makes mention of the different types of theoretical positions people bring to their reading of literature. These include reading from a viewpoint based on an understanding of myths and archetypes, feminism, Marxism, structuralism, formalism and post-structuralism criticism. Authors in this section and the section below draw on these various theoretical positions to interpret the *Harry Potter* novels.

The most general of these critical books are: *Contemporary classics of children's literature: A guide to the Harry Potter novels* (Eccleshare, 2002), *J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter novels: A reader's guide*, (Nel, 2001), and *Beacham's sourcebooks for teaching young adult fiction: Exploring Harry Potter* (Schafer, 2002). Julia Eccleshare (2002) is very general in her approach to the *Harry Potter* novels but very perceptive in that she draws from a variety of theoretical positions in reviewing the series without being overwhelmed by any

particularly theoretical approach. She stresses the importance of the mythical hero in the books and the use of archetypes for good and evil (pp. 17-18) and also speaks strongly on the political and social views that Rowling supports in the books (pp. 74-93). Yet Eccleshare also notes, from a feminist perspective, the unfavourable female stereotypes in the books (pp. 84-88). Philip Nel's (2001) work is in a similar vein to Eccleshare's as he comments on the different ideologies that are apparent in the series including racism, elitism, prejudice and the abuse of power (pp. 42-46) and he also recognises the importance of the mythical hero in the narratives (p. 36).

Elizabeth Schafer's (2002) approach to the books is to analyse them from a number of perspectives. She provides an overview of the history and cultural effect of the *Harry Potter* series, a biography of Rowling, and an analysis of a variety of aspects of the novels including the characters, themes, settings, school life, food, sports, curriculum, science and moral codes. Schafer is particularly strong in the way she highlights the importance of myths, archetypes and symbols in the series and other influences that affect Rowling's work. However, one may feel sceptical regarding some of her interpretations. One opinion that this author was reluctant to agree with was the view that the Weasley's flying car, which is able to expand to accommodate the number of people who wish to travel in it as well as accommodate their luggage (*CoS*), can be seen as a symbol of the womb (p. 225).

In this category are books that deal with the cultural impact of the *Harry Potter* series. These books include *Sticks and stones: The troublesome success of children's literature from Slovenly Peter to Harry Potter* by Jack Zipes (2002) and *The irresistible rise of Harry Potter* (2002) by Andrew Blake. Blake (2002) centres his work specifically on the cultural and political phenomenon of the *Harry Potter* books and also mentions the importance of the hero journey and Arthurian legends to the novels. He argues that the series is a product of their political and cultural climate, which means that they are a reflection of current

ideologies in Great Britain. Blake feels that the character of Harry Potter is a “retrolutionary” (p. 15), rather than a revolutionary, because he represents “aspects of the future through terms set by the past, in order to make it seem palatable” (pp. 8-9). Blake’s views are relevant as he stresses that while the *Harry Potter* series explores the old and uses past literary forms, the series deals with, under the surface, present concerns (pp. 17-26). However, Blake is limited in his analysis by his pre-occupation with British society and culture and therefore fails to provide his readers with an explanation of why the series has had remarkable success in other parts of the world away from Great Britain. Blake gives many examples of how the series reflects much of modern Great Britain’s culture and society, including politics, particularly its consumerism and involvement in New Labour, as well as its nostalgia for its past.

Renowned literary critic Jack Zipes (2002) devotes a chapter of his book to the *Harry Potter* series. Zipes work reflects his personal ideologies as he is a Marxist (Nodelman, p. 258), and a feminist interpretist of fairy tales (McGillis, p. 162). He points to the relevance of the hero journey to the *Harry Potter* books, the use of fairy tale motifs and the use of stereotypical female models in the novels. Zipes finds the novels tedious (p. 176) and provides limited information on themes found in their covers. He feels that the series draws on established literary traditions and that Harry Potter is just another Hardy boy with a lightning-shaped scar on his forehead (p. 178). Zipes seeks books that will revolutionise children’s thinking and provide them with new cultural and social models rather than make them more acceptable of current social and cultural models (p. 188). He appears to be upset with Rowling for not showing a new world view and he does not seem to understand that she may rather be reflecting, through the books, on our current world situation. His research is also limited in its reliability as he declares: “while children are not adverse to reading the Harry Potter adventures and other books, they are adverse to spending money on them” (pp. 185-186), but bases this statement on the comments from one child he spoke to.

5) Academic publications critically examining the *Harry Potter* series

There is a group of books published specifically about the *Harry Potter* series that may be classed as academic or scholarly texts. There are five published books in this area which are: *Re-reading Harry Potter*, by Suman Gupta (2003), *Reading Harry Potter: Critical essays*, edited by Giselle Anatol (2003), *Harry Potter's world: Multidisciplinary critical perspectives*, edited by Elizabeth Heilman (2003), *The ivory tower and Harry Potter: Perspectives on a literary phenomenon*, edited by Lana Whited (2002) and *Harry Potter and Philosophy: If Aristotle ran Hogwarts*, edited by David Bagget and Shawn Klein (2004). In each of these books the authors also bring their ideologies to their study of the *Harry Potter* series and therefore a wide variety of interpretations of the text and how it speaks to people are provided.

Gupta's (2003) book is, in many ways, particularly disappointing. He uses a "text to world" methodology which has as its key objective "to understand how specific texts and their readings lead outwards towards and devolve from the world they occur within" (p.22). This approach assumes "the content of texts and their possible readings have something to do with their social and political effects, and indicate something of the social and political effects, and indicate something of the social and political circumstances they derive from" (p. 22). In reality Gupta really only states what has already been stated previously, particularly by Blake (2002) and Zipes (2002), which is that the *Harry Potter* series is based on aspects of Rowling's own culture and society (pp. 50 – 52). Gupta's aim is to concentrate on the "political and social effects that constitute the *Harry Potter* phenomenon" (p. 14). The book tells us something about the social and political world we inhabit (p. 13). This includes observations on gender, class and slavery. Much of Gupta's book is a simple reflection on the realities of our world, both good and bad, e.g. the type of advertising we are inundated with is

reflected in the world of *Harry Potter* (pp. 133-140). A large section of the book contains long statements on academic controversies or on Gupta's own views on various areas including his view that "belief in a Christian world-view seems no more 'real' than belief in a magical world view" (p. 74). This is a particularly controversial comment.

The remaining books in this area contain a number of worthwhile articles, too numerous to analyse individually. All the articles are by scholars and/or teachers and provide insight into a large number of areas including the cultural phenomena of the *Harry Potter* series as well as many literary aspects of it that have been raised by other critics previously commented on. Heilman's (2003) book categorises its contents by the perspectives that contributors have written from. Tammy Turner-Vorbeck, in her article *Pottermania: Good, clean fun or cultural hegemony?* takes a Marxist approach, like Zipes, to the series because of the way in which the novels seem to support a certain cultural and social model and encourage this model's continuance (p. 14), while Maria Nikolajeva's article, *Harry Potter-A return to the romantic hero* (2003), takes a literary perspective in looking at the hero journey in the series.

An article that I found relevant for this study was written by Hollie Anderson (2003), a Navajo Indian, who took a reader-response perspective to the books. In the article, *Reading Harry Potter with Navajo eyes*, she states that she had been sent to boarding school and found that in reading the series of books she found "many of the themes pertinent to me personally as an alien student disconnected from the familiar and also to the experiences of my parents, both of whom attended boarding school" (Anderson, 2003, p. 97). Thus, she responded to the series on a very personal level. This particular article shows how one person related to the *Harry Potter* narrative, they identified with the novels. It is this connection with narratives that make them a powerful tool in education. If students relate in a similar way to aspects of the series then they are more likely to learn from it.

Whited's (2002) book also offers a variety of articles but is dominated by seven articles which take a particularly literary perspective of the *Harry Potter* novels in seeking to trace the influences that have led to their creation. A well-written article is Mary Pharr's article *In medias res: Harry Potter as hero-in-progress* (2002). This article looks at the central character of Harry Potter as being one who brings with him the wisdom of a myriad of earlier heroes, especially the so-called monomyth, and with each of his adventures he refines that wisdom with modern knowledge (p. 66). There are also a number of articles on the social and political aspects of the books including its relationship not just to New Labour but also to Thatcherism (Westman, 2002), the series' value as a means of generating income for commercial enterprises (Borah, 2002) and the contradictions in the series over issues of equality versus privilege and exceptionalism (Mendlesohn, 2002).

Anatol's (2003) book also is separated into sections. One section provides articles on reading the series in relation to childhood theories, another section is on literal influences on the books and the third section is on morality and social issues in the novels. All the articles are useful as they provide input into various areas including both Jungian and Freudian interpretations of the books, how children acquire knowledge in similarity with the characters in the series, how Harry's actions and decisions can assist children in the moving from the simple black and white issues to the more grey areas, issues of racism, materialism and slavery portrayed in the books, technology and its effect in alienating people, legal concepts in the magical world, further discussion on the British love of nostalgia as portrayed in the books, class prejudices and gender issues. Many of these articles offer new light or reinforce previously-published views.

Bagget and Klein's book (2004) takes a philosophical view of the *Harry Potter* series. It has specific chapters on the ethics in the series particularly the battle between good and evil (Deavel & Deavel, 2004, Weed, 2004). Mention is also made of Harry's virtues and their

relevance to his success (Morris, 2004, Hsieh, 2004, Walls, 2004, Patterson, 2004). There is also a chapter by Mimi Gladstein (2004), which strongly supports Rowling's depiction of gender. Gladstein feels that the *Harry Potter* world is "a world where equal opportunity among the sexes is a given" (p. 49). These four edited books also show how the novels have made people reflect on the *Harry Potter* series in regard to their own beliefs.

6) Internet and Journal resources about the *Harry Potter* series

Internet sources also provide much information about the *Harry Potter* series. Due to the large number of articles available on the Internet the author of this thesis has decided not to express a view on them except in a general fashion. Many articles posted on the internet come from recognised institutions and these reflect opinions about the series, especially in regards to religious debate over the novels. The internet also provides a large number of media stories about the series. Listed below are some articles that the author found of interest, because they indicated the wide interest in the *Harry Potter* series as newsworthy.

- "Hogwarts Headache", which is a medical condition apparently caused by reading a *Harry Potter* book for too long at:

<http://www.hindu.com/2003/11/04/stories/2003110402092200.htm>

- *Harry Potter* books as being instructional books on the occult at:

<http://www.cuttingedge.org/news/n1380.cfm>

- The Vatican supporting the reading of the *Harry Potter* books at:

<http://www.natcatch.com/NCR Online/archives/022103/0221031.htm>

- The Vatican against the reading of the *Harry Potter* books at:

http://www.envoymagazine.com/potter_warning.htm

- Symbolism and its importance in the *Harry Potter* books at:

<http://homepage.mac.com/kia/potter/symbols.html>

- *Harry Potter* and the theme of his hero journey at:

<http://www.mugglenet.com/editorials/editorials/edit-olanick02.shtml> or

http://www.mythichero.com/new_world_mythology.htm

- Harry Potter as the new Prozac, relieving depression for children and others at:

<http://www.news.com.au/common/story>

Journal articles are fairly sparse regarding the *Harry Potter* series and also the comments and ideas reflected in them are all found in the published books that have previously been commented on. Generally, they have centred on views about the religious debate over the novels, the literary value of the books and the series value in providing moral guidance. The remarks on the series' value in assisting readers with their moral education would indicate some support for the series' use in Religious Education.

Margie Beck (2001) emphasises the series' value in teaching Religious Education based on themes such as loyalty, friendship, trust and honesty. Colin Lankshear and Michele Knobel (2001) remark on the metanarratives found in the series, particularly the triumph of good over evil, and the humanistic metanarrative, which stresses the importance of friendship, kindness and selflessness. Dan McVeigh (2002) comments on the traditions that have influenced Rowling's work including moral traditions. Sharon Black (2003) makes mention of the way readers identify with Harry and the series relevance to Bettelheim's work on a child's moral development and the need to identify with others. These opinions support the view of the author of this thesis that children respond to books when they identify with characters in the books. It also mentions that identification with a character is important for children's moral development and that moral development is an essential component of any religious instruction. Nancy Knaap (2003) finds the books engaging and of literary worth, especially in the manner in which they raise questions of moral significance for readers to

consider. Mary Black and Marilyn Eisenwine (2001) mention varying views expressed about the series but generally find that the series portrays positive messages, while William Loudon (2001) states how he identified with the characters and settings in the books.

Summary of themes in Literature Review

In summary, there are a variety of themes that come through in literature regarding the *Harry Potter* series. As can be perceived from the previous statements of academic critics further discussion of the subtexts of the books is required. There is much mention of moral and spiritual messages that commentators feel influence those reading the series. As mentioned, these viewpoints include that the novels promote occultism, that they are against basic Christian beliefs, that they should be read only with parental guidance and that they provide access to Christian beliefs which can be of benefit to all. There are interruptions of the books as being modern-day morality plays (Granger, 2002), Harry Potter as a Christ figure and the books as a modern day interpretation of the Gospels (Killinger, 2002), and that the books are more an updated depiction of the Stoic moral system than of Christian beliefs (Kern, 2003).

A large number of authors comment on the themes that are apparent in the novels especially moral, social, political and spiritual themes. These include mention of solidarity, empathy, self sacrifice, the nature of love, forgiveness, hope, faith, death, elitism, family, the nature of inequality, injustice, prejudice, possibilities of transformation, ambiguity, making choices, the nature of relationships/friendships, education, the nature of good and evil, multiculturalism, the nature of authority and the exercise of political power. Different authors provide opinions on the relevance of these themes to actions and events in the series

(Cherrett, Eccleshare, Granger, Kern, Killinger, Neal, Plyming, et al.). Generally these themes are seen as providing guidance in the religious instruction of our youth.

Many commentators and critics of the books make mention of the importance of the names of the characters in the *Harry Potter* series and the names of places (Colbert, Nel, 2001, Killinger, Granger, Grimes, Schafer and Waters & Mithrandir). An example of this importance is in the character of Professor Remus Lupin. If one knew that “Remus” was one of the two brothers who was suckled by a she wolf in Roman mythology, that “Lupin” means wolf-like in Latin and that the scientific name for the wolf is “*Canis Lupus*”, then a reader may have worked out early in *PoA* that Professor Remus Lupin is a werewolf rather than the announcement of his ailment over two thirds of the way through the book (Chp. 18). While guide books often make reference to this, many of the more scholarly books also make mention of the importance of names.

There are many articles and statements on what has been important in influencing the creation of the *Harry Potter* series. Comments by critics provide information for the general reader about aspects of the series that they may not be aware of. Many critics make mention of the importance of archetypes, of the hero journey or monomyth in the creation of the stories as well as the Arthurian legends and general mythical stories particularly those featuring the clash of good and evil (Applebaum, Nikolajeva, Alton, De Rosa, Kornfeld & Prothro, Nel, 2001, etc.). Many readers would be accepting of the series because they feel comfortable with the literary genres that the series draws from. Critics assert that we have become accepting of these types of stories because we come across them repeatedly whether in books, films, television series or other mediums. This is important to understand as it provides us with one of the reasons for the series’ popularity.

The importance of Charles Dickens, Roald Dahl and the Inklings writers, boarding school stories, fairy tales, folk tales, magical tales and fantasy tales are also referred to

(Granger, 2002, Alton, Elster, Lavoie, Park, McVeigh, Skulnick & Goodman, Zipes, Mills, Beck, Black & Eisenwise, etc.). As with the hero journey, Rowling is drawing on literary traditions that people identify with. These critics' opinions make us reflect on the similarity of Harry Potter to Cinderella, especially in their younger years, the depiction of characters in the books, which are similar to those portrayed by both Dickens and Dahl. The critics' assertions make us aware of the similarity of Harry to other wizardly characters such as Ged from Ursula Le Guin's *The Earthsea trilogy* (1979) or the students of Miss Cackle's Academy for Witches, from Jill Murphy's book *Adventures of the worst witch* (1998) (Cockrell, 2002, Pinsent, 2002).

Particularly relevant is the critical comment that is made on the importance of Rowling's social, political and cultural background on the ideologies that are contained in the *Harry Potter* books (Westman, Blake, Gupta and Lankshear & Knobel). As many of the readers of the novels are not British these statements make readers reflect on parts of the subtext, which they would previously have found difficult to comprehend. Critics make mention of Rowling's depiction of government and bureaucracy in the books as well as her portrayal of the education system and the media. Critics offer insight into these depictions and their connection with Rowling's background as a welfare mother, her experience of the authority and power in Great Britain and her perceived feelings on the British education system and the British media (Elster, Nel, 2001, Hopkins, et al.). From these critics we are able to have some increased understanding of current and past political practice in both Great Britain and the wider world and their apparent influence on the series, especially in areas of consumerism (Blake, Zipes, Turner-Vorbeck, Applebaum, et al.).

Concerns are raised by a number of critics about the influence the books will have on supporting inequalities that occur in our societies. These include areas such as racial prejudice and gender bias (Gallardo-C & Smith, Gupta, Lavoie, et al.). These critics help us

to perceive the complexities in trying to understand Rowling's depiction of gender based on how one interprets her text. Is her portrayal of gender objectionable because she is reinforcing traditional and unacceptable gender roles (Park, Zipes, Dresang, et al.), or is Rowling portraying gender as it really is to help us reflect on what we still have to do to achieve real gender equity (Gallardo-C & Smith)?

Critics also provide perspectives on other aspects of the texts. Harry's moral development is referred to and its relevance to the readers of the series (Nel, 2001, Whited & Grimes, Knapp, et al.). These critics provide us with some insight into Harry's choices and how they provide material to assist children in their own moral development. Harry's influence on boys reading (Doughty, 2002) is commented on as well as the problems in translating *Harry Potter* into other languages particularly its Americanisation (Nel, 2002 and Jentsch).

Through the increasing critical opinions that have been published about the *Harry Potter* series readers are offered new interpretations of the text. Through these critical comments readers are given the opportunity to gain more from the text than they may be able to attain unassisted.

Where do we place the *Harry Potter* series in literature?

Based on critics' responses and the reading of the series it is clear, as stated previously, that the *Harry Potter* books are, ". . . radically intertextual" (Stephens, 1992, p.86). The series popularity may partly be explained through the large number of discourses and genres that are apparent in the stories and therefore most readers can find something that they relate to and feel comfortable with in the series (Eccleshare, 2002, p.15). The novels draw on detective/mystery narratives, which have become a mainstay of modern literature as

well as television and movie dramas (Alton, Elster, Zipes, Beck and Granger). Children are familiar with the structure of such stories through the comics and novels they read as well as the television shows they view and movies they watch. The popularity of television dramas such as the various *Law and Order* and *CSI* programmes prove the continuing popularity of the detective/mystery story in modern society. They also draw from the use of a serial format, which provides ongoing adventures. Dickens used a serial form in many of his books, while others have used it with characters in continuing adventures, such as Sherlock Holmes and Tarzan. Modern society feels comfortable with this serial format through both literature and other art areas such as television and movies, particularly those television series that are classed as “Soap Operas”. We have serial characters such as Father Brown, Horace Rumpole, Dr Who, Indiana Jones and James Bond, which have been very popular.

Rowling also draws from the boarding schools stories that have been popular in English literature, most notably from the book *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (Hughes, 1856) (Alton, Elster, Skulnick & Goodman, et al.). Boarding school stories provide the audience with an environment which would seem to provide a greater chance for adventure than the family home. There are no parents around, food is always a topic of interest, large school buildings provide hiding places, there is the competitive outlet of team sports and there is the surrogate family consisting of the main character's fellow schoolhouse members. The *Harry Potter* series also draws from the key literary genres that have dominated story-telling for generations. These are the genres of the Hero Journey/Quest, Mythical tales and Fairy tale/Fantasy tales (Applebaum, Nikolajeva, De Rosa, et al.). Often these genres are intertwined in literature but have become so familiar to us that we are comfortable with their structure. This mixing of literary genres is particularly noticeable in *The Lord of the Rings* (1954) by J. R. R. Tolkien.

Harry is on a hero quest to struggle against those who wish to destroy him, usually evil in character, and also to discover more about himself and the potential evil that lurks in him. Such a hero is found in many stories including modern tales which students are aware of including Frodo Baggins in *The Lord of the Rings*, Luke Skywalker in the *Star Wars* series, Simba in *The Lion King*, Shrek in *Shrek* or Neo in *The Matrix*. They are also familiar with this genre in traditional tales including the story of Jesus. In the novels we are provided with the traditional Archetypes, commented on by Carl Jung and others, especially the Child (Harry) and the Shadow (Voldemort). The series also draws from the fairy tale tradition that is still a prominent part of the Western education system. In particular, people have become familiar with the traditional fairy tale happy ending after the struggle between good and evil, therefore the endings of the published *Harry Potter* books are not unexpected.

While recognising that Rowling draws on a large number of literature genres and combines them competently in her work, in the historic development of literature the *Harry Potter* series is best placed in the Fantasy genre if one is to classify it into a particular genre. While Rowling draws from many types of literature, her work is best classified in the Fantasy genre because Harry spends the majority of his time in a fantasy world, the world of wizardry. Rowling's creation is closely related to fantasy literature in the tradition of C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien. Lewis's *Narnia* is also a fantasy land, it contains fauns, witches, giants and other mythical creatures, while Tolkien's *Middle Earth* can be seen as a mythical/fantasy land in its use of magic, dwarves, orcs, trolls, wizards and dragons. In *The Lord of the Rings*, the *Chronicles of Narnia* and the *Harry Potter* series these fantasy worlds are also slightly blurred. Harry Potter's world is meant to be our own world but one that is hidden from us as is the world of *Narnia*, which is entered from our world, while Tolkien's *Middle Earth* is portrayed as occurring between the Second and Third Ages of the world while we exist in the Fourth Age (Granger, 2004, p.7). However, Rowling's work does not

contain the allegorised Christianity that is an essential element in both Tolkien's and Lewis's work (Blake, p. 95) but, as Kern states, with some reservations the *Harry Potter* books can be read as Christian allegory (p. 219). Rowling's work is similar to Lewis's and Tolkien's work in that all three authors, through the use of fantasy, depict a moral hero on a quest. Like Frodo Baggins in *The Lord of the Rings* and the majority of the Pevensie children in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Harry Potter is seeking to discover more about himself as well as save the world that surrounds him while making his decisions based on a moral code.

Is the *Harry Potter* series suitable for use in a Christian school?

As stated previously there have been spirited attacks on the *Harry Potter* series by a number of critics which might indicate that the books are unsuitable for use in schools, particularly those which are based on Christian values. The most publicised attacks have been by religious groups. There were *Harry Potter* book burnings and removal of books from school libraries (Killinger, pp. 2-3, Bridger, p. 4, Neal, 2001, pp. 5-6). These attacks on the books may be seen as an indication of the moral right movement, the moral majority, which has swept parts of the world, particularly the United States of America, where people wish to return to (so-called) "old fashioned values" and protect their children from temptation especially in an increasingly secular world. As mentioned previously critic Richard Abanes also supports this view when he states that the series is "...steeped in a thinly disguised occultism; it favors morally flawed, egocentric characters who lie with impunity, practice occultic techniques, use profanity and refuse to repent; and it frequently depicts gratuitous violence" (p. x). However, a reading of the books does not support Abanes' view.

Other critics, besides Abanes and Dollins, have attacked the books as being supportive of occultist practices, including Marian Horvat (2002) and Michael O'Brien

(2001), yet it is important to remember, as mentioned previously, that the magic used in the books is not of the occult type, as no supernatural power is called upon to provide one with magical abilities. The magic depicted in the books is simply a talent that one is lucky enough to be born with and, like all talents, can be developed. There have also been attacks on the books because of their portrayal of other aspects of our society and these will be referred to later in this thesis.

The ideologies of J. K. Rowling

As previously noted one's interpretation of the *Harry Potter* series is always influenced by the ideologies one brings to a reading of the text. Rowling, as mentioned, also brings her own ideologies to the series. These ideologies are, of course, influenced by her background (Shapiro, 2001, pp. 5-6), especially the loss of her mother, her bouts of depression, her experience of welfare and her Christian upbringing and almost classical education.

It is this author's opinion that Rowling sees children's literature as instructional in focus. Harry is a child who teaches us about aspects important to one's life although not in a blatantly didactic manner. Through the actions, thoughts and comments of Harry, and other righteous characters, we are given lessons in morality (Shapiro, 2001, p. 9). These include lessons in the importance of friendship, the importance of choice, the need to show forgiveness to others and that people have the ability to transform (Plyming, 2001, pp.10-21). Rowling draws from her own history to illustrate, through Harry, the effects of depression (Nel, 2001, p.21). The depiction of the Dementors is how Rowling felt when she suffered from bouts of depression, that literally one's soul was sucked from one's body:

Dementors are among the foulest creatures that walk this earth. They infest the darkest, filthiest places, they glory in decay and despair, they drain peace, hope and happiness out of the air around them. . . . Get too near a Dementor and every good feeling, every happy memory, will be sucked out of you. If it can, the Dementor will feed on you long enough to reduce you to something like itself – soulless and evil. You'll be left with nothing but the worst experiences of your life' (*PoA*, p. 140).

Rowling also uses the character of Hermione to depict some of her own passions. This includes trying to achieve justice in the world. Hermione is a mudblood who suffers her own injustices. She fights for the house elves, which is reminiscent of Rowling's work for Amnesty International (Shapiro, 2001, p. 45). In addition Rowling and Hermione share a great love of learning (Eccleshare, 2002, p.74 and Shapiro, pp. 5-6). Christian values dominate Harry's values as they did Rowling's upbringing (Granger, 2002, p. x). The loss of her own mother may have also influenced Rowling's depiction of Harry's loss of his parents (Granger, 2002, pp. 46-47). While Harry's parents died when he was very young he seems to sense them close to him particularly in times of trouble and Rowling may feel the same about the loss of her own mother. Rowling's depiction of gender issues, as well as her depiction of foreigners, are those that she is most familiar from through her British culture, particularly traditional English children's novels depiction of females and foreigners (Eccleshare, p. 81, pp. 86-87). Throughout the *Harry Potter* novels there are limited female roles and there is apparent discrimination in the depiction of foreigners. The French students who visit from Beauxbatons have the attractive French accent and good manners (*GoF*, p. 221) and Beauxbatons itself is French for "beautiful wands" (Colbert, 2001, p. 149). However, the students from Durmstrang in Eastern Europe are not described so kindly, one boy is unable to eat his food without spilling it on himself (*GoF*, p. 227), and their Head, Professor Karkaroff,

is described as being thin with a weak chin, yellow teeth and cold eyes (*GoF*, p. 217), and is a reformed Death Eater (*GoF*, p. 586). It is worth noting that the term *Durmstrang* is itself a play on the German words for “storm and stress” which are “*sturm und drang*” (Colbert, 2001, p. 73) and that England fought Germany in both World Wars.

The format of the novels is influenced by the literature Rowling read and admired as both a child and adult (Granger, 2002, pp. 30-34). The seven books in the *Narnia* chronicles as well as the use of magic in the series may have influenced Rowling’s use of magic and her decision to have seven *Harry Potter* books (Granger, 2002, p. 31, p.150). Her characters draw their names and characteristics from books she is familiar with, particularly classical books (Nel, 2001, p.16). Cedric Diggory’s name is a play on the character Digory Kirke in the *Narnia* Chronicles, and the name of Hogwarts caretaker, Argus Filch, is a play on the hundred-eyed Argus, son of Arestor, whom the goddess Juno asked to watch the heifer, Io, a disguised maiden, in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (Nel, 2001, p. 16). Fawkes, Dumbledore’s phoenix, is named after the famous English villain Guy Fawkes who attempted to blow up the English parliament and Hagrid’s pet dog Fluffy reminds us of the three-headed dog Cerebus found in Greek Mythology, especially when Hagrid “bought him off a Greek chappie” (*PS*, p. 141). Other examples of these allusions to famous historical, fictional characters and mythological creatures occur throughout the series.

Rowling’s view of authority, particularly government and bureaucracy, has likely been influenced by her experience as a welfare mother under the Margaret Thatcher government and her experience of New Labour (Granger, 2002, p. 90, Nel, 2001, pp. 39-40 and Blake, 2002, pp. 23-31). Rowling shows her love of books and her nearly classical education (Granger, 2002, p. 151) through her depiction of educational institutions in the series (Eccleshare, 2002, pp. 89-94). She values education highly but not necessarily some of the pedagogies that dominate it. She also brings a particularly British perspective to class

hierarchies in the series (Eccleshare, p. 80 and Nel, 2001, pp. 42-43). We see depictions of privileged upbringing being attacked but our hero himself is privileged through the money that is available to him. Harry and his friends illustrate the consumerism that Rowling herself is familiar with from her own background (Westman, 2002). She also draws on the British love of nostalgia, as Harry's world is itself very nostalgic in its portrayal (Blake, 2002, pp.7-15).

Rowling, like all of us, has been influenced by her past. She has her own ideological perspective, which she brings to her writing whether consciously or unconsciously. Through close reading of the text and the help of critics we are able to gain some understanding of these ideologies.

Conclusion

The author of this thesis undertook a research project in an attempt to acquire useful data that would answer the questions:

- Do our young people really connect with these books?
- Do the books contain worthwhile values?
- If they do contain worthwhile values then what are these values and are they relevant to the Christian values espoused by Catholic schools?

This research consisted of a document analysis and a collective case study. This study, while limited, provided useful data that is referred to in the remainder of this thesis.

The document analysis and literature review provided the opportunity to examine how a variety of critics viewed the *Harry Potter* series. Through their views it was possible to conclude that the majority of critics found the *Harry Potter* novels drew from traditional literary forms and that the series contained characters and events which expressed aspects of

our societies including the depiction of values which are consistent with those found in modern Christian societies. The thesis author also felt that this study supported the view that the books are suitable for use in our educational institutions including those catering for students aged nine to fourteen years. Those critics who felt the series was dangerous for young people to read were in the minority and their arguments were poorly grounded. This study also caused the author to conclude that there was insufficient research into how young people felt about the series.

The collective case study, both the interviews and focus group research, provided the opportunity for the author to research how young people felt about the series and whether they felt a connection with the books. Comments made by the students will be included in later sections of the thesis but the research did indicate that many young people do generally enjoy reading the novels, that they relate to the various characters in the stories and that they comprehend that the stories are value laden.

CHAPTER 3: WHY VALUES?

“It’s not hard to make decisions when you know what your values are”

(Roy Disney, n.d.)

Introduction

This thesis deals specifically with the teaching of values to our young people and in doing so it is necessary to comment on a number of questions related to this specific topic. These questions include: Why values are important? How we have traditionally learnt our values? and What has been the traditional role of schools in the teaching of values? This chapter attempts to answer these particular questions and also notes the increased State and Federal Governments interest and support for schools to play a key role in educating Australian youth in values. Lastly, reference is also made to concerns about the *Harry Potter* series because of its portrayal of certain aspects of society that may encourage the adoption of unsatisfactory values and beliefs in opposition to established societal values.

The need for values

Values are a necessary part of any society, whether they been selected values that belong to individuals or small groups, or values that are common to the vast majority of the populace. While a society may be formed without a shared set of values it will not survive for any great length of time because of the difficulty in reaching a consensus when major decisions need to be made. As stated previously, values are “the priorities individuals and societies attach to certain beliefs, experiences, and objects, in deciding how they shall live

and what they shall treasure” (Hill, 1994, p. 7). Values guide us in our choices and in our behaviour. If we believe that humans are capable of free choice then the choices they make will be governed by their personal values.

We need values so that we are able to have some consistency in our behaviour and expect some consistency in the behaviour of others. Without this consistency societies would be unable to function because people would not be able to live with each other in stable relationships. Furthermore, society would be unable to create long-term laws because for laws to remain effective they need to be recognised by the majority of citizens as accurately reflecting their wishes on what is acceptable behaviour. To a large degree there would be anarchy because one person would be unable to trust another to complete a task whether it be to provide them with an accurate diagnosis of their illness or complete the building of their house. There would be no bonding of society members, no glue holding them together, so there would be no society (Halstead, 1996, p. 7). In reality our values are an essential defining factor in who we are and where we belong. In reality the values we exhibit through our behaviour are one of the key ways in which people judge us.

How we develop values and what influences them

Individuals develop their set of personal values from their experience with external values. This experience may come through their relatives, their friends, acquaintances, teachers, different aspects of the society they live in, mass media, books they read, films they view, a religion they become involved with, unpleasant experiences they may be involved with and so on. By experiencing and observing these values people then choose their own set of values. During their early years these values will change as children grow into adulthood and their perceptions change. In adult life most people have settled on a set of personal values

that change little for the rest of their lives. If a person changes their set of personal values dramatically after they enter adulthood it is usually because they have undertaken some life-changing event.

Stories offer experiences of values, both negative and positive, without the reader personally undertaking real-life experiences in these values. A person can experience the effects of the persecution of the Jewish people by the followers of Nazism through the stories of Jewish people who have written about these events. While a reader only receives a limited perspective that is often enough of an experience to affect a person's set of personal values. In this way the *Harry Potter* series provides experiences of both negative and positive values that, while set in an imaginary world, allow a reader to reflect on their own set of values. A reader can experience the pain of Harry growing up without parents because of their death due to the violence of another wizard seeking power. One can experience the embarrassment of Ron Weasley due to the teasing of others because of his family's poor economic situation. This is exemplified when Malfoy and his companions discover Ron's ancient dress robes,

‘Look at this!’ said Malfoy in ecstasy, holding up Ron's robes and showing Crabbe and Goyle. ‘Weasley, you weren't thinking of wearing these, were you? I mean – they were very fashionable in about 1890 ...’

‘Eat dung, Malfoy!’ said Ron, the same colour as the dress robes as he snatched them back out of Malfoy's grip” (GoF, p. 150).

All stories that involve the depiction of people experiencing values provide the chance for readers to experience the effect of those values without leaving the safety of their own environment.

Education and values

As children are involved in educational institutions for a large part of their lives then what occurs in those educational institutions will influence children's values. Educational institutions have commonly been viewed as containing a moral component (Straughan, 1988, p.12). Through the daily interactions between teachers and students teachers are "seen to support certain values by their encouragement or discouragement of certain forms of behaviour" (Straughan, p. 13). "More formally, the school, as an institution will, again inevitably, underline certain values rather than others as a result of the particular style of discipline it maintains and the rules which it enforces" (Straughan, p. 13). The school will transmit values that they may not be aware of, part of a "hidden curriculum" (Straughan, p. 14). Catholic schools have, as a central aim, the transmission of values: "The Catholic school, far more than any other, must be a community whose aim is the transmission of values for living." (*The Catholic school*, 1977, p. 41)

This thesis deals specifically with the explicit, conscious attempts by schools to transmit values and other critics, besides Roger Straughan (1988), also recognise this relationship between schools and the transmission of values whether openly or through the hidden curriculum (Halstead, 1996, pp. 3-4). In looking at the current teaching of values in schools it is necessary to have some understanding of the history of Values Education in Australian schools.

Australian schools' history of Values Education

In the history of Australian schooling different approaches have been taken regarding the education of students in values. In the 1860s to 1880s, both the religious schools and the

state-funded schools of Australia saw that education involved more than achieving goals in literacy and numeracy. Mary MacKillop's Josephite schools, that began to be established in the 1860's, placed importance on educating students in Christian values because they were Catholic school but even the charters of secular schools established in the 1870s and 1880s stated that Values Education was a central aim of formal education because it was able to assure "personal morality for each individual and a suitable citizenry for the soon to be new nation" (Lovat, 2005b, ¶ 3). In the majority of the 1900's Values Education was not seen as a key outcome in secular educational facilities but there was certainly Values Education being undertaken in both implicit and explicit ways. These values were seen as being an essential part of the Australian culture and were generally centred on Christian-based, European/Mediterranean values because the majority of Australia's population had cultural ties to these areas (Hill, 2004, p. 3). Many non-government schools, particularly those established by the Catholic and Protestant Churches saw Values Education as a key part of their educational mission. These values were of course Christian-based due to the religious affiliations of the Churches involved.

With the cultural changes that occurred in the 1960s and 1970s many of these communal values came under challenge. As Hill (2004) states, factors such as the advent of global television, youth anger over the Vietnam War, and easy access to the birth control pill helped cause changes in traditional values. Consumerism increased in 1980s and people sought to satisfy their desires rather than communal ones. However, there was also a push for rights for women and oppressed minorities (p. 3). Australia started to take immigrants from other areas of the globe as the so-called "White Australia Policy" dissolved. Competing value systems arrived with migrants who came from cultures that were not the traditional source of Australia's population. In the 1980s the Australian education system reacted to these cultural changes.

The teaching system that was “focussed preponderantly on the more academically selective portion of the population, on the learning and cultural preference of the hegemonic white, largely Anglo-Celtic population, on the essential literacies of language, mathematics, science, history and the arts” (Lovat, 2005a, p. 2) has now changed. Schools are now involved, to a greater degree, in a social agency role, which involves some transmission of values. The need for schools to increase their role in Values Education has been caused by a number of factors. These include the need for any society to undertake measures to protect its values when they come under threat and the changing structure of Australia’s families.

Societies that are being placed under pressure by rapid changes will often reminisce, usually through rose-coloured glasses, about the good old days and the values that were an essential part of those times. In reinforcing these traditional values societal groups often hope to relive these ‘golden’ days. In recent decades Australia has also seen a dramatic change in the structure of its families. There has been a decline in extended families with “a corresponding loss of supervision and support for young parents” (Australian Institute of Criminology, 1991, p. 293). In the new millennium there is a higher number of families where both parents work and subsequently there are now fewer mothers staying home to do housework and childcare (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2003a, ¶ 1). There has also been an increase of 53% in the number of one-parent families between 1986 and 2001 compared to an increase of only 3% in the number of couple families with children (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2003b, ¶ 1). Due to these changes in family structures it is reasonable to assume that a student’s school life is often the most stable part of their environment and because of this stability school life is increasingly influential in the formation of a student.

Research undertaken in the 1990s also stressed the importance of teaching in the formation of students. This research discovered that teachers, through quality teaching, could effect real change in their students regardless of their students’ backgrounds (Lovat, 2005a,

pp. 3-4). As Terence Lovat (2005a) states, research into quality teaching involves more than factual learning but involves the engaging of “the whole person in depth of cognition, social and emotional maturity, and self-knowledge” (p. 5). This will involve personal and social values inculcation (Lovat, 2005a, p. 8). With this increased recognition of the importance of quality teaching in students’ lives came changes in government policy related to the roles of schools in Values Education.

The first noticeable, published change which indicated a Government move towards secular schools taking an increased role in Values Education is to be found in the National Curriculum framework on SOSE (Curriculum Corporation, 1994). For the first time, in a key education policy document aimed at teachers in public schools as well as independent/Catholic schools, outcomes dealing with morals were listed. In the strand of Culture, two outcomes listed under “Personal, group and cultural identity” are:

6.9 Analyses the core values of groups and societies

8.9 Evaluates moral and ethical issues and justifies personal positions (p. 6).

Some state education authorities started to look at Values Education around this time (Hill, 2004, p. 9). From these beginnings in the 1990s there has been an increased push during the early stages of this millennium for values to be taught in secular as well as religious schools. These specific policy movements will be commented on below.

Approaches to teaching values

Schools and teachers have chosen different approaches to the teaching of values. The *Values Education Study: Final report* (2003) gives little information on the ways values have been taught to Australian school children in recent years, but it does state that many

schools that took part in its study “sought a synthesis of two contrasting views” (p. 9). These two views are:

- Advocates of the character education or more prescriptive approach primarily argue that schools should play a more extensive role in the teaching of societal values and favour instilling values via direct instruction, often using specifically-designed programmes.
- Cognitive-developmental theorists have argued that values or moral education should be promoted through the development of reasoning, and hence advocate such teaching methods as moral reasoning using moral dilemmas to develop students’ moral judgements and values clarification. (*Values Education study: Final report*, p. 9)

The first method involves schools using direct instructional techniques through their teaching. Certain values are placed before the students as being necessary. This would be classified by Straughan (1988) as “Value transmission”, which would also include the everyday transmission of values by teachers through their words and actions, which affect children’s beliefs and behaviours (pp. 13-15). The second method, mentioned above, would seem to draw heavily on the work of Lawrence Kohlberg on moral reasoning in which he theorises that people in all cultures progress through a set pattern of stages of moral development (Straughan, p. 18). This method promotes the development of reasoning in students through teaching methods such as using moral dilemmas. These dilemmas assist in the development of students’ moral reasoning and enable them to clarify their values and those around them. As Straughan (p. 22) states, it must be remembered that Kohlberg himself changed some of his views on the education of students in morals, “The educator must be a socializer, teaching value content and behaviour, not merely a Socratic facilitator of development” (Kohlberg, 1978, p. 84).

Generally, critics encourage a whole school approach to the education of values. This involves the teaching of values across all the curriculum areas, including English, as well as a curriculum area implemented for the specific teaching of values (Cooper, Burman, Ling, Razdevsek-Pucko & Stephenson, 1998, p. 163, Straughan, 1988, p. 126). In a Catholic school this approach would be seen as part of the Religious Education syllabus while in non-religious schools it might go under the title of “Civics and Citizenship” or something similar. While the *Values Education study: Final report* (2003) does not suggest a specific Values Education curriculum subject area it does suggest, “Schools apply their Values Education priorities to their overall curriculum provision ” (p. 14). The *National Framework for Values Education in Australian schools* (2005) states that schools should be “ensuring values are incorporated into school policies and teaching programmes across the key learning areas” (p. 3). In recent Federal Government publications it is now suggested that schools should have co-curricular programmes in Values Education (*A whole school approach: Values Education for Australian schooling poster*, 2006).

Values Education in Tasmanian schools

Catholic schools are specifically established to promote Catholic values, which are seen as an essential part of a Catholic school’s curriculum. Individual subjects, in a Catholic school, are aimed not only at teaching knowledge but also at “the acquisition of values and the discovery of truth” (*The Catholic school*, 1977, p. 34). “Every curriculum area or subject that is taught within a Catholic school has a religious dimension, a capacity to assist students to examine the world of human culture and the world of religion, providing knowledge and skills, and fostering attitudes and values that are life-giving and that assist young people to search for meaning and truth” (*GNFL*, 2005, p. 25).

While values influence all aspects of a Catholic school they are particularly relevant to the specific Religious Education curriculum of a Catholic school. The Religious Education curriculum for the Catholic Archdiocese of Hobart, which covers all Catholic schools in Tasmania, recognises the importance of values in Religious Education in Schools. This curriculum, entitled *Good News for Living (GNFL)* (2005), emphasises the importance of teaching values to students as a necessary component of an education in a Catholic school. Among the core values and purposes listed as being essential to learning in a Catholic context are:

- understanding, accepting and valuing differences among people personally, culturally, spiritually and religiously.
- responding to situations with compassion and care for others.
- valuing the dignity of each person.
- being in solidarity with those who suffer.
- valuing and practising forgiveness and reconciliation.
- developing an informed moral conscience.
- being able to lead others, using the gifts of enterprise and innovation.
- seeking, speaking and living the truth.
- acting with an attitude of compassion and service towards others.
- upholding and protecting the most vulnerable lives.
- empathising with those who are poor, needy or marginalised.
- responding proactively to those who are poor, needy or marginalised.
- responding with compassion to those who are sick or in need.
- respecting the sanctity of life.
- valuing the freedom of all people.
- valuing human rights.

- working for a just and compassionate society. (*GNFL*, pp. 86-87)

Values Education is not only a key component of Catholic schools but is now advocated as an essential element in all Australian schools. While many critics may dispute whether specific Values Education should be part of any school system or children should simply be educated to explore and develop their own values (Halstead, 1996, p. 9), the Australian Federal and State governments have decided that there is a need for specific Values Education in schools in Australia: “Our world-class school education, based on agreed national goals, will provide the foundation for young Australians’ intellectual, physical, social, spiritual, moral and aesthetic development. It will give them the knowledge, skill, attitudes and values relevant to present and emerging social, cultural and economic needs in local, national and international settings” (*Australia’s common and agreed national goals for schooling in the 21st Century*, 1999, also known as *The Adelaide declaration*, referenced under this title).

These governments recognise the important role that teachers and schools have in the teaching of values. The *Australian Government Values Education* programme essentially began with a *Values Education Study* that was commissioned in 2002, which involved sixty-nine schools. A final report entitled *Values Education study: Final report* was published in August 2003 and after subsequent consultation, created some guiding principles. “These principles recognise that in all contexts, schools promote, foster and transmit values to all students and that education is as much about building character as it is about equipping students with specific skills. Guiding principles also recognise that schools are neither value-free nor value-neutral zones of social and educational engagement” (*Paving the way to Values Education*, 2005, p. 13). This study recognised that effective Values Education should help “students understand and be able to apply values such as care and compassion; doing

your best; freedom; honesty and trustworthiness; integrity; respect; responsibility and understanding, tolerance and inclusion” (*Paving the way to Values Education*, p. 13).

An interesting appendix to the study indicated, through an online survey, that parents only placed family members above teachers and schools in a question of whose responsibility it is to teach values to students (*Appendix iii: Report of the Online Survey*, in *Values Education study final report*, p.219). This would only reinforce the Federal Government’s view that the education of values is one of the key responsibilities of schools.

The Federal Government, in its 2004-2005 Budget, promised \$29.7 million in funding for Values Education initiatives between 2004-2008. This included values forums in schools, a values-based “Education Good Practice Schools Project” and the development of curriculum materials (*Paving the way to Values Education*). A *Draft National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools* evolved and *The National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools* was released in 2005. It states that “Values Education is any explicit and/or implicit school-based activity to promote student understanding and knowledge of values, and to inculcate the skills and dispositions of students so that they can enact particular values as individuals and as members of the wider community” (*Paving the way to Values Education*, 2005, p. 6). The *Values for Australian schools kit* was released throughout Australia in mid-2006.

Specific *Values for Australian Schools* were published in poster form, (*Values for Australian Schooling*, Appendix 5) and include the values: showing care and compassion, respect, honesty and trustworthiness, understanding, tolerance and inclusion. These values also encourage students to do their best, to treat others fairly, be responsible for their actions, follow principles of moral and ethical conduct and to stand up for the rights of others (*Paving the way to Values Education*, 2005, p. 2). The Australian Government Values Education programme also links to other Australian Government education initiatives (*Paving the way*

to *Values Education*, p. 15), which support the values-education initiatives. These initiatives include a *Civics and Citizenship* programme (<http://www.civicsandcitizenship.edu.au/>), *The National School Drug Education Strategy* (www.dest.gov.au/schools/drugeducation/NSDES.htm), *The National Safe Schools Framework* (http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/publications/subject_curriculum.htm) and the *Mindmatters* programme (<http://www.online.curriculum.edu.au/>).

There are also commercial education teaching programmes, which promote the importance of students having core values. One that is currently in use in many Tasmanian Catholic schools is the *Bounceback* programme (McGrath & Noble, 2003). Units in this programme include one specifically based on core values including honesty, fairness, responsibility, loyalty, supportiveness, being caring, cooperation, understanding others, respectfulness and friendliness. There are also units on showing courage, being resilient, being positive in difficult times, dealing with one's own and others emotions, relationship skills, importance of humour, dealing with bullying and how to achieve success.

The Tasmanian Government has also encouraged the importance of Values Education through the *Essential Learnings Framework* (2002), which is the central framework being used in current curriculum development in both Government and Non-Government schools in Tasmania. This framework is guided by a set of core values, which are:

- Connectedness
- Resilience
- Achievement
- Creativity
- Integrity
- Responsibility
- Equity (*Essential Learnings: Framework 1*, 2002, p. 9).

These *Essential Learnings* values link with the *National Values for Australian Schools* in many areas. Kiernan (2005) has outlined these connections in a grid plan (*Appendix 6*)

The *Essential Learning Framework* is based on five areas, which are:

- Thinking
- Communicating
- Personal Futures
- Social Responsibility
- World Futures.

Two of these areas are particularly relevant to Values Education. “Personal Futures” consists of four key elements, which are: building and maintaining identity and relationships, maintaining wellbeing, being ethical, and creating and pursuing goals. “Social Responsibility” consists of four key elements, which are: building social capital, valuing diversity, acting democratically, and understanding the past and creating preferred futures. (*Essential Learnings: Framework 1*, 2002, pp. 24-33). These match with the values recognised in the *National Values for Australian Schools*. Some of the *National Values for Australian Schools* correspond with the *Essential Learnings* area of “World Futures”. World futures elements are: investigating the natural and constructed world, understanding systems, designing and evaluating technological solutions, and creating sustainable futures (*Essential Learnings: Framework 1*, pp. 24-33).

Some concerns about the *Harry Potter* series

Values are found in all stories that children listen to, read and view and the *Harry Potter* books are a series of stories full of values. Before looking at the Christian values contained in the novels and commenting on their suitability for teaching values it is necessary

to make comment regarding concerns expressed by critics about the possibility of readers gaining unsatisfactory values and beliefs from the books. They have attacked the series for containing elements of xenophobia, supporting inequalities in Western societies through their portrayals of elements of those societies particularly in the portrayal of women, and of being supportive of the current class system in Great Britain (Park, Dresang, Zipes, Westman, et al.). There is no doubt that many criticisms of the novels are justifiable and that parents and teachers need to have some understanding of these concerns. Part of the reason for these attacks is because Rowling adopts a conventionality in her literary form that carries with it some of the tradition prejudices associated with those forms.

The books reinforce traditional, ordinary, literary genres that readers generally find attractive but that are not challenging to them possibly because Rowling herself is comfortable with these genres. Sexism and other prejudices are apparent in the *Harry Potter* books. The books seem to support the view that certain people/creatures are best suited to certain roles in society, particularly that the house elves seem unable to cope with freedom and may be better off as slaves. A passion for consumerism is also shown in the books through Harry, Ron and other characters coveting the latest model broomstick or collecting wizard trading cards. The series generally depicts foreigners, such as the students of Durmstrang, and races, such as the Giants, in an unpleasant light. However, as stated previously, interpretation depends on how one reads the text and what one is seeking from a text. One could justify Rowling's portrayal of women in the books and other aspects of the books as being an accurate portrayal of the real world as it exists, not an ideal world of social and racial equality (Gallardo-C & Smith, 2003). Some readers might want their emotions shocked and their lives changed by reading a certain book but the *Harry Potter* books would not provide this reaction. Rowling essentially does not enter new literary grounds and if critics read her books hoping for something completely new or especially challenging then

they will be disappointed. Many of these criticisms of the series can be traced to the use of Harry Potter as a traditional hero, a character that has been part of our culture of stories for generations, and due to this he suffers some of the weaknesses of those heroes.

As Harry Potter follows in the tradition of other heroes Margery Hourihan's (1997) work on literary heroes is relevant to the *Harry Potter* series because she specifically deals with the problematic meanings young readers may acquire from reading hero stories available to them (p. 5). She feels that hero stories are a powerful agent in shaping social and political attitudes, and that their influence is always conservative (p. 21). While Harry Potter shows some modern differences to traditional heroes, including some feminine attributes (Nikolajeva, 2003, p. 135), Hourihan's opinions on heroes are relevant in studying the *Harry Potter* series because Harry is predominantly modelled on the traditional hero. Hourihan's views are referred to in more detail below.

The *Harry Potter* stories, like many other hero stories, show a view of the world that is prejudiced. There are very few ethnic characters in the series that we are generally made aware of. These include Angelina Johnson, a black girl, Cho Chang, of Asian ancestry, and the Patil twins, Parvati and Padma, of Indian ancestry. The central characters, both good and evil are white Europeans. Hagrid, who is half-giant, is the only exception to this but, while he is shown in a good light, he is also shown as a person with limited intellect. As much of the story occurs in the magical world non-human species are generally shown as inferior. Giants are depicted as being violent and uncouth (*OoP*, pp. 377-383) and house elves are depicted as being unable to cope with freedom from slavery as depicted through the character of Winky who declines into apparent alcoholism when freed from her slavery (*GoF*, pp. 466-467). There are some exceptions to this dominant portrayal of non-human creatures but generally white Europeans dominate the series, even if they are still in their teens. This would support Hourihan's (1997) view that white Europeans, in hero stories, are generally depicted as "the

natural masters of the world because they are strong, brave, skilful, rational and dedicated” (p. 1).

Generally the women depicted in the *Harry Potter* series serve these white males or only appear in relation to the hero (Hourihan, 1997, pp. 1-3). Throughout the series Hermione’s main role appears to be as a source of brainpower for Harry to use in his endeavours. One might see her as a search engine for Harry to gather information from so as to complete his assignment. Petunia Dursley is shown as a very inferior person and under the complete domination of her husband and even Minerva McGonagall, Deputy Headmistress to Albus Dumbledore, has a very limited role in the series. Both Mrs Weasley and Mrs Dursley are portrayed as stay-at-home mothers with their whole being centred on their family, as they seem to have no outside interests. As previously stated many critics have concerns about gender bias in the *Harry Potter* books. Some believe strongly that Rowling’s portrayal of women is gender-biased and depicts women in traditional subservient roles (Schoefer, Elliot, Dresang, Heilman, etc). By this depiction of women Rowling is consciously or unconsciously reinforcing traditional and unacceptable gender roles (Park, Zipes, Anatol, Dresang, Westman, etc.).

Michelle Yeo’s (2004) remarks are particularly relevant in this area. She feels that on a first reading women may appear in a good light in the early *Harry Potter* books. However, with a deeper reading, using an analysis of the symbols in the books, the portrayal of women in the series follows the “old representations of women as connected to evil, dark magic and traditional roles of passivity and naiveté” (¶ 3). She does not blame Rowling for this but feels that the underlying symbol system used in the books, which represents an unacceptable view of women, is simply something that “is so deeply embedded in the cultural and mythological history of our Westernized and Christian heritage that we embrace it without question or thought as to its deeper meaning” (¶ 3).

On the other hand some critics feel that Rowling's depiction of women places women on an equal footing with men. As previously mentioned Gladstein (2004) states that Rowling depicts a world with gender equality (p. 49). Ximena Gallardo-C and C. Jason Smith (2003) feel that Rowling's depiction of women does show them in a subservient role but that this only reflects real life and that this will help readers to think about gender bias and what they need to do to achieve gender equity. They also feel that Harry is a type of Cinderella character, which enables girls to relate to him to a greater degree than they would to most male heroes (p. 191). Other critics feel that Harry actually displays a number of feminist characteristics. "Harry displays quite a few traits we normally associate with feminine stereotypes. He is non-violent, non-aggressive, emotional, caring, and vulnerable, which definitely makes him different from the conventional romantic heroes" (Nikolajeva, 2003, p. 135). Nikolajeva's comments were made before *OoP* and *HBP* were published and, as stated below, in these books we do witness aggression and violence from Harry but we also witness other, gentler emotions. This show of emotions, by Harry, is in opposition to Hourihan's view that male heroes deny emotion and it is generally left for the male hero to wed a female who provides, through her emotions, a balancing act for the psyche of the hero (1997, p. 199).

Many traditional heroes embody the superior terms of traditional Western culture dualisms (Hourihan, 1997, pp. 2-3). In Harry's case his enemies shows disrespect for human life while Harry exhibits compassion and respect for life. Harry, also like the traditional heroes, uses violence himself or needs others to commit violence to overcome his enemies. This is most noticeable in the more recently published books. In *OoP* he smashes a Death Eater in the face with his elbow (p. 694) and sends spells against others including the dreaded and illegal Cruciatius Curse (pp. 696-715). He also chases after the Death Eater Bellatrix Black Lestrage to kill her when she kills Sirius Black (p. 713). In *HBP* Harry, in a clash

with Draco Malfoy, uses the Sectumsempra spell on him which causes bloody wounds to his chest (p. 489). At the end of the book he uses curses in a battle with the Death Eaters including the illegal Cruciatus Curse, the second time he has used it (pp. 558-563). As Hourihan notices such actions imply that it is necessary and justifiable to use violence against those enemies who are inherently evil (p. 103). In any use of the *Harry Potter* books it is necessary to take into account these prejudices and how they may influence readers. If a teacher uses the *Harry Potter* stories they also need to use other stories which provide a different perspective, “which discourage the quest for domination use of force and violence to achieve it, and encourage a respect for the environment and for men and women of all cultural backgrounds” (Hourihan, p. 235).

The concerns raised regarding Harry Potter and other heroes are matters for deep consideration by teachers when they use hero stories or any source material in the education of students entrusted into their care. Teachers and parents also need to remember that there are numerous other books that are popular with our children and which also depict inequalities of some type. The books written by Roald Dahl certainly depict inequalities in areas such as the exploitation of labour and gender roles. The *Harry Potter* series and other books while containing ideas and views, which may cause some concern, also provide educational opportunities. They provide teachers with a resource that can be used to assist students in developing critical thinking skills. All students should be taught not only how to read but how to read critically. They need to be able to analyse the texts they are provided with, as well as those they choose themselves, so that they do not accept uncritically the ideologies of the author and the cultural ideologies he or she writes from.

Conclusion

For a society to be long lasting and stable it needs to have a set of values that the majority of its citizens support and follow. Children gain these societal values from many sources including stories and schools. Values have been part of the instruction process in Australian educational institutions since their inception, especially in schools established around religious principles, but in recent years both Federal and State Government policy statements have made it clear that specific instruction in values is a necessary component of all schools. As schools are being encouraged to teach values and stories are recognised as an established and successful means of values instruction, schools need to ensure that stories used in educational institutions provide children with appropriate values from which they can learn. While the *Harry Potter* series, like many books, contain elements that children and teachers need to be concerned about and reflective upon they do contain a hero who, for the majority of his time, follows a set of values that are in accordance with those values both secular and religious schools in Australia would deem worthwhile. These particular values will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4: CHOICE AND VALUES IN *HARRY POTTER*

“Living a life that matters doesn't happen by accident. It's not a matter of circumstance but of choice”

(Michael Josephson, 2003).

Introduction

The *Harry Potter* series deals with a hero who struggles throughout his life. As Harry continues on his life journey he, like all of us, needs to make a number of choices. These choices are the key to discovering Harry's values and the choices that we make are the key to our humanity. In this chapter specific mention is made of the values that both critics and students have recognised in the series. Comment is also made in relation to the Catholic belief in the importance of humanity's ability to make free choices because this freedom separates humans from all other creatures and supports the Christian belief in their eternal bond with God.

Critics, youth, *Harry Potter* and values

In essence, critics' personal ideologies have dominated the opinions they have made regarding the *Harry Potter* series. Critics have drawn from their own ideologies and referred to aspects of the *Harry Potter* series which speak most relevantly to them at the time they read and expressed views regarding the novels. All critics' comments are relevant because they bring meanings to the text which may differ to other people's reading of the text. People's perception of the values in any text will also vary due to the different ideologies

they bring to that text. This thesis, in seeking to reach an understanding of values that can be found in the series, makes observations on values that both critics and young people found in the books. It is through their opinions that a substantive understanding of values in the *Harry Potter* series can be ascertained. As this thesis is considering the use of the series in teaching Religious Education in a Christian context, the values that have been singled out for study are those that can be classed as Christian values. These values, which guide the way we live, are generally perceived as our personal values.

The qualities that a person demonstrates in their behaviour indicate the personal values that the person has. These qualities are seen as being important for one's development because they are seen as essential to the formation of the self. Personal qualities are also important in one's religious beliefs. All religions carry some set of beliefs on the qualities we should exhibit to fulfil our potential. The followers of Christianity would be expected to love one another as Jesus loves humankind if Heaven on Earth is to be achieved, in Hinduism one should refrain from killing if one wished to move further on the path to Moksha, and in Buddhism truthfulness would be seen as a personal quality if one wishes to eventually achieve Nirvana. However, one can also exhibit personal qualities without having any religious beliefs and a person may exhibit qualities that are in opposition to their supposed religious beliefs. Through the examination of and reflection on one's qualities it is possible to gain a greater understanding of ourselves and those around us. Personal qualities are important in our spiritual and moral growth, regardless of our religious beliefs.

Critics have made statements on the personal qualities they found in the *Harry Potter* series and their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with them. The qualities mentioned included selflessness, self-sacrifice, honesty, kindness, fairness, tolerance, respect, loyalty, self discipline, relationships, friendships, compassion, trust, courage, grace, need for justice, mercy and hope.

Choice

“ ‘*Life is a do-it-yourself project.*’ *Your attitudes and the choices you make today will be your life tomorrow, build it wisely*”

(*Life is a do-it-yourself project.* n.d. p. 1)

Choice derives from the word “choose,” meaning, specifically, to pick from a greater number (*The Oxford reference dictionary*, Hawkins, 1986, p. 454). Choosing is defined as “the act or power of choosing” (*ibid.*). Choice is also highlighted in opinions expressed by critics because it is seen as important to the series. As Mimi Gladstein (2004) states, “Rowling creates a world where what is and should be important is the “content of one’s character” and the choices one makes” (p. 49). Plyming (2001) refers to the importance of Harry choosing to want to be in Gryffindor rather than Slytherin. He justifiably mentions the importance of Dumbledore’s statement in *CoS* that, “It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities” (*CoS*, p. 245) (p. 14). We demonstrate our personal values through the choices we make. Other critics see this as a key statement in the series (Cherrett, 2003, p. 29, Bridger, 2001, p. 74, 2001, Houghton, 2001, p.17, Beck, 2001, p. 53, Pharr, 2002, p. 63, et al.). In “the Harry Potter series, choice is used to deny the fixedness of nature as characters are not good or bad in essence but in their choices” (Lachance, 2005, p. 75). H  l  ne Lachance (2005) also states that in making his choices “Harry (Potter) shows a string of moral values that corresponds [sic] to Christian humanist criteria: courage, loyalty, love, forgiveness, altruism, nobility of the soul, spirit of sacrifice, etc” (p. 65).

Plyming (2001) highlights “This emphasis of choice over and against fate, peer pressure and family pedigree”, as being at the heart of the spirituality in the *Harry Potter* series (p. 14). He relates this choice to that preached in the New Testament and which

provides guidance in remembering that we “are morally responsible people, who can make choices and who must answer for them” (p. 15). Choices have consequences in real life and they also have consequences in the *Harry Potter* series (Doughty, 2002, p. 249, Pharr, 2002, p. 64). Plymington also emphasises that we “humans do not have to be slaves to the voices without or the genes within” (p. 15). It is clear that through our choices we illustrate what sort of person we are, what our personal values are (Cherrett, 2003, p. 32, Kern, 2003, p. 88). John Granger (2002) also believes that the choices Harry makes define who he is (p. 77), as does Killinger (2002, p. 94). As Granger states: “Harry makes two types of choices in every book – about what sort of person he is and what to do in a crisis – and he chooses ‘what is right’ over ‘what is easy’ every time” (p. 77). Often these choices cause Harry suffering but this does not deter him from continuing to make the right decisions (Killinger, p. 99).

Bridger comments on the theme of choice that is apparent in the *Harry Potter* series as corresponding to “one of the major themes of ethics – the relationship between freewill and determinism ” (2001, p. 74). Beck also stresses this point when she states that the *Harry Potter* series discusses the issue of free will “ that as human beings we were created to be free to choose and then live with the consequence of such choices ” (p. 53). David and Catherine Deavel (2002) also mention Rowling’s emphasis on choice versus destiny and “ how choices must be made according to the criteria of truth and absolute moral limits ” (p. 49). Kern (2003) states how important choice over fate is in the *Harry Potter* series (p. 54). Chantel Lavoie (2003) also cites the important lesson of choice demonstrated by Harry Potter (p. 42). She states children, too, have important decisions to make, and Rowling’s books emphasise that children need to consider individual preference, conscience, and right and wrong rather than what the majority think and do. These choices should be informed, reflecting both self-reliance and cooperation-involving group or family loyalty and “grown-up” negotiations between these shifting boundaries (p. 42).

Rebecca Skulnick and Jesse Goodman (2003) recognise the importance of Harry not blindly following institutional rules but basing his choices on “his sense of citizenship, his ability to make concerted choices, and his willingness to negate or promote the rules of his popular government, the Hogwarts institution” (p. 264). Some critics attack Harry for making choices that are against set rules because they feel that this illustrates some sort of anti-authoritarian stance which the series’ readers may adopt (Furst & Heilman, 2001, p. 135, Abanes, 2001, pp. 260-261). However, Harry generally only breaks set rules for the common good. In fact he often illustrates a higher level of moral development than many of the adults in the series. If people are willing to break rules when a higher principle is at stake then they are said to be at the Postconventional level under Kohlberg’s stages of moral development, a level usually reserved for adults (Whited & Grimes, 2002, p. 195). With Harry being predominantly at this stage of moral development he avoids being manipulated by those around him. In essence it assists him in being a leader rather than a follower:

We cannot make good choices by mindlessly keeping to a set of rules and regulations.

In fact, if we never progress beyond an unthinking attitude of compliance with laws handed down to us from above, we may even lay ourselves open to deception and manipulation by authority figures who would wish to control and enslave us.

(Cherrett, 2003, pp. 35-36)

Other critics have also noted the importance of the choices characters in the series make in relation to their moral development. They relate Harry’s development to Kohlberg’s stages of moral development because Kohlberg’s work is still an acceptable criterion to analyse a person’s moral development. Lana Whited and M. Katherine Grimes (2002) undertake a study on the actions and attitudes key characters show in making choices to try and ascertain at what level they are performing at (pp. 182-208). They place Draco Malfoy at

Stage 1: Punishment and Obedience, based on his actions in the first book, *PS* (p. 185). In the book *GoF* they feel Harry is predominantly acting at the Stage Three: Interpersonal level (p. 189) but has shown steady signs of movement into the Stage Four: Authority and Social Order level and occasionally the Stage Five: Social Contract level in *PoA* and *GoF* (p. 199-200). Kern (2003) makes mention of Whited and Grimes work in this area and while making comment on the weaknesses in Kohlberg's model and offering insight into others' work regarding this model, including Carol Gilligan's (1982), he does believe that Harry's stories will help children with their moral reasoning because of the reasoning Harry and other characters use in the series (pp. 123-127).

Cherrett (2003) also notes how the majority of Harry's choices involve choosing what is right over what is easy (p. 48). Pharr (2002) recognises that the thin but crucial wall that separates us between being good and being evil is choice (p. 63). This choice, however, can be guided by providing opportunities for students to experience moral behaviour. Thomas Shannon (2006) states that adults:

can encourage moral behavior, we can help moral development, but at a certain point individuals have to do it by themselves, on their own, without anyone observing them. One has given them the moral map, helped them learn to read it, but now you hope the map is internal and will help them to navigate their own way (p. 44).

Students surveyed in this study made mention of the importance of choice. To the question, "What do you think Dumbledore means when he says to Harry, in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, 'It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities.' (p. 245)?" students' responses indicated an understanding about the importance choice has in deciding who we are (*Appendix 7, Student Interview responses*, p. 3). Student views included:

- Your actions show what sort of person you are or become. Your choices decide your path in life
- Your actions are decided by your choices not anyone else's. Choices can be affected by background but still are your choices
- You can choose who you are and what you become
- Abilities you have, choices you decide, you can change
- You have to have the strength to choose what you think is right
- Choices decide what we mean in life, what we believe in life
- Your choices affect others
- Your personality is important. Your choices reveal who you truly are
- Making choices and decisions show what sort of person you really are
- Choices/decisions decide whether we are good or bad people

Throughout the *Harry Potter* series Harry and his friends and others make choices from which the reader is then able to judge what sort of person they are, what values they espouse. In the response to the question, "Can you please list for me some of Harry's personal values that you perceive from reading the book(s)?" students were able to provide a extensive list of the personal values Harry exhibits (*Appendix 7, Student Interview responses*, p. 4). These included kindness, courage, a caring attitude and loyalty. In focus group discussions students also recognised personal values exhibited by Harry and others in the books. They recognised values such as courage, cunning, loyalty, bravery and modesty (*Appendix 8, Focus Group responses*, pp. 1-2).

At the end of *HBP* we see Harry prepared to be responsible for his own moral behaviour rather than be guided by advice from those around him. He is now about to turn seventeen and has grown in his ability to make choices. Harry has moved through Kohlberg's

stages of moral development and found both joy and tragedy through the consequences of choices that he has made (Kern, 2003, pp. 121-127. Whited & Grimes, 2002, pp. 183-208). In this way Harry is a model for other children because he has had to work his way through a number of moral conflicts. Through the various experiences Harry has undertaken he gains a greater ability to make educated moral decisions. His experiences provide examples for children to analyse; they are able to study Harry's "difficulties of moral conflict to have a better sense of ethical problems and solutions. The non-threatening conditions of imaginative play allow them to try out different approaches and to adopt different perspectives" (Kern, p. 40). As Kern (2003) suggests, fantasy literature, such as the *Harry Potter* series, offers youth a chance to work through difficult moral questions in a safe and secure context (p. 120). Whited and Grimes (2002) also reflect on Kohlberg's theory of moral development and feel that based on Kohlberg's views "Rowling provides young readers with models of moral decision-making via the characters who inhabit her magical and Muggle worlds" (p. 207). At the end of *HPB* Harry has recently lost the guidance of Albus Dumbledore, the moral lighthouse that has guided him through the dark times he has faced in his short life, and is now ready to voyage out under his own steam, guided by his own choices, navigating his own destiny.

Human Freedom, Destiny, Choice and the Fall Myth

Choice is a key theme in the *Harry Potter* books because much of the series deals with the choices people make, particularly the choice between good and evil. Choice is therefore a key component in reaching a set of personal values from which we decide on whether we are of good or bad character. Essentially the ability of humans to make choices allows humans to develop a sense of morality based on the values they choose. Shannon

(2006) suggests that there are a number of elements that lead to people becoming morally responsible. Two of these key elements are, firstly, that we need “to become aware of the embedded values in our way of life and to take responsibility for them by either affirming or rejecting them” (p. 43), which is a personal choice, and, secondly, that we need to learn to make a decision which also involves learning “how to identify what is different about each part of the choice, how each part affects me, what are the consequences of my choice, and how to move beyond simple choice to reasons for the choice” (p. 43).

Choice can only occur if people have the freedom to choose from two or more alternatives, without such freedom it is not possible to have genuine choice. This freedom of choice allows humankind to have a say in their future rather than their future being decided by prophecy or by the whims of some supernatural force. In the *Harry Potter* book *OoP* there is mention made of a prophecy, previously made by Professor Trelawney, regarding Harry Potter:

The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord approaches ... born to those who have thrice defied him, born as the seventh month dies ... and the Dark Lord will mark him as equal, but he will have power the Dark Lord knows not ... and either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives (*OoP*, p. 741).

If this passage is taken in isolation then it may be argued that Rowling is providing Harry Potter with little, if any, free choice regardless of Dumbledore’s previous statements about choice being all-important in what one becomes (*CoS*, p. 245). This passage would place Harry’s destiny out of his hands because it has been prophesised that he must kill Voldemort to survive, as ultimately both cannot co-exist. Yet, as Granger (2002) states, Harry’s “choices remain critically important, however, because this destiny is not a fate; he

must choose to play the Harry Potter role . . . which is by no means automatic or pre-determined (p. 83). However, it is not until *HBP* that this is made clear.

In an exchange between Harry Potter and Dumbledore we have a clarification that Harry does have the power of free choice regardless of the prophecy, which would initially seem to argue against free choice:

‘But Harry, never forget that what the prophecy says is only significant because Voldemort made it so. I told you this at the end of last year. Voldemort singled you out as the person who would be most dangerous to him –and in doing so, he *made* you the person who would be most dangerous to him!’ . . .

‘If Voldemort had never heard of the prophecy, would it have been fulfilled? Would it have meant anything? Of course not! Do you think every prophecy in the Hall of Prophecy has been fulfilled?’ . . .

‘You see, the prophecy does not mean you *have* to do anything! But the prophecy caused Lord Voldemort to *mark you as his equal* . . . in other words, you are free to choose your way, quite free to turn your back on the prophecy! But Voldemort continues to set store by the prophecy. He will continue to hunt you . . . which makes it certain, really, that –‘

‘That one of us is going to end up killing the other,’ said Harry. ‘Yes.’

But he understood at last what Dumbledore had been trying to tell him. It was, he thought, the difference between being dragged into the arena to face a battle to the death and walking into the arena with your head held high. Some people, perhaps, would say that there was little to choose between the two ways, but Dumbledore knew –and so do I, thought Harry, with a rush of fierce pride, and so did my parents –that there was all the difference in the world (*HBP*, pp. 476 – 479) [Italics in original].

This exchange illustrates that Harry's free choice is not ruled out by a prophecy but one's choices are certainly limited by the actions of someone who believes in a prophecy and acts on it. This is a reflection on life in general where we all have free choice but that free choice can be limited by the actions of others. In modern society our free choices can be limited by the actions of people such as terrorists or through a lack of opportunities because of government policies, financial constraints, access to educational facilities, our place of birth, etc.

In discussing the *Harry Potter* series and Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy, Lachance (2005), argues that both groups of books make use of the concept of choice to present a humanist faith (pp. 4-6, p. 63). She states that Pullman and Rowling make their characters responsible for their destiny and conscious of the repercussions of their actions and choices without involvement of supernatural forces although she does believe that both authors follow a Christian narrative tradition (p. 4, p. 86). Instead of being protected and guided by a superhuman being, the characters have to look within themselves for answers and choose the path they believe is good according to their moral values (p. 16). The author of this thesis fully supports this interpretation of choice in the *Harry Potter* series but does not support Lachance's argument that such an interpretation is inconsistent with Christian beliefs and therefore needs to be classed as a humanist interpretation of choice. Lachance states that Rowling rejects the idea of faith in a supernatural being (p. 86) but the author of this thesis feels that a reading of the *Harry Potter* series does not support such a sweeping statement.

Lachance (2005) bases her view of both the *Harry Potter* series and the *His Dark Materials* series presenting a humanist perspective on choice by stating that Pullman deliberately reverses the Christian belief of the Fall Myth (pp. 20-21). The Fall Myth is a key Christian concept that comes from a story found in the Old Testament book of *Genesis*. This story refers to the fall of humankind from a state of innocence to a state of sinfulness because

of an act of disobedience. The common Christian translation of the original Hebrew scripture suggests that God created Adam and Eve, the first humans, in His image. Adam and Eve are allowed to live in the Garden of Eden but are not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge because to do so would show disobedience to God's instruction. They were innocent beings but a serpent tempts them to eat fruit from the forbidden tree and when they do eat the fruit they are transformed. They become aware of a distinction between 'Good and Evil'. They are now superior to all forms of life, but their existence is filled with new troubles. They have become self-conscious; they are ashamed of their nakedness, and conceal their reproductive organs. God questions their actions and then expels them from the Garden of Eden. Finally they know, for the first time, they are going to die (Booker, p. 546). All their descendants will suffer and die because of their actions. Lachance states, in referring to *His Dark Materials*:

Pullman paradoxically uses the Fall Myth to illustrate his idea of secular faith.

Pullman's "sin" is that he uses a Christian myth to deliver a message that rejects the idea of God and of religious faith. He uses the same images as in the traditional Fall Myth: Adam and Eve, the serpent and the fruit, for example. However, Pullman's version of this religious myth works as a central articulation of his idea of hope, of humanist faith. He presents the coming of awareness of sexuality, the eating of the apple, not as a "fall" but as a joyful discovery, as an enlightenment (pp. 20-21).

It is a view of hope that places emphasis on a faith in humanity to make the right choices rather than a faith in a God to provide us with a good life (p. 3). Harry Potter does have hope in a better future through the decisions he makes but this does not mean that he either accepts or rejects the notion of a supernatural being in whom others may find hope. A person can have hope in their own ability to make choices and make their life better yet it does not mean that they reject or accept an ultimate hope in being at one with a loving God.

Lachance's (2005) comments on Harry's responsibility to make choices, because of his hopes for a better world, are consistent with the Christian interpretation of choice rather than just a humanist interpretation. Lachance seems to comprehend humanism in a limited way. She seems to see it as referring to a rejection of the existence of God because humans alone decide their fate through the choices they make. However, one can be both a humanist and a Christian. Lachance even refers to Christian humanism when she comments that Harry moral values correspond to Christian humanist criteria (p. 65). A Christian humanist can believe in the power of God, who has provided humankind with freedom of choice, and also believe that humans should not be reliant on God to save them from atrocities on earth but that they have the power to make choices that will decide the fate of our world (Edwards, 1989, pp. 1-2). This is what Christian theologians refer to as creating the Kingdom of God on Earth (Nolan, 1977, p. 46 and Hornsby-Smith, 2006, p. 41), where a new world order is created based on "right relationships of justice, love and peace" (O'Murchu, 1991, p. 46). Catholic theology would state that freedom to make one's choice, which affects one's destiny, is an essential part of the Catholic faith and are shown through the freedom that God allowed the mythical creatures of Adam and Eve to make their choices regarding picking and eating the fruit. This Christian anthropological view of a God allowing human free choice varies greatly to the view of God(s) found in other creation stories such as "the Babylonian creation-story *Enuma Elish*, where humanity is designed to bear the burden of the capriciousness of the gods" (Tuohy, 2004, p. 98).

Many contemporary Catholic theologians view the Fall Myth as central to the Christian faith because it shows humans exercising their power to choose, their freedom of choice, even if the consequences of such freedom may not always be so pleasant. It was ancient man's attempt to try and explain the differences between humans and other animals that do not have the same power to make choices (Booker, 2004, p. 547). Catholic Church

documents support the view that humans should exercise free choice and not rely on God to make their choices for them:

It is, however, only in freedom that man can turn himself towards what is good. . . . but that which is truly freedom is an exceptional sign of the image of God in man. . . . Man's dignity therefore requires him to act out of conscious and free choice, as moved and drawn in a personal way from within, and not by blind impulses in himself or by mere external constraint (*Gaudium et Spes*, 1965, ¶17).

“The right to the exercise of freedom, especially in religious and moral matters, is an inalienable requirement of the dignity of man” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, ¶ 1747).

Choice, therefore, is a key component of freedom and in Christian tradition the freedom of the human person has been linked to the belief that God has free choice, and as we are created in God's image, *Imago Dei*, then we share in the free creative activity of God (Tuohy, 2004, pp. 97-98). We are God-like because we are able to choose. Harry Potter is therefore following the Christian faith model as much as a Humanist one, even though Christianity is not mentioned in the series in any important sense. Due to this interpretation it is not possible to state that Rowling rejects the idea of faith in a supernatural being (Lachance, p. 86).

Choice is also important because Harry needs to find the courage in himself to make choices that correspond with his moral makeup. This is not always easy because such choices affect those around him. Readers can learn much from the way Harry struggles with fear, anxiety, concern and other emotions as he makes decisions. This is particularly apparent in Harry's guilty reaction to Sirius Black's death:

It was his fault Sirius had died; it was all his fault. If he, Harry, had not been stupid enough to fall for Voldemort's trick, if he had not been so convinced that what he had seen in his dream was real, if he had opened his mind to the possibility that Voldemort was, as Hermione had said, banking on Harry's *love of playing the hero ...* (*OoP*, p. 723) [Italics in original].

However, through making these decisions Harry's character and self-esteem are able to grow. Harry, like all of us, makes mistakes but he does learn from them. He mistakenly supports Ron in his criticism of Hermione Granger by not commenting on Ron's verbal attack on her:

'It's no wonder no one can stand her,' he said to Harry as they pushed their way into the crowded corridor, 'she's a nightmare, honestly.'

Someone knocked into Harry as they hurried past him. It was Hermione. Harry caught a glimpse of her face – and was startled to see that she was in tears. (*PS*, p. 127).

Harry also chooses not to comfort Hermione when she is obviously distressed. However, when Harry makes the choice, with Ron, to break the rules (*PS*, pp. 127-132) to search for Hermione and save her from a mountain troll a strong friendship begins. "But from that moment on, Hermione Granger became their friend" (*PS*, p. 132).

Through his choices Harry gains greater understanding because sometimes his choices help others and sometimes they cause others to suffer, the ripple or consequences effect of choice. Through Harry's choices students are able to experience the emotions that come with both successful and disastrous consequences based on one's choices. As stated previously Harry feels guilty for the death of Sirius Black and this is because Harry dreams that Sirius is

being tortured by Lord Voldemort in the Ministry of Magic's Department of Mysteries and believes it is true. " 'It's time you learned the difference between life and dreams, Potter'" (*OoP*, p. 690), state his enemies. Harry chooses to lead a band of student wizards to the Ministry of Magic thinking that he will be able to rescue Sirius Black (*OoP*, pp. 640-673). The students are attacked by Death Eaters, and members of the Order of the Phoenix, including Sirius Black, arrive to save them. The end result of this action is the death of Sirius Black (*OoP*, pp. 710-711). Harry is heartbroken by his death, loses his temper and causes destruction in Dumbledore's office:

'I know how you're feeling Harry,' said Dumbledore very quietly.

'No you don't,' said Harry, and his voice was suddenly loud and strong; white-hot anger leapt inside him; Dumbledore knew *nothing* about his feelings. . . .

Harry felt the white-hot anger lick his insides, blazing in the terrible emptiness, filling him with the desire to hurt Dumbledore for his calmness and his empty words.

. . .

'I DON'T CARE!' Harry yelled at them, snatching up a lunascope and throwing it into the fireplace. 'I'VE HAD ENOUGH, I'VE SEEN ENOUGH, I WANT OUT, I WANT IT TO END, I DON'T CARE ANYMORE-' (pp. 725-726) [Capitals in original].

Harry is also free to make choices to disobey set rules, just as Jesus chose to disobey the Jewish rule of not labouring to get food on the Sabbath when he picks and eats corn (Matthew 12: 1-8). Both Harry and Jesus are considering the greater good. Harry and Ron leave their dormitory against Professor McGonagall's instructions to get some vital information to Gilderoy Lockhart in *CoS* (pp. 218-219) in the hope that he can save Ginny Weasley from the monster in the Chamber of Secrets. In *OoP* Harry breaches the *Decree for*

the Reasonable Restriction of Underage Sorcery (pp. 29-30) by using a Patronus Charm because he is trying to save both Dudley and himself from the Dementors (pp. 20-23).

Other personal values in *Harry Potter*

Selflessness is derived from the word “selfless” which is defined as “disregarding oneself or one’s own interests, unselfish” (*The Oxford reference dictionary*, Hawkins, 1986, p.751). In this thesis the term “selflessness” refers to acts of unselfishness where people act out of regard for other people’s interests rather than their own. Self-sacrifice is defined as the “sacrifice of one’s own interests and wishes so that others may benefit” (*ibid.*). Selflessness and self-sacrifice are key themes in the *Harry Potter* series. Critics express opinions on the examples of selflessness and self-sacrifice in the books by Harry and other characters (Bridger, 2001, pp. 91-93). Hermione even makes the comment that Harry has a bit of a “saving-people thing” (*OoP*, p. 646). Examples include Harry’s mother’s sacrifice of her life to protect Harry (*CoS*, p. 233 and *GoF*, p. 566), Harry entering the Chamber of Secrets to rescue Ginny (*CoS*, pp. 221-240), Harry’s rescuing both Ron and Gabrielle Delacour from the merpeople (*GoF*, pp. 435-436) and in *PS* when Ron sacrifices himself in the chess game under Hogwarts where he could have been killed:

‘Ready?’ Ron called, his face pale but determined. ‘Here I go – now, don’t hang around once you’ve won.’

He stepped forward and the white queen pounced. She struck Ron hard around the head with her stone arm and he crashed to the floor” (pp. 205-206).

Bridger (2001) draws attention to the importance of this self-sacrificial love which he views as a key Christian theme in the book and expresses the view that Rowling seems to

embrace self-sacrificial love as a moral philosophy to live by (p. 31, p. 62, p. 90, p. 93). Other critics also see this theme as important. Furst and Heilmann (2001), among others, comment on the analogy of the sacrificial love of Harry's mother with Jesus' death on the cross to take away our sins (pp. 104-105) but they stress that it does not offer the eternal salvation Christ's death does. Yet Furst and Heilmann see Jesus' act as far more important than the sacrifice provided by Harry's mother because Jesus' death provided eternal salvation for humankind, whereas Harry's mother's sacrifice provides limited salvation for Harry (2001, p. 107).

Other critics remark on the centrality of the theme of self-sacrifice to Christian faith (Killinger, 2002, pp. 80-89, Neal, 2001, 195-196, Cherrett, 2003, p. 69). Cherrett and others state that the acts of self-sacrifice in the books are specifically aimed at the defeat of evil and are therefore closely connected with the Christian faith (Cherrett, pp. 80-82, Neal, 2001, pp. 195-196, Bridger, 2001, p. 31). Abanes (2001) takes a different view because he attacks the sacrifices Harry makes as only being done for his friends (p. 135, p. 239). However, he has conveniently forgotten Harry's sacrificial actions in seeking to help Hermione when she was not his friend (*PS*, pp. 129-132).

Dumbledore also provides a model of the sacrificial lamb, exemplified by Jesus, through his actions in *HBP*. Before any action takes place in *HBP* Dumbledore has suffered a blackened hand from his efforts over the summer break to try and retrieve Voldemort's Horcruxes (p. 50). Through his actions Dumbledore hopes to cause the ultimate defeat of Voldemort. During the book Dumbledore suffers greatly while trying to retrieve a horcrux from a cave (pp. 519-540). These actions have so drained Dumbledore that his enemies even note that he is close to death: 'He's not long for this world anyway, if you ask me!' (p. 555). Dumbledore's death is caused by his sacrificial act to save Harry from being noticed by his

enemies. He is struck down by the Avada Kedavra killing curse because he is unable to defend himself as he has had his wand dislodged by Malfoy in an early incident:

Then, by the light of the Mark, he saw Dumbledore's wand flying in an arc over the edge of the ramparts and understood . . . Dumbledore had wordlessly immobilised Harry, and the second he had taken to perform the spell had cost him the chance of defending himself. (*HBP*, pp. 545-546).

Plyming (2001) also highlights the importance of sacrifice in one's relationships with others. He comments on the sacrifices Harry's parents made in trying to save him and how "these events and the continual reliving of them shape and change Harry's present existence" (p. 19). Kern (2003) also notes the importance of sacrifices in relationships (pp. 73-74, p. 118), as does Neal (2002, pp. 65-66). Examples of the effect of people sacrificing themselves for others are shown in other parts of the books and they have a profound effect on people's relationships. A key example, as stated earlier, is when Ron and Harry risk their lives to fight off the troll that is attacking Hermione Granger. From this sacrificial act a seemingly permanent friendship is born (*PS*, pp. 129-132). Kern sees Harry's sacrificial activities as very important to the books particularly as these actions support his view of Harry as being a stoic figure (p. 115).

Students also responded to the presence of selflessness and self-sacrifice in the *Harry Potter* series. Upon questioning students about the self-sacrifice shown by Harry's mother they were able to provide other examples of self-sacrifice in the series (*Appendix 7, Student Interview responses*, pp. 9-10). These included:

- Ron getting injured in chess game in *PS* book
- Sirius Black helping to save Harry on *OoP* and dies
- Sirius Black helping to save Harry (and others) against Remus' werewolf in *PoA*

- Sirius Black protecting Harry
- Severus Snape in trying to help Harry in Shrieking Shack
- Hermione Granger helping house elves
- Dumbledore in helping Harry at end of *OoP*
- Hermione and Ron suffering to help Harry get to Philosopher's Stone
- Hermione and Ron helping Sirius Black escape
- Albus Dumbledore in all books
- Ron and Harry risking death in following spider trail
- Harry Potter entering Chamber of Secrets to save Ginny
- Snape helping Harry survive the Quidditch game in *PS* book against own house team
- Harry risking life to save others in Triwizard Tournament.

One of the key scenes mentioned by the students is Severus Snape's rescue of Harry from the supposed threat of Remus Lupin, the werewolf, in *PoA* (pp. 262-265). Snape dislikes Harry Potter and in *HBP* appears to be a traitor to Professor Dumbledore. He is a complicated character who is not always what he seems. He had previously saved Harry from plunging to his death from his enchanted broomstick in *PS* (pp. 139-140) but in *PoA* he actually places his own life in danger to protect Harry because he thinks Harry may be killed:

“Get out of the way, Potter, you're in enough trouble already,” snarled
Snape. ‘If I hadn't been here to save your skin - ’
. . . ‘I have just saved your neck, you should be thanking me on bended knee!
You would have been well served if he'd killed you!’ (p. 265).

Critics make mention of the importance of the personal quality of kindness in the series. Kindness is derived from the word “kind” which means to be “gentle or considerate in

conduct or manner towards others” (*The Oxford reference dictionary*, Hawkins, 1986, p. 454) and is essentially a communal action, which is shown through one’s gentleness, consideration and fairness to those around you. Farah Mendlesohn (2002) comments that the ideological structure which Rowling uses for all her books is based on the manipulation of an uncritical construction of fairness (p.159). Mendlesohn feels that this follows in the traditions of Tolkien and Lewis’ message that “fairness and happiness can best be achieved when rules are obeyed and heroes decided by destiny” (p. 160). By this she means that characters such as Frodo Baggins have been chosen by destiny to do great deeds and that they generally follow the rules of their time to achieve their task. Yet Mendlesohn seems mistaken in this assumption because the key characters in the *Harry Potter* series, including Harry, Ron, Hermione and Malfoy, constantly disobey rules. They may sneak out at night, go to forbidden areas or indulge in magic spells that are not permitted for their age group. Also, as previously stated, Harry’s future is not decided by destiny but by the choices he makes.

Killinger (2002) also emphasises the importance of kindness in the *Harry Potter* books. He views the series as depicting Harry as the “seeker” of a “golden” existence based on a set of ethics which are based on the Judeo-Christian tradition exemplified by Jesus Christ in the Gospels (pp. 64-99). Neal (2001) also makes mention of this seeker motif and its relationship to Judeo-Christian ethics (pp. 189-190). Jesus exemplified kindness in his words, actions and the way he responds to others throughout the Gospels and Harry exhibits similar kindness in his words, actions and the way he responds to others.

However, Mendlesohn (2002) makes further remarks about Harry and kindness. She feels that Rowling’s depiction of kindness in the novels is flawed. While Harry shows kindness to others it is limited because it does not offer real life change for those who are oppressed. Mendlesohn feels that the books only argue superficially for kindness to others because in reality they deny “the oppressed the agency to change their own lives” (p. 181).

An example of this limited kindness is Harry being kind to the house elf Dobby. He helps Dobby to be free of the Malfoy household at the end of *CoS* (p. 248) book but he does not show the compassion that Hermione shows for the rest of the enslaved house elves through her creation of *S.P.E.W.* (*Society for the Promotion of Elfish Welfare*) (*GoF*, p. 198). Harry is quite content for house elves to continue to be enslaved in other wizarding households, as well as providing him with all his cooking and cleaning needs at Hogwarts; whereas Hermione understands that there needs to be real social and political change if house elves are ever truly to be free.

While Mendlesohn's observations on the depiction of kindness in the books are legitimate, it may be that Rowling is actually reflecting the reality many people have of kindness. People are willing to donate thirty dollars a month to help a child in a poor country as an act of kindness but would never think of joining a political movement or social movement which has as its aim to cause real change. This may involve change in Government policies such as the implementation of true free trade policies so that poorer countries are able to freely sell their goods in Western countries or the transfer of excess farm produce to poorer countries from nations that subsidise their farmers to overproduce resulting in dumping of excess produce where it is left to rot. Change in big companies' business practices can be encouraged so that production of items in poorer countries provides those workers with a fair wage based on the price the products eventually sell for in Western countries and that natural resources taken from poorer countries are paid for at a reasonable rate. Such changes may enable the demise of world poverty and give all families in the world an acceptable lifestyle. The payment of small amounts of money by kind hearted people so that a child will survive in a third world, inevitably growing up into a culture of disease, poverty and short life expectancy may be an accurate interpretation of one form of Western

kindness. Rowling shows a flawed kindness, which is perhaps the real depiction of kindness in the world of the majority of her readers.

It is important to note that there are numerous incidents of Harry Potter and his friends being kind to those around them throughout the series. Hagrid is kind to both the students in the school and the animals that he encounters as well as his giant half brother Grawp (*OoP*, pp. 608-614). The trio of Ron, Hermione and Harry show kindness towards Neville Longbottom even before they witness the condition Neville's parents are in after being tortured by the Death Eaters (*OoP*, pp. 452-455). Harry himself seems to be generally kind to those around him except when Rowling presents the reader with the mood swings and emotional minefield that can be part of being a teenager. Dumbledore is certainly depicted as a kind headmaster who is always concerned for the welfare of his students regardless of the policies that are being pushed onto him by the bureaucracy of the Ministry of Magic.

We are all flawed, as are the characters in the books, including the hero, *Harry Potter*. We have some instances of moodiness exhibited by Harry when he is not so kind to those around him. This is particularly illustrated in the fifth book in the series, *OoP*, where Harry suffers moments of jealousy and anger towards his friends:

He could hardly bear to think of the pair of them having fun at The Burrow when he was stuck in Privet Drive. In fact, he was so angry with them he had thrown away, unopened, the two boxes of Honeydukes chocolates they'd set him for his birthday. (p. 13).

But before he knew it, Harry was shouting.

'SO YOU HAVEN'T BEEN IN THE MEETINGS, BIG DEAL! YOU'VE STILL BEEN HERE, HAVEN'T YOU? YOU'VE STILL BEEN TOGETHER! ME, I'VE BEEN STUCK AT THE DURSLEYS' FOR A MONTH! AND I'VE HANDLED

MORE THAN YOU TWO'VE EVER MANAGED AND DUMBLEDORE KNOWS IT – WHO SAVED THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE? WHO GOT RID OF RIDDLE? WHO SAVED BOTH YOUR SKINS FROM THE DEMENTORS?' (p. 63) [Capitals in original].

These types of feelings, while unkind, can be seen as examples of the feelings that most teenagers suffer from. Ron also shows jealousy and betrayal towards Harry when he is convinced Harry placed his own name in the Goblet of Fire (*GoF*, pp. 251-252): “ ‘Yeah?’ said Ron, and there was no trace of a grin, forced or otherwise, on his face now. ‘You want to get to bed, Harry, I expect you’ll need to be up early tomorrow for a photocall or something.’ ” (p. 252). Harry, like most of us, has a dark side, which is sometimes shown in his actions and emotions. At one stage Harry cannot understand why both Ron and Hermione are made prefects when he isn’t and he is upset and jealous over their appointment: “I’ve definitely done more, Harry thought indignantly. I’ve done more than either of them!” (*OoP*, p. 152). We all have moments of jealousy when others get something we may have wished for and though we should feel happy for them in the success they have gained we instead find ourselves resentful. Instead of criticising Rowling for this depiction of flawed kindness we should be praising her. She portrays the sort of select kindness that we all exhibit because we all have emotions, which cause us turmoil. By portraying a heroic figure with real emotions, including those less attractive emotions, Rowling helps readers understand that no one is perfect and the reader is more readily able to identify with that hero because of his flawed character.

As previously mentioned, students included kindness as a personal value that Harry exhibits in the books (*Appendix 7, Student Interview responses*, p. 4). Students perceived kindness as the most popular personal value that Harry displayed with nine students

expressing opinions on this value compared to the next popular value which was caring for others with six responses (*Appendix 7: Student Interview responses*, p. 4). Kindness is also mentioned in other values people exhibit which include caring for others, helping others, treating people equally, being interested in others and being thoughtful, which were all commented on by students (*Appendix 7: Student Interview responses*, p. 4). Students recognised the values in other characters that are linked with kindness or included kindness. Hermione showed kindness and a caring attitude, Ron showed kindness, a caring attitude and consideration for others, Dumbledore was kind, caring and treated people equally while Hagrid was also kind, caring, loving and helpful (*Appendix 7: Student Interview responses*, p. 5).

Importantly children recognised that for a character to be good they had to exhibit kindness and the qualities linked to kindness. In answering the question “What makes them good?” students listed some qualities that relate to kindness. These included:

- They have good qualities (humour, smart, helpful/fun to be with, kind, caring)
- They are caring
- Try to help others
- Don't put others down (*Appendix 7: Student Interview responses*, p. 6).

It is also relevant that students made statements on values that are opposite to those that are based on kindness to explain what were the qualities of bad/evil characters in the series (*Appendix 7: Student Interview responses*, pp. 7-8). These included:

- They hurt/kill people
- They seek power (without consideration for others)
- They are selfish
- They put people down

- They take pleasure in seeing others suffer
- Don't care about others' feelings
- Don't value other people
- They're mean
- Hate others

The *Harry Potter* narratives take place predominantly within a school setting, which is a social setting, so friendships and other relationships are key themes in the book and the qualities of these relationships, which are personal qualities, are aptly illustrated throughout the series. Friendship derives from the word "friend" meaning "a person with whom one enjoys mutual affection and regard (usu. exclusive of sexual or family bonds), (*The Oxford reference dictionary*, Hawkins, 1986, p. 321). In particular, friendship qualities include kindness to one's friends and making sacrifices for your friends, which have been previously mentioned. Many critics made mention regarding aspects of friendship in the books especially the friendship of Harry, Hermione and Ron.

Mendlesohn (2002) looks at the way friendship with members of the social hierarchy has an effect on one's acceptance in Hogwarts. She sees Hermione and Ron's acceptance at Hogwarts as almost totally dependent on Harry's friendship towards them (p. 174) and Crabbe and Goyle are also accepted only because of their friendship with Draco Malfoy (pp. 173-174). Therefore Rowling's depiction of friendship is limited. Mendlesohn views Ron, Hermione, Crabbe and Goyle as courtiers to the princely Harry and Draco (pp. 173-174). Mendlesohn's remarks on friendship are limited because she centres her statements specifically on this aspect of friendship rather than the personal qualities that the friendships in the books illustrate.

Beck (2001) cites the re-occurring theme of friendship in the books. She finds this theme worthwhile for religious educators because Harry, Ron and Hermione's friendship grows as the years go on but their friendship also illustrates that other people move in and out of such friendship groups and that other things happen in friendships: "As with all relationships, there are times when the friendships falter, people are misunderstood and doubted and for a time the friendship doesn't exist" (p. 53). The rocky parts of friendships, as illustrated by Ron, Harry and Hermione's friendship, are also commented on by other critics. Furst and Heilman (2001, pp. 142-145) and Neal (2001, pp. 81-82) view the friendships illustrated in these books as useful starting points for discussing friendships with children. In friendships, children will go through many emotions and call on their own personal qualities as well as experience the personal qualities of others. These include qualities of selflessness, kindness, fairness, tolerance, respect, loyalty, self-discipline, compassion, trust, honesty, courage and mercy.

As previously stated, Kern (2003) mentions the importance of friendships in relationship to Kohlberg's model on moral decision-making (pp. 123-124). Kern views aspects and actions such as friendships and kindness as representative of "attempts to make society function smoothly through loyalty, sensitivity, and respect - all virtues pointing toward the conventional level of moral reasoning" (p. 124). Plyming (2001) also stresses the importance of friendships in the *Harry Potter* series because they illustrate that people can only be their true selves through how they live with others (pp. 18-19). This view stresses the importance of community involvement, which enables a Christian to live their faith. Neal (2002), a Christian critic, also remarks on the importance of friendship (pp. 81-82) because one's friends influence one's character development.

Granger takes a more symbolic view of the friendships exhibited in the *Harry Potter* series. He sees the friendship of Harry, Ron and Hermione, and the abilities, qualities and

talents that each contributes to the friendship, as symbolising the human soul's three faculties or powers, which Plato wrote about (Granger, 2002, pp. 114-122, Granger, 2004, pp. 87-91). The friends represent our own soul and we can learn the importance of how our soul should work by considering the actions of Ron, Hermione and Harry. Ron symbolises the Body, Hermione the Mind and Harry the Spirit (Granger, 2002, pp. 115-119, Granger, 2004, pp. 88-91). The combined actions of these three friends are symbolic of our own actions. When Harry, Hermione and Ron work in unison by permitting the Mind and Body to be subservient to the Heart then there is success. However, if this order is turned upside down then there are problems (Granger, 2002, p. 120, Granger, 2004, pp. 90-91).

Harry also has a strong relationship with Albus Dumbledore for much of the series and, as with most relationships, this one has its ups and downs but we generally see Harry showing trust in loyalty to the older man. Cherrett (2003) refers to Harry's personal relationship with Dumbledore as being similar to a person's relationship with Jesus Christ/God (p. 48). In times of personal loss people often feel antagonism towards God and this same antagonism is reflected in the temporary breakdown in Harry and Dumbledore's relationship when Harry wishes harm to the older wizard towards the end of *OoP* after the death of Sirius Black, (p. 726). Neal (2002) focuses on the importance of trusting one another so that God's will can be done (pp. 151-152). She illustrates her point by referring to Dumbledore's comments to Severus Snape and Sirius Black to lay aside their old differences, which began when they were students at Hogwarts, and unite so that through trust they can help overcome Lord Voldemort (*GoF*, p. 618).

Many critics discuss specific aspects of Harry's friendships because they illustrate what sort of person Harry is and what personal qualities are needed to maintain relationships. Students also found examples of friendship in the book and the qualities that are needed to maintain friendships in any relationship. In Focus Group remarks students felt that there was

friendship shown in the series (*Appendix 8: Focus Group responses, p. 6*). They specifically mentioned the friendship between Hermione, Ron, Hagrid and Harry, between Malfoy, Crabbe and Goyle and between Hagrid and Dumbledore (p. 6). Students also mentioned personal qualities that they found in the books, which are qualities linked to maintaining a healthy friendship. These included kindness, loyalty, treating people equally, honesty, selflessness, being interested in others, friendliness, thoughtfulness (*Appendix 7: Student Interview responses, pp. 4-5*). To the specific question of, “What did you learn about friendship from the books?” (*Appendix 7: Student Interview responses, p. 10*), students responded with these opinions:

- Stick by your friends
- Nothing new
- If a disagreement happens don't let it end the friendship
- Friendship can grow through/with unexpected people
- To value friendship more highly than previously
- Be loyal
- To make new friends you should really get to know them first
- Mixed friendships can occur
- Stick by your friends providing they are of good character
- Help each other
- Be nice
- Trust your friends
- Respect each other
- Look deeper into people's emotions, actions, etc to judge whether they are true friends
- True friendship is life long even if separated by distance

- Friendships grow through challenges.

Courage is another personal quality in the *Harry Potter* series that is recognised by critics. Killinger (2002) makes particular mention of the courage of Harry Potter, particularly in his Quidditch matches (p. 73). He relates this type of courage to Christ's courage in dying on the cross, "It is the kind of courage that leads people forward despite powerful opposition - even to a cross!" (p. 74). Other critics make mention of our own personal need to show courage, as reflected in the character of Harry, if we are to overcome our own fears. Cherrett (2003) states: "fears increase when we try to sweep them under the carpet..." (p. 23), hence the Defence Against the Dark Arts lesson on defeating the boggarts in *PoA* (pp. 100-106). She contends that we need to show courage if we are to confront the wrongs in the world (p. 74, p. 87) and that the *Harry Potter* series demonstrates the type of courage needed as shown through Harry and other characters (p. 80).

Neal (2002) also recognises the importance of courage to overcome evil, which is shown in *PS* (p. 5). Courage means to show "readiness to face and endure danger or difficulty" (*The Oxford reference dictionary*, Hawkins, 1986, p. 194). Lavoie (2003) also notes the importance of Harry's house, Gryffindor, valuing courage above all else (p. 38). The Sorting Hat song states:

“ You might belong in Gryffindor,
Where dwell the brave at heart,
Their daring, nerve and chivalry
Set Gryffindors apart; (*PS*, p. 88)

Lavoie (2003) notes that the Slytherin house's main task seems to be to test the courage of those in Gryffindor, the two houses forming a duality (p. 42). She expresses the

view that throughout the series the Gryffindor house members show their courage when faced with adversity (pp. 38-44). There are exceptions to this, as she notes that Severus Snape, a Slytherin, shows courage while Peter Pettigrew, a Gryffindor, lacks courage (p. 41). She also contends that Harry inherits his courage from his two families, from Lily and James Potter and from the Gryffindor house (p. 46).

The students surveyed also recognised courage as a key quality of some of the characters in the *Harry Potter* series (*Appendix 8: Focus Group responses*, p. 1, p. 6). They specifically recognised it as one of Harry's qualities (*Appendix 7: Student Interview responses*, p. 4, *Appendix 8: Focus Group responses*, p. 2). The courage of characters in the books can also be recognised in many of the self-sacrificial and selfless acts that students recognised in the series (*Appendix 7: Student Interview responses*, pp. 9-10). This would include:

- Ron getting injured in chess game in *PS*
- Sirius Black helping to save Harry (and others) against Remus' werewolf in

PoA

- Severus Snape in trying to help Harry in Shrieking Shack
- Hermione Granger helping house elves
- Ron and Harry risking death in following spider trail
- Harry Potter entering Chamber of Secrets to save Ginny
- Hermione and Ron standing up for Harry over Filch's cat's petrification
- Harry risking life to save others in Triwizard Tournament.

These are good examples of courage, particularly Hermione's efforts to improve the conditions for the house elves. Her almost solitary stand is commendable because she is seeking real change in the wizarding culture and is not receiving the best of support from her

friends Harry and Ron (*GoF*, pp. 198-199). Another example of courage shown in the books is Neville Longbottom's efforts in standing up against Harry and his friends in the first book when he tries to stop them leaving the Gryffindor common-room (*PS*, p. 198). Dumbledore rightly makes much of this event and the courage Neville shows because it is always hardest to stand up against one's friends:

‘There are all kinds of courage,’ said Dumbledore, smiling. ‘it takes a great deal of bravery to stand up to our enemies, but just as much to stand up to our friends. I therefore award ten points to Mr Neville Longbottom.’ (*PS*, p. 221).

Hope is another personal quality that critics identified in the series. Hope refers to an “expectation and desire” (*The Oxford reference dictionary*, Hawkins, 1986, p. 395). In this thesis it refers to an expectation or desire that encourages a positive outcome for those with hope. We need to have hope as a personal quality so that we can be positive in our attitudes rather than becoming despairing in our outlook. As previously stated it is closely connected to choice because no-one would bother making choices if they felt there was no hope for a better world. Heroes too, need hope because without it there would be no reason to undertake heroic acts.

Carroll (2004), in her thesis entitled *Imagination for better not worse: The Hobbit in the primary classroom*, stresses that children need hope to help them cope with the adversities which they will face in life (pp. 25-28). Bettelheim (1989) stresses that the primary importance of fairy tales and fantasy is to give children hope (p. 3-6). Cherrett (2003) relates the hope depicted in *Harry Potter* to the hope in salvation through Jesus Christ (pp. 50-68). Emily Griesinger (2002) also stresses the importance of hope in the *Harry Potter* series. She feels that “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” (§ 39). Griesinger also feels that the hope portrayed in the series will assist children in understanding the hope that Christ offers (§ 4).

Students, in responding to specific questions, also found hope in the series:

Q: Do you think there’s hope shown in this book?

Yes. [several].

Like Harry brings hope to the like, um, to the Muggle borns.

Well, Harry shows hope to all the wizards by, like, kind of defeating Voldemort in every book, in every movie, and shows hope that the next time he comes they he will be able to protect them.

Q: What would be an example of the hope that’s shown in this book?

Well Harry can survive Voldemort’s Avada Kedavra.

Q: Good, Harry’s hope – he’s survived the curse... And is there any other side? What are they hoping for in the book to happen? If there was one big hope – what are they hoping for?

For Voldemort to be defeated (Appendix 8: Focus Group responses, pp. 7-8).

The whole *Harry Potter* series is based on the key hope that Harry will be able to defeat Lord Voldemort. This hope begins with Harry’s escape from Lord Voldemort’s attack on him as a child. It is greeted by the majority of the wizarding world almost in the same manner as the resurrection of Jesus. The common biblical term “Rejoice” is even used:

“Don’t be sorry, my dear sir, for nothing could upset me today! Rejoice, for You-Know-Who has gone at last! Even Muggles like yourself should be celebrating, this happy, happy day!’

And the old man hugged Mr Dursley around the middle and walked off.

(*PS*, p.10).

Harry escapes death here and numerous attempts to kill him in preceding books. This is best illustrated in the graveyard scene towards the end of *GoF* where he escapes from Voldemort and the Death Eaters:

And then an unearthly and beautiful sound filled the air ... it was coming from every thread of the light-spun web vibrating around Harry and Voldemort. It was a sound Harry recognised, though he had heard it only once before in his life ... phoenix song...

It was the sound of hope to Harry (*GoF*, p. 576).

In reference to Cherrett (2003) and Griesinger's (2002) statements relating the hope in the *Harry Potter* series to the hope offered by Christ it is important to note that the Phoenix itself a recognised symbol of Christ (Becker, 1994, p. 232). Fawkes, the phoenix, does give hope to Harry in other parts of the series. He helped Harry defeat the Basilisk in the Chamber of Secrets by blinding the beast and providing a sword to Harry through the delivery of the sorting Hat. Fawkes also saved him from the Basilisk's deadly venom with his tears and carried Harry, Ron, Ginny Weasley and Gilderoy Lockhart to safety (*CoS*, pp. 232-239).

The theme of hope is also important in the trail of Voldemort's past victims who appear to Harry when he struggles with Voldemort as they both try to eliminate the other with magic. Many of these victims have a message of hope and encouragement for Harry:

‘Hold on, Harry,’ it said. . . .

‘You fight him, boy ...’ . . .

‘Don't let go now!’ she cried, and her voice echoed like Cedric's, as though from very far away. ‘Don't let him get you, Harry – don't let go!’ . . .

‘Your father's coming ...’ she said quietly. ‘He wants to see you ... it will be all right ... hold on ...’ (*GoF*, pp. 578-579).

The ending of the *HBP* novel sees Harry taking offensive action, hoping to destroy Lord Voldemort completely rather than continually fighting off his attacks. He is willing to take the attack to Lord Voldemort by hunting down and destroying the Horcruxes that contains the parts of Voldemort's soul (*HBP*, pp. 467-470):

‘Then I've got to track down the rest of the Horcruxes, haven't I?’ said Harry, his eyes upon Dumbledore's white tomb, reflected in the water on the other side of the lake. ‘That's what he wanted me to do, that's why he told me all about them. If Dumbledore was right – and I'm sure he was – there are still four of them out there. I've got to find them and destroy them and then I've got to go after the seventh bit of Voldemort's soul, the bit that's still in his body, and I'm the one who's going to kill him.’ (*HBP*, p. 606).

Grace is also a personal quality that critics recognised in the books. Grace, in this work, refers to the showing of goodwill towards others or to provide them with a favour (*The Oxford reference dictionary*, Hawkins, 1986, p. 352). Furst and Heilmann (2001) refer to the example of grace shown by Professor McGonagall when, rather than punish Harry for flying his broom against a teacher's instructions, he is made a member of the Gryffindor Quidditch team (*PS*, pp. 110-113). They see this example as a good analogy for the grace shown by God for us by allowing his Son to die for our sins (p. 109-111). Cherrett (2003) also relates the grace shown by characters in the *Harry Potter* series with the grace shown by God (pp. 50-68). Harry shows Peter Pettigrew grace in *PoA* when he tells Remus Lupin and Sirius Black not to kill him (*PoA*, p. 275) while Dumbledore shows grace towards characters that have been seen by others to do wrong. He provides Hagrid with a job even though he was expelled

from Hogwarts (*PS*, p. 48), and Severus Snape with a job even though he was a Death Eater (*GoF*, p. 616).

Forgiveness is closely connected to the quality of grace. Forgiveness derives from the word forgive which means “to cease to feel angry or resentful towards (a person) or about (an offence)” (*The Oxford reference dictionary*, Hawkins, 1986, p. 315). Cherrett (2003) highlights the close connection between grace and forgiveness in the series and connects forgiveness with the forgiveness that God provides (pp. 65-68). She particularly highlights how the act of forgiveness can strengthen a friendship as when Harry, Ron and Hermione reconcile (p. 66) after the break-up over Hermione’s cat’s possible consumption of Ron’s rat in *PoA* (p. 186). Personal relationships require acts of forgiveness if those relationships are going to continue.

Mercy is another personal quality and is closely connected to forgiveness and grace. Mercy is viewed as one of the basic virtues of Christian ethics, and refers to “refraining from inflicting punishment or pain on an offender or enemy etc. who is in one’s power” (*The Oxford reference dictionary*, Hawkins, 1986, p. 525). Both Furst and Heilmann (2001, p. 116) and Cherrett (2003, pp. 73-74) comment on the mercy shown in the *Harry Potter* series in its relationship to the Christian traditions. Harry shows mercy as well as grace towards Peter Pettigrew when he does not allow Remus Lupin and Sirius Black to kill him in the Shrieking Shack, after it is discovered that it was Pettigrew’s betrayal of James and Lily Potter that caused their death:

Black and Lupin stood shoulder to shoulder, wands raised.

‘You should have realised,’ said Lupin quietly. ‘if Voldemort didn’t kill you, we would. Goodbye Peter.’

Hermione covered her face with her hands and turned to the wall.

‘NO!’ Harry yelled. He ran forwards, placing himself in front of Pettigrew, facing the wands, ‘You can’t kill him,’ he said breathlessly. ‘You can’t.’
(*PoA*, p. 275).

This is the key example of mercy remarked on by critics. Furst and Heilmann (2001) see this example as an analogy of the mercy God shows to us (pp. 116-119). In *HBP* the concept of mercy is expanded on. Dumbledore, weak and suffering, loses his wand and Draco Malfoy states that Dumbledore is now at his mercy. Dumbledore replies, “ ‘No Draco,’ . . . ‘It is my mercy, and not yours, that matters now.’” (p. 553). This indicates a wider understanding of mercy where the victims of cruelty need to show mercy towards those who inflict cruelty on them if the inflictor is ever to find real peace. This is particularly shown in the kindness Harry shows through his act of mercy and grace for his enemy, Peter Pettigrew (*PoA*, p. 275).

In regards to the values of grace, mercy and forgiveness, students being surveyed only made mention of the character of Dumbledore as showing forgiveness (*Appendix 7: Student Interview responses*, p. 5) and no mention was made about grace and mercy. This does not necessarily mean that students felt that characters did not show these qualities but it may be that they simply felt the values of mercy and forgiveness are simply apparent when one is being kind, just, considerate, caring, loving, friendly, etc and therefore there is no need to make specific mention of them (*Appendix 7: Student Interview responses*, pp. 4-5). While students were not specifically questioned regarding the qualities of grace presented in the books, they felt that key characters exhibited qualities closely linked with showing grace. To show grace a person has to show qualities of forgiveness, kindness and caring rather than vengefulness. As previously mentioned, students found that the “good” characters had these sorts of qualities (*Appendix 7: Student Interview responses*, pp. 4-6). Importantly, students

also recognised qualities in bad or evil characters that are inconsequent with the qualities needed to show grace, mercy and forgiveness to others. These poor qualities included:

- They hurt/kill people
- They seek power (without consideration for others)
- They are selfish
- They put people down
- Don't value other people
- They take pleasure in seeing others suffer (*Appendix 7: Student Interview responses*, pp. 7-8).

Love is also a personal quality critics found relevant to the *Harry Potter* series. Self-sacrifice can be an explicit example of one's love for someone else. Lily and James Potter's sacrifice of their own lives to protect their son's life is an excellent example of love (*PoA*, p. 213). Cherrett (2003) makes mention of the important personal qualities that are shown in the *Harry Potter* series including love (pp. 82-84). When Dumbledore asserts that there is a force "that is at once more wonderful and more terrible than death, than human intelligence, than the forces of nature" (*OoP*, p. 743), Cherrett presumes he is referring to 'love', which she perceives as the most powerful of human qualities.

Students perceived a large number of examples of self-sacrifice in the series and they also expressed opinions on the specific quality of love shown in the series. To the Focus Group question, "Is there love, shown in the book?" responses were:

- "Yes."
- "I think Harry and Hermione love each other."
- "They do."
- "Mrs Weasley shows love."

- “Dumbledore”
- “Hagrid does. Like Hermione is called a mudblood, he comforts her.” (*Appendix 8: Focus Group responses*, pp. 8-9).

Other personal qualities that students perceived characters exhibiting in the series can be perceived as showing love. These would include kindness, honesty, courage, loyalty, forgiveness, thoughtfulness, consideration and justice (*Appendix 7: Student Interview responses*).

Truthfulness is another personal quality commented on by the critics. It is derived from the word “truth” which is “the quality or state of being true or truthful” (*The Oxford reference dictionary*, Hawkins, 1986, p. 883). To fully understand “truth” it is necessary to have an understanding of the meaning of the word “true”. Like many words it has a variety of connected meanings. In this thesis it also has a number of meanings. These meanings include “in accordance with fact . . . correct principles or an accepted standard; rightly or strictly so called; genuine, not false . . . loyal, faithful . . . completely true to one’s principles; firmly loyal” (*ibid.*, p. 882).

In the series we find the manipulation of truth by the reporter Rita Skeeter (*GoF*, pp. 380-382, pp. 444-445, pp. 531-532) and others, and even Harry does not always tell the truth; but when he lies it is for a higher good, a higher moral principle (Neal, 2001, pp. 165-172, Bridger, 2001, pp. 67-71). This is related to Harry’s higher moral decision-making ability previously mentioned. There are examples, in the series, where the key characters of Harry, Ron and Hermione act dishonestly but they do so in pursuit of a higher goal. This pattern is demonstrated in nearly every book as Harry and his friends break rules at key moments, usually to stop Voldemort fulfilling his plans. In *PS* Ron, Hermione and Harry leave the Gryffindor common room without permission (p. 198) and enter a forbidden area of Hogwarts. In *CS* Ron and Harry go to Gilderoy Lockhart’s room when they should have

remained at the Gryffindor common room (p. 216) and Harry eventually ends up in the Chamber of Secrets. In *PoA* Harry and Hermione break the law and help Sirius Black escape from the Ministry of Magic's imprisonment at Hogwarts and his perceived fate of receiving a Dementors kiss (p. 303). They do this because Sirius is innocent. This action will later assist Harry in his fight against Voldemort, especially as Sirius Black gives his own life to help Harry escape death from the Death Eaters in *OoP* (pp. 708-709). In the *OoP* the formation of the "Defence Association" (DA) (pp. 303-310 and p. 347) is against the new school rule (p. 313) that bans student organizations, including groups or clubs, but the DA's formation and the actions of its members will help in the fight against the evils of Lord Voldemort and the Death Eaters.

However, as Cherrett (2003) mentions, the truth helps Harry and others to grow (pp.102-112). She contends that Harry's continual discovery of the truth behind his heritage helps him to develop into an individual in his own right (*ibid.*). Cherrett remarks on how the series does value the truth (pp. 104-105). Dumbledore states: "that the truth is always generally preferable to lies," (*GoF*, p. 626), but he also warns us that the truth can be dangerous: " 'The truth.' Dumbledore sighed. 'It is a beautiful and terrible thing, and should therefore be treated with great caution.' " (*PS*, p. 216). Beck also recognises truth and honesty as being main themes in the series and that "honesty is the best policy and whenever dishonest behaviour occurs, there are always negative consequences" (p. 53).

Students surveyed made useful observations in regard to the quality of truth. While commenting on honesty students noticed that key characters, including those perceived as good characters are not always honest in the books:

Q: Is there honesty in the book?

Yes, sometimes.

Q: Sometimes – that's a good point. Is Harry always honest?

No [several]

Q: No? Is Hermione always honest?

No [several].

Q: No? So, when they're dishonest, why are they dishonest? They may not actually lie, but they bend the truth... Why do they do it?

To protect someone.

Q: To protect someone.

To get something done.

Q: To get something done? Anything else?

If they don't want to make a big fuss out of something. (Appendix 8: Focus Group responses, pp. 6-7).

Importantly, the series supports the view that in maintaining a personal friendship it is necessary to be honest with one's friends. Throughout the series key characters demonstrate this honesty in being open to their friends. Examples include when Hermione is honest to Harry and Ron telling them how insensitive they are in *OoP* (p. 405) and in *HBP* when Harry is honest with Ron when he tells him that he has a mental problem regarding his Quidditch ability rather than a co-ordination problem (p. 272).

Humility is also a personal quality examined in the *Harry Potter* series. Humility means "to have a humble state of mind" (*The Oxford reference dictionary*, Hawkins, 1986, p. 403). In this thesis humble is taken as "showing a low estimate of one's own importance" (*ibid.*). Cherrett (2003) highlights Dumbledore's humility towards those who work under him and how this is an example for all of us (pp. 127-128). Dumbledore almost provides a stewardship model of leadership through the humility he shows to others over whom he has authority. We see the way Dumbledore only uses his immense magical power when it is absolutely necessary. This is best illustrated towards the end of *GoF* when Barty Crouch Jr., a Death Eater, disguised as Mad-Eye Moody, teacher of *Defence Against the Dark Arts* at Hogwarts, is about to kill Harry Potter. Dumbledore, accompanied by Professors Snape and

McGonagall, enters the room after blasting his way in with a spell and causing the disguised Barty Crouch Jr. to be thrown back:

At that moment, Harry understood for the first time why people said Dumbledore was the only wizard Voldemort had ever feared. The look upon Dumbledore's face as he stared down at the unconscious form of Mad-Eye Moody was more terrible than Harry could ever have imagined. There was no benign smile upon Dumbledore's face, no twinkle in the eyes behind the spectacles. There was cold fury in every line of the ancient face; a sense of power radiated from Dumbledore as though he was giving off burning heat (pp. 589-590).

Students were not specifically questioned on the humility of the characters in the books but one student did see Harry as vain while another saw him as not being vain (*Appendix 7: Student Interview responses*, p. 4). Many of the qualities students felt the good characters displayed, such as a caring attitude, are usually those we would see as being common to a person of humility. Qualities such as selfishness and putting people down, which were commented on by students as qualities of bad/evil characters, would usually be those we associate with a lack of humility.

There are instances in the series where Harry does show vanity. As previously mentioned he gets jealous when he feels he should have been made a prefect (*OoP*, p. 152). However, there are also incidents where Harry shows that humility rather than the seeking of fame. As he states to Hermione he did not seek to be famous. “ ‘I didn't ask – I didn't want – *Voldemort killed my parents!*’ Harry spluttered. “I got famous because he murdered my family but couldn't kill me! Who wants to be famous for that? Don't they think I'd rather it'd never -' ” (*OoP*, p. 71) [*Italics in original*]. In the Triwizard Tournament, in *GoF*, Harry could win the tournament, which would provide him with great glory and further fame above

that which he already enjoyed as the boy who could not be killed by Lord Voldemort. Instead Harry helps Cedric Diggory. Cedric offers him the cup, to win the tournament, because he deserves to have it but Harry decides it should be a tie:

‘Both of us,’ Harry said.

‘What?’

‘We’ll take it at the same time. It’s still a Hogwarts victory. We’ll tie for it.’

Cedric stared at Harry. He unfolded his arms. ‘You – you sure?’

‘Yeah,’ said Harry. ‘Yeah . . . we’ve helped each other out, haven’t we? We both got here. Let’s just take it together.’ (*GoF*, pp. 550-551).

Conclusion

“I think you understand that these books are fundamentally moral (that is how I see them, in any case)”

(Joanne Rowling, 2000b, ¶ 78)

The personal choices displayed by Harry Potter are an essential part of the *Harry Potter* series and those choices are based on Harry’s personal values, which are in consensus with the personal values that are encouraged by both Federal and State Governments. These values are also Christian-based and are expressed using free choice, which is also in agreement with current Christian teachings making the series acceptable for use in teaching Christian values.

Harry’s choices are shown as important because not only do they show his values but they also indicate his growth as a human. Our young people need to also understand that the choices they make, based on their values, are indicators of their growth as human beings

regardless of their previous history. Their choices decide who they become. As Dumbledore states to Cornelius Fudge, a government official, who stereotypes many characters due to their origins, “You fail to recognise that it matters not what someone is born, but what they grow to be!” (*GoF*, pp. 614-615). As Cecilia Hatt (2006) suggests the books contain:

a structure which gives coherence to moral choices, an assurance that being faithful in little things will affect the larger ones, that a good deed mainly benefits the doer but still makes a difference far beyond its immediate point of application (p. 43).

Contrary to what one might expect, the magic enables the realism, creating a world in which the consequences of moral choice are immediately identifiable and this gives urgency to the need to develop an informed judgement. In the Hogwarts world, the characters may be observed as they formulate an ethic of justice, mercy and forgiveness. Because they are physically much more able to effect what they wish than ordinary people would be, they see and understand the results of their decisions more starkly (p. 42).

CHAPTER 5: *HARRY POTTER*, THE “HERO JOURNEY” AND OUR YOUTH

“Search for the hero inside yourself. Until you find the key to your life”

(M People, 1995)

“Heroes summarize individual and collective desires, and support the idea of the eternal personal achievement which is therefore, the guide for the greatest advances of human race”

(Michelle Roche, 2003, pp. 24-25).

Introduction

Previous mention has been made of the relationship of the *Harry Potter* series to the hero journey or monomyth. Many critics have commented on this relationship in their opinions of the books (Applebaum, 2003, Nikolajeva, 2003, Alton, 2003, Schafer, 2000, et al.). The connection between the *Harry Potter* series and the hero journey is an important one because it helps us to understand one of the reasons that the books have been so successful in engaging with our youth and how our youth can learn from the books.

What is the “Hero Journey”?

The monomyth or hero journey is a term used by mythologist Joseph Campbell in his famous book, *The hero with a thousand faces* (1949/1993). This book built on the work of German anthropologist Adolp Bastian (1826-1905) (Campbell, 1993, p. 18), who had proposed the idea that myths from various parts of the world contained elementary ideas that derive from the human psyche (Brennan, 1999, Booker, 2004). Campbell was also influenced

by Arnold van Gennep’s (1909/1961) work on rites of passage (Campbell, 1993, p. 10).

Renowned Swiss psychologist, Carl Jung, called these elementary ideas, “archetypes” which he saw as the inherited, unconscious ideas and images that are the components of the collective unconscious (Doty, 1986, pp. 148-158). Jung felt that while we could not see the archetype we could see how the force had shown itself (Doty, p. 151). Jung claimed that we needed mythical stories to help us:

make sense of the confusion of our society and our psyches. Myths voice the truths of our unconscious selves, . . . the gods, goddesses, and heroes of myth embody aspects of creativity, cleverness, grief, joy, aggression, and ecstasy. The monsters of myth are really monsters of the mind (*Mythology: Myths, legends, and fantasies*, pp.12-13).

Campbell’s work took Jung’s theory of “archetypes” and looked for the common underlying structure in the world’s myths and religions (Campbell, 1993, p. 18). He called this common story pattern a “monomyth” (a term taken from James Joyce’s work *Finnegan’s Wake*, 1939/1992, p. 581), yet it is now usually referred to as a hero journey. This story pattern refers to the standard adventure path of mythological heroes, which Campbell divides into three parts: departure (or separation), initiation and return. He saw these stages as a magnification of the traditional rites of passage, which are separation, initiation and return:

A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man. (Campbell, 1993, p. 30)

In his research Campbell found that heroic adventure myths had similar stages even though they came from all over the world. Even though others had noticed these story

patterns too (Segal, 1999, pp. 117-118) Campbell published a more thorough analysis of these patterns than had previously been produced. He divided each of the three parts of the heroic adventure myths into a number of stages. They are:

Departure:

- 1) The call to adventure
- 2) Refusal of the call
- 3) Supernatural Aid
- 4) The crossing of the first threshold
- 5) The belly of the whale.

Initiation:

- 1) The road of trials,
- 2) The meeting with the Goddess
- 3) Woman as the temptress
- 4) Atonement with the father
- 5) Apotheosis
- 6) The ultimate boon.

Return:

- 1) Refusal of the return
- 2) The magic flight
- 3) Rescue from without
- 4) The crossing of the return threshold
- 5) Master of the two worlds
- 6) Freedom to live (Campbell, 1993, pp. 49-243).

Campbell did not state that each monomyth followed these stages exactly but he did argue that there is little variation from this adventure path in most hero journey myths (Campbell, 1993, p. 38).

Other critics have also analysed the stages of the hero journey (Brennan, 1999), including David Leeming (1973), Michael Vogler (1992/1999) and Booker (2004). Leeming settled on an eight-stage hero’s journey while Vogler settled on twelve-stages. The stages outlined by these critics are very similar to those outlined by Campbell with Vogler specifically basing his stages on Campbell’s work (Vogler, 1999, pp. 9-12). Vogler’s stages are:

1. Ordinary World
2. Call to Adventure
3. Refusal of the Call
4. Meeting with the Mentor
5. Crossing the First Threshold
6. Tests, Allies, Enemies
7. Approach to the Inmost Cave
8. Ordeal
9. Reward (Seizing the Sword)
10. The Road Back
11. Resurrection
12. Return with the Elixir (1999, p. 12).

The hero journey occurs in some of the great stories of our world including that of Moses, Jesus and Gautama Buddha (Campbell, 1993, pp. 30-40). A key structural stage of any hero journey is when the hero has to face a number of trials. These can involve a hero

undertaking trips to the underworld, labyrinths, caves, over seas, through the sky as well as encounters with dragons (beasts) and confrontations with their opposite (Campbell, 1993, pp. 97-109).

While the *Harry Potter* series does draw strongly from the hero journey or monomyth plot structure it is important to understand that it also draws from other plot structures as well. Booker, also using a Jungian perspective, makes mention of seven basic story plots that are found in stories (2004). These plots are labelled as: Overcoming the Monster, Rags to Riches, The Quest, Voyage and Return, Comedy, Tragedy and Rebirth (pp. 21-213). While the *Harry Potter* series draws mainly from “The Quest” plot, the series also draws from other plots Booker cites, including “Voyage and Return”, “Rags to Riches” and “Overcoming the Monster” (Booker, p. 319). This is not uncommon because, as Booker states, many stories also draw from a number of these plots:

There are extensive areas of overlap between one type of plot and another. Indeed, there are many stories which are shaped by more than one ‘basic plot’ at a time (there are even a small number, including *The Lord of the Rings*, which include all seven of the plots (pp. 5-6).

The “Hero Journey” and its relevance to our youth

Research undertaken by Campbell, Vogler and others indicate that people relate to the hero journey form in its varied forms. As Vogler (1992/1999) observes, people find this type of story attractive. His book, *The writer journey: Mythic structure for writers* (1992), and subsequent revised editions outline how the hero journey pattern, as disclosed by Campbell (1949/1993), has been used in many successful films. Our young people also view films in which the hero journey has been used and many of those films have been highly successful

with the youth audience. Examples are *The Lion King*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*, *The Wizard of Oz* and the *Star Wars* films (Vogler, 1999). More contemporary examples would be *Finding Nemo* and *Shrek*. Our youth have been exposed to the hero journey through films as well as through other forms of narratives including traditional myths.

The recent Angus and Robertson survey of Australian children between the ages of five and seventeen, in which 60,000 children voted for their favourite book, chose adaptations of the hero journey in all of their top ten choices (Angus & Robertson, 2006). These included the *Harry Potter* series as equal first choice, the *Narnia* chronicles (Lewis), *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (Dahl, 1964) and *Eragon* (Paolini, 2003). Due to this enculturation of the hero journey in our young people, particularly through our popular film culture, it is reasonable to assume that they are comfortable with this form of narrative and that they find it relevant because it continues to attract both young viewers and readers. This connection with the hero journey is important because by using this concept in the education of our youth we are providing a greater chance for the learning to be more effective as students personally relate to the learning process (White, p. 130, p.168).

Modern Australian based research also supports the relevancy of the hero journey to our youth. In a limited research project undertaken in the Wollongong area of Australia, with a Grade Six class, the published results indicate that the hero journey does connect with our youth. Kori Nemme and Phil Fitzsimmons (2004) based their study on Campbell’s views about how a person’s interaction with a hero journey causes a natural response as they relate that story to their own lives (pp. 5-7). In their research project they introduced students to the concept and structure of the hero journey, and immersed students in the novel *Rowan of Rin* by Emily Rodda (1993/2003). Importantly, the study undertaken showed how the hero journey narrative could be used in a co-educational class with a varied range of abilities and

culture backgrounds. The class contained seven children out of the class of twenty-eight who were undertaking a reading-recovery programme and the class had a wide range of language abilities with students mainly coming from Anglo-Saxon, Lebanese and Portuguese backgrounds, including some with little use of English at home (Nemme & Fitzsimmons, p. 9).

Through a shared book experience and set tasks, students were encouraged to apply their understanding of the text to their own life journey. Without inducement from the researchers students frequently responded with their personal experiences in relation to the text (Nemme & Fitzsimmons, 2004, pp. 9-18). The results of the study indicate the suitability of the hero journey narrative as an educational tool with contemporary students because students connected with it.

The study found that there was a great deal of resonance with Campbell’s (1991) notions of natural response when the ‘Hero’s Journey’ was introduced into the classroom context through the shared book experience. The process of resonance appeared lively and interactive and involved the interplay between Campbell’s notions of natural response and the relationships and nature of learning in the classroom. Students applied an archetypal resonance to the text; undertook a personal resonance with the ‘Hero’s Journey’ to other narrative and their own lives; and also developed a social resonance to other students and the teacher (pp. 9-10).

The second relevance of the hero journey is in the way it relates to our mind, whether consciously or subconsciously. While a hero journey describes a physical journey to its reader, which often involves adventure and suspense, it is also an inward journey that relates to its reader’s psyche. The reason this occurs, as Campbell

perceives it, is because all hero journeys are actually about us. He speculated that people related naturally with the narrative form, particularly the hero journey narrative, because we are aware that our own lives are a narrative (1993). People also respond to the archetypes present in hero journeys. The hero’s search connects with modern readers because it is a reflection of their own search, through their unconscious, for self-knowledge (Segal, 1999, p. 135):

Freud, Jung, and their followers have demonstrated irrefutably that the logic, the heroes, and the deeds of myth survive into modern times. In the absence of an effective general mythology, each of us has his private, unrecognised, rudimentary, yet secretly potent pantheon of dream. The latest incarnation of Oedipus, the continued romance of Beauty and the Beast, stand this afternoon on the corner of Forty-second Street and Fifth Avenue, waiting for the traffic light to change (Campbell, 1993, p. 4).

The hero journey also connects with people on the conscious level of our emotions. As Vogler (1999) states:

In any good story the hero grows and changes, making a journey from one way of being to the next: from despair to hope, weakness to strength, folly to wisdom, love to hate, and back again. It’s these emotional journeys that hook an audience and make a story worth watching (p. 13).

If we accept Campbell’s view then all myths are relevant to us and speak to us because they are about us:

In the end we are all of us in a sense experts on stories, because nothing is closer to us than to see the world in the form of stories. Not only are our heads full of stories all the time; we are each of us acting out our own story throughout our lives. Outwardly male or female, we are each of us, like David Copperfield, cast as the hero of the story

of our own life – just as we are equally its heroine. And the aim of our life, as we see from stories, is that those two should become one, to ‘live happily ever after’ (Booker, 2004, p. 701).

Lastly, myths, including the hero journey, speak to us about our values. While various critics interpret myths in different ways most recognise them as a valuable instrument in the reinforcing of cultural values including renowned mythologist, Bronislaw Malinowski and Jung (Segal, 1999, p. 79). Jung felt that myth had a social function because he saw the archetypes as models of how man [sic] should behave (Segal, p. 79). Malinowski followed the socio-functional or structural-functional approach to myths, which studied them “ in terms of their functional ability to provide social solidarity, to transmit cultural values” (Doty, p. 46). This corresponds with an earlier statement in this thesis that stories are seen as an important means through which societal values are taught.

Myths, particularly hero journeys, are also stories (Hourihan, 1997, pp. 1-4) and provide the same sort of function as stories including the enculturation of values. They do this through people encountering hero journeys in different media and relating their own inner struggles with the struggles undertaken by the hero and the choices he (and occasionally she) makes in overcoming these challenges. These choices, as mentioned previously, are based on the hero’s personal values. This, in reality, presents a problem, as outlined previously in reference to Hourihan’s work. She states that the values hero stories espouse usually involve the upholding the values of the dominant societal group and the glorification of violence to achieve victory (pp. 1-4). This is because the meanings of the traditional hero stories include “the inscription of white European dominance, the marginalisation of women and the privileging of action and extroversion over imagination

and feeling “ (p. 10). Vogler (1999) also recognises that the traditional hero journey is more masculine than feminine (pp. xviii-xix).

The masculine need to go out and overcome obstacles, to achieve, conquer, and possess, may be replaced in the woman’s journey by the drives to preserve the family and the species, make a home, grapple with emotions, come to accord, or cultivate beauty” (p. xix).

***Harry Potter* as a “Hero Journey”**

If a hero journey is attractive to us, speaks to us and teaches us values, it is necessary to ask if the *Harry Potter* series is a hero journey. As previously stated a number of critics (Applebaum, 2003, Nikolajeva, 2003, Alton, 2003, Schafer, 2002, et al.) have referred to this aspect of the series. Schafer (2002) feels that Harry fulfils many of the criteria required to be called a mythical hero including that he acquires self-knowledge, matures during his ordeal and that readers are able to “identify with Harry’s experiences and recognize parallels in their own lives” (p. 130). Pharr (2002) sees Harry as a hero in progress, a potential representative of Campbell’s monomyth (p. 54) while Nikolajeva (2003) writes that “the movement of Campbellian monomyth, . . . corresponds exactly to the master plot of children’s fiction . . . most tangible in all *Harry Potter* novels to date” (p. 127). If we accept *Harry Potter* as a hero in the sense of the monomyth it is necessary to relate directly some incidents in the *Harry Potter* series to Campbell’s monomyth pattern.

***Harry Potter* and the “Hero Journey” form**

There is no great surprise that the *Harry Potter* series draws from the hero journey form because a large number of popular stories, both in the written media and other media, draw on this pattern; it speaks to us psychologically as we are connected to this pattern through our collective unconscious (Segal, 1999, p. 135). Campbell felt that a new set of hero journey narratives was needed that drew on the world as we knew it, that allowed us to enjoy the great stories of mythology in a new setting. “. . . mythology shows itself to be as amenable as life itself to the obsessions and requirements of the individual, the race, the age” (Campbell, 1993 p. 382). Some critics see the *Harry Potter* series and other works, such as *Star Wars* (1977), as examples of these new narratives (Milum, 2003).

Throughout the *Harry Potter* series it is easy to connect events in the stories with the hero journey or monomyth pattern as described by Campbell and others. Written below is a depiction of the hero journey in *PS*. The structural outline and terminology used is taken from Vogler (1999, p. 12).

Ordinary World

Harry lives at the residence of Mr and Mrs Dursley, 4 Privet Drive, Little Whinging, Surrey. The creation of this address by Rowling indicates her desire to portray the Dursley family as comical and distasteful early in the series. Privet refers to a shrub, which is frequently planted in some numbers to be turned into hedges that are trimmed into uniformity. Vernon and Petunia Dursley wish to be seen as conventional, in uniformity with the rest of their neighbours (*PS*, p. 7), not connected with anything strange or mysterious, especially witchcraft. They tend to be boring people rather than excitement seekers. The term “whinging” is commonly used in the English language to describe the action of constant

complaining which is one of the characteristics of Dursley family especially in regard to Harry (*PS*, pp. 19-27). Harry is an orphan, small and skinny, with wild hair and a lightning bolt scar. He is given old clothes to wear, requires glasses and is forced to live in the cupboard under the stairs. Mr and Mrs Dursley reluctantly look after him and he has to put up with his spoiled cousin Dudley, who is a bully. Both Vernon and Petunia do not wish Harry to know about his origins as they lie to him about how his parents died (*PS*, pp. 19-27).

Call to Adventure

Harry is called to his adventure, initially a life of wizardry, through strange occurrences. His hair grows back almost instantly after it is cut, one of Dudley’s large jumpers refuses to fit over his head and he strangely ends up on the school roof when he was only seeking to jump behind some bins. He has a dream about a flying motorbike then, on the visit to the Zoo for his cousin Dudley’s birthday, Harry gets physical responses from a snake he is talking to, the glass on the snake’s enclosure vanishes and while the snake escapes Harry swears he heard it talk to him (*PS*, pp. 23- 26).

Refusal of the Call

Harry then receives strange letters that he is not allowed to open. On behalf of Harry, but without his consent, Uncle Vernon refuses the call to wizardry by trying to stop the letters arriving even though they now number in the hundreds. The Dursleys try to avoid the call by fleeing with Harry to an old house on an isolated rock in the sea but Hagrid arrives and the call is taken up (*PS*, p. 30-51).

Meeting with the Mentor

Harry has met one of his mentors, Hagrid, but he is yet to formally meet his dominant mentor, Dumbledore. However, Dumbledore has already been involved in mentoring Harry's life, as he was responsible for Harry's placement in the Dursley household when his parents were slain. This action was undertaken to protect Harry (*PS*, pp. 15-16).

Crossing the First Threshold

In *PS* Harry must pass a number of thresholds rather than just one, to enter his new wizarding world. These thresholds are not the dramatic episodes that occur in many hero journeys but they do show Harry's commitment to a new life. In London Harry is assisted by Hagrid to get into Diagon Alley, a witches shopping area, which is hidden away from the muggle world. He is also assisted by Hagrid to get some of money left to him by his parents from Gringotts, a bank run by goblins that is positioned in the Alley, which will help him break the shackles of poverty and enter a world of economic independence. He purchases items that will assist him to live effectively in the wizarding world. These include a wand and an owl. At King's Cross he is taught how to get through the protective barrier at Platform 9 ³/₄, so that he can get the Hogwarts train, the formal means of entering his new world/life. Here he meets Ron Weasley and many of the Weasley family. On the train Draco Malfoy threatens him with the same fate as his parents. Draco may be seen here as a Threshold Guardian (Vogler, 1999, p. 129). Harry then has to travel over water, a common symbolic threshold, to arrive at his new home, Hogwarts. Finally Harry must pass the Sorting Hat ceremony. This hat takes some time in deciding whether Harry will go in the Gryffindor or the Slytherin house. With his acceptance into the Gryffindor House Harry has now crossed from the Dursley family into a new surrogate family (*PS*, 55-97).

Trials, Allies and Enemies

Harry's trials had begun when he was a baby and Voldemort tried to kill him. However his conscious trials begin on the train to Hogwarts when he overcomes Malfoy's threats. Soon Malfoy and Snape are his perceived enemies. He also learns of Voldemort's attempts to kill him, which establishes Voldemort as a perceived enemy. In retrieving Neville's Rememberall, a trial, Harry's abilities on a broomstick are discovered. He becomes friends with Ron on the Hogwarts train and he soon welcomes Hermione as an ally after helping to save her from the trial of the troublesome Mountain Troll. These two young wizards offer their own talents to assist Harry in his trials. Hermione helps discover information about the Philosopher's Stone and inadvertently helps save Harry when Quirrell tries to kill him during a Quidditch match. Harry shows his talents in Quidditch by recovering the golden snitch. By this stage Harry has begun to work out how his new world operates (PS, 101- 141).

Approach to the Inmost Cave

Harry learns more about himself through the Mirror of Erised, which he discovers in a darkened room. The Mirror of Erised will later be a key part of Voldemort's quest for immortality. Through this object Harry is able to see his parents. As with many quest stories there is rescue of loved ones because Harry has now achieved a link with his parents. There is also the harbouring of a potential monster, which is another element common to many quest stories, as Harry, through the desires he views in the mirror, could be driven to madness. With the help of Dumbledore Harry is able to overcome the temptation of the mirror, a minor ordeal. Dumbledore has now become Harry's primary mentor. He has provided Harry with sound advice and with the elixir of the invisibility cloak (PS, pp. 148-157).

Ordeal

As stated above, the Mirror of Erised is a minor ordeal while the main ordeal for Harry, in the *PS* quest story, is located further than indicated in Vogler’s general hero journey structure. Vogler places the main ordeal after the *Approach to the Inmost Cave* (1999, p. 12) but in *PS* the main ordeal occurs after the structural point entitled *The Road Back*. Such variations in the hero journey are not unusual.

Reward

Harry has received the gift of the invisibility cloak earlier so that he can access the mirror. It is a gift from the grave as it was his father’s. It assists Harry in sneaking around Hogwarts to gather information and in providing cover for Hermione, Harry and Ron in their final adventure in *PS*. He has also received Dumbledore’s advice regarding the Mirror of Erised, which will later assist him in his confrontation with Voldemort/Quirrell. This is where Dumbledore properly shows his mentoring role. Harry learns that desire can be one’s worst enemy as it can literally destroy your humanity. This notion is demonstrated in Voldemort’s quest for immortality and power that derives him of his humanity (*PS*, pp. 148-157).

The Road Back

Through the detention he receives Harry gains information that will help him on his quest. During the trip to the forbidden forest with Malfoy, they find a hooded creature feeding off the blood of a slain unicorn. The centaur Firenze saves Harry and also provides information that explains why the Philosopher’s Stone is at risk (*PS*, 181-189).

Ordeal

Harry’s main mentor, Dumbledore, is away so Harry must face the main ordeal alone. However, Harry starts this ordeal with his friends Ron and Hermione. Initially Harry and his friends must overcome those who would restrict them. Harry must risk expulsion from Hogwarts as he needs to break school rules to stop the rebirth of Lord Voldemort. Then Harry, Ron and Hermione suffer the ordeal of stopping their friend Neville from threatening their quest. Using their respective talents the trio must overcome a number of minor ordeals until Harry faces the ultimate one. They descend past the three-headed dog, Fluffy (a reminder of Cerberus, the guardian dog of the Underworld in Greek mythology) and then the Devil’s Snare plant. They then retrieve a specific flying key, compete against a group of huge animated chess pieces, solve a riddle to avoid poisoning and complete a task. Ron and Harry will suffer physically from these ordeals (*PS*, pp. 195-208). Harry, now the lone hero, faces his key test/ordeal. He meets Voldemort/Quirrell alone. He must then look past the desire to use the Philosopher’s Stone for himself in order to stop Voldemort/Quirrell getting the Stone to provide Voldemort with eternal life. Dumbledore’s advice is instrumental here because he told Harry that in the mirror you are able to see what you most desire, which in this case is the Philosopher’s Stone (*PS*, p. 157). By looking in the mirror Harry sees the Philosopher’s Stone placed in his pocket, which is where it suddenly appears. Harry then overcomes Voldemort through the death of Quirrel (*PS*, pp. 195-214).

Resurrection

After struggling with Quirrell/Voldemort, Harry falls into darkness. He returns to consciousness with Dumbledore in the hospital wing. Order has been temporarily restored to the wizarding world and Harry has shown himself to be a real hero in his own right. Some people may read this episode as a literal ‘resurrection’ in that Harry may have died and

Dumbledore brought him back to life. This type of resurrection is found commonly in heroic myths (Vogler, 1999, p. 22). Ironically, Harry has temporarily hindered Voldemort’s chance of being resurrected to full life (*PS*, p. 214).

Return with the Elixir

The actions of Harry, Ron, Hermione and Neville provide Gryffindor with the points that give them the house cup when all had seemed lost. Hagrid passes Harry a book with animated photos of his parents in it that will provide a life-long connection to them. He returns to his old world, the Dursleys residence, with memories of his parents, new confidence, new wealth and new magical abilities which increase his manoeuvring power in the Dursley household (*PS*, pp. 220-223).

From these critics comments and the author’s own analysis of the books it is clear that Rowling draws on the hero journey in her *Harry Potter* series whether consciously or sub-consciously. Harry is a hero in all senses of the word. He crosses from the threshold of the ordinary world into the magical world at the beginning of each book and in that magical world he undertakes trials that reflect back to many of those undertaken in the great myths, including contact with creatures such as dragons, giant spiders, a basilisk, a three headed giant dog, and giants. Harry undertakes adventures in underground caverns, flying cars, attacking trees, dark forests and other places that are also reflections of scenes in familiar heroic adventures. Most importantly it is through these trials that we discover the personal values of the boy wizard.

Harry’s personal values are a necessary component of what makes him a success but they also are representative of values that will help each of us to be worthwhile contributors to society (Bridger, Cherrett, Granger, et al.). It is Harry’s choices that illustrate the values he

possesses. It is worth repeating Dumbledore’s remark on the importance of choice in order to emphasise this point: “It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities” (*CoS*, p. 245). As Deavel and Deavel (2002) state: “The drama of the series centres around Harry’s decisions in the face of danger, temptation, and doubt of his own abilities and future. Harry triumphs because he ultimately chooses what is morally good”

(¶ 23). This is particularly relevant when we remember that Harry and Voldemort, the opposites of each other in the values they espouse, are actually similar in many other ways. As noted previously both are half-blood orphans, conceived from a union between a muggle (non-wizarding) born and a wizard-born parent, both are Parselmouths (they can speak to snakes and understand their language), both have wands that contain feathers from the same phoenix and they even looked similar to each other in their youth. Therefore the different characters they become are determined predominantly by the choices they make.

Conclusion

The hero journey has been central to human history throughout the centuries. Humankind is attracted to such narratives because of the archetypes that occur in them and because each one is about us, about the struggles and triumphs that are part of our every day existence. We have become immersed in this type of narrative through the stories we read and the movies we watch. Our young people are not immune to this hero journey influence as shown by the popularity of books and films that exhibit the characteristics common to hero journeys. It is this connection that provides a key to their use in teaching values. If students are engaged in their learning then they will learn more and the *Harry Potter* series, and other suitable hero journeys, offer themselves as attractive, accessible and worthwhile teaching tools that will engage

students in their learning. As Carroll (2004) declares, hero journeys, such as *The Hobbit*, “are valuable additions to the primary school curriculum as a means of preparing and empowering young children for the journey of life” (p. 36).

CHAPTER 6: USING *HARRY POTTER*

“ . . . using the hero journey in the classroom encouraged students to move beyond the literal levels of meaning in narrative to initiate responses that were more personal and relevant to their own personal journey and understanding”

(Kori Nemme & Phil Fitzsimmons, 2004, p. 10)

Introduction

As previously stated, one of the essential tasks of Australian schools is the teaching of values. This is especially important in the area of Religious Education, which is a required curriculum area in Tasmanian Catholic schools. Societal values and religious values are taught to encourage students to live out those values and to help them assimilate into the society and/or religion to which they belong. Any form of Religious Education involves the teaching of values that define the religion being taught. In some circumstances it involves the teaching of the values of the religion that a school actively promotes such as a Catholic school teaching the values espoused by the Catholic Church. In other cases teachers are instructing students in values of alternative religions so that students are able to be better informed and more tolerant of other religious beliefs.

A key component of this thesis is the use of the *Harry Potter* series as an educational tool specifically in the teaching of these values. This chapter outlines the use of the books in the classroom for instruction in both religious education values and secular values. It stresses the series' use as a tool that provides opportunities to teach and embed in students not just basic literacy skills but higher-order thinking skills. This includes being able to critically analyse and transform texts and other information that the students receive. When students

gain these higher thinking skills they are able to make use of them throughout their lives: “It has become essential to develop critical thinking skills so that young people will become problem solvers in their own lives” (Carroll, p. 130).

***Harry Potter* as a multi-dimensional teaching tool**

For generations the teaching of literacy skills has been seen as a key component in providing an effective education for students. As Alloway and Gilbert (1996) state: “literacy competence is a crucial requirement for active and informed citizenship and a critical component in moves towards a more equitable and just society” (p. 1). In the last fifty years the effective teaching of literacy competency to students, as well as effective teaching of other subject areas, has been tied to the need to teach students higher-order thinking skills (Bloom, 1956). The *Harry Potter* books provide a resource to assist in achieving competent literacy skills in schools because they provide the opportunity to teach and use higher thinking skills. The skills that are taught and embedded through the use of the *Harry Potter* novels can be used in other areas of the curriculum.

The *Harry Potter* books provide an opportunity for students to undertake a literacy experience which provides “them with a broad knowledge base from which they can make meaning of the world” (Collings, 1997, p. 8). Students need to have access to texts that stimulate them in any curriculum area. The popularity of the *Harry Potter* texts with both young female and male readers provides just such an opportunity because their popularity would seem to be based, at least partly, on young people making a connection with the characters in the stories. The *Harry Potter* texts provide the chance for students to “develop a genuine appreciation of diversity and an awareness and understanding of how people are

constituted by the various discourses and social experiences to which they have access”
(Collings, p. 8).

The Literate Learner

Teaching literacy is no longer seen as the teaching of a single skill because if students are making full meaning of the texts that they are reading then they need to draw on a variety of interwoven skills and resources. Peter Freebody and Allan Luke, in their *Four Resources Model* (1990) make mention of four interwoven skills that are essential for students to develop if they are to be truly critical of the texts they read. As Freebody states:

the model interrogated literacy curriculums and pedagogical strategies. Effective literacy draws on a repertoire of practices that allow learners, as they engage in reading and writing activities, to:

- break the code of texts: recognising and using the fundamental features and architecture of written texts including: alphabet, sounds in words, spelling, conventions and patterns of sentence structure and text
- participate in the meanings of text: understanding and composing meaningful written, visual and spoken texts from within the meaning systems of particular cultures, institutions, families, communities, nation-states and so forth;
- use texts functionally: traversing the social relations around texts; knowing about and acting on the different cultural and social functions that various texts perform both inside and outside school and knowing that these functions shape the way texts are structured, their tone, their degree of formality and their sequence of components;

- critically analyse and transform texts: understanding and acting on the knowledge that texts are not neutral, that they represent particular views and silence other points of view, influence people's ideas; and that their designs and discourses can be critiqued and redesigned, in novel and hybrid ways (Freebody, 1999, ¶ 13).

The *Harry Potter* texts offer themselves as a teaching tool in this area. The texts enable students to strengthen their literacy skills through the reading of the texts and through close analysis of the text. As previously stated, the *Harry Potter* series particularly offers itself for critical analysis. This includes examination of how the text is constructed and analysis of the perspectives offered in the books. Lessons engaging these books could enable students to critically question many aspects of the series including the bias towards certain groups such as elves, centaurs and giants, the “traditional” portrayal of the mother figure in the books through the characters of Mrs Weasley and Mrs Dursley, and the inadequacies in the depiction of both Professor McGonagall, as the senior female teacher at Hogwarts, and of Hermione, as the key female figure throughout the series. The skills students develop can be transferred into many aspects of their daily life, whether it involves critical analysis of what is presented by the mass media or how to make direct decisions that affect one’s own personal life.

Examples of the types of effective analysis that can be undertaken in the area of Values Education, using the *Harry Potter* texts as a basis, are outlined in lesson plans accompanying this thesis (*Appendix 9 & 10*). The importance of critical analysis, and the higher-order thinking skills that go with it, are an essential part of the pedagogy that underpins both the mandated Religious Education curriculum for Tasmanian Catholic schools and the pedagogy that underpins the Tasmanian state curriculum, *Essential Learnings* (White, p. 34).

Developing higher-order thinking skills to fully utilise the *Harry Potter* books

While the *Harry Potter* books offer a valuable resource for education they are only valuable if students have the necessary skills, as outlined above, to make use of them. Students need especially to develop higher-order thinking competencies if they are to reach a deeper reading of the texts rather than just a shallow surface reading. Such expertise is necessary if students are to become effective critical thinkers. In this thesis higher-order thinking skills “refers to the thinking that takes place at the higher levels of abstraction where analysis, critical interpretation, creative application and reasoned evaluation occur. Higher-order thinking is promoted by teaching which encourages students to reflect on how they learn and what has been learnt” (Department of Education. Tasmania Government, *Effective teaching*, n.d., p. 1). Proficiency in higher-order thinking can be taught and learnt which enables the learner to not only think but to think about their thinking. This facility for higher-order thinking is a key component of Freebody and Luke’s *Four Resources Model* and is especially relevant if effective textual analysis is to occur. Students need not just to know factual information but also to have skills to analyse, synthesise and effectively evaluate that information. The Catholic Education Office in Tasmania, in recent years, has undertaken professional development for teachers in how they can teach students higher-order thinking skills.

This professional development undertaken in Tasmanian schools, and many of the documents that have arisen from it, draw from the work of Benjamin Bloom and his associates (1956) and other researchers reflecting on this work especially Lorin Anderson, a former Bloom pupil, who modified Bloom’s original taxonomy (1999). Bloom “believed that education should focus on ‘mastery’ of subjects and the promotion of higher forms of thinking, rather than a utilitarian approach to simply transferring facts” (Chapman, 2005, p.

1). The higher-order thinking skills being taught at Tasmanian Catholic schools rely heavily on using Bloom's taxonomy levels as a guide to encourage students to employ higher-order thinking skills.

Bloom's taxonomy

Bloom and his associates (1956) developed a taxonomy of learning objectives for teachers. Over the following years this taxonomy has been modified and expanded. Bloom's Taxonomy model identified three overlapping domains of educational activities. They were

1. Cognitive domain: intellectual capability or mental skills
2. Affective domain: one's feelings and emotions
3. Psychomotor domain: manual and physical skills (Clark, 1999, p. 1)

As the cognitive domain involves intellectual capability it has been the model used for much of the work on higher-order thinking skills. Bloom and his associates classified "learning behaviours according to six levels ranging from Knowledge, which focuses upon recitation of facts, to Evaluation, which requires complex valuing and weighing of information. Each level relates to a higher level of cognitive ability" (Wakefield, 1998, ¶ 2).

These categories are:

- 1 **Knowledge:** remembering or recalling appropriate, previously learned information to draw out factual (usually right or wrong) answers. Use words and phrases such as: how many, when, where, list, define, tell, describe, identify, etc., to draw out factual answers, testing students' recall and recognition.
- 2 **Comprehension:** grasping or understanding the meaning of informational materials. Use words such as: describe, explain, estimate, predict, identify, differentiate, etc., to encourage students to translate, interpret, and extrapolate.

3 **Application:** applying previously learned information (or knowledge) to new and unfamiliar situations. Use words such as: demonstrate, apply, illustrate, show, solve, examine, classify, experiment, etc., to encourage students to apply knowledge to situations that are new and unfamiliar.

4 **Analysis:** breaking down information into parts, or examining (and trying to understand the organizational structure of) information. Use words and phrases such as: what are the differences, analyze, explain, compare, separate, classify, arrange, etc., to encourage students to break information down into parts.

5 **Synthesis:** applying prior knowledge and skills to combine elements into a pattern not clearly there before. Use words and phrases such as: combine, rearrange, substitute, create, design, invent, what if, etc., to encourage students to combine elements into a pattern that's new.

6 **Evaluation:** judging or deciding according to some set of criteria, without real right or wrong answers. Use words such as: assess, decide, measure, select, explain, conclude, compare, summarize, etc., to encourage students to make judgements according to a set of criteria (*Teachervision.com*. p. 1).

Through reference to Bloom's taxonomy teachers are able to model higher-order thinking strategies in the way they teach the *Harry Potter* books and the questions they ask regarding the series. Students can begin to use, in their own work, the thinking skills and processes demonstrated by the teacher. Because Bloom's taxonomy is categorised into six different thinking levels it is suitable for use in all classrooms that may be using the *Harry Potter* books. When teaching younger students, teachers would tend to be more reliant on the bottom three categories which are lower-order thinking skills but as the students' ability level grows so would the level of thinking be expected to grow so that more emphasis is placed on

the upper levels, the higher-order thinking skills' levels. The taxonomy also caters for students of mixed abilities in the same class because it provides a variety of thinking levels that can be used by the teacher so that all levels of student thinking are catered for and higher thinking levels are encouraged.

***Harry Potter* and Bloom's taxonomy**

As previously mentioned the *Harry Potter* series is suitable for use, in conjunction with Bloom's taxonomy, to assist students in the acquisition and embedding of higher-order thinking skills. As mentioned, these skills are important in life and can be used to critically analyse the personal values one adopts. A simple table, based on Bloom's taxonomy, is provided below. It provides some appropriate verbs, question beginnings and potential activities that can be applied to various *Harry Potter* books. The structure of the table itself is based on work from Joan Dalton and David Smith (1986).

Level of thinking	Key verbs	Sample question beginnings	Potential activities
Knowledge: remembering or recalling appropriate, previously learned information to draw out factual (usually right or wrong) answers.	How many, when, where, list, define, tell, describe, sequence, identify, relate, locate, write, find, state, name, label, reproduce, quote, pronounce, match, recite, count, draw, recall, point out, recount, acknowledge, match.	What happened after...? How many...? Who was it that...? Can you name the...? Describe what happened at...? Who spoke to...? Can you tell why...? Find the meaning of...? What is...? Which is true or false...? Name all the...?	Write a list of the main events in the story. With a classmate make a timeline of events in <i>PS</i> . Write a list of Hogwarts staff you remember being mentioned. In your study group write a list of any mythical creatures you remember from the book.

Level of thinking	Key verbs	Sample question beginnings	Potential activities
<p>Comprehension: grasping or understanding the meaning of informational materials.</p>	<p>Describe, conclude, explain, estimate, predict, identify, differentiate, report, illustrate, interpret, explain, review, demonstrate, outline, discuss, distinguish between, restate, translate, summaries, tell, compare, rephrase, recognise, order.</p>	<p>Can you write in your own words...? Can you write a brief outline...? What do you think could of happened next...? Who do you think...? What was the main idea...? Who was the key character...? Can you distinguish between...? What differences exist between...? Can you provide an example of what you mean...? Can you provide a definition for...?</p>	<p>Draw a new book cover for <i>PoA</i>. With a classmate discuss what you think the Philosopher's Stone could do. Predict what might happen in the last <i>Harry Potter</i> book. In your study group write and perform a play based on one of the incidents in <i>GoF</i>. Retell part of the story in your own words. Write a new blurb for <i>GoF</i>.</p>
<p>Application: applying previously learned information (or knowledge) to new and unfamiliar situations.</p>	<p>Change, choose, demonstrate, apply, illustrate, show, solve, examine, classify, experiment, use, construct, complete, discover, relate, present, classify, interview, prepare, produce, transfer, calculate, compile, construct, select.</p>	<p>Do you know another instance where...? Could this have happened in...? Can you group by characteristics such as...? What factors would you change if...? Can you apply the method used to some experience of your own...? What questions would you ask of...? From the information given, can you develop a set of instructions about...? Would this information be useful if you had a ...?</p>	<p>Construct a model of a Nimbus 2000. Make a diorama to illustrate an important event in <i>CoS</i>. Play celebrity heads using characters from the books. Make a map showing the different rooms in Hogwarts. Construct a Marauder's Map for your school. Make up a quiz questions on events, characters, etc., that appear in the books. Construct a clay model of one of the mythical creatures mentioned in the books.</p>

Level of thinking	Key verbs	Sample question beginnings	Potential activities
<p>Analysis: breaking down information into parts, or examining (and trying to understand the organizational structure of) information.</p>	<p>Characterize, point out, analyse, explain, compare, deduce, separate, classify, differentiate, explore, arrange, advertise, explain, identify, categorise, diagram, investigate, contrast, examine, outline, research, debate, depict, distinguish.</p>	<p>Which events could have happened...? If ... happened, what might the ending have been? How was this similar to...? What was the underlying theme of...? What do you see as other possible outcomes? Why did ... changes occur? Can you compare your ... with that presented in...? Can you explain what must have happened when...? How is ... similar to ...? What are some of the problems of...? Can you distinguish between...? What were some of the motives behind...? What was the problem with...?</p>	<p>Write a commercial to sell one of the magical products mentioned in the books. Conduct a survey to investigate why people like the <i>Harry Potter</i> books. In study groups use a chart to find the hero journey structure in each book. Undertake research to try and identify why some people support Voldemort and others don't. With a classmate prepare a report about what would be the repercussions if all elves were granted freedom.</p>
<p>Synthesis: applying prior knowledge and skills to combine elements into a pattern not clearly there before.</p>	<p>Combine, rearrange, substitute, create, design, invent, what if, compose, predict, plan, construct, imagine, propose, devise, formulate, organise, make, develop, extrapolate, demonstrate, hypothesise, forecast, integrate, produce, rewrite, perform.</p>	<p>Can you design a ... to ...? Why not compose a song about...? Can you see a possible solution to...? If you had access to all resources how would you deal with...? Why don't you devise your own way to deal with...? What would happen if...? How many ways can you...? Can you create new and unusual uses for...? Can you write a new recipe for ...? Can you develop a proposal which would...</p>	<p>In your study group create a <i>Harry Potter</i> board game. In pairs develop a new team game that makes use of magic broomsticks. Create a new product for the Weasley twins' store. Plan a marketing campaign for the Weasley's twins' store. Forecast what would have happened to the wizarding world or muggle world if Voldemort had got the Philosopher's Stone.</p>

Level of thinking	Key verbs	Sample question beginnings	Potential activities
Evaluation: judging or deciding according to some set of criteria, without real right or wrong answers.	Assess, evaluate, decide, measure, select, explain, conclude, compare, choose, summarise, appraise, determine, prove, rank, discuss, rate, recommend, argue for/against, verify, debate, justify, choose, judge, critique, prioritise.	Is there a better solution to...? Judge the value of... Can you defend your position about...? Do you think ... is a good or a bad thing? How would you have handled...? What changes to ... would you recommend? Do you believe? Are you a ... person? How would you feel if...? How effective are...? What do you think about...?	Prepare a list of criteria to judge the success of each <i>Harry Potter</i> book. In your study groups conduct a debate about whether the elves should be freed. With a classmate create a set of rules that wizards need to follow. Write a letter to Dumbledore advising on changes needed at Hogwarts. Write a half yearly report about Harry from Severus Snape's viewpoint.

How Religious Education is taught in Tasmania

As previously stated the Tasmanian Catholic schools, which are under the control of the Tasmanian Catholic Education Commission and its administrative arm, the Catholic Education Office, follow a curriculum framework entitled *Good News for Living (GNFL)* (2005). This curriculum framework draws on “four key perspectives that underpin the conceptualisation and construction of a religious education program” (*GNFL*, p. 58). The document expresses these as:

- The Doctrinal Dimension
- The Catechetical Dimension
- The Pedagogical Dimension

- The Curriculum Dimension (*GNFL*, pp. 58-71).

The Doctrinal Dimension refers to the essential understandings of the Catholic Faith as explained in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1997). An example of one of these doctrinal concepts is “ We respond to God’s commandments by treating each other with respect, love and compassion” (*GNFL*, p. 111, based on *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, ¶1893). These concepts are organised, in the Curriculum framework, under eight strands which are defined by their central theology. They are entitled:

Jesus Christ

God

Church

Scripture

Sacraments

Christian Life

Christian Prayer

Religion and Society (*GNFL*, 2005, pp. 89-118).

The Catechetical Dimension involves the religious education programme guiding students in the process of catechesis that consists of three essential characteristics:

Knowledge: showing interest in the Gospel, wondering, inquiring, seeking, moving towards faith

Conversion: meeting Jesus, desiring to know him more and to follow him

Response: in prayer, in life, in relationship with God leading to a fruitful profession and expression of faith (*GNFL*, 2005, p. 63).

The Catechetical approach to planning preferred by *GNFL* (2005) is Thomas Groome's *Shared Christian Praxis* (1991). This approach involves non-sequential movements, which can be bonded together, and which seek to encourage transformational learning (*GNFL*, pp. 63-65).

Focusing Activity

The focusing activity introduces, orientates and motivates students to the study of a generative topic. It introduces the focusing theme or symbol and facilitates students' entry into the first movement which may be:

- **Naming**

Learners are invited to participate in an experience or to express in some form their own or other's experience that relates particularly to the topic.

- **Reflecting Critically**

Participants are encouraged to reflect critically on what has already been expressed. Why do we do this? Why do others act the way they do? What options are there? This may lead to further investigation or inquiry into the topics.

- **Accessing the Christian Story and Vision**

Here the participants access the relevant Scripture and Church Tradition using the best scholarship that is available.

- **Integrating and Understanding**

Participants reflect on their own understandings, experience, views and questions in the light of the Christian Story and Vision. By placing the two in relationship they deepen their understanding.

- **Responding**

In response to this integration, participants are challenged to identify appropriate ways of living the Christian life (*GNFL*, p. 65).

In using Groome's *Shared Christian Praxis* planning approach the Catholic Education office encourages the use of higher-order thinking skills. The *Shared Christian Praxis* approach is in accordance with Bloom's taxonomy as Groome himself points out:

A shared praxis approach calls for examinations that invite (a) an accurate expression of and familiarity with the "cognitive content" made accessible, (b) understanding that reflects students' own analysis and critical thinking about the cognitive content (most reliably evidenced by an ability to express it clearly in their own terms), (c) evaluation and judgement by students of the "cognitive content" they encountered, and (d) their chosen and tested perception of its meaning and import for themselves and others who take it seriously. Although the sequence is different, I note that my "taxonomy" of cognitive criteria is similar to what Bloom and others proposed as evidence of authentic cognition (1991, p. 276).

The Pedagogical Dimension approach preferred by *GNFL* (2005, pp. 66-69) is the *DEEP* Pedagogical framework constructed by Dan White (2004), the Director for Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Hobart. White's research into brain-based learning and the best way students learn resulted in the formation of the *DEEP* pedagogy which refers to the four principles of:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Discernment: | The generation of personal meaning and understanding |
| Enrichment: | Catering for individualised learning |
| Engagement: | Personal choice to be involved in learning |
| Participation: | The communal dimension of learning |

Whilst the four key principles are designed to accentuate specific pedagogical considerations, it must be recognised there is a mutual reciprocity when these principles are translated into classroom practice. (White, p. 114).

Through the use of the *DEEP* pedagogy teachers are able “to reflect on their teaching practice and to make conscious decisions as to the most appropriate strategies that will promote higher-order thinking processes and quality student learning” (*GNFL*, p. 66). The *DEEP* pedagogy strongly emphasises the need to teach and use higher-order thinking skills. White’s own research noticed the absence of higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills in many religious education programmes (2004, pp. 120-121). In forming his *DEEP* pedagogy White highlights the need for higher-order thinking skills e.g. “1.2 Emphasises critical and lateral thinking processes” (p. 176).

The Curriculum Dimension of *GNFL* (2005) is guided by the previously mentioned *Essential Learnings Framework* (2002), which was developed by the Tasmanian Education Department. *GNFL* encourages a four stage curriculum design which:

draws on the *Teaching for Understanding Framework* of Blythe et al (1998), and the *Backward Design* approach to curriculum design use by Wiggins and McTighe (2000, p.8). Principles underpinning backward design encourage teachers to make judgements about important learning goals for their students, to decide on appropriate ways students can show their learning, and to plan the appropriate learning experiences for effective student learning (p. 69).

The *Essential Learnings Framework* (2002) also draws heavily from the Freebody and Luke *Four Resources Model* (Department of Education, *Updated and new being literate support materials*, 2005, p. 32) and promotes the use of Bloom’s taxonomy as a useful tool in promoting higher-order thinking (*Effective Teaching*, itag.education.tas.gov.au/effectteach

Thinking/thinklearn.htm, pp. 1-2). This *Essential Learnings Framework* influences the teaching of Religious Education in Tasmanian Catholic schools as well as that of secular subjects (GNFL, 2005, p. 2). Teachers are encouraged to:

create a religious education program which draws on the enduring understandings of the faith tradition and the best practice within the dimensions of catechesis, curriculum and pedagogy. These dimensions do not stand alone. Whilst taking into account the readiness and capabilities of students, these dimensions are interwoven in such a manner that religious educators are empowered to skilfully and critically construct rich, relevant and meaningful programs which respect the integrity of the Christian message. In Tasmania, this multi-dimensional perspective on learning and teaching in religious education is influenced by the *Essential Learnings Framework* (GNFL, p. 59).

Essentially, in teaching values in Religious Education in a Catholic school a teacher is guided by the GNFL (2005) curriculum framework that supports the *Essential Learnings Framework* (2002). In teaching values away from the Religious Education lessons in Tasmanian Catholic schools and in teaching values in a secular class in a non-religious school a teacher is guided by the *Essential Learnings Framework* (2002). Both these documents place emphasis on the use of higher-order thinking skills with the intention that students develop strong critical-thinking skills. The GNFL document quite clearly states that Christians need to be critically reflective as indicated through its adoption of Groome's *Shared Christian Praxis*, which, as previously stated, stresses the need to be critically reflective. Other statements in the document also mention the need for critical thinking (GNFL, p. 22, p. 23, p. 25).

Using *Harry Potter* in a Religious Education Values Unit

As explained previously there is a strict framework for teaching values in Religious Education in Tasmanian schools. Due to the mandated *Doctrinal Concepts and Values and Purposes* central to each unit of work in Religious Education (GNFL, 2005, pp. 84-118), as well as purposeful scripture references and accepted Church theological interpretations, the author has only been able to provide limited documentation of how to use the *Harry Potter* series in teaching values in Religious Education. The author has concentrated on how the series could be used in the *Suggested Assessment Tasks* and *Suggested Learning and Teaching Experience* sections of a unit entitled *Living as Disciples* (http://www.ceo.hobart.catholic.edu.au/resources_and_documents.php?menu=/faith_education_service.php). This planning unit (*Appendix 9*) is drawn from the *GNFL Resource Banks* available at http://www.ceo.hobart.catholic.edu.au/resources_and_documents.php?menu=/faith_education_service.php. It is aimed at a Grade Five/Six class level.

As mentioned the *Harry Potter* books provide a valuable resource for use in the Resource Bank unit outlined and other units because of the values that are apparent in the series. Previously in this thesis mention has been made of the personal values that are exhibited by the characters in the books through the choices they make. This relates to the personal values Jesus himself demonstrated in the choices he made and the stories he told. As students engage with the characters in the *Harry Potter* series they can provide a stimulus to their learning. Connected knowing is an important part of the learning progress. The *DEEP* pedagogy refers to the need to facilitate “connected knowing with previous religious and secular understandings” (White, p. 176), which would include the understandings students have reached through their connection with the *Harry Potter* series. White emphasises that “Learners need an opportunity to reconnect with the content of previous experiences and

lessons prior to proceeding to new activities” (p. 119). White’s focus group research indicated “that teachers were acutely aware that prior learning and experiences influenced the capacity of students to meaningfully engage in an activity’ (p. 162). These previous experiences could certainly involve their connection with the *Harry Potter* series. There are, of course, other resources such as the stories of saints and the portrayal of other characters in fictional stories that students may connect to and would be useful in teaching Christian values.

Using *Harry Potter* in a secular Values Education Unit

This planning unit is based on the *Essential Learnings Framework* (2002) and sample units provided by the Education Department of Tasmania from the *Learning, Teaching and Assessment Guide* at <http://www.ltag.education.tas.gov.au>. As stated previously *Essential Learnings* is the curriculum framework adopted by Tasmanian State Education schools and has also been implemented in Tasmanian Catholic Schools.

When planning for any *Essential Learnings* unit teachers are encouraged to use a common planning structure with an accepted terminology. This includes the use of certain terms such as “Generative Topic”, a “Throughline” and “Understanding Goals”. The secular unit on values provided at *Appendix 10* draws on an established Department of Education unit entitled *Your Values, Your Choice*, which is referenced where appropriate. It covers the whole unit including areas where the *Harry Potter* texts would not be used. This unit also draws on the teaching strategies provided by Kate O’Brien, Steve Todd and Dan White, which have been adapted in some places, with permission (O’Brien & White, 2001, & O’Brien, Todd & White, 2003). These teaching strategies draw heavily on Herrmann’s (1988, 1996) work on the four thinking quadrants of the brain which he classifies as: analytic,

organised, personalised and synthesised. By using a variety of these teaching strategies, which draw from one of the four preferred thinking modes and encourage the use of higher thinking skills, students should be more engaged in their learning and gain more from it. The teaching strategies used also encourage co-operative learning as many are group-based activities which place the teacher in the role of a facilitator, ensuring that groups work constructively and that students learn from this group work. Co-operative learning is encouraged in both the *Essential Learnings (Essential Learnings: Framework 2003, p. 17 and p. 28)* and *GNFL* curriculum documents (2005, p. 69), as it is seen as an effective tool to increase student learning in the area being studied as well as improving their social skills.

Conclusion

Our young people face innumerable challenges as they try to find their place in a world that is continuously changing. This world often encourages selfishness over selflessness so that the Christian values that were once dominant in Western society are now under threat. Federal and State Government bodies have recognised this threat and have undertaken moves to instil traditional values in our youth specifically through our education systems. Recent curriculum documents have encouraged the education of students in values but they have also encouraged the use of higher thinking skills so that students do not learn just facts but actually learn how to think. The *Harry Potter* series offers itself as a worthwhile tool in both these areas. They are books which both connect with students and also provide values that are worthwhile and inline with those being supported by both Federal and State Governments as well as Christian education institutions.

Harry Potter is more than just a boy wizard; he is “a seeker”. As a seeker, he physically chases after the golden snitch facing opposition players and Bludgers. Yet Harry is

also a seeker of justice, guided by his personal values rather than his flying skills, facing opposition from foes with the occasional bludger thrown in. Our young people need to be seekers of justice; they need to understand that the journey to justice is not easy and that setbacks will indeed occur. Their journey for justice is, like Harry's, filled with moments of joy and moments of despair, moments of doubt as well as moments of strength. When navigating this difficult journey the values students adopt may prove to be a guiding light.

. . . you are a living a book every day. . . . Each day is a page. Each year is a chapter.

. . . Few of us will do the spectacular deeds of heroism that spread themselves across the pages of our newspapers in big black headlines. But we can all be heroic in the little things of everyday life. We can do the helpful things, say the kind words, meet our difficulties with courage and high hearts, stand up for the right when the cost is high, keep our word even though it means sacrifice, be a giver instead of a destroyer. Often this quiet, humble heroism is the greatest heroism of all. . . .

You are the hero of your book and it is up to you to think and live like a hero. Day by day your book grows toward the completed volume of your life story. You can't do anything about the part of your book already written; that must stand. But look at those glorious white pages ahead! (Wilferd A. Peterson, n.d. pp. 1-2).

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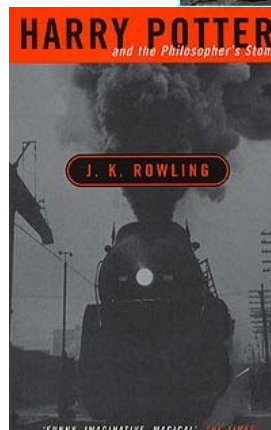
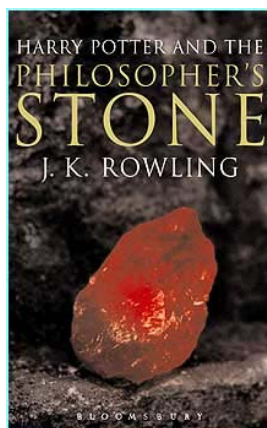
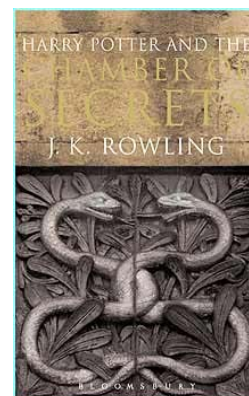
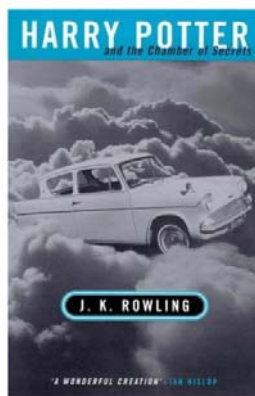
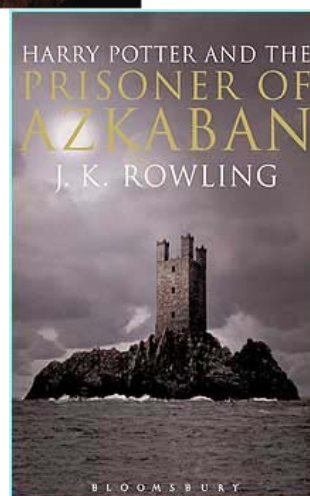
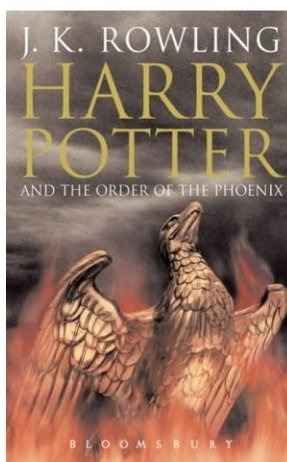
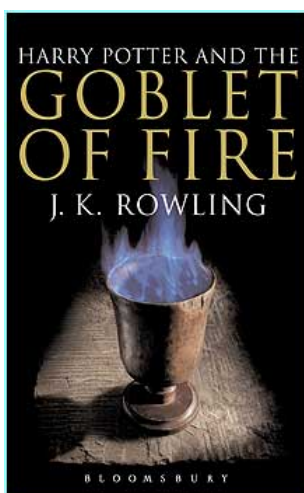
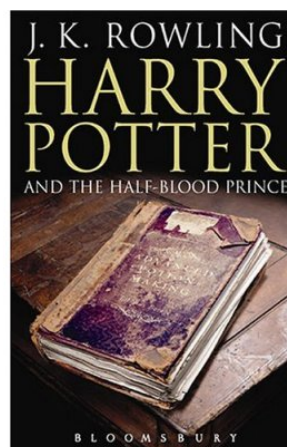
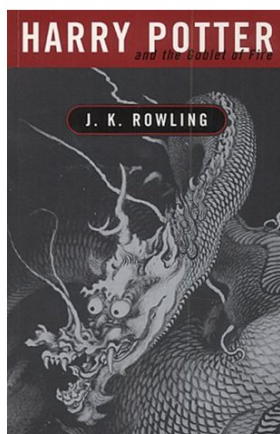
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Appendix 1: *Harry Potter* adult covers



Appendix 2: Interview Permission Forms

Australian Catholic University
Brisbane Sydney Canberra Ballarat Melbourne



STUDENT RESEARCH INFORMATION LETTER TO PARENTS/CARERS OF PARTICIPANTS

Title of Research Project: The *Harry Potter* books: Critical response, youth response and their value in Religious Education.

Staff Supervisor: Associate Professor Margot Hillel OAM, Australian Catholic University, St Patrick's Campus, Melbourne.

Student Researcher: Anthony Lennard

Dear Parents

I am undertaking a Doctoral research project that centres on the topic: The *Harry Potter* books: Critical response, youth response and their value in Religious Education.

My name is Anthony Lennard and I am a Catholic school teacher. I am also a Doctoral student at the Australian Catholic University, Melbourne Campus. I am writing to you to seek permission to interview your child for my research project. Permission to undertake this research has been granted by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University, the Director of Catholic Education in Tasmania, Mr Dan White and the Principal of MacKillop College, Mr Craig Deayton.

I have outlined details of the research project I am undertaking below and attached the relevant consent/assent forms. **It is important that you read the information below and the attached forms carefully before you sign anything. It is also important that you talk to you child regarding the information printed below and gain their verbal and written consent to be part of this project before you agree to their participation.** Please note that not all children who have returned parental consent and participant assent forms will be able to be interviewed.

RESEARCH PROJECT OUTLINE:

The research project is aimed at ascertaining whether students in Grade Seven and Eight find values in the *Harry Potter* series of books. This research will be undertaken through the use of oral interviews with individual students.

Students will be removed from classes for individual interviews, which will take approximately twenty minutes. They will be under adult supervision during the interviews by myself, the interviewer. Any school work missed during the interview will not need to be made up in the student's free time.

The data collected will be used in the research being undertaken on the Doctoral project mentioned above. It may also be used in other publications centred on children's response to the *Harry Potter* series of books, particularly their worth as resources for teaching values.

Only those students who return signed consent and assent forms to the school will be interviewed. Students also need to have read at least one *Harry Potter* book. These students are free to decline the interview or leave the interview at any time and return to class. No more than thirty students will be interviewed.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study as the names of students being interviewed will only be used by MacKillop College for administrative matters, as the interviewer will not record any students' names. MacKillop College will destroy the list naming the students to be interviewed after the interviews have been finished. Confidentiality will also be maintained in any report of the study or any publications resulting from the research. The name of the school or its general location will not be mentioned in the study and only a student's sex and age will be used for referencing and this will occur only as aggregated data.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this research feel free to firstly contact my supervisor, Associate Professor Margot Hillel OAM, Aust. Cath. University, St Patrick's Campus, Melbourne, Phone: (03) 9953 3240, Email: M.Hillel@patrick.acu.edu.au

If you are unable to contact Associate Professor Hillel please contact, Mr Anthony Lennard, during work hours, on 62 283335.

In the event that you have any complaint or concern about the way you or your child has been treated during the study, or if you have any query my supervisor has not been able to satisfy, you may contact the Chair of the **Human Research Ethics Committee** care of:

Research services
Australian Catholic University
Melbourne Campus
Locked Bag 4115
FITZROY VIC 3065
Tel: 03 9953 3157
Fax: 03 9953 3315

Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and will be fully investigated by this committee and the complainant will be informed of the outcome.

If you are happy for your child to take part in this project, and they are happy to participate in it, please retain this letter and one copy of the consent form and return the green consent form (filled in and signed) to MacKillop College office by Friday, July 15th, 2005.

Yours sincerely

Anthony Lennard
B.A., Dip. Ed., Grad. Dip. R.E. Studs., Grad. Dip. Ed.Admin., M. Ed., M.Ed.Admin.

PARENT/CARER COPY TO KEEP

Australian Catholic University
Brisbane Sydney Canberra Ballarat Melbourne



CONSENT FORM for

Title of Research Project: The *Harry Potter* books: Critical response, youth response and their value in Religious Education.

Staff Supervisor: Associate Professor Margot Hillel OAM, Australian Catholic University, St Patrick's Campus, Melbourne.

Student Researcher: Anthony Lennard

Investigator/Interviewer: Mr Anthony Lennard

I _____ (parent/carer) have read and understood the information provided in the, INFORMATION LETTER TO PARENTS/CARERS OF PARTICIPANTS. I have also discussed this project with my child. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree that my child, nominated below, may participate in this activity, realising that I can withdraw my consent at any time and that they may withdraw their consent to be interviewed at any time. I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or may be provided to other researchers in a form that only identifies my child by age and sex.

Name of parent/carer _____

Signature _____ Date: _____

Name of child: _____

TO BE FILLED OUT AND RETURNED TO SCHOOL OFFICE BY
FRIDAY, JULY 15th

Australian Catholic University
Brisbane Sydney Canberra Ballarat Melbourne



CONSENT FORM for

Title of Research Project: The *Harry Potter* books: Critical response, youth response and their value in Religious Education.

Staff Supervisor: Associate Professor Margot Hillel OAM, Australian Catholic University, St Patrick's Campus, Melbourne.

Student Researcher: Anthony Lennard

Investigator/Interviewer: Mr Anthony Lennard

I _____ (parent/carer) have read and understood the information provided in the, INFORMATION LETTER TO PARENTS/CARERS OF PARTICIPANTS. I have also discussed this project with my child. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree that my child, nominated below, may participate in this activity, realising that I can withdraw my consent at any time and that they may withdraw their consent to be interviewed at any time. I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or may be provided to other researchers in a form that only identifies my child by age and sex.

Name of parent/carer _____

Signature _____ Date: _____

Name of child: _____

Appendix 3: Focus Group Permission Forms

Australian Catholic University
Brisbane Sydney Canberra Ballarat Melbourne



STUDENT RESEARCH INFORMATION LETTER TO PARENTS/CARERS OF PARTICIPANTS

Title of Research Project: A study of the *Harry Potter* series of books as a valued mythology for the youth of today.

Staff Supervisor: Associate Professor Margot Hillel OAM, Australian Catholic University, St Patrick's Campus, Melbourne.

Student Researcher: Anthony Lennard

Dear Parents

I am undertaking a Doctoral research project that centres on the topic: A study of the *Harry Potter* series of books as a valued mythology for the youth of today.

My name is Anthony Lennard and I am a Catholic schoolteacher. I am also a Doctoral student at Australian Catholic University, Melbourne Campus. I am writing to you to seek permission to interview your child for my research project. Permission to undertake this research has been granted by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University, and the Principal of Sacred Heart College, Mrs. Jill Morgan.

I have outlined details of the research project I am undertaking below and attached the relevant consent/assent forms. **It is important that you read the information below and the attached forms carefully before you sign anything. It is also important that you talk to your child regarding the information printed below and gain their verbal and written consent to be part of this project before you agree to their participation.** Please note that not all children who have returned parental consent and participant assent forms will be able to be part of the focus group.

RESEARCH PROJECT OUTLINE:

The research project is aimed at ascertaining whether students in Grade Seven and Eight find values and morals in the *Harry Potter* series of books. This research will be undertaken through the use of a focus group discussion with seven or eight students.

Students will be removed from classes for this focus group discussion and it will take approximately one hour. They will be under adult supervision during this discussion by myself, the discussion facilitator. Any schoolwork missed during the activity will not need to be made up in the student's free time.

The discussion during this activity will be audio taped for later analysis. The data collected from this focus group discussion will be used in the research being undertaken on the Doctoral project mentioned above. The data may also be used in other publications centred on children's response to the *Harry Potter* series of books, particularly their worth as resources for teaching values and morals.

Only those students who return signed consent and assent forms to the school will be involved in the focus group discussion. Students also need to have read at least one *Harry Potter* book. These students are free to decline to be part of the discussion on the day and may leave the activity any time and return to class. No more than eight students will take part in the activity.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study as the names of students involved in the focus group will only be used by Sacred Heart College for administrative matters, as the facilitator will not record any students' names. Sacred Heart College will destroy the list naming the students involved in the focus group once the activity is finished. Confidentiality will also be maintained in any report of the study or any publications resulting from the research. The name of the school or its general location will not be mentioned in the study and only a student's sex and age will be used for referencing and this will occur only as aggregated data.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this research feel free to firstly contact my supervisor, Associate Professor Margot Hillel OAM, Aust. Cath. University, St Patrick's Campus, Melbourne, Phone: (03) 9953 3240, Email: M.Hillel@patrick.acu.edu.au

If you are unable to contact Associate Professor Hillel please contact, Mr. Anthony Lennard, during work hours, on 62 283335.

In the event that you have any complaint or concern about the way you or your child has been treated during the study, or if you have any query my supervisor has not been able to satisfy, you may contact the Chair of the **Human Research Ethics Committee** care of:

Research services
Australian Catholic University
Melbourne Campus
Locked Bag 4115
FITZROY VIC 3065
Tel: 03 9953 3157
Fax: 03 9953 3315

Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and will be fully investigated by this committee and the complainant will be informed of the outcome.

If you are happy for your child to take part in this project, and they are happy to participate in it, please retain this letter and one copy of the consent form and **return the other consent form to Sacred Heart College office by Wednesday, December 7th, 2005.**

Yours sincerely

Anthony Lennard
B.A., Dip. Ed., Grad. Dip. R.E. Studs., Grad. Dip. Ed.Admin., M. Ed., M.Ed.Admin.

Australian Catholic University
Brisbane Sydney Canberra Ballarat Melbourne



INFORMED CONSENT FORM

COPY FOR PARENT/GUARDIAN TO KEEP

TITLE OF PROJECT: A study of the *Harry Potter* series of books as a valued mythology for the youth of today. **Focus Group discussion.**

STAFF SUPERVISOR: Associate Professor Margot Hillel OAM, Australian Catholic University, St Patrick's Campus, Melbourne.

STUDENT RESEARCHER: Anthony Lennard

COURSE: Doctor of Education

Parent/Guardian Consent

I (the parent/guardian) have read and understood the information provided in the *Information Letter to Parents/Carers of Participants*. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree that my child nominate below may participate in this activity, realising that I can withdraw my consent at any time. I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way

Name of Parent/guardian:
(block letters)

Signature: Date:.....

Name of child:

Child Assent

I (the participant aged under 18 years) understand what this research project is designed to explore. What I will be asked to do has been explained to me. I agree to take part in the project, realising that I can withdraw at any time without having to give a reason for my decision.

Name of child:
(block letters)

Signature: Date:.....

Student Researcher: Anthony Lennard

Signature

Date:

Australian Catholic University
Brisbane Sydney Canberra Ballarat Melbourne



INFORMED CONSENT FORM

COPY TO SUBMIT TO RESEARCHER

TITLE OF PROJECT: A study of the *Harry Potter* series of books as a valued mythology for the youth of today. **Focus group discussion.**

STAFF SUPERVISOR: Associate Professor Margot Hillel OAM, Australian Catholic University, St Patrick's Campus, Melbourne.

STUDENT RESEARCHER: Anthony Lennard

COURSE: Doctor of Education

Parent/Guardian Consent

I (*the parent/guardian*) have read and understood the information provided in the *Information Letter to Parents/Carers of Participants*. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree that my child nominate below may participate in this activity, realising that I can withdraw my consent at any time. I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way

Name of Parent/guardian:
(block letters)

Signature: Date:

Name of child:

Child Assent

I (*the participant aged under 18 years*) understand what this research project is designed to explore. What I will be asked to do has been explained to me. I agree to take part in the project, realising that I can withdraw at any time without having to give a reason for my decision.

Name of child:
(block letters)

Signature: Date:

Student Researcher: Anthony Lennard

Signature

Date:

Appendix 4: Ethics approval forms

Australian Catholic University
Brisbane Sydney Canberra Ballarat Melbourne



Human Research Ethics Committee

Committee Approval Form

Principal Investigator/Supervisor: A/Prof Margot Hillel Melbourne Campus
Co-Investigators: n/a
Student Researcher: Mr Anthony Lennard Melbourne Campus

Ethics approval has been granted for the following project: A study of the Harry Potter series of books as a valued mythology for the youth of today
for the period: 23/07/04 - 27/08/04
Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) Register Number: V2003.04-124

The following standard conditions as stipulated in the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans* (1999) apply:


- (i) that Principal Investigators / Supervisors provide, on the form supplied by the Human Research Ethics Committee, annual reports on matters such as:
 - security of records
 - compliance with approved consent procedures and documentation
 - compliance with special conditions, and

- (ii) that researchers report to the HREC immediately any matter that might affect the ethical acceptability of the protocol, such as:
 - proposed changes to the protocol
 - unforeseen circumstances or events
 - adverse effects on participants

The HREC will conduct an audit each year of all projects deemed to be of more than minimum risk. There will also be random audits of a sample of projects considered to be of minimum risk on all campuses each year.

Within one month of the conclusion of the project, researchers are required to complete a *Final Report Form* and submit it to the local Research Services Officer.

If the project continues for more than one year, researchers are required to complete an *Annual Progress Report Form* and submit it to the local Research Services Officer within one month of the anniversary date of the ethics approval.

Signed:  Date: 23/07/04
(Research Services Officer, Melbourne Campus)

Fri, 1 Jan 1904 18:21

From: res ethics <r.ethics@patrick.acu.edu.au>
To: <lennarda@austarnet.com.au>, Margot Hillel <M.Hillel@patrick.acu.edu.au>
Date: Thursday, 5 May 2005 10:26
Subject: Ethics Extension V2003.04-124

Dear Anthony and Margot,

Thank you for returning the Ethics Progress Report for your project V2003.04-124 A study of the Harry Potter series of books as a valued mythology for the youth of today.

The Deputy Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee has approved your request to extend the period of data collection. The new expiry date for data collection is the 31st December 2005.


We wish you well in this ongoing project.

Kind Regards,

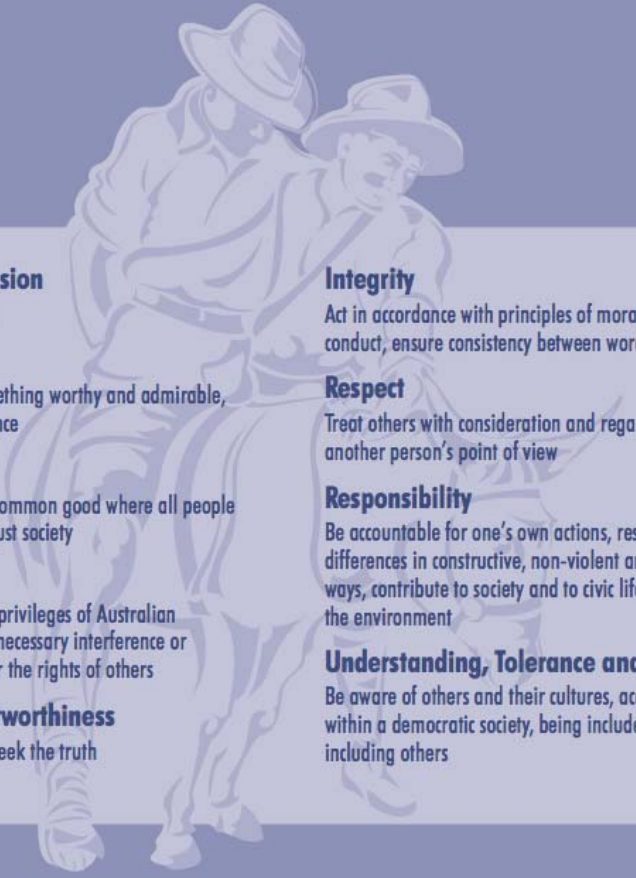
Ivy

Ivy Hajduk
Research Services Officer (Ethics)
Research Services
Australian Catholic University Limited
ABN 15 050 192 660
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Email: i.hajduk@patrick.acu.edu.au

Appendix 5: “Values for Australian Schooling” poster



VALUES FOR AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLING



Care and Compassion
Care for self and others

Doing Your Best
Seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence

Fair Go
Pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society

Freedom
Enjoy all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others

Honesty and Trustworthiness
Be honest, sincere and seek the truth

Integrity
Act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds

Respect
Treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person’s point of view

Responsibility
Be accountable for one’s own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment

Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion
Be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within a democratic society, being included and including others

CHARACTER IS DESTINY
— George Eliot

Appendix 6: Jan Kiernan's Grid Plans

Linking the *Essential Learnings* values to the national *Values for Australian Schooling*

Essential Learnings Values	National Values for Australian Schooling								
	Care and Compassion	Doing your best	Fair go	Freedom	Honesty and trustworthiness	Integrity	Respect	Responsibility	Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion
Connectedness	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Resilience		✓				✓	✓	✓	
Achievement		✓					✓		
Creativity		✓			✓				
Integrity	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Responsibility	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Equity	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓

Linking the *Essential Learnings* to the national *Values for Australian Schooling*

Essential Learnings	National Values for Australian Schooling								
	Care and Compassion	Doing your best	Fair go	Freedom	Honesty and trustworthiness	Integrity	Respect	Responsibility	Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion
Social responsibility									
Building social capital	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Valuing diversity	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Acting democratically	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Understanding the past and creating preferred futures									
Personal futures									
Building and maintaining identity and relationships	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Maintaining wellbeing									
Being ethical	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Creating and pursuing goals	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
World futures									
Investigating the natural and constructed world		✓							
Understanding systems									
Designing and evaluating technological solutions		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
Creating sustainable futures		✓							
	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

Taken from: Kiernan, J. (2005). *Values Education in Australian schools: Support materials for Tasmanian Schools*. Retrieved March 29, 2006, from http://www.valueseducation.edu.au/verve/_resources/Values_Education_support_Tas.pdf (pp. 5-6).

Appendix 7: Student Interview responses

Students' responses to questions regarding the *Harry Potter* series of books, 2005

Sex: 15 Female students 10 Male students

Ages: 13 Twelve year old, 10 Thirteen year old, 2 Fourteen year old

Q: Which characters in the book(s) do you like?

Ron Weasley 14 Harry Potter 11 Hermione Granger 9 Albus Dumbledore 7 Draco Malfoy 5 Professor McGonagall 2 Fred Weasley 3 George Weasley 3 Severus Snape 2 Mrs Weasley 2 Dobby 2	Hagrid 2 Ginny Weasley 2 All 1 Cho Chang 1 Mad-Eye Moody 1 Sirius Black 1 Peeves the ghost 1 Lucius Malfoy 1 Cedric Diggory 1 Oliver Wood 1 Voldemort 1
--	---

Q: What was it that you liked about him/her/them?

Hermione Granger: Always gets things right (2)

Her intelligence

Positive attitude

She was funny without knowing it

She stood up to Draco Malfoy

Good role model for everyone

Strong personality

Albus Dumbledore: His weirdness, mysteriousness (2)

Has hidden talents you discover as series goes on

More adviser/counselor than Principal

Understanding

Understood danger of power

Always positive, cheerful, happy principal

Ron Weasley: He was funny (3)

His being terrified of something (spiders) (3)

Expressed his fear

He is cool

Had to put up with attention to Harry

Stood out

Weasley twins equally liked: Playing pranks

Mischievousness (2)

Cool

Funny

Draco Malfoy: His nastiness, sneakiness

Says what he thinks (2)

Sirius Black: Can transform into a dog

Has a sense of wildness about him

Hagrid: Always helping people

Voldemort: He was evil and satanic

Mrs Weasley: Was kind and caring to Harry

Mad-Eye Moody: Interesting, weird, zany, teaching style.

Q: What do you think Dumbledore means when he says to Harry, in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, “It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities.” (p. 245)?

Your actions show what sort of person you are or become. Your choices
decide your path in life. 3

No response. 3

The right choices will affect how you go in life. 1

What your like on the inside is more important than the outside. 1

Choices are more important than how good you are at things. 1

Your actions are decided by your choices not anyone else’s. Choices can be
affected by background but still are your choices. 1

Actions are more important than words. 1

You can choose who you are and what you become 1

Abilities you have, choices you decide, you can change 1

You have to have the strength to choose what you think is right. 1

Choices decide what we mean in life, what we believe in life. 1

Your choices affect others. 1

Choices don’t always work, think before making choices 1

Harry needs to understand the importance of decisions for future life 1

Decisions on whether you want to be good. Harry choose to be good and
faithful 1

Your personality is important. Your choices reveal who you truly are. 1

Making choices and decisions show what sort of person you really are. 1

Choices/decisions decide whether we are good or bad people 1

Q: Can you please list for me some of Harry's personal values that you perceive from reading the book(s)? (If answer is Yes list below). Fifteen answered Yes

Kindness 9 Cares for others/friends 6 Loyalty 5 His friends 4 Bravery 2 Talent for wizardry 2 Loves/care about his parents 2 Skilled in Quidditch 2 He makes good choices 2 Courage 2 To be good 2 Helps others 2 Treats people equally 2 Importance of family 2 Emotional strength 2 Honesty 1 Quick to learn 1 Intelligent 1 Not vain 1 (Can be vain 1)	His wand 1 Stop Voldemort 1 Not selfish 1 Tough skinned 1 Reasonable understanding 1 Protect others 1 Interested in others/curious 1 Stick to his convictions 1 Wants justice 1 Co-operative 1 Leadership 1 Be persistent 1 Friendly 1 Friendship 1 Thoughtful 1 Nice to others 1 Adventurous 1 Will try things 1 Try his best 1
---	--

Q: Can you give me some of the personal values of other characters in the books, both good and bad characters? (If answer is Yes list below) Fifteen answered

Yes.

Draco Malfoy: Selfish 2 Nasty 2 Mean 1 Puts others down 1 May be nicer than appears in books 1 Wants to be seen as important 1 Lucius/Draco Malfoy: Power 3 Money 1 Hermione Granger: Caring 3 Values education/learning 2 Helpful 1	Professor Umbridge: Values ministry 1 Ron Weasley: He's funny 2 Is a wimp sometimes 1 Has faults 1 Positive 1 Kind 1 Considerate 1 He's interesting 1 Loyal to family 1 Cares for family 1 Cares for his rat 1 Wants to be normal 1 Likes to be recognized 1 His life 1
--	--

<p>Intelligent 1 Punctual 1 Studious 1 Wisdom 1 Integrity 1 Capable 1 Not vain 1 Honest 1 Kind 1 Seeks perfection 1 Respect for herself 1 Sense of justice/fairness 1 Expresses opinions 1</p> <p>Albus Dumbledore: Values doing best for school 2 Intelligence 1 Integrity 1 Caring 1 Wisdom 1 Forgiving 1 Kind 1 Smart 1 Treats people with equality 1 Persistent 1</p> <p>Winky: Loyalty 1</p> <p>Severus Snape: Values strictness 1</p>	<p>Hagrid: Kindness 1 Caring 1 Loving 1 Helpfulness 1 Tries to do best for school 1 Values nature 1</p> <p>Gilderoy Lockhart: Values fame 1</p> <p>Weasley twins: Sneakiness 1 Cleverness 1 Ambitiousness 1 Strong minded 1</p> <p>Voldemort: Power 4 Selfish 2 Values that his way is only way 1 Rude 1 Unkind 1 Values evil 1</p> <p>James Potter: Arrogance in youth 1</p>
--	--

Q: Who do you think are good characters in the book(s)?

<p>Harry Potter 24 Ron Wesley 21 Hermione Granger 22 Albus Dumbledore 16 Professor McGonagall 7 Sirius Black 7 Hagrid 7 Lily and James Potter 3 Severus Snape 3 The Weasley Family 3 Remus Lupin 3 Mrs Weasley 2 Ginny Weasley 2</p>	<p>Fred and George Wesley 2 Hogwarts permanent teachers 2 Neville Longbottom 1 Seamus Finnigan 1 Dean Thomas 1 Mainly Gryffindor 1 Professor Sprout 1 Mr Weasley 1 Professor Moody 1 Order of Phoenix 1 Nymphadora Tonks 1 Cedric Diggory 1 Cho Chang 1</p>
--	---

Q: What makes them good?

They have good qualities (humour, smart, helpful/fun to be with, kind, caring) 5

They are caring 3

Their actions 3

Try to help others 3

Not out to get people/protect others/not doing wrong 3

They stop evil happening/stand up to evil/ Voldemort 3

Not evil 3

They are positive 2

Fight for what they believe in which is justice/fairness 1

More down to earth 1

Don't put others down 1

Don't scare easily 1

Different to other/stand out 1

Try hardest in what they do 1

They suffer from human emotions 1

The values they hold 1

Friendship 1

Their choices 1

Are trying to defeat Voldemort 1

Q: Who do you think are bad/evil characters in the book(s)?

<p>Voldemort (Tom Riddle) 18 Draco Malfoy 17 Lucius Malfoy 15 Gregory Goyle 8 Vincent Crabbe 8 Severus Snape 7 (Severus Snape: can be good 1) (Severus Snape: used to be 1) Peter Pettigrew 5 Death Eaters 5 Professor Quirrell 4</p>	<p>Death Eaters (but not Peter Pettigrew) 2 Crabbe and Goyle's parents (Deatheaters) 2 Argus Filch 2 Professor Umbridge 2 Gilderoy Lockhart 1 Remus Lupin 1 Narcissus Malfoy 1 Slytherin house members 1</p>
---	---

Q: What makes them bad/evil?

They hurt/kill people 6

They seek power (without consideration for others) 5

They are selfish 4

They put people down 4

Their ways/actions (nastiness, opinions, etc) 2

They want to kill Harry 1

Jealous of Harry (Malfoy) 1

They take pleasure in seeing others suffer 1

Don't care about others feelings 1

The way they think 1

Don't value other people 1

They destroy things 1

Influenced by their parents to think they are better than others 1

Voldemort fear and anger he shows 1

Remus in werewolf state hurts people 1

They're mean 1

Hate others 1

Suspicious of people 1

Snape picks on Harry 1

Because they are against Harry Potter 1

Snape's physical and vocal description 1

Use powers such as magic for bad things 1

They get up to mischief 1

Q: In the books characters such as Hagrid, Hermione, Gilderoy Lockhart, Sirius Black, Dobby and Remus Lupin are often judged by others because of their appearance, their history or for other reasons. What do you learn about judging others through reading the book(s)?

Don't judge a book by its cover 9

Don't take things at first impression/appearances 7

Spend time and get to know someone before deciding what they are really like 6

Count what's inside not the appearance 2

Don't judge by history of character 2

Don't stereotype people 1

People are not always what they seem 1

Sense of strength in many characters who appear as abnormal 1

Everyone is equal 1

Looking good doesn't mean you are good 1

Rich people are not necessarily good people 1

Everyone has feelings 1

Q: Harry's mother showed self-sacrifice in dying to save Harry. Can you think of other examples of self-sacrifice shown in the book(s) and who shows this self-sacrifice? (If answer is Yes (22 answered Yes) then ask who and where are examples. If answer No (3 answered No) move on to next question.)

Ron getting injured in chess game in PS book 6

Sirius Black helping to save Harry on OoP and dies 3

Sirius Black helping to save Harry (and others) against Remus' werewolf in
PoA 3

Harry risked himself constantly 3

Harry sharing glory of Triwizard win with Cedric Diggory 2

Sirius Black protecting Harry 2

Severus Snape in trying to help Harry in Shrieking Shack 2

Hermione using magic against rules to help people 2

Hermione giving Harry potion in PS 2

Phoenix helping Harry 1

Hermione Granger helping house elves 1

Dumbledore in helping Harry at end of OoP 1

Harry Potter standing up for dead parents with Professor Umbridge 1

Hermione and Ron suffering to help Harry get to Philosopher's Stone 1

Hermione and Ron suffering to help Harry throughout 1

Hermione and Ron helping Sirius Black escape 1

Risk being expelled in seeking PS 1

Albus Dumbledore in all books 1

Ron and Harry risking death in following spider trail 1

Remus Lupin helping against Dementors on train in PoA 1

Harry Potter entering Chamber of Secrets to save Ginny 1

Hermione, Ron and Harry trying to help Hippogriff in PoA 1

Hermione and Ron standing up for Harry over Filch's cat's petrification 1

Snape helping Harry survive in Quidditch game in PS book against own house team 1

Harry seeking to destroy Voldemort 1

Harry risking life to save others in Triwizard Tournament 1

Dursleys wanting to keep Harry 1

Weasley's allow Harry to stay with them 1

Q: What did you learn about friendship from the books?

Stick by your friends 6

Nothing new 5

If a disagreement happens don't let it end the friendship 3

Friendship can grow through/with unexpected people 2

To value friendship more highly than previously 2

Be loyal 2

To make new friends you should really get to know them first 2

Mixed friendships can occur 1

Stick by your friends providing they are of good character 1

Help each other 1

Be nice 1

Trust your friends 1

Respect each other 1

Look deeper into people's emotions, actions, etc to judge whether they are

true friends 1

True friendship is life long even if separated by distance 1

Friendships grow through challenges 1

Appendix 8: Focus Group responses

Some responses received to focus group discussions on Harry Potter with Grade Seven and Eight students, 2005

Interviewer: Anthony Lennard

Q: If you are looking at Harry Potter, or some of the other characters in the *Harry Potter* books, what do you think the personal qualities are that they show? So, you might say, yeah, 'Harry Potter shows this, Hermione shows this, Draco Malfoy shows this. Any of the personal qualities you think they might have?'

Cunning.

Courage

A bit 'spocky,' Hermione always want to get all the work done.

Loyalty.

Bravery, . . . and friendship, and helping each other... Humour.

Ron's got humour.

Hermione shows a lot of courage, even though she's scared, she still tries her best...

Harry's got bravery and courage.

Ron's a bit... Wimpish.

Q. Okay – what's he wimpish about?

He's scared of spiders.

He's just got a fear, a phobia... He shouldn't be afraid to show that he is scared of something.

Q: What qualities would the Weasleys have, the personal qualities that the Weasleys would have?

They're modest.

They want to make people comfortable around them and everything.

Q: All right, if someone said to me, let's take Harry Potter himself, what personal qualities would he have? He's loyal, he's also cunning – what other qualities does he have?

He's really brave as well.

He's courageous.

Friendly.

Q: Are there any people who have what you would call 'un-Christian qualities' or not so good qualities'?

Malfoy.

Yes, but he's been brought up like that, it isn't necessarily his fault – he's been brought up to be like –

He makes comments and he's snide all the time.

He's stuck up.

He thinks he's better than everyone else.

He reckons he's so good because of his pure blood.

People don't get along with him, and they're, like, 'lower' than him... He tends to like pick on them...

The way that the Dursleys treat Harry.

Q: What poor qualities has Voldemort got?

Thinks he's pure blood.

He shows the same poor qualities as Malfoy.

Q: What do you think we could learn – the qualities we could learn – from the *Harry Potter* books that would be to do with being a Christian, for example? What qualities does Harry Potter have that a Christian also has?

Sticking up for your friends and stuff – you should always stand by their side.

Q: If I said to you who are the most heroic characters in the book, could you give me whom you think are the most heroic, and why they're heroes? Can you think of anyone?

Harry.

He stood up to Voldemort many times, and he didn't give up.

Hermione and Ron.

In the fourth one Cedric was pretty heroic... [inaudible].

That also shows Harry being very courageous there, because like, um Cedric was lying on the ground and Harry had the choice to either save Cedric or grab the whole cup... But he didn't know about that so he decided to save Cedric before getting the cup.

Sirius Black was pretty brave.

Q: So Harry stood up – he stood up to Voldemort and why do you think he stood up to Voldemort... So he stood up to it: why?

To get him back at him for killing his parents.

Stop his reign of terror.

Q: Is there anyone else you think who's heroic?

Dumbledore, because he gave his life to stop Voldemort.

Q: Do you think then to be a hero you can never be scared – to put it that way?

A hero can be anyone, it just depends what qualities you bring with you [?]

Q: Now, some critic wrote once that he disagreed with both Mrs Weasley and Hermione because they felt that they weren't good role models for girls... Why do you think they felt they weren't good role models for girls?

They're so fussy.

Everything has to be perfect for them, and if they do something wrong they make a big deal out of it.

Not really because without Hermione... they wouldn't have got information from the library in the first one or in the second one like, Hermione figured out the Polyjuice Potion. [inaudible].

She's got the brains of everything.

Q: Good, very good. Anything else you would say? Let's take Hermione – she's got good qualities – but what qualities did she miss out that Harry's got?

She's not very mischievous. And she hates getting in trouble.

Q: Good, anything else?

The girls don't – well it's a bit sexist in the books that they don't really give the girls the good roles, we get the spocky and the overly caring roles. I think there should be characters – girls – more like Harry sort of. And there aren't many girls in the Quidditch team, either.

Q: If I read out to you – we mentioned these values before – if I read out to you a value, you can tell me whether it's in the book. “Yes” it's in there or ”No” if it's not. Let's take Loyalty – is loyalty in the book?

Yes [several].

Harry, Ron and Hermione.

Lupin, like believes in Sirius.

Crabbe and Goyle sometimes show their loyalty.

Harry, Ron and Hermione. And Dumbledore [inaudible]. And Hagrid

Q: Would you be encouraged to be loyal after reading the book?

Maybe [several]

Q: Maybe? Well, is there friendship in the book?

Yes [several]

Harry Potter and Hermione and Ron show friendship to each other along with Hagrid.

Malfoy, Crabbe and Goyle.

Hagrid and Dumbledore.

Q: Is there courage in the book?

Yes [several].

Harry [several].

Ron shows courage by going into the spider lair, even though he doesn't like spiders.

Q: Is there honesty in the book?

Yes, sometimes.

Q: Sometimes – that's a good point. Is Harry always honest?

No [several]

Q: No? Is Hermione always honest?

No [several].

Q: No? So, when they're dishonest, why are they dishonest? They may not actually lie, but they bend the truth... Why do they do it?

To protect someone.

Q: To protect someone.

To get something done.

Q: To get something done? Anything else?

If they don't want to make a big fuss out of something.

Q: Do you think there's hope shown in this book?

Yes. [several].

Like Harry brings hope to the like, um, to the Muggle borns.

Well, Harry shows hope to all the wizards by, like, kind of defeating Voldemort in every book, in every movie, and shows hope that the next time he comes they he will be able to protect them.

Q: What would be an example of the hope that's shown in this book?

Well Harry can survive Voldemort's Avada Kedavra.

Q: Good, Harry's hope – he's survived the curse... And is there any other side? What are they hoping for in the book to happen? If there was one big hope – what are they hoping for?

For Voldemort to be defeated.

Q: Defeated. Good, let's look at a couple more. Perseverance. You should all know what perseverance is, I hope. Perseverance. Do you think is there perseverance shown in the book?

Yes [several].

Yes, Hermione shows a lot of perseverance by keeping going on with her studies, and when she first couldn't find Nicholas Flamel she kept on trying and trying to find him.

Harry keeps trying, and keeps going on to fight them [?] ... [inaudible].

Q: Good. Is there love, shown in the book?

Yes.

I think Harry and Hermione love each other.

They do.

Mrs Weasley shows love.

Dumbledore.

Hagrid does. Like when Hermione is called a mudblood, he comforts her.

Q: Loyalty?

Yes [several].

Q: Just one more. Faith? What do we mean by the word 'faith'?

They have faith in Dumbledore when he's in administration.

They're all got faith in Harry.

Hermione and Ron have faith in Harry, in the first book when he gets the youngest seeker of the century, and he's like "What if I can't do it" and they say of course you'll be able to do it, your dad was a seeker as well. They just have faith in him that he will.

Q: Good, and what does that faith involve?

Being loyal to him (Dumbledore).

Q: Okay we see that. He is loyal to him because he has faith in him. If we went through... Could you give me an example of where someone shows faith in someone else?

The Death Eaters show faith in Voldemort.

Q: Good. Anyone else shows faith in anyone? Just think of any examples when someone shows faith in someone.

Harry and Lupin and the Dementors. Harry trying to get over his fears.

Q: Good. And who has faith in him that he might get over it?

Lupin.

Q: Good, Lupin. All right, do you think that Harry has faith in Hermione, and Hermione have faith in Ron and Ron have faith in Hermione, and so on?

Yes [several].

Appendix 9: Religious Education Values Unit

Suggested Assessment Tasks

Assessment tasks may also include those listed below under Suggested Learning and Teaching Experiences as well as these suggestions:

- Students individually complete an adapted **Triple Play** (*Appendix 11*) where they state scriptural messages on values, comment where these values can be found in the *Harry Potter* series and where they can be found in their own personal world. Visual representations may be used.
- Students take a character from the *Harry Potter* books, either good or bad. Using a **Character Analysis Chart** (*Appendix 11*) and *Harry Potter* books they have to show the quality the character demonstrates, how they show this quality and where in the books they show this quality.

Suggested Learning and Teaching Experiences

Focusing Activity:

Students view the *Harry Potter* film *PS*. As they watch they record the choices the key characters make and the personal values that characters show. This is done on a **Movie Study** sheet (*Appendix 13*) (*Assessment task*).

- Students compare the personal qualities exhibited by Harry, Hermione and Ron with those exhibited by Jesus. In small groups students are given sections of the Gospel to

explore to ascertain Jesus' values. This could include stories where perceived sinners are welcomed by Jesus (Story of Zaccheus, Luke 19:1-10), stories where Jesus proclaims a new commandment "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Mark: 12: 28-33), or parables where Jesus tells fictional stories that embody personal values such as being kind and merciful to your enemy (The Good Samaritan, Luke 10: 30-37). Use a **Scripture Graffiti** (*Appendix 11*) Sheet to complete this exercise (*Assessment task*).

- Students compare the discrimination shown in Jesus' time to sick people, to discrimination against house elves in the *Harry Potter* books (*CoS*, pp. 16-19, *GoF*, pp. 198-199, 326-334, *OoP*, pp. 732-734), and the discrimination shown against a contemporary group. This may include third world people, religious groups in certain countries, women, children, asylum seekers, etc. In small groups, after research time and work time, students present a **Powerpoint** display illustrating the differences and similarities between the three groups. Students are assessed on how well their **Powerpoint** fulfilled the required criteria (*Assessment task*).
- Students read *The Beatitudes* (Matthew 5:1-12). Working in pairs students take one of the Beatitudes and fill out a **Scripture Graffiti** (*Appendix 11*) sheet using either written or graphic meanings. Students are then given an A3 size **Billboard** (*Appendix 11*) to create a *Harry Potter* poster that illustrates this Beatitude (*Assessment tasks*).
- In small groups students are presented with passage references from *Harry Potter* books provided to them. They have to read the passage, give it a title and provide the main values message that can be perceived from the passage using the adapted

Scripture Jump sheet entitled **Harry Potter Jump** (*Appendix 11*). Only positive value passages are used (e.g. *PS*, pp. 204-206, Ron sacrifices himself in chess game) (*Assessment task*).

- Students take part in a **Life Choice Playing Cards** activity (*Appendix 11*). The moral dilemma could be “How should the wizarding world respond to Hermione’s attempts to release the elves from servitude?” Each group of three or four works out six possible options/solutions/choices on their cards including their reasons. Students place options in preference and then share cards with other groups. After more discussion they then decide new preferential order. Students are given opportunity to individually choose best option from cards that they have viewed and write a personal response as to why they chose that option.
- After brainstorming what the “Order of the Phoenix” are seeking to do and what Hermione is seeking to do with S.P.E.W., students research groups in society that have similar goals. e.g. Amnesty International.
- Students reflect on the injustices Harry and other characters have faced in the books. After discussion students come up with a list of injustices that they are familiar with in their school, society, country and the world. They write a personal response on how they can respond to these injustices.

Appendix 10: Secular Values Education Unit

Unit Title: How to make choices.

Year Level: 5-8

Unit Overview:

This unit aims to help students understand that our actions have consequences and therefore we need to make conscientious choices about what actions we will undertake. These choices should be decided by the personal values that we believe in and follow.

Generative Topic:

How should we make our choices?

Throughline:

Making choices involves our personal values, societal needs and consideration of the consequences of our choices for both others and ourselves.

Understanding Goals

Students will understand:

- That our choices have consequences for the person making the choice and for others, both good and bad consequences.
- That our choices are influenced by various factors.
- That our choices always involve other people.
- That as members of society we are often limited in our choices because of the need to consider the “common good”.

Host organiser

Personal Futures

- Building and maintaining identity and relationships
- Maintaining well being
- Being ethical
- Creating and pursuing goals

Supporting Essentials:

Social Responsibility

- Building social capital
- Valuing Diversity

Thinking

- Reflective thinking (Ethical reasoning)

Resources/Required materials:

- *Harry Potter* books
- Teaching strategy sheets (*Appendix 11*)

<u>Activities</u>	<u>Ongoing Assessment</u>
<p>Focusing in:</p> <p>1. What choices do we make?</p> <p>In small groups students undertake a Classroom RAP (<i>Appendix 11</i>) regarding choices they have had to make in the last week. Together, drawing from choices brainstormed, students park the six toughest choices that they had to make.</p> <p>Using a Different but Alike: Think Pad (<i>Appendix 11</i>) students choose four of the choices group members made and underneath write out what influenced their decisions.</p> <p>2. What is the difference between a ‘choice’ and a ‘decision’?</p> <p>Ask students to discuss the above question/ problem in small groups, then use Three Strikes (<i>Appendix 11</i>) to reach a consensus on a definition. Given sufficient planning time group presents their definition to whole class through chosen reporter and through acted out example explaining the difference.</p> <p>Culmination of lesson would revolve around view that “Choices are the options open to us on a given occasion, whereas decisions involve taking one of the options” (<i>Your Values, Your Choice,</i></p>	<p>Throughout unit observe students in their group work and their participation in class discussion/brainstorming sessions to gain a limited assessment of students understanding of choice, factors that influence our range of choices, how we make choices and the possible consequences of any choices we make.</p> <p>Each group member is required to write their name on any group work/sheet handed in throughout the class sessions. Teacher assesses each teaching strategy sheet. Copies are made so that students can place them in their portfolios.</p> <p>Students, for homework, are required to spend ten minutes each night writing down five of the choices they made during the last twenty four hours and the reasons why they have made that particular choice. This will be done in a section of their allocated <i>Studies of Society and Environment</i> workbook/folder. This is assessed once a week.</p>

<p>http://www.ltag.education.tas.gov.au)</p> <p>Finding out:</p> <p>1. What influences the choices you make?</p> <p>Provide each class member with example(s) of choice(s) that they may need to make. Make choice(s) relevant to class and time of year (e.g. Grade Six in Term One might like to look at choice of which high school they wish to attend, Grade Eight in Term Three might like to look at what optional subjects they might like to choose for Grade Nine.) Students individually write down the choice(s) they made and reasons why. Then the students pair and share.</p> <p>Using Sink the Boat (<i>Appendix 11</i>) students, under the concept heading, “What caused me to make the decision?”, park all the reasons that they chose a particular answer. They need to consider all the factors. Students then pick the six key reasons for their choice and place them in the holes in the boat. In pairs students swap over their Sink the Boat sheet and then they try to cover the other people’s boat holes (their reasons) with a valid reason that nullifies the other person’s reason for making their choice. “Post-it” stick on notes are used in this activity. Classroom discussion on the</p>	<p>Students, having looked at one way to sort out group differences (Three Strikes), have to report, in approximately one hundred words, three alternative ways to come up with a consensual decision in a group of four when people have made different choices. They are given some possible situations that are common to society, e.g. What movie will we go and see? What type of restaurant will we eat out at? Assessed by teacher.</p> <p>Each student is required, in a formal test time to write out lists of influences and factors that will affect how they make a choice in regard to a number of simple scenarios presented to them. Examples would be: How do people decide what food they buy at the supermarket? How do courts decide that someone is guilty of a crime? How do children decide what sport they play? How do parents decide what school they will send their child to? How do teenagers decide what clothes they buy? How do teenagers decide what food they would eat?</p> <p>After assessment teacher reports back to</p>
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<p>work undertaken should generate views regarding how people have different reasons for the choices they make.</p> <p>Students then read from a section of the <i>Harry Potter</i> book <i>PS</i> where Hermione, Ron and Harry break rules in leaving the Gryffindor Common Room, disable Neville Longbottom and go to an out-of-bounds part of Hogwarts because they seek to stop the stealing of the Philosophers Stone (pp. 197-208).</p> <p>In small groups students undertake a Rally Table Worksheet (<i>Appendix 11</i>) with the Focus Question “What influenced Harry, Ron and Hermione’s decisions?” Students are then asked to try and classify these influences into categories based on what they read in the book section and their own knowledge of the <i>Harry Potter</i> stories. They circle red the personal influences, circle green the social influences, circle blue any other influences. Brainstorm and discuss these influences in class situation. Include the questions, “What would their choice have been? and “What would Voldemort’s response have been?”</p> <p>Students sum up the variety of reasons that people make choices by listing the reasons down, then, in small groups, rank the top ten.</p>	<p>class on views expresses for informal comment/discussion by students.</p> <p>Students are given the opportunity to research, as a homework project, issues that are currently or historically relevant and that have both arguments for and against certain choices. Issues are age related. Examples would be: Should Australia detain all asylum seekers? Should parents be allowed to smoke in a car when there are children present in the car? Should the Atomic Bomb have been dropped on Hiroshima? Students hand in project at end of unit and present findings orally to class. Assessed by teacher. Students also assess each student’s arguments for and against their chosen topic.</p> <p>Assess each student’s understanding of the importance of personal values and societal values in making a decision. Students present formal list of the personal values that Harry Potter and other characters exhibited by studying the choices they made in the section they recently read and other parts of the books they may know.</p>
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<p>Students create a small sign about a personal value for display in class/school.</p> <p>Going further:</p> <p>1. What connections might there be between choice, action and consequence?</p> <p>In small groups students pick a section of a <i>Harry Potter</i> book from the list below.</p> <p><i>PS</i>, pp. 110-111 Harry chasing Malfoy to retrieve the Remembrall.</p> <p><i>PS</i>, pp. 127- 131 Hermione being saved from Mountain Troll by Harry and Ron.</p> <p><i>PS</i>, pp. 151-153 Harry enters Library without permission and later finds Mirror of Erised.</p> <p><i>CoS</i>, pp. 218-21 Harry and Ron break rules in leaving their dormitory and kidnap Gilderoy Lockhart.</p> <p><i>PoA</i>, pp. 274- 276 Harry stops Sirius Black and Remus Lupin from killing Peter Pettigrew.</p> <p><i>PoA</i>, pp. 301-303 Harry and Hermione free the Sirius Black from the Dementor's kiss after freeing Buckbeak from execution.</p> <p>They read and analyse the section and in their groups they have to prepare and act out the scene from the book giving both the real choice Harry made in the book as well as a rewind that provides an alternative choice that Harry could of made.</p>	<p>Assess the group's understanding of realistic alternatives.</p> <p>Take a digital photo of a scene from each play and assess, using a Rubric, both the drama abilities/skills shown as well as the range of possible alternative consequences presented.</p>
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<p>These short plays are presented to class. Class discuss, after each play, the consequences that could have occurred if the alternative choice was made, including taking no action. They also look at why they think the characters made the choices they did. Stress is placed on the personal values that guided their decisions as well as the societal values that were taken into consideration.</p> <p>Class are presented with a Scripture Detours sheet changed to Harry Potter Detours (<i>Appendix 11</i>) sheet and given the scenario of the <i>Harry Potter</i> plot for <i>PS</i> and given the opportunity, in pairs, to look at alternatives.</p> <p>Individually they then complete a Consequences Chart (<i>Appendix 11</i>) for one of their alternatives.</p> <p>As a whole-group discussion, teacher asks students to consider the following with regard to the examples provided to them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were the possible actions clear in each case? • Did the characters involved have ‘real’ choices or did other factors seem to limit their options? • Is it possible to act without consequence? • Were there times when not acting would have had the most 	<p>Assess relevance of students understanding of values that affect decisions and the relevance of alternative consequences presented, including taking no action.</p> <p>Assess indications of emerging ethical reasoning as students consider consequences of actions, alternative points of view, weigh up ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ choices and justify their opinion (<i>Your Values, Your Choice</i>, http://www.Itag.education.tas.gov.au).</p> <p>Assess each student’s emerging understanding of the importance of how a person responds to a situation and how</p>
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<p>desirable consequences? (<i>Your Values, Your Choice</i>, http://www.ltag.education.tas.gov.au)</p> <p>Analysing:</p> <p>1. What causes consequences of our actions to be different?</p> <p>Hand students a sections of the <i>Harry Potter</i> book, <i>OoP</i>, where Harry's rash actions contribute to Sirius Black's death. <i>OoP</i> pp. 640-642, pp. 645-653, pp. 670-673, p. 689, pp. 706-709.</p> <p>Groups fill out a refined 'DEAF' Thinking (<i>Appendix 11</i>) sheet which provides chance for students to analyse the plot and also to analyse Harry's response, its consequences and also alternative responses and possible consequences that could have occurred. Students present to peers.</p> <p>Student discussion on Harry's feelings because of the consequences of his actions referring to <i>OoP</i>, pp. 723-727.</p> <p>Brainstorm this on whiteboard.</p> <p>Class discussion on "What can he do to feel better?"</p> <p>Then look at Professor Dumbledore's response to Harry <i>OoP</i>, pp. 727-744. (handout copies).</p> <p>Discussion on "What does this tell us about decisions we make?"</p> <p>In pairs students are given a certain</p>	<p>this affects the possible consequences.</p> <p>Further assess each student's emerging understanding of the importance of one's response, based on adequate knowledge, and the possible consequences when not all the relevant information is known.</p>
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action and asked to map out, on a **Consequences Chart** (*Appendix 11*), where the consequences of actions have been particularly beneficial or harmful. Examples might include: The Israeli Army attacking parts of Lebanon to retrieve its kidnapped soldiers, People using solar energy in their homes, People diving into shallow water ignoring signs, People planting more native trees, People driving dangerously and causing accidents.

Students take these incidents, real or perceived, and are given the opportunity, using the computer programme **Comic Life**, to create a strip outlining their findings (e.g. *Appendix 12*). (Programme available for free thirty day trial.

This should lead to the clarification of the connection between choice, action and consequence in each case (*Your Values, Your Choice*, <http://www.ltag.education.tas.gov.au>).

2. Why do people differ in the choices they make?

Students are provided with a copy of Lawrence Kohlberg's Heinz Dilemma Scenario One (<http://www.vtaide.com/blessing/Kohlberg.htm>). Individually they complete a **Hand Prints** (*Appendix 11*) activity on this dilemma.

Voluntarily students contribute to a

Assess each pair of students **Comic Life** creation on assessment areas including ICT skills shown, clarity of message to audience, valid reasoning for possible consequences that may arise from a person's particular choice.

<p>discussion on their views. In discussion the dilemma is expanded to include Scenario 2 and Scenario 3 (http://www.vtaide.com/blessing/Kohlberg.htm).</p> <p>Students should gain some understanding of how people have different perspectives on how they make choices. It should also raise the issue of societal laws and the reasons we have them but also how they limit our choice.</p> <p>Drawing conclusions:</p> <p>1. What should we consider when making choices?</p> <p>Through brainstorming students re-analyse what caused Harry Potter to make the choices he did in the sections that they were provided with.</p> <p>Students, in groups of two, are given the opportunity to create a poster entitled “Before making a choice ask yourself...” These posters will be displayed in the classroom and school.</p> <p>Culminating Performance</p> <p>Students, in small groups, or individually, are given the opportunity to create their own scenarios that involve making a choice. These could include rules set by government (placing your seatbelt on) or choices about the environment (whether we should place our empty plastic bottle</p>	<p>Assess each student’s understanding of how one’s individual needs can sometimes come into conflict with societal rules.</p> <p>Assess each student’s improved understanding of how an individual’s choices are affected by their perceived needs.</p> <p>Assess each pair of students work based on their artistic ability, their ability to use common advertising features to get message across, and their understanding of the procedures people should follow before making a decision.</p> <p>Use photos taken to add to class/ school display so that students have opportunity to reflect on what they have learnt throughout the rest of the year. This is</p>
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<p>in the recycling bin or place it in with the normal rubbish).</p> <p>These are presented to the class and discussed informally by the class, on an individual basis, to embed the importance of how different perspectives might affect the choices made.</p> <p>Students then present these scenarios after an opportunity is provided to review and practice them, at the school assembly. Parents and friends of the school are invited to attend. Plays are filmed for possible future use as well as photos taken for portfolios. Audience participation is encouraged as students provide questions the person should be asking before making the decision and then display possible choices that the student audience can vote on.</p>	<p>particularly important as students will make constant choices throughout the year and need to be able to have the opportunity to refocus on what they have previously learnt.</p>
<p>Questions for further exploration:</p> <p>What makes a choice right?</p> <p>What makes a choice good?</p> <p>What is the difference between a right decision and a good decision?</p> <p>Can there be justifiable reasons for breaking a rule?</p> <p>How important is the reason for acting?</p> <p>Can ‘good’ reasons justify an action with detrimental consequences?” (<i>Your Values, Your Choice</i>, http://www.ltag.education.tas.gov.au).</p>	<p>Assess students in formal test situation to provide answers to these questions. This should provide some guidance in the knowledge and understanding of the students but also provides information for teacher to evaluate their teaching and how effective the unit was in fulfilling its stated goals. Will assist in planning for follow up work with class as well as changes needed in teaching this unit of work.</p>

Appendix 11: Teaching strategy sheets

Triple Play



Initial Play - Harry Potter World

Replay - Personal World

Triple Play - Global World

	→		→	
	→		→	
	→		→	
	→		→	
	→		→	
	→		→	

Adapted, with permission, from: White, D., O'Brien, K., and Todd, S. (2003, p. 98).

Character Analysis Chart

Character: _____

Personal Quality	Harry Potter World Readings	_____ showed this quality by: (What hapened?)



Adapted, with permission, from: White, D., O'Brien, K., and Todd, S. (2003, p. 52).

Scripture Graffiti

Passage:

Possible Meanings:



Billboard



Scripture Passage:

[A large empty rectangular area with a thick black border decorated with white circles, intended for writing a scripture passage.]

Harry Potter *Jump*



Theme: _____

Passage	Title	Main Message

130 *Into the Deep*

Adapted, with permission, from: White, D., O'Brien, K., and Todd, S. (2003, p. 130).

Life's Choices - Playing Cards



Option:

Reason:

Option:

Reason:

Option:

Reason:

Option:

Reason:

Option:

Reason:

Option:

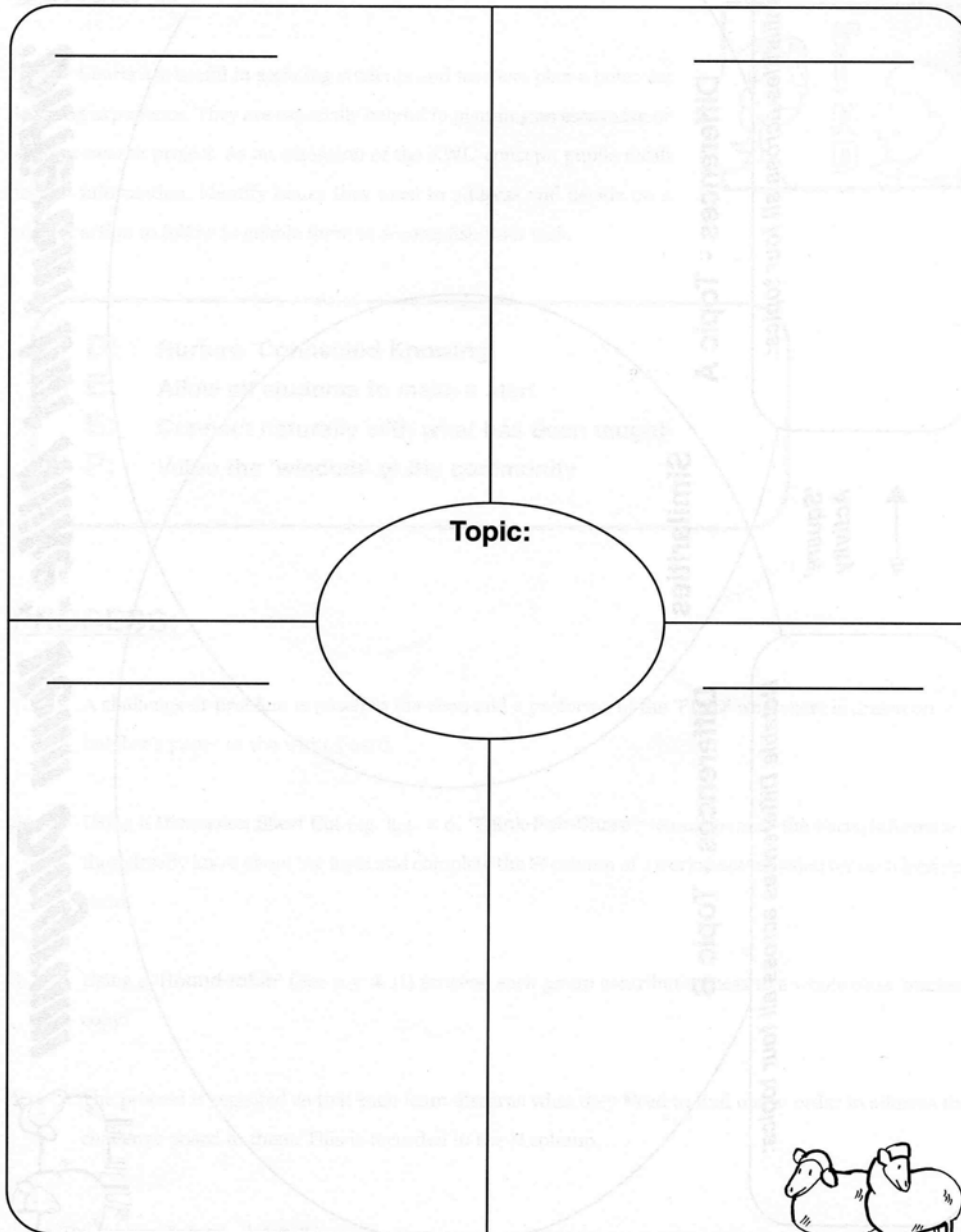
Reason:

**Classroom RAP - Parking Lot
Brainstorming Worksheet**

Parking Lot Ideas

- >
- >
- >
- >
- >
- >

'Different but Alike': Think Pad



From: White, D., O'Brien, K., and Todd, S. (2003, p. 55).

THREE STRIKES

PROBLEM:			
Possible Solutions	Strike One	Strike Two	Strike Three - You're Out

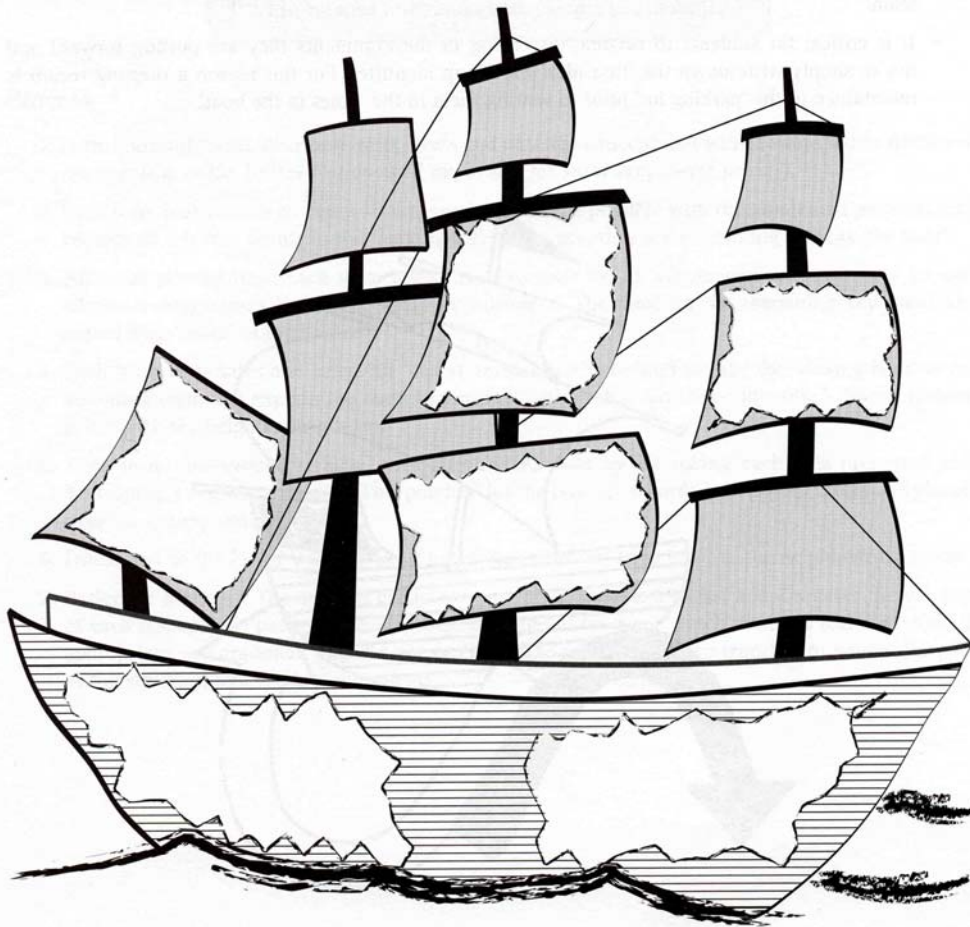
From: O'Brien, K. and White, D. (2001, p. 81).

Sink The Boat

Concept:

Parking Lot

- -
 -
 -
 -
 -
- -
 -
 -
 -
 -

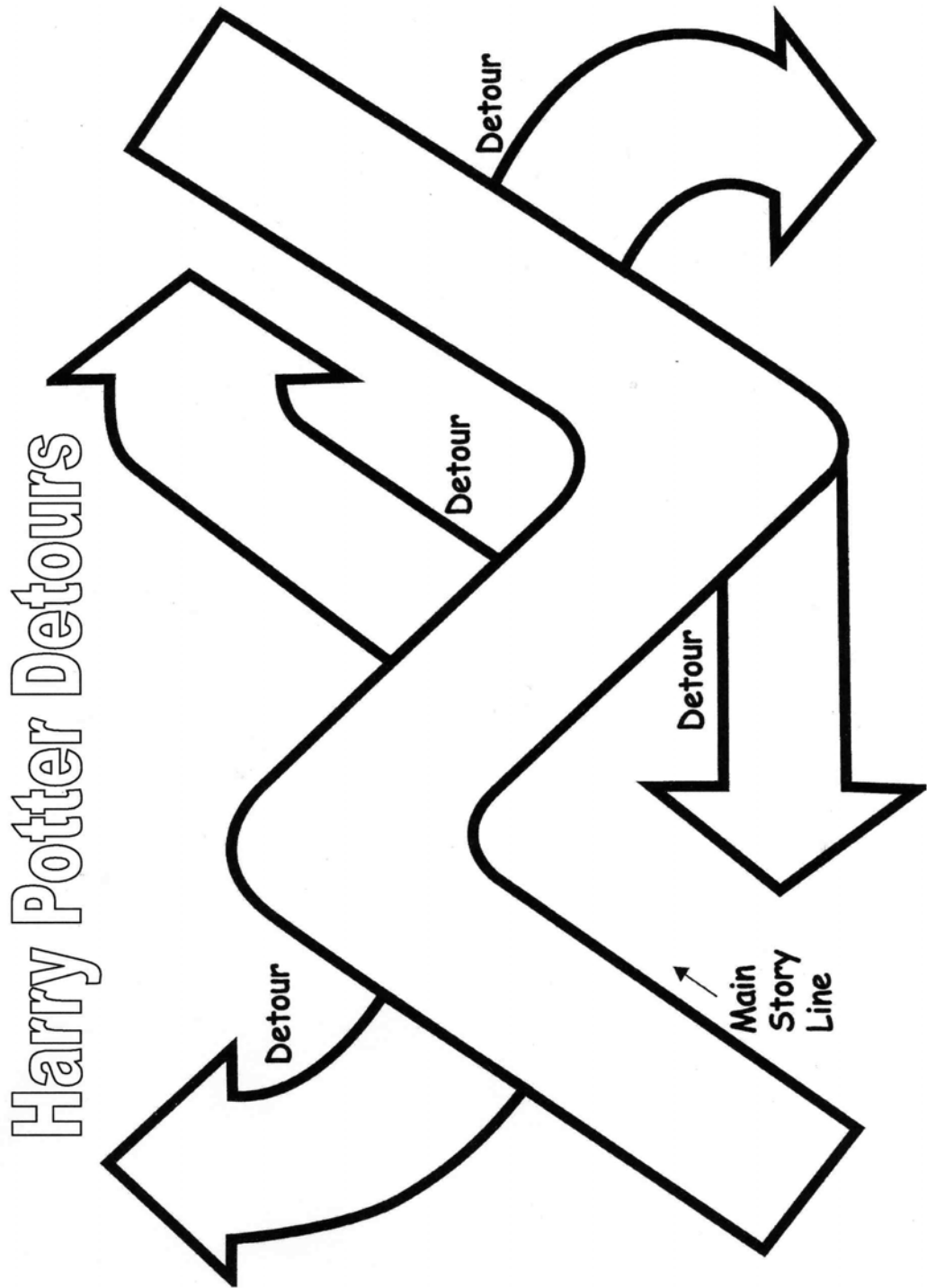


RALLY TABLE WORKSHEET

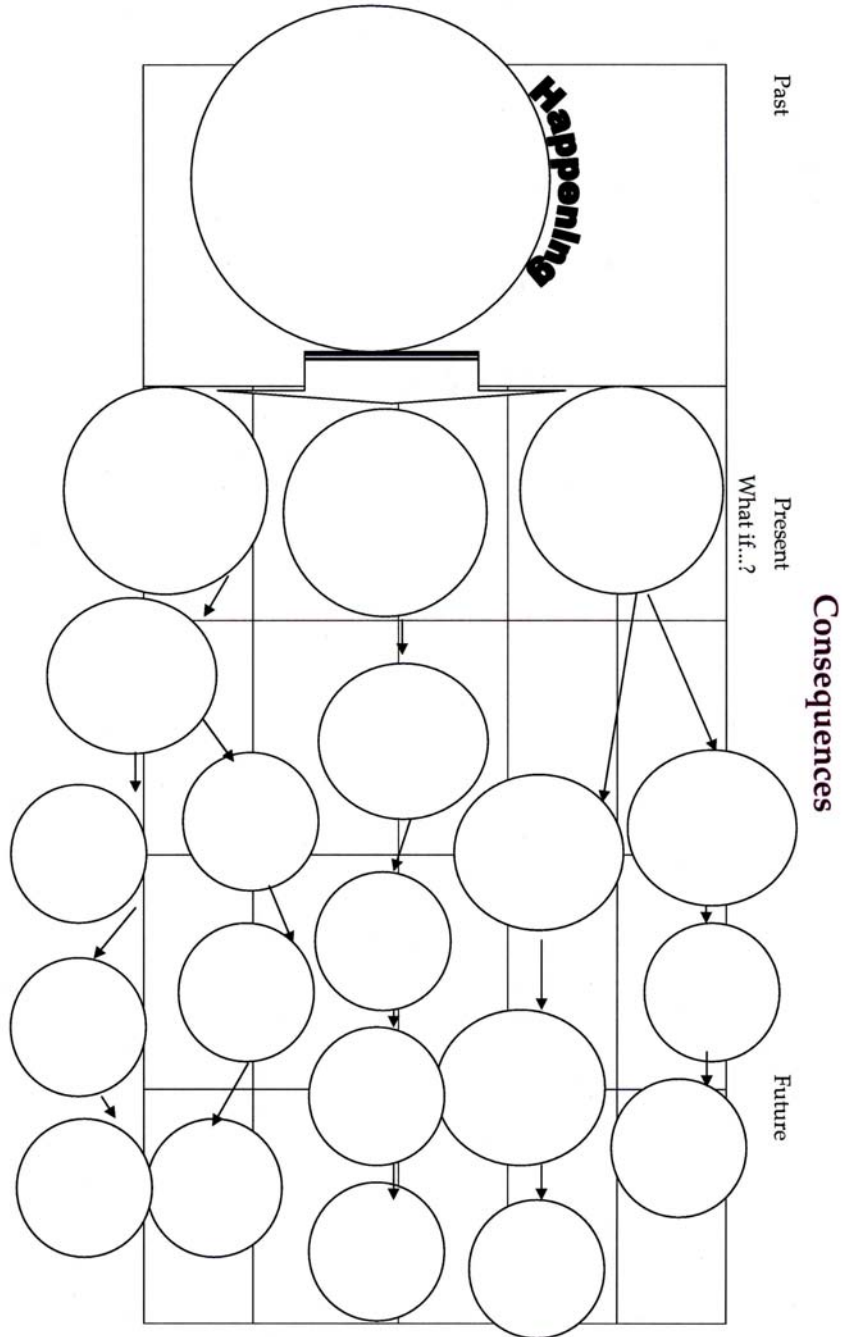
Focus Question:

Shared Wisdom:

From: O'Brien, K. and White, D. (2001, p. 91).

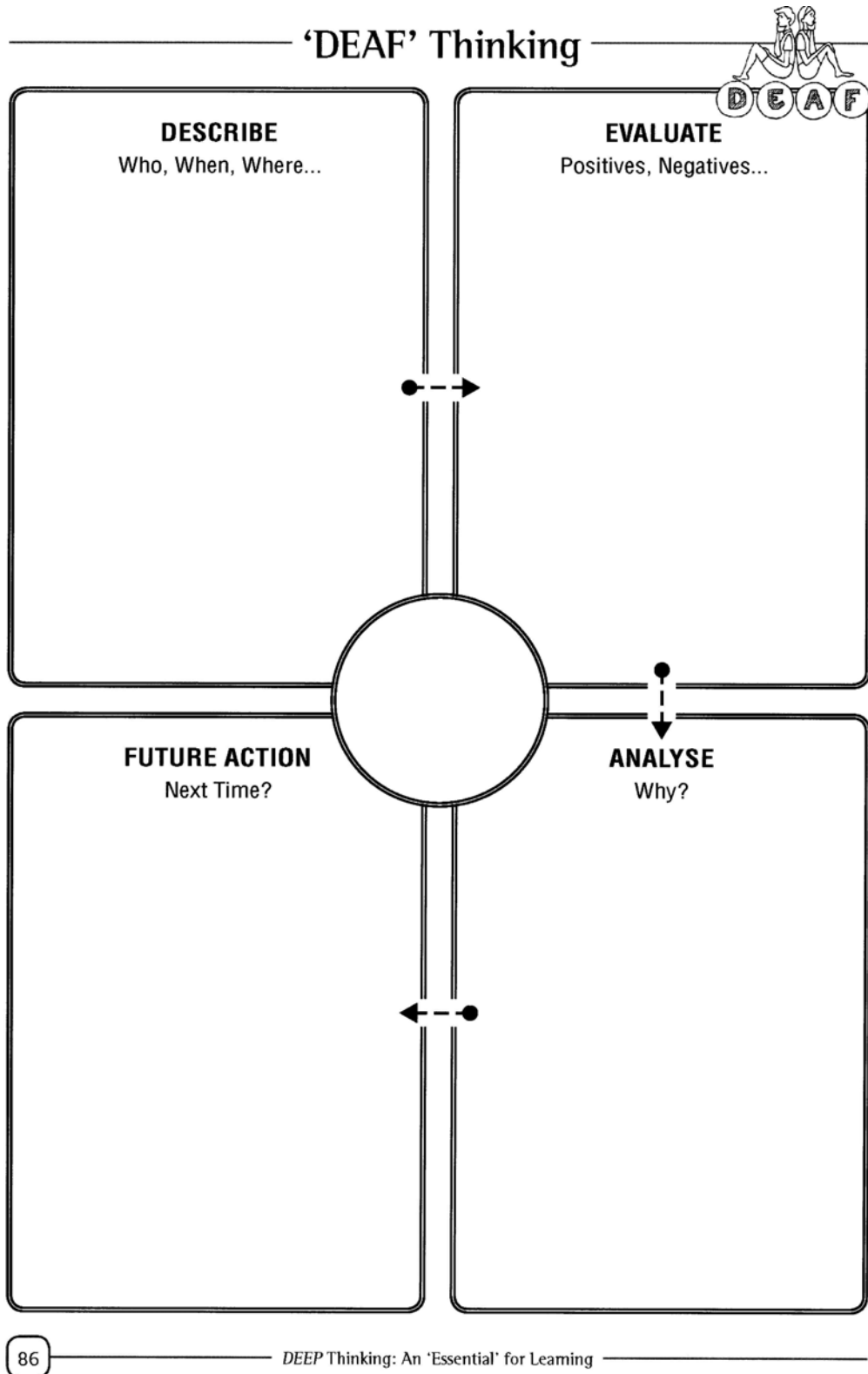


Adapted, with permission, from: White, D., O'Brien, K., and Todd, S. (2003, p. 121).

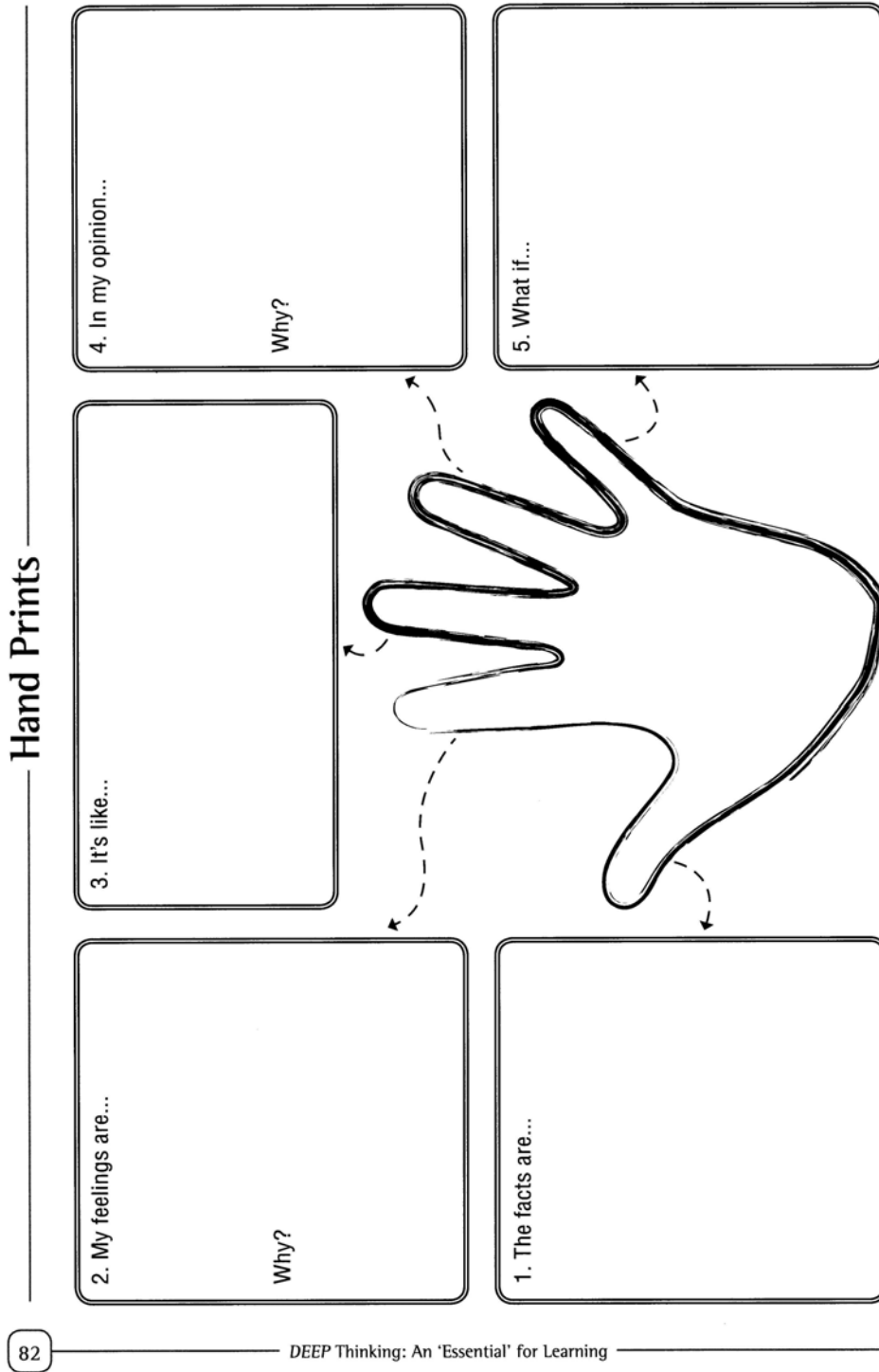


Values Education in Australian Schools: Support materials for Tasmanian Schools (Jan Kiernan, Oct 2005)

Taken from: Kiernan, J. (2005). *Values Education in Australian schools: Support materials for Tasmanian Schools*. Retrieved March 29, 2006, from http://www.valueseducation.edu.au/verve/_resources/Values_Education_support_Tas.pdf (p. 61).



From: White, D., White, S., and O'Brien, K. (2006, p. 86).



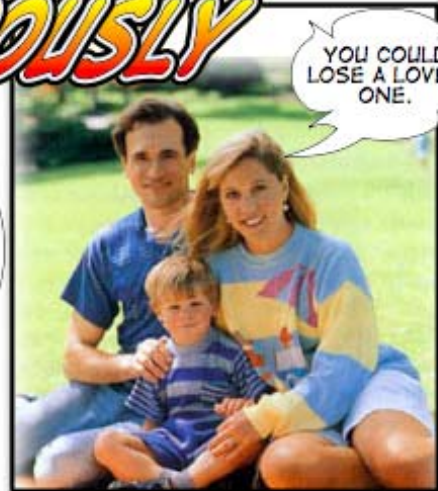
From: White, D., White, S., and O'Brien, K. (2006, p. 82).

Appendix 12: Comic Life example

DRIVING DANGEROUSLY



DRIVING DANGEROUSLY CAN CAUSE ACCIDENTS RESULTING IN SOMEONE'S DEATH OR INJURY.



YOU COULD LOSE A LOVED ONE.



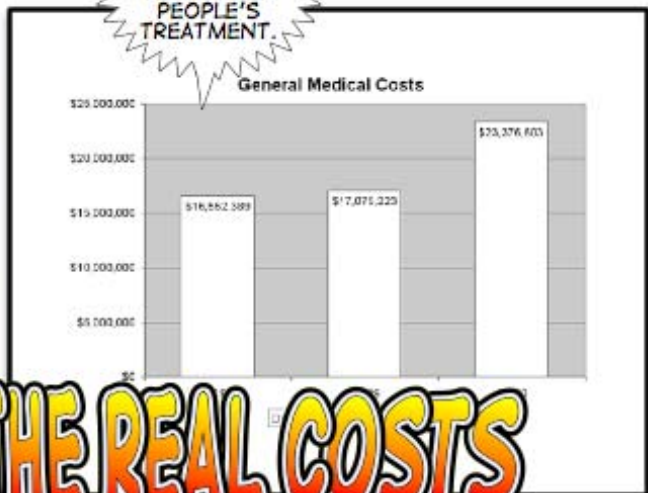
HAVE TO BURY A CLOSE FRIEND

SUFFER DEPRESSION BECAUSE YOU CAUSED SOMEONE'S DEATH OR INJURY.



BECOME DISABLED AND NEED CONSTANT CARE.

INCREASE MEDICAL COSTS FOR EVERYONE TO PAY FOR PEOPLE'S TREATMENT.



THE REAL COSTS

Appendix 13: Movie study

MOVIE STUDY

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone



- 1) In the film *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* Harry Potter, Hermione Granger, Ron Malfoy, Rebeus Hagrid and Albus Dumbledore demonstrate that they possess personal values. Show the personal values each character possesses by ticking the appropriate box on the table below.

	Harry	Hermione	Ron	Hagrid	Dumbledore
Love					
Compassion					
Responsibility					
Care					
Friendship					
Honesty					
Trustworthiness					
Respect					
Co-operation					
Humility					

- 2) Choose one value per character and give an example of a situation in the movie where this value is demonstrated.

Harry _____

Hermione _____

Ron _____

Hagrid _____

Dumbledore _____

3) List some acts by any of the film's characters that show poor personal values.

4) List five of the important choices characters make during the film?

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

Name: _____

abcfnrsw

