

The University of Southern Mississippi
The Aquila Digital Community

Dissertations

Spring 5-1-2016

**In Absentia Parentis: The Orphan Figure in Latter Twentieth
Century Anglo-American Children's Fantasy**

James Michael Curtis
University of Southern Mississippi

Follow this and additional works at: <https://aquila.usm.edu/dissertations>

 Part of the [Children's and Young Adult Literature Commons](#), and the [Modern Literature Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Curtis, James Michael, "In Absentia Parentis: The Orphan Figure in Latter Twentieth Century Anglo-American Children's Fantasy" (2016). *Dissertations*. 322.
<https://aquila.usm.edu/dissertations/322>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by The Aquila Digital Community. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of The Aquila Digital Community. For more information, please contact Joshua.Cromwell@usm.edu.

IN ABSENTIA PARENTIS: THE ORPHAN FIGURE IN LATTER TWENTIETH
CENTURY ANGLO-AMERICAN CHILDREN'S FANTASY

by

James Michael Curtis

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School
and the Department of English
at The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Approved:

Dr. Jameela Lares, Committee Chair
Professor, English

Dr. Eric Tribunella, Committee Member
Associate Professor, English

Dr. Charles Sumner, Committee Member
Associate Professor, English

Dr. Alexandra Valint, Committee Member
Assistant Professor, English

Dr. Karen S. Coats
Dean of the Graduate School

May 2016

COPYRIGHT BY
JAMES MICHAEL CURTIS
2016

ABSTRACT

IN ABSENTIA PARENTIS: THE ORPHAN FIGURE IN LATTER TWENTIETH CENTURY ANGLO-AMERICAN CHILDREN'S FANTASY

by James Michael Curtis

May 2016

Childhood development theory tells us that there are certain psychological processes that we all undergo during childhood, regardless of our national or cultural background. These developmental struggles can include regression—which can be both a positive and negative phenomenon—but can also include some of the more beneficial processes like overcoming separation anxiety and creating and establishing a sense of self. One figure that is often marginalized in discussions of childhood development in children's fantasy fiction is the orphan. In fact, book-length studies on the orphan figure in children's literary fantasy are virtually non-existent; however, I believe that attention to this recurring figure in children's fantasy is crucial to a better psychoanalytic understanding of children's literature. Childhood developmental psychologists insist upon the influence of the mother and the father as critical to the healthy psychological development of the child. In a comic genre like children's literature, the orphan—an inherently tragic figure—must still progress normally through the stages of psychological development to ensure the comic narrative. One way that these developmental processes are negotiated is through the intervention of conventions of the fantasy genre. In this study, I will be using childhood developmental theory in order to show how orphan figures in children's literature—like Harry Potter—demonstrate these developmental dilemmas from various stages of childhood. Furthermore, by drawing on Brian

Attebery's definition of fantasy as both formula and mode, I endeavor to demonstrate how conventions of the fantasy genre—like magic, for instance—help to create a narrative that walks the orphan protagonist through these psycho-developmental stages, thereby allowing those characters the opportunity to process fundamental psychological processes in the absence of the parental influence that childhood developmental psychologists claim is vital to the child's normalizing progress to adulthood. Ultimately, what I offer in this study is a nuanced analysis of the orphan figure in children's fantasy, one that draws upon childhood development theory and theories of the fantasy genre in order to show how the fantasy orphan figure models successful resolution of crucial childhood developmental processes through hyperbolic externalizations of those psycho-developmental dilemmas.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The successful production of this project would not have been possible without the continued diligence of Dr. Jameela Lares, Dr. Eric Tribunella, Dr. Charles Sumner, and Dr. Alexandra Valint, all of whom have enabled me to create the best possible study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	iii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Psychoanalysis and Fantasy	
Methodology	
The Orphan in Literature: A Critical Background	
The Orphan in Children’s Fantasy: A Sample Case Study	
II. SEPARATION ANXIETY IN DIANNA WYNNE JONES’S <i>CHARMED LIFE</i> AND ROALD DAHL’S <i>JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH</i>	32
Separation Anxiety and the Orphan Figure	
Breaking the Spell of Codependency in <i>Charmed Life</i>	
Regression and Re-integration in <i>James and the Giant Peach</i>	
Conclusion	
III. FANTASY AND THE TRAUMA NARRATIVE IN J. K. ROWLING’S HARRY POTTER SERIES.....	67
Harry Potter, Family, and Post-war Trauma Narrative	
Harry Potter’s Magical Salvation	
Aetnormativity and the Oedipal Conflict	
The Carnavalesque and the Loss of Innocence	
Neither Can Live While the <i>Other</i> Survives	
Phantasy and the Trauma Narrative	
Conclusion	
IV. THE FAMILY ROMANCE IN PHILIP PULLMAN’S HIS DARK MATERIALS.....	109
His Dark Materials and the “Virtual Orphan”	
<i>Northern Lights</i> and Lyra’s Family Romance	
Will’s Own Family Romance in <i>The Subtle Knife</i>	
Will and Lyra’s Identities “Settled”: A Note on <i>The Amber Spyglass</i>	
Conclusion	
V. RESOLVING IDENTITY ISSUES IN LLOYD ALEXANDER’S CHRONICLES OF PRYDAIN.....	142

	Oedipus and Psychoanalysis	
	Chronicles of Prydain as Modern Mythopoeic Foundling Tale	
	The Foundling Orphan and Individuation	
	Aetonnormativity in The Chronicles of Prydain	
	Conclusion	
VI.	ID AND INDIVIDUATION IN URSULA LEGUIN'S <i>A WIZARD OF EARTHSEA</i>	171
	Psycho-developmental Threads in A Wizard of Earthsea	
	Fantastic Individuation in Earthsea	
	The Abject and the Self	
	Conclusion	
VII.	CONCLUSION.....	203
	Fantasy and the Orphan: Some Clarifications	
	Future Directions	
	Closing Remarks	
	WORKS CITED.....	215

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the opening lines of his seminal work on American children's literature, *Audacious Kids: Coming of Age in America's Classic Children's Books*, Jerry Griswold recalls a student's question about the commonality shared among several "Golden Age" children's texts. His student asks: "Why are the children, in so many [. . .] childhood classics, orphans?" (3). Although Griswold does acknowledge this common feature, he does not pursue his student's query beyond labeling the phenomenon as a sort of narratological trope inherent in the life of the fictional child-hero. Indeed, the problem with much of the existing scholarship on the orphan figure is that many children's literature scholars—like Griswold—have passed over these types of characters as mere recurrent tropes, devoid of any real substance beyond their being narrative fixtures or staples of nineteenth-century social reform.¹ However, I maintain that a deeper analysis of the function of the orphan figure is fundamental to a more comprehensive understanding of the fields of children's literature and childhood studies.

Furthermore, I believe that the narrative workings of the orphan character in children's fiction are perhaps best understood through the lens of psychoanalytic theory. One reason for this connection is that so much of the prevailing research on childhood psychological development revolves around the child's relationship to his or her parents, especially the mother. In fact, Anna Freud tells us that "failure of the mother to play her part as a reliable need-fulfilling and comfort-giving agency will cause breakdowns in

¹For discussions of orphans in nineteenth-century literature, see, for example, Eileen Simpson's *Orphans: Real and Imaginary* (1987), Diana Pazicky's *Cultural Orphans in America* (1998), Laura Peters's *Orphan Texts* (2000), Claudia Nelson's *Little Strangers* (2003), Lydia Murdoch's *Imagined Orphans* (2006), and Joe Sutliff Sanders's *Disciplining Girls* (2011).

individuation” (67). Anna Freud’s fellow ego psychologist Erik Erikson—another of the earliest childhood developmental theorists—also discusses the importance of parental influence in the early development of children: “the basic intolerances, fears, and resulting anxieties [of children] arise from the mere fact that human life begins with a long, slow childhood and [. . .] with an attachment to parental figures” (411). Melanie Klein, another important early thinker in child development theory who would later depart from Freud’s ideas and form her own “object relations” school of child development, emphasizes the essential role of the parents in early childhood when she asserts that “Because our mother first satisfied all our self-preservative needs and sensual desires and gave us security, the part she plays in our minds is a lasting one,” and that “the very important part in which the father plays in the child’s emotional life also influences all later love relations, and all other human associations” (*Love, Guilt, and Reparation* 59). Even in the realm of contemporary child psychology, the parent-infant bond is considered instrumental to childhood development. Laura Berk, whose text *Child Development* has been a staple in courses on early child psychology for years, asserts that: “contemporary research indicates that—although the parent-infant bond is vitally important—later development is influenced not just by early attachment experiences but also by the continuing quality of the parent-child relationship” (426). Berk’s argument informs us that the bond between child and parent is fundamental to healthy psychological development not only in infancy but throughout the entirety of childhood.

In their lack of mother, father, or both parents, orphans occupy a unique place in psychological discourse, as the absence of direct parental influence allows for a greater possibility of developmental deviations and even pathologies. This connection allows us

to examine the role of the fictional orphan in terms of developmental psychology, furthering the psychoanalytical understanding of the orphan figure in children's literature. Undoubtedly, the term "orphan" is a fairly loaded word, and its meaning can vary depending on the context of the individual being described. The *Oxford English Dictionary* gives us an explicit definition of the word orphan: "A person, esp. a child, both of whose parents are dead (or, rarely, one of whose parents has died). In extended use: an abandoned or neglected child" ("orphan"). Here, we can see that the literal definition of "orphan" entails the loss of either parent, although popular usage of the word generally refers to the loss of both mother and father. This study will examine fictional orphans who have lost both parents (e.g., Cat and Gwendolen Chant from Diana Wynne Jones's *Charmed Life*, James from Roald Dahl's *James and the Giant Peach*, Harry Potter from J. K. Rowling's world-famous series, and Taran from Lloyd Alexander's *Chronicles of Prydain*) and those who have lost one parent, deemed "half-orphans" by many (e.g., Ged from Ursula LeGuin's *A Wizard of Earthsea*). However, this analysis is not limited to the denotative uses of the term. In fact, as noted above, one of the ways in which the orphan figure has been examined in recent years is through the plight of the abandoned or neglected child, leading to the conception of the "psychic orphan," which essentially points to a child with living (though absent) parents (e.g., Lyra Belacqua and Will Parry from Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* series).

Psychoanalysis and Fantasy

Prevailing psychoanalytical discourse on the orphan ties itself inextricably to the realm of fantasy, as the imagined absence of real parents perpetuates the creation of fantastic, idealized parental figures in the minds of all children who experience the

“family romance.” According to Anna Freud, the undoing of the maternal and paternal ideals formed during early childhood is one of the discernible steps in psychological maturation from child to adult, a step that includes: “the post-oedipal lessening of drive urgency and the transfer of libido from the parental figures to contemporaries . . . [and providing] evidence of disillusionment with and denigration of the parents (‘family romance,’ etc.)” (66). This process of parental idealization and subsequent dismantling of those ideas is not so very different from what occurs in the vast majority of fantasy orphan texts for children. In fact, idealized parental figures often “rescue” children from their orphaned state and transport them to fantasy worlds where their very *real* social problems are much more easily solved through various fantasy conventions. However, in accordance with proper and healthy psychological development, those orphan characters often come to undermine those parental ideals. For example, Harry Potter’s paternal ideals in regards to both his own father and his paternal surrogate Albus Dumbledore are shattered when he learns that his father was once a bully to the young Severus Snape and when Harry discovers that Dumbledore once harbored anti-“Muggle” (i.e., anti-human) sentiments. While we can attribute this recurrent intervention of fantasy to the “hope” that writers like Natalie Babbitt and critics like Bruno Bettelheim assert is crucial to the childhood experience of reading fantasy,² I argue that the purpose which this narrative trope of orphanhood serves is much different in children’s fantasy fiction. In this study, I hope to show how psychological dilemmas are evoked by orphan characters and resolved through fantasy narrative conventions. To clarify, I am not adopting Bettelheim’s

² While Babbitt’s notion of the hope that children’s fantasy offers is rooted in the resolution of real-world problems through fantastic methods, Bettelheim’s discussion of the inherent hope in stories for children is psychoanalytic and offers ways that this sort of narrative hope allows for psychotherapeutic benefits and psychological catharsis for young readers.

insistent position that psychological narratives like fairy tales unequivocally have therapeutic effects on readers; rather, I am primarily showing how children's fantasy texts mirror real-world psychology and offering possibilities that others with a more firm grounding in clinical psychology might one day be able to prove empirically.

Critic T. E. Apter emphasizes the link between psychoanalysis and fantasy in his psychoanalytic approach to fantasy in literature—aptly titled *Fantasy Literature* (1982)—when he asserts that: “the fantasist’s world is also Freud’s world; and Freud, the greatest representative of psychoanalysis, is also among the greatest fantasists” (142).

Undoubtedly, Freud’s ideas on wish-fulfillment and the unconscious have had resounding implications in the articulation of fantasy as a phenomenon and as a literary genre.

Indeed, among Tzvetan Todorov’s *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* (1970), Eric Rabkin’s *The Fantastic in Literature* (1976), Rosemary Jackson’s *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* (1981), Brian Attebery’s *Strategies of Fantasy* (1992) and numerous others, one would be hard-pressed to find a critical theory of fantasy that does not incorporate psychoanalytic theories in one way or another. Todorov relies heavily on Freud’s notion of the “uncanny” in his articulation of the “fantastic,” and Rabkin, Jackson, and Attebery all use various Freudian psychoanalytic theories on dreams and the unconscious to articulate definitions of fantasy that focus on the ways that unconscious content manifests itself in the creation of fantasy narratives. In his own discussion of the psychological effects of fantasy literature, Apter notes that “the impact of fantasy rests upon the fact³ that the world presented seems to be unquestionably ours, yet at the same time, as in a dream, ordinary meanings are suspended” (3). The mimesis

³ While the juxtaposition of “fantasy” and “fact” might seem ironic, Apter’s point is that we need a solid, realistic basis on which to build a relatable fantasy world.

involved in constructing a verisimilar fantasy narrative is one side of what I see as the ambivalent nature of fantasy itself, which relies on the juxtaposition of the familiar and the unfamiliar—the “real” and the fantastic. This juxtaposition of mimesis and fantasy could very well explain (at least in part) why we continue to see the very real issues of child development acted out in even the most otherworldly fantasy narratives.

This analysis makes two central claims: one, that the fantasy orphan figure evokes psycho-developmental processes undergone in childhood and, secondly, that the successful resolution of those processes is modelled by the orphan protagonists of these stories through the use of narrative conventions inherent in the fantasy genre. Because of the nearly limitless possibilities of the fantasy genre, these texts are able to provide us with hyperbolic externalizations of inner psycho-developmental struggles and with examples of both the positive and negative possibilities for the development of the orphan figure. Furthermore, this study seeks to fill some gaps in existing scholarship by discussing the role of the orphan in children’s Anglo-American fantasy of the latter twentieth century. This particular period in British or American history, an era in which American and British cultures alike were directly confronted with the aftermath of several major wars and all of the horrors involved therewith,⁴ called for the reaffirmation of the ideals of family and nation, arguably more so than other moments in the history of these two cultures. The social need for catharsis in the face of this post-war emotional

⁴Military conflicts in which both the U.K. and U.S. were involved in the twentieth century include World War I (1914-1918), the Allied Intervention in the Russian Civil War (1918-20), World War II (1939-45), the Korean War (1950-53), the Vietnam War (1955-75), the Gulf War (1990-91), and the Bosnian War (1992-95). Individually, the U.K. had a lengthier history of military conflict which included the Anglo-Aro War (1901-02), the Turkish War of Independence (1919-23), the Third Anglo-Afghan War (1919), the Irish War of Independence (1919-21), the British-Zionist Conflict (1938-48), the Suez Crisis (1956-57), the Falklands War (1982), and the Kosovo War (1998-99). The U.S. was also involved in the Banana Wars (1898-1934), the Border War (1910-19), the Bay of Pigs Invasion (1961), the Dominican Civil War (1965-66), and the Invasion of Panama (1989-90).

and psychological fallout is discussed by critic Laura Peters in her study of orphans in British literature and culture, *Orphan Texts: Victorian Orphans, Culture, and Empire* (2000). Peters claims that “the orphan as a figure provokes in the larger family—society—fear, anxiety, guilt, and inadequacy by its presence” and that “the orphan figure is continually reproduced by [society], as its presence is necessary for the reaffirmation of the ideals of family and nation” (23, 122). Although I am not arguing for any potential effects on the child or adult reader in this study, I believe that Peters’s claim about orphanhood and the ideals of family and nation may provide us with at least one strong rationale for studying the recurrence of the orphan figure in cultural artifacts like children’s literature.

Nevertheless, Peters’s focus on the nineteenth century points to yet another gap in scholarship on the orphan figure. The vast majority of sustained critical work on orphans in literature—works written both for children and for adults—focus predominantly on realist texts from the nineteenth century, leaving both the entirety of the twentieth century and the fantasy genre virtually ignored—a situation I hope, in part, to rectify in my own study. After all, children’s literature exists, among other things, as a cultural artifact, carrying with it the psycho-social and historical imprint of the society from which it emerges. For my purposes, the increased production and popularity of fantasy children’s texts during the latter half of the twentieth century—a period that witnessed a boom in post-war children’s fantasy that many label the second “Golden Age” of children’s literature⁵—warrants exploration into the causes behind this growth in popularity.

⁵ See, for example, Griswold’s *Audacious Kids*, Hunt’s *Introduction to Children’s Literature* (specifically chapter six), Angela Sorby’s “Golden Age” in *Keywords for Children’s Literature*, and Lucy Pearson’s “Introduction: Golden Ages” in *The Making of Modern Children’s Literature in Britain*.

In this study, I will examine the orphan figure in order to add to the sparse critical work on the orphan in children's fantasy literature scholarship. Specifically, I will provide psychoanalytic textual analyses that focus on varying aspects of childhood development as they are depicted in children's fantasy fiction, beginning with the earliest childhood developmental dilemmas experienced in infancy and moving along the psycho-developmental scale towards adolescence. I will first examine in chapter one Roald Dahl's *James and the Giant Peach* and Dianna Wynne Jones's *Charmed Life* to show how both narratives utilize the fantasy genre to quickly resolve the psychological struggles surrounding separation anxiety, subverting any fears that might arise for the orphan protagonists in those texts. Next, in chapter two, I will move towards an analysis of J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter series and will include a discussion of both the Oedipal dilemma and the post-war trauma narrative represented in the series. The goal of this chapter is to offer an understanding of how children's literature depicts the ways in which its central characters deal with traumatic loss and how certain fantasy conventions allow them to continue to develop normally despite this trauma. Then, in chapter three, I will proceed to examine the narrative of the virtual (or psychic) orphan, or the child whose parents are technically alive, though absent (in one way or another) from their childhood. This chapter will consider Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* series, focusing specifically on characters Lyra Belacqua and Will Parry in an effort to demonstrate how Pullman's trilogy utilizes fantasy conventions to resolve issues surrounding the "family romance" for Lyra and Will. In chapter four, I will be focusing specifically on Lloyd Alexander's *Chronicles of Prydain* and illustrating how the conventions of fantasy work to eliminate the identity issues inherent in the specific lack of initial identifying bases

(i.e., the complete absence of the history and knowledge of one's own biological mother and father) for its foundling orphan protagonist Taran. Finally, in chapter five, I will move to a discussion of the "half-orphan," or the orphan with only one living parent, looking specifically at Ursula LeGuin's *A Wizard of Earthsea* and how LeGuin's use of the fantasy genre deals with issues surrounding individuation, or the creation of a sense of self, which is typically the final psycho-developmental process one undergoes prior to young adulthood. Again, each of these texts could be read as a hyperbolic externalization of the inner psychological struggles of their orphan characters. What we gain from exploring these orphan texts is an understanding of how each narrative, through the use of popular fantasy convention, facilitates the processing of crucial psycho-developmental stages in the absence of parents in these works of popular children's fantasy fiction.

Methodology

There is perhaps no other theorist who creates more divisiveness among psychological and psychoanalytic literary critics than Sigmund Freud. Nevertheless, Freud's ideas remain the taproot of psychoanalytic scholarship, even in contemporary criticism, as it is nearly impossible to employ a psychoanalytic approach to literature that does not in some way engage with Freud's theories—whether the critic subscribes to Freudian ideology or whether he or she wholly rejects it. Accordingly, this study will explore several of Freud's proto-theoretical articulations of child development, especially those that are later picked up and further developed and utilized by Anna Freud, Erik Erikson, John Bowlby, D.W. Winnicott, and Melanie Klein, just to name a few of the earliest and most influential child development theorists of the twentieth century.⁶

⁶ Two very influential early child psychologists who are not utilized in this study nevertheless deserve recognition. Most notably, Jean Piaget and G. Stanley Hall were instrumental in the furthering of child

Additionally, I will be drawing upon more contemporary texts on childhood development—specifically American Psychological Association award-winning cognitive psychologist Robert Siegler’s *How Children Develop* and nationally-renowned child development researcher Laura Berk’s best-selling *Child Development*, which are utilized in academic courses in childhood psychology—in order to demonstrate how these early twentieth-century child psychology theories remain relevant to contemporary understandings of child development. However, since it is my aim to add to current critical conversations involving contemporary children’s fantasy, I will also be using ideas set forth by relevant latter twentieth century fantasy theorists such as Tzvetan Todorov, Rosemary Jackson, Eric Rabkin, Brian Attebery, and Farah Mendlesohn as well as the earlier twentieth century essays on fantasy by J. R. R. Tolkien and C. S. Lewis in order to articulate a better understanding of why fantasy is a particularly effective method for the resolution of these psycho-developmental issues.

In Freud’s *The Interpretation of Dreams*, we see one of the first initiatives for child psychology; although his tone is exceedingly patronizing, his underlying recognition of the need for child analysis is clear:

Child psychology, in my opinion, is destined to render the same services to the psychology of adults as a study of the structure or development of the lower animals renders to the investigation of the structure of the higher

development theory. Piaget is most known for his cognitive development theory (which is based largely on human biology). Although Piaget was no doubt influential in this regard, his theories do not take into account the relative aspect of childhood development and instead assert a series of psycho-developmental stages that assume a certain basic cognitive function for all children, which of course is why more contemporary theorists have moved beyond Piaget—and why I do not draw upon his theories in this study. In terms of Hall although his theories were—like Piaget’s—influential in their time, “because there was no theoretical framework to give meaning to Hall’s questions, the findings of his studies were of little value. . . [and] today, his theory is all but forgotten” (Berk 8).

orders of animals. *Hitherto but few deliberate efforts have been made to make use of the psychology of the child for such a purpose.* (221, emphasis mine)

Despite his seemingly dismissive attitude towards the psychology of children, Freud goes on to acknowledge in *The Interpretation of Dreams* that “parents play a leading part in the infantile psychology of all persons who subsequently become psychoneurotics” (221). Because Freud posits the cause of psychopathology on the influence of an individual’s parents during the course of that individual’s maturation, it would seem that Freud actually places more emphasis on the need for child psychology than his initial tone would lead us to believe. Indeed, Freud’s daughter Anna takes on her father’s impetus and, along with several others, begins to take psychoanalysis in the direction of a deeper understanding of the psychology of childhood. Although these early theorists—particularly Anna Freud and Melanie Klein—would ultimately differ in the directions that they took these early psycho-developmental ideas, nearly all of them agreed on one important factor in childhood development: the impact of parental influence upon the healthy psychological growth of the child.

For instance, Anna Freud placed a great deal of emphasis on the “early mother-child relationship and impact of environmental influence during the first year of life” (24) and argued that “the state of his dependency, or independence . . . can be assessed approximately from the uses a child makes of the parents” (46). Melanie Klein, Anna Freud’s eventual rival, bases her entire system of “object-relations” theories on the child’s relationship to the parent, especially the mother. D.W. Winnicott, one of Klein’s followers, stresses the importance of early parental interactions for children: “the union

between father and mother provides a fact, a hard fact around which the child may build a fantasy, a rock to which he can cling to and against which he can kick” (115). Erik Erikson, an early child psychologist who adhered more to Anna Freud’s “ego psychology” school of thought than Melanie Klein’s “objection-relations” theories, also emphasizes the essential nature of parental influence upon the normative progression of the child towards maturation:

The infant’s first social achievement, then, is his willingness to let the mother out of sight without undue anxiety or rage, because she has become an inner certainty as well as an outer predictability. Such consistency, continuity, and sameness of experience provide a rudimentary sense of ego identity which depends . . . on the recognition that there is an inner population of remembered and anticipated sensations and images which are firmly correlated with the outer population of familiar and predictable things and people. (247)

Because of this early reliance on parental influence, the orphan—who has either one or no parents—must find other ways to develop. This issue of development is not only crucial in terms of the psychological maturation of the child; it is also an issue that is inherent in children’s and adolescent fiction. As Roberta Trites notes in *Disturbing the Universe* (2000), her invaluable study on the adolescent and young adult genre, “the idea of growth—the investigation of which characters have developed and which have not—is one of the most common principles in the study of children’s and adolescent literature. Since novels of development are *entwicklungsroman*, virtually all children’s and adolescent novels participate in the genre” (9). Here, Trites is tracing the Germanic

origins of the *bildungsroman* and drawing a deliberate distinction between the *entwicklungsroman* and the *bildungsroman*, noting that the former entails any kind of developmental maturation, whereas the latter involves the idea that “the protagonist’s growth is neither accidental . . . nor simply a matter of normal developmental growth; rather, the hero self-consciously sets out on a quest to achieve independence” (11). For Trites, the *bildungsroman* ends in adulthood, whereas the *entwicklungsroman* is any narrative of development. For the purposes of this study, I will be using the term “narrative of maturation” to describe the primary texts under analysis since this study involves examples of both the *entwicklungsroman* and the *bildungsroman*. In these narratives of maturation, the orphan is in an intrinsically precarious psychological place due to his or her lack of parents. The primary emphasis that developmental psychologists place on the role of the mother and father during normal childhood development tells us this much; however, in children’s and adolescent fiction, the growth that is—as Trites claims—one of the “common principles” of the genre becomes problematized by the orphan character’s lack of a fundamental parental basis. It is only fitting then that—in the genre of children’s fantasy fiction—the very conventions of that genre must often aid the orphan in his healthy psychological development if he or she is to experience this necessary growth despite the absence of crucial parental influence.

In terms of addressing the implications of those fantasy conventions, I will be drawing on ideas presented by such critics as Tzvetan Todorov, Rosemary Jackson, Eric Rabkin, and Anne Swinfen in order to articulate the nuances of the fantasy genre as they affect the psychological development of the orphan protagonist. For Todorov, fantasy is largely a phenomenon of reader-response and narratology. Specifically, he claims that in:

A world which is indeed our world, the one we know, a world without devils, sylphides, or vampires, there occurs an event which cannot be explained by the laws of this same familiar world. The person who experiences the event must opt for one of two possible solutions: either he is the victim of an illusion of the senses of a product of the imagination—and laws of the world then remain what they are; or else the event has taken place [. . .] the fantastic occupies the duration of this uncertainty.

(25)

Rosemary Jackson acknowledges the importance of Todorov's text: "the value of Todorov's work in encouraging serious critical engagement with a form of literature which had been dismissed as being rather frivolous or foolish cannot be overestimated" (3). However, her own take on the fantasy genre is one that concentrates on its use as *mode*—specifically as a narrative method of exploring, critiquing, and even subverting socio-cultural norms—hence, the title of her own study, *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*. Anne Swinfen's *In Defence of Fantasy* does just what its title suggests and provides a rationale for understanding fantasy beyond the simple "escapist" critique that is often applied to it. Swinfen argues that the verisimilitude involved in creating an effective fantasy allows us to see our own real-world problems in new and inventive ways. Finally, Eric Rabkin offers a nuanced definition of fantasy in his *The Fantastic in Literature*, maintaining that fantasy itself is a genre in which an author creates a set of "ground rules" and spends the entirety of the narrative reversing our expectations, taking to exponentially higher levels Todorov's notion of the "fantastic" as a reader-response.

Although all of these later twentieth century theorists each contribute to furthering our understanding of fantasy literature—and each will certainly factor into my later analyses whenever relevant—my study is most aligned with the ideas presented in Brian Attebery’s *Strategies of Fantasy*—itself an amalgamation of the most significant fantasy theories presented by those mentioned above and cited as “the most valuable theoretical text for taking a definition of fantasy beyond preference and intuition” (*Cambridge Companion to Fantasy Literature* 1). In the first chapter of *Strategies of Fantasy*, Attebery offers two distinctly competing definitions for fantasy. The first reads: “Fantasy is a form of popular escapist literature that combines stock characters and devices—wizards, dragons, magic, and the like—into a predictable plot in which the perennially understaffed forces of good triumph over a monolithic evil” (1). Attebery’s second, more nuanced, definition is:

Fantasy is a sophisticated mode of storytelling characterized by stylistic playfulness, self-reflexiveness, and a subversive treatment of established orders of society and thought. Arguably the major fictional mode of the late twentieth century, it draws upon contemporary ideas about sign systems and the indeterminacy of meaning and at the same time recaptures the vitality and freedom of nonmimetic traditional forms such as epic, folktale, romance, and myth. (1)

Through his articulation of these two distinctly different definitions, what Attebery is pointing to is the notion of fantasy as both *formula* (in the former definition) and *mode* (in the latter). Though Attebery’s outlining of fantasy-as-mode is pointing to the self-reflexivity and focus on language inherent in postmodern theory, my analysis focuses on

a different dimension of the fantasy-as-mode concept, one that actually relies on the often denigrated idea of fantasy-as-formula. In other words, what I am offering in this study is an analysis of fantasy that exhibits its use as a narrative mode, adding an even more nuanced dimension to Attebery's idea of fantasy as *mode*. Essentially, I argue that by utilizing those very formulaic conventions—"wizards, dragons, magic, and the like"—children's fantasy orphan narratives facilitate a variation on the use of fantasy as mode, externalizing inner psychological processes and allowing the orphan protagonists of these fantasy texts the opportunity to process psycho-developmental struggles in the absence of the parental influence that child developmental theorists claim is vital to the normalizing trajectory towards successful psychological progression to adulthood.

As a reference point for some of the tropes that I will be highlighting in my discussion of orphan narratives, one important source will be John Clute and John Grant's edited reference book, *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy* (1997), which was awarded the Hugo Award for Best Non-Fiction Book, the World Fantasy Award for a professional text, and the Locus Award for Non-Fiction.⁷ The *Encyclopedia* is a collection of entries by various contributors on fantasy tropes, texts, and authors dating back to the eighteenth century and remains an invaluable source for anyone studying fantasy fiction. Because of its eclectic and comprehensive nature, I will be using the *Encyclopedia* (along with other reference texts that deal with the fantasy genre) in order to show how the recurrent narrative elements that I will be discussing are and have been established conventions of the fantasy genre for some time. In addition to both *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy* and Attebery's *Strategies of Fantasy*, other key texts on fantasy conventions that will be referenced throughout this study include Diana Wynne Jones's *The Tough Guide to*

⁷ All three honors were awarded to the *Encyclopedia of Fantasy* in 1998.

Fantasyland (1996), Matthew T. Dickerson's *From Homer to Harry Potter: A Handbook on Myth and Fantasy* (2006), Farah Mendlesohn's *Rhetorics of Fantasy* (2008), Farah Mendlesohn and Edward James's co-authored *A Short History of Fantasy* (2009) and Brian Attebery's *Stories About Stories: Fantasy and the Remaking of Myth* (2014).

The Orphan in Literature: A Critical Background

Of course, any psychoanalytic literary analysis of the orphan figure in children's literature should begin with Freud. In his theories on the Oedipus complex, Freud is the first to articulate the proto-typical literary orphan figure—Oedipus himself—in terms of the universality of the human psycho-developmental experience. According to Freud, all infants experience a primal desire to wholly possess the mother and, owing to the child's burgeoning recognition of the father as a competitor for the mother's attention, harbor an inherent desire to usurp or even *kill* the father—much in the way that Oedipus murdered his own father Laius:

It may be that we were all destined to direct our first sexual impulses toward our mothers, and our first impulses of hatred and violence toward our fathers; our dreams convince us that we were. King Oedipus, who slew his father Laius and wedded his mother Jocasta, is nothing more or less than a wish-fulfilment—the fulfilment of the wish of our childhood. But we, more fortunate than he, insofar as we have not become psychoneurotics, have since our childhood succeeded in withdrawing our sexual impulses from our mothers, and in forgetting our jealousy of our fathers. (*Interpretation of Dreams* 85)

For Freud, the child's inherent need to *sublimate*, or find a socially acceptable outlet for, this id-driven homicidal instinct facilitates the resolution of this "Oedipus Complex" in the course of normal, healthy development. The failure to resolve these hostile feelings can result in various pathologies throughout childhood and even into adulthood.

Carl Jung, Freud's former protégé, takes the Oedipal struggle to the level of the archetype, attributing heroic, mythical status to the orphan figure as Jung himself traces it back through generations of oral and written cultural artifacts. Jung's work on the "hero" archetype, though generally dismissed by modern psychological critics along with his theories on the collective unconscious, is picked up by mythologist Joseph Campbell in the late 1940s as part of his definition of the "hero's journey," a recurring transcultural narrative that he outlines in detail in his comparative mythological study, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949). In terms of children's literature scholarship, it is important to examine this line of thinking on the orphan figure in order to fully understand one of the first sustained critical discussions about the orphan hero in children's fantasy—Natalie Babbitt's "Fantasy and the Classic Hero" (1987)—which draws attention to the orphan figure in children's literature through an understanding of the archetypal and mythical implications outlined by Jung and Campbell. Babbitt begins by pointing out how her reading of Campbell's *Hero With a Thousand Faces*, which was heavily influenced by Jungian theory, inspired her to revisit children's fantasy with an eye towards how Jungian archetypal theory plays out in several popular children's fantasy narratives such as *James and the Giant Peach*, *Peter Pan*, *The Wizard of Oz*, and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Since the orphan is one aspect of the "hero" archetype that Jung describes, Babbitt is able to draw attention to the recurrence of the orphan figure as a manifestation

of Jungian archetypes throughout literature, including characters such as Dahl's James and Baum's Dorothy who appear in works of fiction that are produced for children.

Whether or not one subscribes to Jung's or Campbell's ideas (i.e., the psychological or anthropological aspect of the archetype), the fact remains that the orphan is a recurring narrative figure that has pervaded the history of story-telling. From Moses of Hebrew history, to the Anglo-Saxon hero Beowulf, to the central Islamic figure Muhammad, to certain iterations of the legendary King Arthur and the renowned fairy tale character Cinderella, to Bronte's *Jane Eyre*, Dickens's *Oliver Twist*, and on to Tolkien's Frodo Baggins, the orphan has continued to manifest itself in storytelling throughout human history. This persistent presence across many cultures explains, at least in part, why we continue to see writers invoke the figure of the orphan. However, for comic narrative modes like children's fantasy literature,⁸ the orphan presents a sort of modal conundrum: how, in a genre in which the characteristic "happy ending" is expected, does one transform the fate of an inherently tragic figure like the orphan?

Another approach to the orphan in literature—one that I will be drawing on much more heavily than Freud's proto-theoretical musings—is supplied by developmental psychology, beginning with Erik Erikson's examination of Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) in *Childhood and Society* (1950), where he communicates the importance of *play* in childhood socialization and psycho-development through Tom's

⁸ In Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism*, he asserts that "comedy usually moves towards a happy ending" (170). Later, in *The Great Code*, Frye qualifies this "happy ending" as one of restoration and renewal (73) during his overall discussion of the *Holy Bible* as the "great code" of Western literature. From Dante's *Divine Comedy* (1320), to Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667) and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678)—two taproot texts for modern fantasy—to the children's books of George MacDonald and Charles Kingsley (two of the precursors of modern children's fantasy), and on to the early children's fantasies of E. Nesbit, J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, C. S. Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia* and, finally, J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series, we can see a recurrent pattern of fantasy and the comic ending that has been a staple of the genre for centuries.

deception of Ben Rogers in getting him to white-wash Aunt Polly's fence for Tom. In Erikson's analysis of this famous "white-washing" scene as a means of articulating the psycho-developmental nuances of *play*, we see the first instance of the orphan figure in children's literature being used to explain the importance of childhood psychological processes. Following Erikson, critic Bruno Bettelheim, in his *The Uses of Enchantment* (1976), examines the orphan figure in fairy tales in order to articulate the vicarious working out of Oedipal dilemmas through parental stand-ins (the evil stepmother, the monster, etc.) and follows Erikson's example of using children's texts to articulate psychological processes. However, in Bettelheim's text we see a shift to a reader-response approach in his analysis of orphan characters in fairy tales. According to Bettelheim, fairy tale narratives—especially those involving orphaned or abandoned children—allow the child indirectly to resolve Oedipal conflicts that are inherent in childhood development and involve both the mother and father. Furthermore, he claims that those same narratives can convey the essential concept of autonomy to the child.

Both the mythical and psycho-developmental strains of the discussion of orphans in children's literature are important in that the two begin to merge in the late 1990s into a hybrid discourse of narratological and reader-response analyses. One of the first critics to articulate this dualistic approach to the orphan figure is Melanie Kimball, whose "From Folktales to Fiction: Orphan Characters in Children's Literature" (1999) positions the orphan ambivalently: on the one hand, the orphan is the "eternal Other," perpetually defined by his or her inability to belong to even the most basic social unit—the family. On the other hand, the orphan serves as an incomparable source of optimism in his or her ability to "embody the hope that whatever the present situation, it can change for the

better” (559). Kimball’s study, which incorporates more than fifty folktales and a handful of children’s novels, traces the same mythical pattern that previous critics have noted in their discussions of the orphan as one dimension of the “hero” archetype and in those same critics’ articulation of the quest or “journey” inherent in the lives of those fictional archetypal figures. Kimball traces the roots of the orphan figure in folklore to social mirroring and verisimilitude, citing the prevalence of real-life orphans in the eras in which the folktales she examines emerged. Though she notes the continuation of the orphan figure in periods with a notable decline in literal orphanhood, she does not discuss the possible causes of the perpetuation of the orphan figure in the twentieth century. Furthermore, though she mentions one or two orphan fantasy texts in passing, she chooses instead to focus on Frances Hodgson Burnett’s decidedly more realist *The Secret Garden* (1911). For my purposes, the “hope” that Kimball attributes to the orphan figure is heavily reliant on the comic ending of children’s texts which, in this study, is almost always facilitated through fantasy conventions. What Kimball fails to acknowledge—and what I would add to her analysis of the orphan figure—is that the orphan embodies just as much “fear” as “hope” in terms of his or her potential situation; this embodiment of fear explains why there is a need for the fantastic psychological resolution that occurs in many orphan fantasy narratives.

From Kimball, we move into the twenty-first century, where there is more criticism on the orphan figure as it appears in children’s literature. For example, fantasy writer and essayist Terri Windling—in her 2007 article “Lost and Found: The Orphaned Hero in Myth, Folklore, and Fantasy”—echoes much of the same archetypal and reader-response theory discussed by previous critics. She traces the orphan figure as far back as

Greek legends, Assyrian folktales, and ancient Jewish parables, outlining the historical transformation of the orphan in literature from its origins in myth to some of its more contemporary embodiments like Frodo Baggins in Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* series, Lirael in Garth Nix's novel of the same name, and Jane Yolen's *White Jenna* (1989). Windling begins by outlining the shift of the orphan figure as the child of heroic or supernatural ancestry to the simple "child of cruel or feckless parents" (2) of popular nineteenth-century fairy tale narratives. Like Kimball before her, Windling also mentions the prevalence of the orphan character in twentieth-century fantasy but does not pursue its function therein. One crucial issue that Windling's article does raise, however, is that "we still have orphans in the world; there are still foundlings left at hospital doors; and some of us have been foster kids, or adopted, or otherwise abandoned by one or both parents" (3). Not only does Windling bring the real-life social resonance of the orphan child back into the realm of criticism, but she also includes a revealing personal anecdote from a friend. Orphaned at birth, Windling's friend discusses his own experience in reading orphan fantasy texts: "Orphan stories satisfied my need to read stories I could identify with [. . . but] with endings more satisfactory than mine . . . perhaps they also gave me the idea that there's something wrong with my own life story [. . . that] there will always be a chapter missing" (3). This personal anecdote precludes the type of hopeful optimism that critics like Bettelheim and Kimball assert are inherent in orphan children's narratives. Furthermore, upon learning about such real-life experiences as these, one must wonder at the social implications of these orphan fantasies which pervade Anglo-American culture.

In fact, it is this very idea of the social repercussions of the literary orphan that Eileen Simpson discusses in the second half of her 1987 study, *Orphans: Real and Imaginary*. Though largely ignored by children's literature scholars, Simpson's work remains one of the few book-length studies on the orphan figure in literature and culture. In it, Simpson traces the treatment of real-life orphans from the nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century before discussing how the orphan figure is depicted in literature, including children's narratives like *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884). In her discussion, Simpson brings up several relevant points for this study. For example, she claims that the notion of "orphanhood" takes on metaphorical connotations as orphan rates drop at the turn of the twentieth century, so that "orphanhood" becomes the preferred method for depicting children who are—like Huck Finn—"homeless, unwashed, unschooled, [and] unsupervised" (198). In other words, "orphan" becomes a way of designating the socially abjected child-members of a given society that pose a threat to the bourgeois family ideal. This socio-cultural notion of orphanhood includes what Simpson refers to as the "psychic" orphan, or the child with technically living (though absent) parents—a type of orphan that will be discussed at length later in this study.

However, whether consciously or not, Simpson actually touches on a marked phenomenon of the nineteenth century, when it was common practice both in the United States and in England to discuss poor children in terms of "orphanhood," whether or not the child had living parents. In fact, this orphan discourse is something that Diana Pazicky discusses at length in her *Cultural Orphans in America* (1998), an analysis of orphan narratives in American culture. Pazicky argues that narratives of orphanhood

immediately conjure issues of identity formation—particularly for Americans, whose post-Revolutionary discourse established an “orphaned” national identity following the separation from England, the “parent” country (xviii). Furthermore, she draws on child development theory to articulate a parallel between individual and group identity formation: “one can infer that a group or nation, like an individual, can experience a sense of orphanhood and that its process of collective identity formation is also relational in nature” (xii). In other words, in the same way that individuals often experience imagined orphanhood during childhood psycho-developmental stages, groups can undergo a similar process in the formation of their collective identity. More importantly, Pazicky echoes Erikson in her discussion of socio-cultural identity formation as “relational” to these socially impoverished members of the community. As Erikson asserts, the members of a given society are not merely defined by their highest achievements but also by the baseness of their social injustices. Pazicky discusses this socio-national self-criticism in terms of the nineteenth-century sentimental novel, claiming that “the sentimentalized orphan figure epitomizes the middle class's concern with maintaining its power, status, influence, and values, as defined by the institution of the family [. . . and that] the novels mimic the culture that ostracizes these ‘orphans’ from the middle class and uses them as scapegoats for its internal conflicts” (xvi). In other words, the literary orphan becomes a vehicle for social abjection, and orphan narratives become a vicarious means of social reintegration for impoverished groups (the poor, homeless, abused, and so on) that Pazicky calls the “culturally orphaned.” Oddly, Pazicky only uses *adult* sentimental texts from the nineteenth century to support her claims, despite the number of American orphan texts for children in the period. While it is

certainly possible that orphan narratives do serve this sort of vicarious purpose, such a definitive stance on the function of the orphan figure would be nearly impossible to prove empirically. What is more quantifiable is the presence of the orphan figure across cultures and throughout literary history, as I have demonstrated above.

Focusing on many of the same issues as Pazicky, Laura Peters discusses the British side of the orphan phenomenon during the nineteenth century in her book *Orphan Texts: Victorian Orphans, Culture, and Empire* (2000). For Peters, the ambivalent Victorian discourse on the orphan figure focuses on the orphan child's potential as both hope and threat for nineteenth-century, middle-class notions of family. Moreover, she posits that "when explored, this ambivalence reveals that the orphan is not a foreign, invading threat but is actually produced by and hence is an essential component of the family itself" (22). Broadening the use of "family" to include its social and nationalistic connotations, Peters incorporates Freudian psychoanalytic theory in asserting that the orphan figure, in fact, "embodies a melancholia, a continual objectification and mourning for the unsustainable ideals of family and nation" (143). In other words, the psychological nuances of the orphan figure move beyond any naïve sense of "hope" for the reader and into the realm of the melancholic ideal that results from a society's inability to effectively reconcile childhood social injustices with prevailing bourgeois notions of "family." Though Peters is certainly one of the first modern critics to connect the figure of the orphan to its role as social pariah, it is curious that—like Pazicky—nowhere in her study does she discuss this phenomenon in terms of children's literature, despite the prevalence of orphan protagonists in nineteenth-century texts for children.⁹

⁹ E.g., *The History of Dick Whittington, Lord Mayor of London* (1820), *Oliver Twist* (1838), *The Wide, Wide World* (1850), *Ragged Dick* (1868), *Mark, The Match Boy* (1869), *Eight Cousins, or The Aunt-Hill*

Expanding on several of Peters's ideas, Lydia Murdoch's 2006 study, *Imagined Orphans: Poor Families, Child Welfare, and Contested Citizenship in London*, further analyzes the discourse of orphanhood in nineteenth-century England. Murdoch connects the co-opting of language surrounding orphan children on the part of supposed child welfare advocates to the popularity of Dickens's classic orphan tale, *Oliver Twist* (1838), and she goes on to discuss the ways in which public figures in London utilized the figure of the orphan to articulate larger, nationalistic social issues of child abandonment, abuse, and the growing issue of child labor reform. Furthermore, Murdoch discusses the practice of villainizing poor parents in this discourse of orphanhood. In this sort of reformist dialogue, the mothers and fathers of poverty-stricken children were depicted as "vagrants, drunkards, and prostitutes" (2), despite the fact that the actual records from this time provide "very different narratives of child welfare" (2) in which the only crime that the parents of some of these workhouse children had committed were simply being poor. Murdoch fails, however, to connect this phenomenon to any other literary figure other than *Oliver Twist*, despite both the abundance of literary orphan characters in the nineteenth century and what Bettelheim has asserted as a long-established tendency in folklore and fairy tales for parental figures to be villainized—a bias that has certainly been perpetuated through modern fantasy children's narratives.¹⁰

Seeking to fill the gaps in existing scholarship, I aim to further the understanding of the orphan figure specifically by examining areas that have been ignored in previous

(1875), *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), *Heidi* (1880), *Toby Tyler* (1881), *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), *The Jungle Book* (1894), *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900).

¹⁰Despite Murdoch's omission of literary depictions of orphans in her own work, the topic of the literary orphan figure in the nineteenth century is explored by Claudia Nelson in her monograph *Little Strangers: Portrayals of Adoption and Foster Care in America, 1850-1929* (2003) and in Joe Sutliff Sanders's *Disciplining Girls: Understanding the Origins of the Classic Orphan Girl Story* (2011), both of whom analyze realist orphan narratives of the nineteenth century.

scholarship—namely, Anglo-American children’s fantasy fiction of the latter half of the twentieth century. Though past studies of the orphan figure have focused on the socio-cultural implications of orphan narratives, these studies—when they discuss literary texts at all—have focused largely on realist texts of the nineteenth century, and only seldom do they discuss the phenomenon in terms of children’s texts. For my purposes, the orphan figure is a staple of human narrative which will continue to be invoked in one way or another, whether we subscribe to its status as an “archetype” or whether we merely see it as a convenient *tabula rasa* for the reader. Harkening back to Laura Peters’s study, we can notice that the orphan itself does indeed represent both “hope” and “threat.” The orphan is an embodiment of both the benevolent and destructive potential of humanity; this characteristic undoubtedly serves (at least in part) to explain its sheer pervasiveness throughout literary and cultural history. However, as already suggested, in a comic genre like children’s fantasy literature, the orphan figure creates a narrative conundrum by positing an inherently tragic character as its protagonist. As Attebery asserts early on in *Strategies of Fantasy*: “the characteristic structure of fantasy is comic. It begins with a problem and ends with resolution. Death, despair, horror, and betrayal may enter into fantasy, but they must not be the final word” (15). In this particular chapter, Attebery is drawing heavily upon Tolkien, who—years before in his essay “On Fairy Stories”—asserted that fantasy (or “faerie” as he called it) demands “the consolation of the Happy Ending” (22), or what Tolkien himself called *eucatastrophe*. Adding to Tolkien’s and Attebery’s ideas, I would argue that the same is true for *all* texts written for children. In other words, the “innocence” that is inherent in our own socio-cultural concepts of childhood necessitates this sort of comic resolution in texts that are marketed to children.

Therefore, because children's literature demands the comic narrative mode, the psychological struggles of the orphan—an inherently *tragic* figure—must be resolved in order to effect the comic resolution that is required of children's literature, whether through fantasy conventions or through some other narrative device. The challenge for authors of children's literature who invoke the figure of the orphan is to transform these intrinsically tragic characters into something that is capable of experiencing the requisite comic ending of children's fantasy. Since the “hope” and “threat” of the orphan relies on its capacity to psychologically develop either normatively or pathologically, it is my goal to analyze how the psycho-developmental processes of the orphan figure are evoked and resolved through the conventions of the fantasy genre—a genre that has been largely overlooked in previous monographs on the orphan in children's literature. The purpose of this sort of analysis is to examine how fantasy enables the characteristic comic narrative mode of children's literature despite circumstances that are inherently tragic (i.e. orphan narratives). To that end, what follows throughout the rest of this chapter is a smaller-scale illustration of what I will be exploring during the course of this study.

The Orphan in Children's Fantasy: A Sample Case Study

Though a fuller articulation of the various orphan figures under analysis will follow in their own respective chapters, for now I offer a more generalized example that serves to illustrate the central thesis of this study. In Roald Dahl's *The Witches* (1983), a young boy is orphaned during the first chapter of the novel when his parents die in a car accident, leaving him in the care of his elderly grandmother. The boy, whose name is never revealed in the narrative, soon learns about the existence of witches throughout the world, the main group of which are led by a horrible, monstrous creature known as the

Grand High Witch. The bulk of the novel is concerned with how the young boy and his grandmother work together to thwart the Grand High Witch's plans and with how the two plan to eradicate the witches of England. The boy and his grandmother are successful, and the witches of England (along with the Grand High Witch) are all destroyed by the novel's end. For the purposes of this study, what is important are the ways that the narrative resolves psycho-developmental issues for its central orphan character through the fantasy conventions of the novel.

One of the more universal and intense psychological struggles that children—particularly infants—experience is the overcoming of separation anxiety, or the fear of permanent separation of the child from its love-object or primary source of nourishment. This sort of infantile attachment almost invariably centers on the mother-figure, since she is generally the child's first source of physical affection and, more importantly, sustenance. When the unnamed protagonist of *The Witches* is suddenly (and permanently) separated from his own parents, he is placed in the care of his grandmother. Though the unexpected and irrevocable severance of the young boy from his parents undoubtedly illustrates the underlying cause of separation anxiety, those childhood fears are not so easily quelled for the unnamed protagonist of *The Witches*, especially considering that the boy's grandmother is quite far along in age and sickly to boot. In the beginning, the boy has no guarantee that he will not be left alone once again after his grandmother dies, which, considering her age and poor health, could be at any moment. In fact, the boy's grandmother does almost die towards the beginning of the book after catching pneumonia just before the onset of summer: "the doctor explained to me that pneumonia is not normally a dangerous illness nowadays because of penicillin, but when a person is more

than eighty years old, as my grandmother was, then it is very dangerous indeed” (36). The boy’s fears are made explicit when the doctor asks him: “Do you want your grandmother to die?”; the boy responds emphatically with “*Never!*” (37, emphasis mine). However, because of Dahl’s inclusion of the fantasy convention of magical transformation—which, in Dahl’s children’s texts, is typically used to facilitate an easy resolution to the problems of his child protagonists¹¹—the young boy never has to face the reality of his grandmother dying and leaving him alone, as he is transformed into a mouse by the malevolent Grand High Witch, allowing for a parallel lifespan with his grandmother that effectively sublimates any anxiety surrounding the potential separation from his new maternal figure: “in another eight or nine years [. . .] I’ll be a very old mouse and you’ll be a very old grandmother and soon after that we’ll both die together” (196).

Because of magical transformation, the boy no longer has to worry about being separated from his maternal surrogate. The elation that he feels at knowing that he will not outlive his grandmother is made explicit when, after she tells him that he will only live another nine years at most, he responds with: “That’s great! It’s the best news I’ve ever had! I would never want to live longer than you” (172). The alleviation of this childhood anxiety is something that critic Anne-Marie Bird also discusses in her own article, “Women Behaving Badly: Dahl’s *Witches* Meet the Women of the Eighties,” when she states that the boy’s transformation represents: “a necessary act of wish-fulfillment resolving what is arguably the greatest of childhood fears—namely,

¹¹See also *The Magic Finger* (1966), *George’s Marvellous Medicine* (1981), *The BFG* (1982), *Matilda* (1988), and *The Minpins* (1991). For an extended discussion of Dahl’s use of magical transformation, see chapter two of this study, which examines Dahl’s *James and the Giant Peach* and details how Dahl uses magic to physically and metaphorically transform the worlds of his orphan characters for the better.

separation anxiety” (120). However, like many children’s literature scholars who focus on the reader-response aspect of children’s texts, Bird is also pointing out the potential psychological benefits for the child reader, a critical approach that this study does not seek to engage with. Through this brief example of Dahl’s *The Witches*, we can see on a smaller scale how the conventions of fantasy might work to resolve childhood psycho-developmental struggles like separation anxiety for the orphan—the child who lacks the essential influence of mother and father—in children’s fantasy narratives of the twentieth century. In other words, the fantasy genre offers more than solipsistic escapism and can, in fact, be used as a unique mode for resolving childhood developmental issues in orphan narratives. With this fantastic resolution in mind, let us now turn to a more in-depth study of other orphan figures and how their narratives work to resolve other issues of childhood psychological development through the use of established fantasy conventions.

CHAPTER II

SEPARATION ANXIETY IN DIANNA WYNNE JONES'S *CHARMED LIFE* AND
ROALD DAHL'S *JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH*

Diana Wynne Jones is one of the most prolific fantasy writers of the late twentieth century. Although her readership is fairly broad, Jones is perhaps best known for her handful of popular children's fantasy texts—the Chrestomanci series (1977-2006), the Dalemark Quartet (1979-1993), the Derkholm series (1998-2000), and the Howl's Moving Castle series (1986-2008)—as well as *The Tough Guide to Fantasyland* (1996), a parodic exploration of the type of sword-and-sorcery formulaic fantasy fiction that pervaded much of the late twentieth century. Despite the prolific nature of her work and the awards it has garnered—the 1978 Guardian Children's Fiction Prize for *Charmed Life* and the Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for both *The Crown of Dalemark* (in 1996) and *Dark Lord of Derkholm* (in 1999) and the Children's Literature Association's Phoenix Award for *Howl's Moving Castle* in 2006—very little critical attention has been paid to Jones, especially prior to the twenty-first century. In the past ten to fifteen years, however, there has been resurgent interest in Jones's work, perhaps due to the success of J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter series and the attention it has drawn to other children's fantasy series.

In 2002, an edited collection of articles—*Diana Wynne Jones: An Exciting and Exacting Wisdom*—provided a wide variety of critical approaches to her work. Additionally, Farah Mendlesohn's 2005 monograph, *Diana Wynne Jones: Children's Literature and the Fantastic Tradition*, focuses on the ways that Jones both conforms to traditional generic conventions and (perhaps even more so) on the ways that she subverts, reverses, or flatly denies the inclusion of some of the more clichéd fantasy tropes of the

past century. Charles Butler's *Four British Fantasists: Place and Culture in the Children's Fantasies of Penelope Lively, Alan Garner, Diana Wynne Jones, and Susan Cooper* (2006) examines Jones's oeuvre in the context of other popular British fantasy writers, asserting that Jones holds a unique place in British fantasy writing due to her distinctive use of fantasy conventions and to the fluidity of her readership. Finally, the *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* published a special issue on Jones in 2009 which examined her fantasy fiction from a myriad of critical perspectives, including gender studies, narratology, structuralism, and deconstruction, providing even more perspectives on Jones's work that only helps to supplement the existing body of critical work on her writing. What is largely missing from the current critical conversation surrounding Jones and her work—and, in fact, what I hope to provide here—is an approach to Jones's fantasy fiction that brings the psychoanalytic approach to bear on what is undoubtedly one of the best children's fantasy narratives of the latter twentieth century. Specifically, the first half of this chapter is concerned with the ways that Jones's award-winning *Charmed Life* evokes separation anxiety through its central orphan character, Eric "Cat" Chant, and the ways that the narrative resolves Cat's anxieties through Jones's unique use of fantasy conventions.

While this examination of Jones's work will occupy the first half of the present chapter, the latter portion will be devoted to Roald Dahl's *James and the Giant Peach* (1961). Dahl, in stark contrast to Jones, had certainly known no shortage of critical attention since his rise to prominence in the 1960s. Although any extended, book-length studies of Dahl have been limited largely to Mark I. West's *Roald Dahl* (1992) in Twayne's English Authors Series and the more recent edited collection—also titled *Roald*

Dahl (2014)—in the New Casebooks series, articles on Dahl have been regularly featured in many major children’s literature journals and also in prominent academic journals in *Early Education* and *Library Science*. Dahl is arguably the most popular children’s writer of what fantasy theorists dub “low fantasy,”¹² and oftentimes his blurring of the boundaries between fantasy and the real world drew ire from critics in the 1960s—particularly teachers and librarians—who deemed his work too grotesque for children. However, since opening up Dahl’s texts to a psychoanalytic approach in the 1980s, critics like Hamida Bosmajian have noted the ways that Dahl’s seemingly grotesque narratives for children can have a beneficial, bibliotherapeutic effect on the child-reader. Specifically, she argues in her article “*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and Other Excremental Visions” that many of the macabre punishments meted out to the “bad” children in Dahl’s *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* actually serve to “release a child’s anxieties about bodily functions, physical injury, and death” (47). Critic Mark I. West, probably the most prolific writer on Dahl’s work, has also used the psychoanalytic approach in assessing these children’s “low fantasy” texts. In his “The Grotesque and the Taboo in Roald Dahl’s Humorous Writings for Children,” West echoes Bosmajian in exhibiting the ways that Dahl’s use of the macabre and the grotesque can actually have advantageous effects on the child-reader, contrary to the negative criticism leveled against Dahl by many early reviewers of his books for children. In discussing further benefits for the child-reader, West’s “Regression and Fragmentation of the Self in *James*

¹² “Sometimes called ‘low fantasy,’ sometimes ‘real world fantasy’ or ‘modern urban fantasy,’ [these stories are] characterized by the avoidance of the enclosed fantasy worlds predominant in earlier fantasies, from Lewis Carroll’s *Wonderland* to Ursula LeGuin’s *Earthsea*. Instead, these fantasies describe settings that seem to be real, familiar, present-day places, except that they contain the magical characters and impossible events of fantasy” (Attebery, *Strategies of Fantasy* 126).

and the Giant Peach” uses Freudian notions of the development of the self in order to show how James first regresses, dividing his inner personality into the many giant bugs that accompany him on the peach’s long journey to New York City, and then how he reassembles a coherent sense of self by the novel’s end. Despite the rather broad scope of existing scholarship on Dahl, none of the research I have come across discusses the figure of the orphan to any major extent—despite the prevalence of orphan protagonists in Dahl’s children’s fantasies. In the latter half of this chapter, I contribute to the current critical discussion of Dahl’s work by adding a psychoanalytic dimension that concentrates on how Dahl’s unique use of “low fantasy” allows his most famous orphan figure—James Henry Trotter—to resolve psycho-developmental issues when faced with the absence of parental influence.

Separation Anxiety and the Orphan Figure

The majority of the childhood developmental processes that are discussed in this study—regression, separation anxiety, individuation, and overcoming Oedipal struggles—are common, normalizing processes that nearly every child experiences at some point in the latency (or post-infant, pre-adolescent) period, according to Freudian-based, psycho-developmental theory. The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders V*, the standard for defining mental disorders in the psychiatric community, characterizes separation anxiety as a “developmentally inappropriate and excessive anxiety concerning separation from home or from major attachment figures” (190). Furthermore, psychologist Kathleen McCartney tells us in the *Blackwell Handbook of Early Childhood Development* (2006) that “separation anxiety is the only anxiety disorder that is specific to childhood” (806), and she also goes on to note that the *DSM V*

suggests that “separation anxiety is most likely to emerge after a life stress such as *the loss of a relative* or pet, a major illness, or the move to a new neighborhood” (807, emphasis mine). In orphan-centered children’s fantasies like Jones’s and Dahl’s, the child protagonist experiences the reality of the underlying fears that cause separation anxiety—the loss of a parent. Moreover, the orphans in Jones’s and Dahl’s texts have an established relationship with their parents before the parents themselves die tragically. These relationships make the *separation* aspect of the anxiety much more prominent, and thus it is all the more imperative that these child characters resolve these psycho-developmental issues. In this chapter, I argue that both Dahl and Jones use—albeit in their own, unique ways—the conventions of fantasy in order to effect the resolution of separation anxiety in their own fantasy texts for children.

Breaking the Spell of Codependency in *Charmed Life*

In Diana Wynne Jones’s *Charmed Life*, we are introduced to Eric “Cat” Chant and his older sister Gwendolen. Early in the text, the entire Chant family is involved in a freak steamboat accident that results in the deaths of Cat and Gwendolen’s parents. Soon, however, a man known only as Chrestomanci comes and takes the Chant children away to live in his vast and luxurious castle. Shortly after arriving, Gwendolen becomes annoyed with the limitations that Chrestomanci places on her use of magic, and she begins to rebel. When Chrestomanci grows tired of Gwendolen’s antics, he takes her magic away, leaving her seemingly powerless. However, Gwendolen proves resourceful enough to utilize a magical portal that sends her to another, parallel world—a portal that also takes the version of Gwendolen from the world into which she travels (in this case, a young girl named Janet) and inserts Janet directly into Cat and Gwendolen’s home

world.¹³ Once Gwendolen is gone, Cat is told a number of secrets by Chrestomanci, the most important being that Gwendolen actually has no inherent magical power. In fact, she has been using Cat's power all along. Cat discovers that he, like Chrestomanci, is a "nine-lived enchanter" and that he has powers that lower-level witches and warlocks can never have. It is at this point that Cat begins to assert himself as an individual, and this assertiveness culminates at the end of the text when Gwendolen comes back from the other world in order to help Mr. Nostrum and the host of low-level witches and wizards defeat Chrestomanci so that they can use magic to tyrannize all of the other parallel worlds. The text concludes with Cat saving Chrestomanci, taking his power back from Gwendolen, and finally beginning to recognize and manifest his own magical powers.

Although the preceding summary would probably lead one who is unfamiliar with the *Charmed Life* to believe that the focalizing orphan character of the novel is Gwendolen—since most of the action of the story involves her—it is actually Cat who serves as the main character of *Charmed Life*. The fact that, through a cursory glance at the major plot points in the narrative, Gwendolen could be misconstrued as the novel's protagonist is telling. True enough, for much of the narrative, Cat does nothing without his sister and only rarely leaves her side to venture off on his own. Though Gwendolen is definitely a commanding presence in Cat's life, her control of her brother is nothing if not enabled by his dependency on her. In terms of the present study, I would argue that it is this very notion of familial dependency that depicts certain facets of separation anxiety in *Charmed Life*. In fact, several times in the text, Cat's dependency on his sister is

¹³ As Gwendolen explains to Janet in the letter that she leaves her, "There are hundreds of worlds, only some are nicer than others. They are formed when there is a big event in history like a battle or an earthquake when the result could be two or more quite different things. Both these things happen, but they cannot exist together [. . .] I know there must be Gwendolens in a lot of worlds [. . .] one of you will come here when I go because when I move it will make an empty space that will suck you in" (131).

described in terms that parallel clinical symptoms of separation anxiety in young children. As former Harvard Professor of Early Psychology Kathleen McCartney states in the *Blackwell Handbook of Early Childhood Development* (2008), these symptoms include “recurrent excessive distress in anticipation of separation, worry about losing the attachment figure, school refusal, and fear of being or sleeping alone” (806) and can manifest in pathological displays such as “extreme and prolonged clinginess, prolonged sad mood, excessive fear of strangers, [and] excessive separation distress” (808). Throughout *Charmed Life*, Cat exhibits several of these symptoms and, since Cat has no other family to look to, the symptoms that he manifests in the absence of his parents are almost always in relation to Gwendolen. However negative they may seem at first, these symptomatic manifestations allow us to measure the progressive psychological growth of Cat throughout the text.

For example, when the children are initially orphaned, the text tells us that the tragedy that took Cat’s parents “left him no one else to *cling* to” (7, emphasis mine) except Gwendolen. Added to this parental absence is the fact that, in the beginning, “Gwendolen was very motherly to Cat” (9), which places her squarely in a maternal role that is now vacant following their mother’s death. In terms of the infant-mother bond, Anna Freud tells us that: “infringements of the biological mother-infant tie, for whatever reason they are undertaken, will thus give rise to separation anxiety proper” (66). Therefore, since maternal attachment is so strongly tied to the problem of separation anxiety, it is only natural that we see some of Cat’s most symptomatic moments occur in relation to his new maternal stand-in—his sister. Though Gwendolen is visibly happy with their adoption by Chrestomanci, Cat is far from comfortable with the idea of

relocation. In fact, we are told that “while Gwendolen grew more and more excited and triumphant, Cat found he was missing Mrs. Sharp, and everyone else, even Miss Larkins, as if he had already left them” and that, when Cat and Gwendolen board the train to Chrestomanci Castle, “it upset Cat. He sat tensely on the edge of his seat, fearing that he was in for a time of strangeness and maybe even misery” (35). However, this sort of nervous reaction is characteristic of separation anxiety; in fact, as the *DSM V* makes clear, “separation anxiety is most likely to emerge after a life stress such as the loss of a relative or pet, a major illness, or the *move to a new neighborhood*” (190, emphasis mine). For Cat, an orphan who has experienced the *reality* of parental separation, this sort of anxious response is no doubt compounded by the knowledge of what it means to be in a new, unknown, and potentially confusing situation.

Cat’s expressions of anxiety only continue after his relocation to Chrestomanci Castle, and those subsequent expressions also evoke characteristic symptoms of separation anxiety. Cat’s severe anxiety in social situations begins almost immediately after moving into his new home. At his first dinner at Chrestomanci Castle, Cat’s apprehension at the prospect of being separated from his sister is very evident, especially when the party is being seated at the table and Cat finds that he is “too busy clinging to Gwendolen” (46) to notice what is happening around him. Cat’s intense anxiety becomes even more stark when we are told that “if anyone had tried to put Cat in a chair that was not next to Gwendolen’s he thought he would have fainted from terror” (46). Though Cat’s extreme discomfort and anxiety in this social situation does lessen ever so slightly throughout the course of the dinner, we are still told that Cat “felt he had no appetite at

all” throughout the evening and that he was incredibly relieved when “it was over at last [and] they were allowed to escape up to Gwendolen’s luxurious bedroom” (48).

These descriptions of Cat’s melancholic attachment to Gwendolen continue during the first few weeks of the orphans’ stay at Chrestomanci Castle. At one point, when Gwendolen is scheming to perform some malicious form of magic in an effort to get Chrestomanci to notice her, she sneaks away from the castle and “would not let Cat come with her” (68). In Gwendolen’s absence, “Cat did not know what to do” (68) with himself, and when Gwendolen later disappears once again for the same purposes, Cat once again finds himself “mournfully on his own” (85) without Gwendolen, his only source of foundational attachment in the absence of their parents. One final example of Cat’s symptomatic expressions of separation anxiety occurs after Gwendolen disappears entirely from the world into which she was born. When Cat realizes that his sister has gone—ostensibly for good—we are told that “he would have given his little finger for a word from Gwendolen—any kind of word. He felt horribly lonely” (128). Furthermore, when he finally accepts the fact that his sister never plans to return, we learn that Cat “felt lonelier than ever” (130) because of the permanent absence of his maternal attachment figure.

Although Cat obviously feels this melancholy, symptomatic reaction to his sister’s absence, his confrontation with such an absence is crucial to the resolution of his separation anxiety issues, as he lacks the vital parental presence that typically alleviates this anxiety in non-orphan children. It is only fitting, then, that Cat begins to transition from a childlike, dependent mentality to an independent, adult role following Gwendolen’s disappearance. What’s more, as proposed by the central thesis of this study,

the resolution of this childhood dilemma is perpetuated by fantasy conventions. One of the most striking things about Jones's use of fantasy tropes is that she is constantly manipulating those very conventions in order to do something new and different with her own narratives. In Farah Mendlesohn's *Diana Wynne Jones: Children's Literature and the Fantastic Tradition*, she discusses how Jones often turns the fantasy convention of magic on its end.¹⁴ Unlike the presence of magic in narratives like Alexander's *Chronicles of Prydain* or Rowling's *Harry Potter* series—or any number of other popular children's fantasy narratives, for that matter—magic is not a miracle solution to the problems of the main characters in Jones's work. In fact, Mendlesohn argues that, for Jones, “magic is not a solution to real-world problems” (xv). This notion is certainly the case with the physical problems that crop up in Jones's fantasy texts; for example, Mendlesohn points specifically to Jones's *The Ogre Downstairs* as representative of this argument. Without digressing into a full plot summary of the novel, it is sufficient enough to reinforce Mendlesohn's assertion by noting that the children in the novel find a chemistry set that is filled with magical properties. The children experiment with these chemicals and the result is nearly always disastrous and never solves the problems that they seek to resolve by using the magic of the chemistry set. Even in *Charmed Life*, Gwendolen's magical attempts to incite Chrestomanci almost always go awry and never merit the attention that she seeks from him. Therefore, I tend to agree with Mendlesohn in her analysis of magic in the many fictional worlds of Jones. Nevertheless, I would maintain that, while Jones is certainly innovative in her use of magic (especially in that

¹⁴ For example, Mendlesohn uses *The Ogre Downstairs* (1974), the Chrestomanci series (1977-2006), *Fire and Hemlock* (1984), and the short-story collection *Unexpected Magic* (2004) in order to demonstrate that, unlike many other popular works of children's fantasy, Jones's use of magic is “not a solution to real world problems” (xv) and—in many cases—often causes more problems than it solves.

magic often causes more problems than it solves), her particular use of that recurrent fantasy trope does assist in the solution of the “real-world” problem of overcoming psychological issues for the orphan since it allows for the resolution of Cat’s separation anxiety in *Charmed Life* despite the potential for developmental pathology in his lack of a fundamental parental basis.

One way that the potential for anxious resolution is effected is by positing an *aetornormative*—or adult-normative—approach to the overcoming of Cat’s separation anxiety issues. Maria Nikolajeva, in her *Power, Voice, and Subjectivity in Literature for Young Readers* (2012), coins the term “aetonormativity”¹⁵ in order to draw attention to the recurrent casting of children into adult roles. In aetonormative texts, this thrusting of children into adult roles makes adulthood the normative ideal, much in the same way that heterosexuality creates the “heteronormativity” referenced in queer theory. In Nikolajeva’s description of aetonormative texts, adulthood itself becomes the normative state, while childhood embodies a state of “otherness.” This adult/child dichotomy produces a narrative of maturation that almost invariably involves the assumption of adult characteristics and responsibilities on the part of the child; in many cases, this virtual adulthood is something that the child is forced into. This forcing of the child into an adult role is particularly significant for the orphan, as he or she is often made to assume responsibilities that would ostensibly have otherwise been taken on by their parents. Put another way, unlike children in other typical narratives of maturation (i.e., the *entwicklungsroman*), the natural course of maturation is altered in orphan narratives to form a sort of hyper-development that demands that they “grow up” much faster than

¹⁵ “On analogy with the central concept of queer theory, heteronormativity, I propose the concept of aetonormativity (Lat. *aeto-*, pertaining to age), adult normativity that governs the way children’s literature has been patterned from its emergence to present day” (Nikolajeva 22).

children with parents. In *Charmed Life*, this sort of adult positioning occurs through the intervention of the fantastic convention of magic. When Gwendolen uses dragon's blood to open a gateway to a parallel world, the version of herself that exists in that parallel dimension is pulled out of that world and into Cat and Gwendolen's universe. This alternate version of Gwendolen, named Janet, comes from a world in which magic does not exist—a world very much like our own. Initially, Cat decides to keep Janet's existence a secret from all of the residents of Chrestomanci Castle, and this decision forces him into an adult role when Cat has to look after Janet. Since Janet's knowledge of the world that she has been thrown into is minimal, Cat essentially has to care for her in the way that a parent would care for a child. For example, when Janet first arrives in Cat's world, he even has to physically dress her: "Janet proved quite unable to get [her clothing] on without his help. If he left her to do anything, she put it on back to front. He had to put her petticoats on her, button her up the back, tie her garters, fasten her boots, and put her dress on a second time, right way round, and tie its sash for her" (136). This situation evokes images of a parent dressing his or her child, and posits a definite reversal in Cat's dependent status. Whereas Cat seemed unable to do anything without Gwendolen while she was still present in their world, he now has to assume the opposite role in his relationship with Janet. Janet herself even comments explicitly on her absolute dependency on Cat: "Cat, you're going to be very annoyed with me, but it's absolutely essential that I cling to you all the time we're awake, until I know how to behave" (147). Here, Janet's word choice is particularly significant. Janet tells Cat that she must "cling" to him until they are able to reveal her true self to the residents of Chrestomanci Castle. Earlier, we were told that Cat himself "clung" to Gwendolen during their first few days at

Chrestomanci Castle. Therefore, what we have seen following Gwendolen's disappearance is an absolute role-reversal in the relationship between Cat and Gwendolen—or in this case, in the relationship between Cat and Janet, Gwendolen's other self, who now embodies the child role that Cat has had to cast off in taking on responsibility for her. Moreover, through Jones's use of fantasy, she has enabled an important step in Cat's psychological maturity. As Bowlby asserts, "children tend unwittingly to identify with parents and therefore to adopt, when they become parents, the same patterns of behavior that they themselves have experienced during their own childhood" (245). As an orphan, Cat has had no parental basis on which to build effective caretaking skills; however, through Jones's use of magical portals, Cat comes to learn those skills firsthand through sheer experience.

This new relationship between Cat and Janet—the stand-in for his sister Gwendolen—is crucial for the resolution of Cat's separation anxiety issues, as it forces him to assume an adult role that occludes the possibility for dependency in the face of his new responsibility. In terms of Jones's specific use of the fantasy convention of magic—particularly that magic often cause more problems than it offers solutions¹⁶—this new role is particularly important for Cat's psychic development. As Mendlesohn notes, "there is an indication that Cat does not recognize his power because to do so would be to accept agency and he is just not ready to do this—the link between emotional maturity and real power is absolute" (35). In other words, Mendlesohn is pointing out the

¹⁶For example, nearly all of the problems in the novel—be it Gwendolen's mischief-making in Chrestomanci Castle, the constant fighting between Chrestomanci's children and Gwendolen, and the invasion of Chrestomanci's garden by Mr. Nostrum and his band of ill-intentioned witches and warlocks—arise during the presence of magic in the narrative. Several decades before Jones, however, E. Nesbit subverted the magical solutions to real-world problems by have the fantastic create problems of its own in her own unique fantasy narratives—see, for example, Nesbit's *The Magic City*, among others.

inextricable link between the rise in Cat's magical power and his increased psychological maturity. Indeed, after taking on the adult responsibility of caring for Janet, Cat begins to manifest aspects of his own magical power.

Of course, Janet's entry into Cat's world and his subsequent maturation is made possible through the use of a magical portal between Janet's and Cat's respective worlds. Mendlesohn devotes an entire chapter of her critical study of fantasy fiction, *Rhetorics of Fantasy*, to "portal fantasy" and its history in Anglo-American children's texts, exhibiting the rich history of this particular fantasy trope and its recurrent use as a narrative convention in fantasy fiction.¹⁷ With Gwendolen's disappearance through the fantasy convention of magical portals, Cat is finally able to mature emotionally and demonstrate facets of his own great magical power. For example, one last cruel prank that Gwendolen pulls on the residents of Chrestomanci Castle before disappearing into a parallel world is to turn Euphemia (the housekeeper) into a frog. Though Cat accepts blame for Euphemia's transformation in order to keep Janet from exposing herself as a false Gwendolen when she is asked to reverse the spell, his false confession ultimately works to his advantage because it provides him an opportunity to demonstrate his newly autonomous magical powers. When Mr. Saunders tells Cat to reverse the spell on Euphemia, we are told that Cat "supposed he ought to pretend to try. 'Stop being a frog and turn into Euphemia again,' he said, and wondered miserably what they would do to him when Euphemia didn't. But, to his astonishment, Euphemia did" (146). Though Cat initially assumes that Mr. Saunders performed the reverse transformation, he continues to manifest magical abilities in Gwendolen's absence.

¹⁷See Chapter One, "The Portal-Quest Fantasy," 1-58.

In a subsequent scene, when Cat and Janet are playing outdoors and come across a horse-chestnut (or “conker”) tree, Janet notices the shells and notes that: “They look *almost ripe*” (150, emphasis mine). Cat looks at them and states, “They aren’t. But I wish they were” (150). Suddenly, several of the seeds drop from the tree and fall on the ground, and “Cat craned out of the tree and saw brown shiny conkers showing in the split green cases [. . .] wonderful conkers with grain on them like the contours of a map” (150). Although Cat once again does not acknowledge his own role in this magical transformation, the fact remains that it was Cat’s own magical ability that enchanted the horse-chestnuts and caused their early maturation. While it may be true that Cat is arguably *forced* to accept a certain amount of agency—particularly in caring for Janet—the fact that he successfully rises to the occasion speaks to the level of maturation that he has undergone since Gwendolen’s disappearance. Without Jones’s invocation of fantasy, there is no guarantee that Cat—an orphan without a fundamental parental basis—would have achieved this level of maturity or that he would not have remained in a state of arrested development.

Later in the text, Cat’s magic manifests on a much grander scale, and these latter examples only work to further the idea that, as Cat matures and becomes more independent, he gains more and more power and agency and, as a result, his childhood anxieties are systematically diminished. Towards the end of the novel, Cat and Janet sneak into Chrestomanci’s garden for the purposes of opening up a new portal so that Janet can return home. Whereas earlier in the text Cat was unable to even perform the simple spell of turning a brass button into a gold one, Cat’s magic has advanced so far as to enable him to open a portal to another dimension:

Cat carefully took a pinch of the smelly brown powder [dragon's blood] between the finger and thumb of his right hand...and sprinkled the powder between the pillars of broken stone. The air between the pillars quivered like air that is hot. The darkness cleared slowly, away into the corners of the space, and they found that they could see into a huge room. (231-32)

Following this manifestation of Cat's newfound powers is an unfortunate series of events in which Gwendolen returns and Mr. Nostrum and all the other lower-level witches and wizards ensnare Chrestomanci in an attempt to overthrow his authority. However, before the malevolent troupe can succeed in their task, Chrestomanci reassures Cat of his own ability to prevent them from upsetting the balance of the parallel dimensions: "you are an enchanter. I suspect that you are a stronger enchanter than I am when you put your mind to it [. . .] you've more ability in your little finger than most people—including Gwendolen—have in their entire lives" (249). Armed with this knowledge, Cat uses his power to transform the silver shackles that were binding Chrestomanci; in an even further illustration of the extent of his power, Cat turns the broken shackles into two "ferocious eagles" (250) and sets them upon Mr. Nostrum and his group. Then, in a final display of power and agency, Cat puts a permanent stop to Gwendolen's parasitic siphoning of his magical powers: "For the first time in his life, Cat was angry about it. 'She's no business to!' And he took his magic back. It was like a cool draught in his face" (254).

However, the veritable shift in narrative focus away from Gwendolen's antics and onto Cat's personal dilemmas in the latter half of the novel has the potential to obscure certain crucial aspects of this analysis. Although the language used in the first few chapters leads us to believe that the issues of separation anxiety—particularly in relation

to Cat's unhealthy dependency upon Gwendolen—are limited solely to Cat himself, we must also remember that Gwendolen herself is an orphan, and her orphan status carries with it just as much potential for psycho-developmental dilemmas as Cat's does. In terms of the codependency between the two orphans, then, it must be noted that Gwendolen relies just as much on Cat as he does on her. Although this sort of dependency is not evident from the beginning, we get a hint of Gwendolen's dependency on Cat when Cat begins to spend more time with Chrestomanci's children, Julia and Roger. At one point, when the three are playing with one another, Gwendolen storms into the room and demands that Cat come with her. When Roger explains that Cat is busy playing with them, Gwendolen responds with: "That doesn't matter. I *need* him" (101, emphasis mine). Although we do not know this at the time, what Gwendolen really means is that she needs Cat's presence to attempt the spell that will take her to the parallel dimension that she plans on going to when she disappears. In fact, we later learn that Gwendolen relies entirely on Cat for her magical prowess, as she has no inherent magic of her own; moreover, we later learn that Gwendolen has been using Cat's magic ever since he was a baby. This revelation posits an entirely new slant on the relationship between Cat and Gwendolen, as it is no longer feasible to view Cat's dependency on Gwendolen as one-sided. Clearly, Gwendolen needs Cat just as much as he needs her, and the resolution of her dependency on Cat becomes just as urgent as the resolution of Cat's dependency on her if their issues of separation anxiety are to be effectively sublimated, or psychologically resolved. As Anna Freud asserts, the need to sublimate feelings of separation anxiety become all the more crucial as the child continues to mature; in fact, Freud specifically argues that the failure of the child to conquer these infantile fears can

lead to “breakdowns in individuation, anaclitic depression, other manifestations of deprivation, precocious ego development, or what has been called a ‘false self’” (67). Fortunately for Gwendolen, magic once again provides an opportunity for this process of sublimation to occur. When Gwendolen uses Cat’s magic to transport herself into a parallel world, she successfully resolves her separation anxiety issues and the way that the narrative details her new station illustrates this idea.

After Gwendolen uses dragon’s blood (and Cat’s magic) to remove herself to a parallel dimension, we neither hear nor see from her until Cat uses his own magic to open a gateway to the very world that Gwendolen disappeared to. Through the fabric of the portal that Cat opens, he sees his sister and notices that:

From the way she was behaving, she was certainly a queen. She nodded to some of the important people and they leapt eagerly to the side of her bed and listened with feverish intelligence to what she was saying. She waved to some others, and they ran to do things. She made a sign at another person and he fell on his knees, begging for mercy. The space [that she occupied] was turmoil of people racing to do what Gwendolen wanted.
(232-33)

Here, through the fantasy convention of magical portals, we see that Gwendolen has conquered the discernible traits of her separation anxiety. She no longer clings to Cat for control and power, as she now has the authority to command legions of followers.

Although she was veritably powerless and depended entirely on her brother’s magical prowess in her own world, she clearly now wields enough power to make people literally bend to her will, eliminating any sense of the sort of powerless lack of agency that she so

clearly feared back in her own world. Finally, her assumption of this matriarchal role puts Gwendolen in a maternal, adult role that eradicates the possibility for separation anxiety issues to occur, as she has now *become* the mother figure that the child who is stricken with separation anxiety fears losing.

Anne Swinfen, one of the prevailing fantasy theorists of the twentieth century, discusses the ability of fantasy to create parallel action in two completely separate worlds: “while perception of the secondary worlds might be dreamlike, movement from world to world and the constant cross-reference between them creates a sense of parallelism between the two. Their structures are inevitably thrown into sharp juxtaposition, while action in the secondary world may parallel [...] the primary world” (44). In the secondary world into which Gwendolen places herself, we see an explicit example of Swinfen’s notion of fantastic parallelism. Despite being in two completely separate worlds, both Cat and Gwendolen are simultaneously working through issues of separation anxiety, which they both do successfully and concurrently. In Gwendolen’s relocation to another dimension through the fantasy convention of magic, we can see Swinfen’s assertion that fantasy tends to create parallels between the primary and secondary worlds, giving us yet another example of how fantasy conventions have the potential to resolve resurgent childhood developmental processes for both orphans in *Charmed Life*. Without Jones’s invocation of magic in the text, one can only imagine how Cat and Gwendolen would have developed (or if they would have developed at all). The threat of pathological development that is always present during the child’s separation from his or her parents is something that is eliminated here through Jones’s use of magical portals. The use of the magical portal itself is particularly effective

because it makes an otherwise internal dilemma explicitly *external* and forces both Cat and Gwendolen to be apart from one another and to deal directly with the issues inherent in separation anxiety—an issue which is resolved much more easily for non-orphans who have their parents’ continued presence to resolve this issue for them. In *Charmed Life*, this magical resolution of a marked psycho-developmental issue shows us that fantasy has the ability to eliminate the threat of pathology and to allow the child to develop normally despite the orphan’s parental deficit. With both Cat and Gwendolen’s separation anxiety issues eliminated through fantasy intervention, we can now move on to discussing how a similar process occurs throughout another “accidental orphan” narrative—Roald Dahl’s *James and the Giant Peach*.

Regression and Re-integration in *James and the Giant Peach*

In Dahl’s children’s fantasy classic, *James and the Giant Peach*, readers are first presented with the juxtaposition of the life of James, the story’s protagonist, before and after the death of his parents. Before his parents’ demise, we are told that James “had had a happy life, living peacefully with his mother and father in a beautiful house beside the sea [. . .] it was the perfect life for a small boy” (Dahl 1). Unfortunately, this sort of idealized existence is short-lived for James, and one day as his parents are out shopping, “a terrible thing happened. Both of them suddenly got eaten up by an angry rhinoceros which had escaped from the London Zoo” (1). Although this was, no doubt, a terrible experience for James’s parents, the text tells us that “in the long run it was far nastier for James than it was for them. They were dead and gone in thirty-five seconds flat. Poor James, on the other hand, was still very much alive, and all at once he found himself alone and frightened in a vast, unfriendly world” (2). Here, although the circumstances

surrounding the death of James's parents are couched in humor and absurdity, the language used to describe James's very real situation undoubtedly evokes the anxiety involved in a child's *imagined* separation from his or her parent or attachment figure. However, what is more important for this study is an understanding of how those processes are dealt with in terms of fantasy conventions. Accordingly, I will now turn to the ways that Dahl's novel uses magic—as an established fantasy convention—to deal with both issues of separation anxiety and other developmental issues that James faces throughout the narrative.

From the moment James's parents are killed, his life undoubtedly takes a turn for the worse. He is removed from his happy home on the seaside and taken to live with his cruel and abusive Aunts Spiker and Sponge, who were:

Both really horrible people. They were selfish and lazy and cruel, and right from the beginning they started beating poor James for almost no reason at all. They never called him by his name, but always referred to him as 'you disgusting little beast' or 'you filthy nuisance' or 'you miserable creature,' and they certainly never gave him any toys to play with or picture books to look at. His room was as bare as a prison cell. (2)

Fortunately, James's terrible new predicament does not last long. After meeting a mysterious old man in his aunts' garden, James is given a bag of magical crocodile tongues that have the ability to make "fabulous, unbelievable things" (11) happen to whoever possesses them. However, James stumbles on his way back home and the contents of the bag spill out onto the ground and the crocodile tongues work their way into the ground like a horde of earthworms. Though James initially despairs, his hopes

begin to look up when an enormous peach suddenly begins to appear on a tree in the front yard, a tree that—up to that point—“never even had a blossom on it” (15). The peach suddenly begins to grow until it is the size of a house, and one night James takes it upon himself to enter the peach when he discovers a hole in the side of the massive fruit. Inside, James comes face-to-face with a throng of gigantic insects, creatures who have also been transformed by the magical power of the crocodile tongues that James spilled. Because magic plays such a huge part in James’s transition from abused orphan to autonomous leader, I will now turn to a more detailed discussion of how the narrative uses this established fantasy convention to resolve issues of separation anxiety.

When James discovers the hole in the side of the gigantic peach that serves as the magical catalyst for all of his subsequent adventures, he enters the opening to discover that “the tunnel was damp and murky [. . .] the floor was soggy under his knees, the walls were wet and sticky” (24-25). Critic Mark I. West, in his “Regression and Fragmentation of the Self in *James and the Giant Peach*,” makes note of this description, drawing parallels between Dahl’s use of language and the image of the birth canal, ultimately asserting that this specific scene “closely resembles a reversal of the birthing process” (221). West goes on to claim that this specific reversal is part of the overall process of regression that James is undertaking in this first section of the novel. In psychoanalytic (and specifically Freudian) terms, regression is: “a return to earlier phases of sexual life, phases from which at one time satisfaction was not withheld” (*Five Lectures* 80). In terms of childhood development, however, regression is any maturational backsliding that occurs along the developmental path to normal adolescence: “we claim that [childhood] psychosocial development proceeds by critical . . . moments of progress and

regression” (Erikson 271). In his own article, West makes sure to invoke prevailing developmental theory from Anna Freud and Melanie Klein that posits the difference between “healthy” and “pathological” regression. In other words, regression—despite its backward momentum and, hence, its often negative connotation—can sometimes be a healthy (and, therefore, not necessarily psychologically detrimental) phenomenon. In fact, Anna Freud asserts that: “during the whole period of growth [. . .] it has to be considered legitimate for children to revert periodically” and that “far from interfering with forward development, it will be beneficial for its freedom if the way back is not blocked altogether by environmental disapproval and internal repressions and restrictions” (107). For Klein, regression often entails a sort of psychic “splitting” that enables the child to compartmentalize specific fears which then allow the child deal with subconscious anxieties (*Psychoanalysis of Children* 219). It is on this idea that West bases his argument—the notion that James’s regression into the womb-like home of the peach serves the purpose of allowing him to compartmentalize facets of his personality into the gigantic bugs that he encounters within the gigantic fruit. Such fracturing, according to West, allows James to ultimately re-integrate those aspects of his personality when he arrives in New York City at the end of the novel. While I certainly agree with West that James’s entrance into the womb-like center of the peach does serve the purpose of “healthy” regression, I would add to West’s argument the idea that such a return also serves to resolve the separation anxiety inherent in the “accidental” orphan narrative by allowing a literal return to the womb (or “mother”).

John Bowlby, one of the most influential figures in early twentieth century child development and the first to introduce the idea of “attachment theory,” argues that:

“infringements of the biological mother-infant tie, for whatever reason they are undertaken, will thus give rise to separation anxiety” (“Separation Anxiety” 8). Bowlby’s ideas stem from the heavy reliance of young children on the care of adults; since infants are physically incapable of providing for their own basic needs, they form “attachments” to care-givers, most of whom are—naturally—the child’s parents. Therefore, when a child is suddenly separated from this “attachment object”—which, in infancy, is quite literally its assurance of survival—extreme anxiety arises. In terms of this study, the description of James’s abject loneliness following the death of his parents—which I will repeat now in full—is, essentially, a literal manifestation of the anxieties of the child who is faced with the prospect of separation from the parent or attachment object:

Up until this time, he had had a happy life, living peacefully with his mother and father in a beautiful house beside the sea. There were always plenty of other children for him to play with, and there was the sandy beach for him to run about on, and the ocean to paddle in. It was the perfect life for a small boy [. . .] then, one day, James's mother and father went to London to do some shopping, and there a terrible thing happened. Both of them suddenly got eaten up (in full daylight, mind you, and on a crowded street) by an enormous angry rhinoceros which had escaped from the London Zoo. They were dead and gone in thirty-five seconds flat. Poor James, on the other hand, was still very much alive, and all at once he found himself alone and frightened in a vast unfriendly world. (1)

Therefore, when James “returns to the womb”—to use West’s description—what he is actually doing is participating in a fantasy of reabsorption that parallels a regressive

thought-pattern. In other words, since separation anxiety arises from the child's burgeoning recognition of itself and of its mother as autonomous beings, completely distinct from one another, James is effectively sublimating those childhood anxieties by literally returning to a state of oneness with the mother-figure—here, the womb-like peach. This movement is undoubtedly a regressive one; however, as I have already mentioned, current developmental theory asserts that there are two types of regression: normal and pathological. While I would argue—as West has done in the past—that James's regression is a healthy one, it is one that must nevertheless stop at some point, lest it slip into the realm of pathological “fixation,” as Anna Freud calls it (96). Accordingly, in the way that magic—as fantasy convention—allows for the “healthy” regression that James undergoes in his return to the peach, it also serves to enable the developmental path past that sort of infantile regression in various ways throughout the text.

Probably the first and most immediate benefit of James's initial regression comes in the form of the new familial relationships he forms with the insects inside the giant peach. Although critics like West see the insects as nothing more than fragmented parts of James's own psyche, I would argue that each of the insects is its own autonomous creature and that, collectively, they serve to form a surrogate family that helps James to move past the fear of loneliness inherent in separation anxiety. In discussing Dahl's particular writing style, Eileen Donaldson argues that Dahl utilizes fantasy as a narrative mode in order to “bind the children [in his novels] into new, loving familial relationships” (131). This creation of new familial bonds is most certainly the case with the relationships that James forms with the insect residents of the peach, and the insects

themselves remark upon James's inclusion in this new family unit almost immediately upon meeting him for the first time: "You are one of *us* now, didn't you know that? You are one of the crew" (30).

While the relationships that James has with the Spider, the Centipede, the Earthworm, the Glowworm, and the Silkworm seem very much to be that of a bemused nephew surrounded by a group of eccentric aunts and uncles, his relationship with the Old Green Grasshopper and the Ladybug are markedly different. In fact, these two seem to manifest decidedly parental attitudes in regards to their relationship with James, as they are the only two creatures who repeatedly voice genuine concern for the young orphan. When James first meets the insects, he stays up late, regaled throughout the night by the tales of the Centipede. It is up to the Grasshopper—the obvious paternal figure in this new family dynamic—to remind James that he “really *must* get some sleep” (33) and instructs Miss Spider to weave a bed for James. Later on in the narrative, when the Centipede is busy gnawing away at the stem that tethers the peach to the tree in James's front yard, the Ladybug explains to James what is happening and even offers him protection: “Would you like me to take you under my wing so that you won't fall over when we start rolling?” (39). This sort of protective concern places the Ladybug in a maternal position that complements the Grasshopper's paternal status and provides James with both a mother and father figure in this new configuration of a family unit. More importantly for this study, it serves to eliminate any issues of separation anxiety that James might have by placing him back into the role of the child who is under the care and supervision of a new mother and father in the form of the Ladybug and the Grasshopper. The fact that this new familial arrangement is made possible through magic only serves to

further the idea that Dahl's text utilizes this fantasy convention to enable his focalizing characters to work through certain psycho-developmental tasks (i.e., separation anxiety). However, if James is to *fully* resolve the issues of separation anxiety that become externalized through James's reabsorption into the "womb" of the massive peach, he must ultimately sever himself from his parental surrogates and begin to establish his own autonomy and self-reliance, lest he slip back into the co-dependent mode of the pathological child. Accordingly, he begins to do just that not long after the peach itself is severed from the tree that stands on the property which serves as the physical embodiment of James's unhappiness.

From the moment that James enters the peach and establishes relationships with the gigantic insects therein, he begins a journey towards self-reliance that begins with the destruction of his failed maternal substitutes, Aunts Spiker and Sponge. Fittingly, this journey is initiated by the intervention of the fantastic when the Centipede chews through the stem that tethers the peach to the tree in the malevolent aunts' front yard. Although James's entry into the peach is particularly regressive, I would argue that the severing of the peach and the death of his maternal surrogates in this scene posits a "cutting of the umbilical cord" and enables James to begin to assert his own autonomy throughout the peach's journey to New York City.

Once the giant peach reaches the sea, the insects begin to panic at the prospect of sinking and James reassures them that the peach is buoyant and that they are in no danger of drowning. Moreover, when the Earthworm—the perpetual pessimist—worries that even "if [they] are not going to be drowned, then every one of us is going to starve instead!" (52), James assures them that "we have enough food here to last us for weeks

and weeks . . . our whole ship is made of food!” (53). Even at this early stage in their journey, James is already beginning to make progressive strides in terms of overcoming the sense of separation anxiety that comes from the sudden and tragic deaths of his parents. In fact, I would argue that what we are seeing here in this scene is a direct role-reversal in terms of the depiction of separation anxiety. It is certainly significant that the peach’s resident insects become obsessively fixated on the idea of starving, as, according to Melanie Klein, this is ultimately the core of the child’s unconscious anxieties surrounding separation from the mother—particularly the mother’s breast, the infant’s primary source of nourishment (*Psychoanalysis of Children* 16). However, it is equally significant that James—the character who, after having lost both of his parents, should have the greatest claim to any sort of anxiety in this situation—is actually the one to reassure the *adult* insects that their anxieties are unfounded and that they will be able to survive for quite a long time with just the nourishment at hand. What we see in this scene, then, is a very poignant illustration of how James has already begun to overcome the issues of separation anxiety through the intervention of the fantastic into the narrative. By having recourse to the giant peach—itsself a massive source of food through its magical transformation—James is able to sublimate the primal anxieties surrounding maternal attachment by reassuring the insects that their own obsessive apprehensions are unfounded. Moreover, James—in performing this essential task of sublimation—shows his own developmental progression towards self-reliance, which is something that persists as the peach’s journey across the Atlantic continues.

Another example of James’s progression towards autonomous independence takes place during the scene in which the peach is under threat by a massive frenzy of sharks

who threaten to devour both the peach and all of its inhabitants. When the sharks begin to attack, all of the insects look to James for an answer to their imminent problem: “their eyes waited upon him, tense, anxious, pathetically hopeful” (60). Faced with the failure of the adult insects to do anything about the frenzy of sharks—or even to think about a solution to the problem—James is forced into an authoritative role in order to save the lives of himself and his insect companions. Accordingly, he does just that when he formulates a plan to lift the peach out of the ocean by tethering the giant fruit to hundreds of seagulls. Here, James once again solves a life-threatening issue for the inhabitants of the giant peach. His success in this endeavor illustrates yet another progressive step in James’s movement towards self-reliance, which is itself a move away from the sort of issues of separation anxiety that he must face on a visceral level.

James’s responsibility for his insect companions persists in subsequent chapters, with one particularly striking example occurring just after the peach rises out of the ocean and begins floating through the air towards New York City. The Centipede, in the midst of an egotistic display, edges too closely to the periphery of the peach and tumbles headfirst over the side. James, in an almost superhuman display of quick thinking, tells the silkworm to begin spinning string which he attaches to his ankle before diving over the edge of the peach in order to save the Centipede from drowning. Ultimately, “there was a mile of string to be hauled in, but they all worked like mad, and in the end, over the side of the peach, there appeared a dripping-wet James with a dripping-wet Centipede *clinging* to him tightly with all forty-two of his legs” (85, emphasis mine). The imagery here is particularly noteworthy, as the Centipede is literally clinging to James for protection in much the same way that an infant would cling to its mother (or attachment

figure). In saving the Centipede, James continues to exhibit his own personal growth in terms of the responsibility that he assumes for his insect companions. The fact that the Centipede's salvation is described very much in terms of an adult rescuing a child offers more evidence of this idea that—through the mode and formula of fantasy—James's journey allows him to become autonomous and to resolve the issues of separation anxiety.

One final illustration of the ways that James continues to develop psychologically and to continue his responsibility for the peach's resident insects occurs in the latter portion of the novel, in which James and his friends are confronted with a horde of Cloud-Men—"tall, wispy, wraith-like, shadowy white creatures who looked as though they were made out of a mixture of cotton-wool and candy floss and thin white hairs" (87). Although the Cloud-Men are, at first, completely ignorant of the floating peach or its several inhabitants, this situation changes when the Centipede begins to taunt and ridicule them relentlessly, which "evidently infuriated the Cloud-Men beyond belief. All at once, they spun around and grabbed great handfuls of hail-stones and rushed to the edge of the cloud and started throwing them at the peach, shrieking with fury all the time" (90). However, the situation becomes much more dismal when the Cloud-Men begin forming hail-stones "as large as cannon balls" (92) and begin launching them at the residents of the peach, endangering the lives of everyone on board. Rather than allow his friends to suffer any further harm, James directs the insects to safety: "Quickly! Down the tunnel, or we'll all be wiped out!" (92). Safe inside the pit of the giant peach, James and his insect companions no longer have to worry about the Cloud-Men's hail-stone assault.

Unbeknownst to James and his friends, their encounters with the Cloud-Men are far from over. One of the larger Cloud-People leaps from his cloud and latches on to one of the silk strings that is tethering the seagulls to the stem of the peach and it is up to James once again to think on his feet in order to save himself and his friends from danger. Accordingly, he does just that: “‘Centipede!’ yelled James. ‘Quickly! Bite through that string, the one he’s coming down on!’” (97). When the Centipede severs the string, the deadly Cloud-Man floats away angrily.

When the peach finally arrives in New York City, the inhabitants are once again faced with a dilemma when they realize that they have no way of getting down from the height that the seagulls have carried them. Once again, it is left to James to formulate a solution to their problem, and it is certainly worth noting that the first response to the recognition of this dilemma is to “Ask James” (107) and that James fittingly comes up with a quick solution to their problem: “All we’ll have to do is cut loose a few seagulls. Not too many, mind you, but just enough so that the others can’t quite keep us up in the air. Then down we shall go, slowly and gently, until we reach the ground. Centipede will bite through the strings for us one at a time” (107). Although the operation does not go as smoothly as James had hoped—since he could not have possibly foreseen the small plane that would soon come and slice through all of the peach’s strings at once—it is once again worth noting the insects response to this new calamity: “‘James!’ cried the Earthworm. Do something, James! Quickly, do something!’” (110). At this late point in the novel, it is fairly obvious that the insects rely on James for protection and, oftentimes, for salvation. The fact that the adult insects in this new family unit are incapable of performing this basic task for themselves forces James to assume their decidedly adult

role in protecting everyone who resides inside the peach and shows us that although the journey itself begins with a regression in James's return to the "womb" of the peach, it is clear by the time the peach arrives in New York City that James has established his own sense of self-reliance and autonomy, thereby sublimating any potential anxieties that James might have by being so suddenly and irrevocably separated from his birth parents.

Furthermore, while the journey across the Atlantic had provided a temporary family for James in the form of his insect companions, this familial dynamic changes when they arrive in New York City, as the insects go on to assume adult occupations and responsibilities. The peach, now eaten down to the pit, is set up in a special location in Central Park, and James is allowed to live there for the remainder of his life, with plenty of company. This occurrence is especially significant in terms of illustrating James's overcoming of separation anxiety. Although it would seem that James never actually leaves the "womb" of the peach, it is important to note that the flesh of the peach (from which we get the "womb" imagery in the first place) itself has been entirely eaten away, leaving only the pit—which, of course, is really nothing but the seed of the peach—to stand independently in this vast new place in very much the same way that James, the "seed" of his own parents, does at the conclusion of the novel. While his familial relationships with the insects aboard the peach may have changed since their arrival in the city, it is clear that James never again has to fear the loneliness underlying the psycho-developmental struggles with separation anxiety:

The enormous peach stone . . . was set up permanently in a place of honor in Central Park [and] every day of the week, hundreds and hundreds of children from far and near came pouring into the city to see the marvelous

peach stone in the Park. And James Henry Trotter, who had been the saddest and loneliest boy you could find, now had all the friends and playmates in the world. (126)

In this instance, we can see that James has now been integrated into a much healthier family-based fabric of society through Dahl's extended use of magic. The isolation inherent in James's initial situation is, of course, representative of the fears underlying separation anxiety. That James is able to overcome this isolation and to find a new family speaks to his conquering of those fears and the solace that is necessary to quell any resurgent anxieties regarding that situation. Moreover, because Dahl invokes magic in his text, James does not have to grow up under the oppressive and abusive treatment of his horrible aunts—something that would have undoubtedly stunted his psychological development and severely impeded the typical narrative of maturation (e.g., the *entwicklungsroman*) that takes place in much of children's literature. Instead, through Dahl's invocation of magic, James is given a physical, maternal space in the form of the giant peach—the giant fruit that is (throughout the course of the narrative) slowly and gradually eaten away—much in the same way that a child gradually learns to separate itself from its mother rather than succumb to anxious fear stemming from sudden maternal separation. Much of what Dahl gives us here is a hyperbolic, external representation of separation anxiety and the successful sublimation of that fear as expressed through fantasy, which is—if nothing else—the language of the unconscious.

Both Bowlby's and Anna Freud's studies of orphans demonstrate that the early emotional development of the orphan child is vital to his or her capacity to function

normally later in life.¹⁸ Interestingly, Freud specifically noted that the orphans she observed reacted in a hostile way towards adults yet shared an almost altruistic bond amongst each other. However, for orphans like James who have no peers to form social bonds with, the lack of fantastic intervention would have only left him to grow up under a system of harsh abuse, systems which Bowlby's study indicates could lead to the child's being "withdrawn and isolated . . . overactive and abusive towards their peers [and] by the time they are adolescents, [having] histories of persistent stealing, violence, and sexual misdemeanors" (414). In this way, James—an orphan with great pathological potential if left to the care of his abusive relatives—illustrates how childhood psychological dilemmas can be evoked by orphan fantasy texts and how narratives like Dahl's offer a necessary magical resolution of those psycho-developmental struggles for their orphan protagonists whose tragic identities threaten both the child's burgeoning psychological development and the requisite comic ending of children's fantasy literature.

Conclusion

Diana Wynne Jones and Roald Dahl, in their prolific writing careers, penned some of the best children's fantasies of the twentieth century. The fact that more work has not been done on Jones is certainly unfortunate, as is the fact that more extensive studies on Dahl have not been undertaken, especially given both authors' unique approaches to children's fantasy. Jones's refusal to allow magic to act as a miracle solution to the problems of her characters and Dahl's recurrent use of the fantastic as an intrusive (yet positive) device in an otherwise realistic setting has surely aided in their

¹⁸ See Bowlby's *Child Care and the Growth of Love* (1953) and Anna Freud's *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child* (1951), pp. 127-68.

continued popularity. By altering the fantasy convention of magic to fit their own individual approach to the “low-fantasy” narrative, both Jones and Dahl create remarkable stories which transcend common fantasy fare and immerse their readers in a magical world that feels closer to home than the popular sword-and-sorcery “high fantasy” texts that dominated the genre throughout much of the twentieth century. Perhaps it is the verisimilitude of their work that makes the fantasies they create so ripe for psychoanalytical approaches. For both Jones and Dahl, the orphan characters that they place at the center of their orphan narratives raise problems inherent in childhood developmental dilemmas—problems that necessitate resolution for their orphan protagonists despite the fact that orphan children lack the fundamental parental basis that normally functions in assisting the child to progress through these psychological dilemmas. Accordingly, the conventions of fantasy that Jones and Dahl both utilize and manipulate through their own specialized narrative approaches—specifically, the fantasy trope of magic—provide this very resolution by using those conventions to allow for an external, physical space in which their orphan characters can work out psycho-developmental issues like separation anxiety. Realizing the vast psychoanalytical potential in Jones’s and Dahl’s texts is only the first step in filling this unfortunate critical gap in children’s literary scholarship, and it is my hope that future scholars will take it upon themselves to do just that.

CHAPTER III
 FANTASY AND THE TRAUMA NARRATIVE IN
 J. K. ROWLING'S HARRY POTTER SERIES

J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter series (1997-2007) has become one of the best-selling book series of all time. The first installment, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997), has surpassed the one hundred million mark in terms of sales, and the remaining installments of the series have achieved between fifty and one hundred million in sales, respectively.¹⁹ Rowling's series continues to enjoy international success,²⁰ and the persistent popularity of the series has ensured its continued study among children's literature critics. Early critical pieces like Nicholas Tucker's "The Rise and Rise of Harry Potter," which essentially lauded Rowling's unique synthesis of older children's fantasy fiction in the creation of her own narrative while at the same time maintaining that the books can hardly be considered "classics," have since been eclipsed by the proliferation of varying analytical approaches to the series. A multitude of monographs have been published on the series, including Philip Nel's *J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter Novels: A Reader's Guide* (2001), Suman Gupta's *Re-Reading Harry Potter* (2009), John Killinger's *The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Harry Potter* (2009), Shira Wolosky's *The Riddles of Harry Potter: Secret Passages and Interpretive Quests* (2010), and Vandana Saxena's *The Subversive Harry Potter: Adolescent Rebellion and Containment in the Harry Potter Novels* (2012). Additionally, four published collections on the Harry

¹⁹ Grabianowski, Ed. "The 21 Best-selling Books of All Time" 19 December 2011. HowStuffWorks.com. <<http://entertainment.howstuffworks.com/arts/literature/21-best-sellers.htm>> 22 January 2015.

²⁰ In the list of the twenty-one best-selling books of all time, all seven of the Harry Potter books make an appearance, attesting to their continued popularity among readers. See "21 Best-Selling Books of All Time," Davies, Helen; Marjorie Dorfman, Mary Fons, Deborah Hawkins, Martin Hintz, Linnea Lundgren, David Priess, Julia Clark Robinson, Paul Seaburn, Heidi Stevens, and Steve Theunissen. *Editors of Publications International, Ltd.* (14 September 2007).

Potter books—*The Ivory Tower and Harry Potter* (2002), *Reading Harry Potter* (2003), *Harry Potter's World* (2003), and *Harry Potter's World Wide Influence* (2009)—utilize critical approaches to the series that vary from psychoanalysis, to gender studies, to narratology, and on to analyses of other issues like power dynamics, authority, cultural interpretations, literary influences, and historical contexts.

The first three of the four edited collections on the series provide a breadth of possibility for approaching the novels; however, only about half of the Harry Potter books were published at the time of the release of those edited collections. Since then, and especially following the publication of the last book, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (2007), a tremendous amount of critical work has been done on the series. Indeed, one would be hard-pressed to find a children's fantasy series that has been the subject of more critical analyses in the last ten years.²¹ Despite the proliferation of critical studies on Rowling's series, very little attention has been devoted to the subject of Harry Potter as an orphan. In fact, one of the few critical studies to draw any real attention to the subject was also one of the first; in Tucker's "Rise and Rise of Harry Potter," he engages in a wholesale effort to trace all of Rowling's literary influences and to ultimately show how there is not much "original" about the series. Tucker discusses

²¹ See Michelle Yeo's "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets: Feminist Interpretations/Jungian Dreams" (2004), Michael Cart's "What Rowling Has Wrought" (2004), the edited collection *The Ivory Tower and Harry Potter: Perspectives on a Literary Phenomenon* (2004), Paige Byam's "Children's Literature or Adult Classic? The Harry Potter Series and the British Novel Tradition" (2004), Steven Barfield's "Fantasy and the Interpretation of Fantasy in Harry Potter" (2004), Andrew Burn's "Potterliteracy: Cross-Media Narratives, Cultures, and Grammars" (2004), Noel Chevalier's "The Liberty Tree and the Whomping Willow: Political Justice, Magical Science, and Harry Potter" (2005), Kate Behr's "'Same-as-Difference': Narrative Transformations and Intersecting Cultures in Harry Potter" (2005), Alessandra Petrina's "Forbidden Forest, Enchanted Castle: Arthurian Spaces in the Harry Potter Novels" (2006), Meredith Cherland's "Harry's Girls: Harry Potter and the Discourse of Gender" (2008), Travis Prinzi's *Harry Potter and Imagination: The Way Between Two Worlds* (2010), the edited collection *The Law and Harry Potter* (2010), Rajendra Dash's "Chasing the Shadow: Is the Harry Potter Series a Political Discourse?" (2012), Elizabeth Galway's "Reminders of Rugby in the Halls of Hogwarts: The Insidious Influence of the School Story Genre on the Works of J. K. Rowling" (2012), Mary P. Freier's "The Librarian in Rowling's Harry Potter Series" (2014), and many more.

Harry's orphanhood in terms of its indebtedness to historical fairy tales that have used the trope of the "down-trodden orphan character" (224) in order to evoke empathy with readers and listeners. Although Tucker does criticize Rowling's work as derivative, he does acknowledge her talent in synthesizing older children's fantasy tropes into something relatively fresh. M. Katherine Grimes, in her "Harry Potter: Fairy Tale Prince, Real Boy, and Archetypal Hero," also considers Harry's orphanhood to some extent, though she generally does not move beyond a discussion of how Harry's orphan status places him in the archetypal role of the "hero" as outlined by the likes of Otto Rank, Carl Jung, and Joseph Campbell. Unfortunately, Tucker, Grimes, and even more recent critics have not paid much attention to the subject of Harry-as-orphan beyond this basic narratological and archetypal approach, and most of these studies focus more on Harry's parental surrogates than on his orphanhood in and of itself. Even Ronnie Carmeli's "Four Models of Fatherhood: Paternal Contributors to Harry Potter's Psychological Development," an article that ties in well with the present study in its connection of the Harry Potter series to childhood psycho-developmental issues, only discusses how Harry's paternal stand-ins facilitate Harry's development and does not mention how the fantasy tropes involved in Harry's orphan narrative work to facilitate his development.

Despite this critical *lacuna* in Rowling scholarship, I would argue that Harry's orphan status places him in a unique position in terms of psychological development, as he has no parents to identify with or against, an essential element that is crucial to the normative psychological development of any child. However, his parents are well-known throughout the wizarding world that Harry eventually becomes a part of, and they are known as much for their talents as for the sacrifice that they made for their son. Unlike

other popular orphan characters from children's fantasy writers like Roald Dahl, Lucy Boston, or Diana Wynne Jones, Harry's parents did not meet their demise by accident. Rather, they martyred themselves for their child, and this sacrifice places Harry in a distinctive position apart from other popular fantasy orphans. Accordingly, this chapter will deal with the Harry Potter series in terms of the orphan whose parents deliberately sacrifice themselves for their child. Through this analysis, I aim to show how Harry's psycho-developmental struggles are resolved through the intervention of fantasy convention and what this sort of resolution means in terms of late twentieth century post-war children's narratives.

Harry Potter, Family, and Post-war Trauma Narrative

From the outset, Rowling's Harry Potter series is a narrative about war. In the very first chapter, readers are confronted with the effects of the First Wizarding War in the death of Harry's parents, Lily and James Potter. Moreover, as the series progresses, it continues to deal head-on with the psychological and emotional fallout of the struggles between good and evil. By the series' end, the reader is left with a mass list of casualties that includes Harry's friends, colleagues, family, and even pets, and at no point does Rowling spare her readers an explicit confrontation with Harry's emotional anguish during each loss. However, as Kenneth Kidd notes in his *Freud in Oz: At the Intersections of Psychoanalysis and Children's Literature* (2010), this sort of psychological exploration of the inner responses of child characters during times of war has not always been featured prominently in children's literature. Kidd attributes this sort of direct dealing with the psychological responses of characters in children's fiction to a

rise in what he calls the “children’s literature of atrocity,”²² and he draws a historical dividing line by contrast:

What *is* new is the atrocity part . . . the emphasis on experiences of pain and suffering on the part of principal characters. Older children’s literature seems to be about the management of trauma, whereas the children’s literature of atrocity makes clear the profound emotional and psychological effects of trauma—even the impossibility of recovery. (182)

In other words, Kidd asserts that children’s literature of the past tends to gloss over or ignore altogether the detrimental psychological effects of death and war on its child protagonists and instead focuses on what those traumatized characters do to move past their grief as opposed to confronting and acknowledging it. Perhaps, then, Rowling’s Harry Potter series serves as an example of Kidd’s “children’s literature of atrocity” in its direct dealing with the physical and emotional impact of war on children and adults alike. After all, because Harry himself is an orphan—and, moreover, an orphan by virtue of his parents being a casualty of war—there must inevitably be a confrontation with war and its after-effects. In this case, one such effect is the precarious psychological situation that Harry finds himself in at the beginning of the series, as he lacks the fundamental parental basis on which to progress normally in terms of his own psychological development.

In his enlightening study on war literature, *Culture in Camouflage: War, Empire, and Modern British Literature* (2009), Patrick Deer observes that “strategic fantasy also

²²As representative titles in the “children’s literature of atrocity,” Kidd discusses, amongst others, Jane Yolen’s *The Devil’s Arithmetic* (1988), Han Nolan’s *If I Should Die Before I Wake* (1994), Edward Bloor’s *Crusader* (1999), Marsha Skrypuch’s *The Hunger* (2002), and a host of picture books about 9/11 which include titles such as *9/11: The Book of Help* (2002), Latoria Wright’s *A Day I’ll Never Forget: A Keepsake to Help Children Deal with the September 11, 2001 Attack on America* (2001), and Robin Goodman’s *The Day Our World Changed* (2002).

plays a crucial role in reimagining conflict at crucial moments,” and he goes on to claim that these “fantasies” serve the purpose of “imposing a dominant vision of war through propaganda, censorship, film, speeches, press, and radio statements, recruiting materials, as well as the work of officially sponsored war artists and writers” (4). From a literary standpoint, Deer attributes this role to literature’s ability to work in the favor of those who seek to create what he calls “war culture,” a phenomenon brought about by the “official effort to impose a dominant vision of war through [various cultural materials]” (4). However unwilling I am to attribute such a potentially denigrating and hegemonically collaborative label to Rowling’s particular brand of war-time fantasy, I would argue that the series—published during one of those “crucial moments” that Deer points out—nonetheless utilizes the fantasy mode as a means of resolving Harry’s traumatic experiences, which were no doubt produced by the effects of war. Furthermore, if the goal of this sort of “trauma writing” is—as Kidd argues—to illustrate “the profound emotional and psychological effects of trauma,” I argue that the resolution of Harry’s traumatic experiences and the triumph of “good” over “evil” throughout the series stems not from any collaborative effort on Rowling’s part to further any type of “war culture” but through the very conventions of fantasy that she draws on in creating her own unique orphan series.

From the standpoint of genre, then, the Harry Potter series—one of the most popular children’s fantasy series of all time—is rife with possibility for understanding the purpose of the resolution of Harry’s psychological struggles. As Brian Attebery asserts in his *Strategies of Fantasy*, “mixed parentage—fairy tale on the mother’s side, realistic fiction on the father’s—gives fantasy a unique ability to investigate the twofold process

of constructing a self” (86). In other words, Attebery is identifying fantasy’s inherent reliance on the mimetic (or real) as a foundation for the reader’s experience of a fantasy narrative; the way that this juxtaposition gives fantasy the “unique ability to investigate the [construction of a sense of self]” is by analyzing how realistically-grounded characters develop through their interactions with the fantastic. Interestingly, Attebery (whether consciously or not) is echoing early childhood psychologists like D. W. Winnicott who maintain that the child’s ability to construct a sense of self and to establish relationships with the outside world relies heavily on their capacity to work out their very real psychological issues through fantastic *play*. To add to Attebery’s assertion, I would argue that it is fantasy as a narrative mode that allows us (as literary critics) to investigate how Harry’s sense of self is constructed through the conventions of the fantasy narrative and to draw conclusions as to what these constructions mean in terms of trauma writing for children. Another of Attebery’s claims that are relevant to this process of constructing a sense of self through fantasy narrative is when he tells us that, “the characters in a fairy tale or modern fantasy can be viewed as internal phenomena, embodiments of psychological phenomena acting out their struggle toward integration in a projected landscape of the mind” (*Strategies of Fantasy* 71). In the case of Harry Potter and the orphan figure in children’s fantasy texts, this process of integration is a familial one. Rowling’s series—as post-war children’s fantasy—provides us with an opportunity to explore the individuation, or development of a sense of self, of the orphan figure and the ultimate creation of that orphan’s own family as an attempt at traumatic “recovery.” However, because Harry is an orphan and his abusive upbringing by the Dursleys places him in a potentially detrimental position psychologically if left to the devices of a realist

narrative, Harry's traumatic recovery is one that takes place by utilizing fantasy as both a mode for individuation and as a formula for perpetuating this psycho-developmental journey through the repeated intervention of fantasy tropes.

Critic Angelea Panos discusses this capacity for traumatic recovery in her "Harry Potter and Friends: Models for Psychological Resiliency," asserting that Harry and his friends are "role models that demonstrate the ability to withstand trauma, loss, and dysfunctional family systems" (169). However, Panos's argument is limited to the response of the child reader, thus vastly limiting the possibility for analyzing how the characters themselves experience this catharsis. As I have pointed out, the effects of reading trauma narratives do not end with the child reader. By focusing too closely on the child reader, one risks ignoring the underlying trauma narrative that texts like the Harry Potter illustrate.

One way to understand Harry's psychological development throughout the series is to compare his situation at the beginning of the first book to his circumstances at the conclusion of *The Deathly Hallows*. In *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, we are informed of the values of Harry's only existing blood relations from the opening lines: "Mr. and Mrs. Dursley, of number four, Privet Drive, were proud to say that they were perfectly normal, thank you very much. They were the last people you'd expect to be involved in anything strange or mysterious, because they just didn't hold with such nonsense" (1). The key word in this passage is "normal," as it identifies the Dursleys as the "norm" against which are set individuals like Harry—people who are indeed "strange and mysterious" through their magical abilities. By means of this norm, Harry is immediately othered from his aunt and uncle's family by his magical heritage;

furthermore, he is an orphan—one who does not belong in this particular household—and Rowling makes his position in the Dursley household clear from the beginning: “The Dursleys often spoke about Harry as though he wasn’t there—or, rather, as though he was something very nasty that couldn’t understand them, like a slug” (22). From the outset, Harry is viewed by the Dursleys as an unwanted after-effect of war—a lingering memory and undesired burden of Petunia Dursley’s dead sister Lily and something foreign, lonely, and veritably “other” that must be literally closeted away from polite society. This position is a far cry from where we leave Harry at the end of the series, where Rowling presents us with a much different version of Harry, one who is able to watch as his own children cross the threshold of Platform Nine and Three-Quarters and go off on their own adventures at Hogwarts. In this, the series’ epilogue, Harry has created his own family unit and his sense of self has been established. However, for the purposes of this study, what is important to ascertain is how Harry transitions from orphan outsider to family man throughout the course of the series. What follows, then, is an analysis of the ways that fantasy convention moves Harry along the path from orphan to father, culminating in the resolution of his childhood psychological issues and the negotiation of his own traumatic experiences.

Harry Potter’s Magical Salvation

From the opening chapters of the first book in the series, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*, the reader is made fully aware of the position that Harry occupies in his adoptive family. Harry lives in a cupboard under the stairs, hidden from polite company and (whenever possible) from the sight of his aunt and uncle, despite the fact that his cousin Dudley actually has two rooms to himself. He receives only Dudley’s

hand-me-downs to wear, is treated with perpetual contempt by his aunt and uncle, and is generally excluded from any Dursley family activity. In short, Harry does not belong in the normative, nuclear family-based household of the Dursleys. He is never welcome to join in any of the Dursleys' family activities, except when his aunt and uncle have absolutely no choice to take him along—and even then they do so begrudgingly.

If left to the devices of a more realist narrative, there is no guarantee that Harry would have undergone the type of change that would have allowed him to experience the many surrogate family relationships that he ultimately forms during the course of the series. Most likely, he would have spent his entire childhood under the abusive and cruel treatment of his aunt, uncle, and cousin, and been stunted psychologically throughout adulthood because of it. In fact, in “Crowning the King: Harry Potter and the Construction of Royalty,” Farah Mendlesohn asserts that: “not since the nineteenth century have orphans been portrayed with such extreme relatives with any intention other than parody” (162). Fortunately for Harry, his story is rooted in the rich history of the fantasy narrative, and as renowned fantasy writer (and sometimes critic) Natalie Babbitt says, “something has to happen” (7) in these fantasy stories written for children because they tend to center on an action-driven plot as opposed to the more “character-driven” narratives written for adults. Generally, in texts like Rowling's Harry Potter series, this “something” that Babbitt refers to is often the intrusion of the fantastic into the otherwise mimetic or realistic world that the primary character resides in, whether that intrusion takes the form of magic, house-elves, talking snakes, flying cars, or half-giants. For Harry, this fantastic intervention begins when magical letters from Hogwarts begin mysteriously appearing at his aunt and uncle's house. Despite Uncle Vernon's best

attempts to keep the letters from Harry, Harry ultimately receives his acceptance letter from Rubeus Hagrid, a half-giant who hand-delivers the letter to Harry.

In this first book in Rowling's series, Hagrid's initial appearance provides Harry the opportunity to escape the otherness inherent in his adoptive family situation and to begin a journey that will ultimately result in his transition from orphan child to family man, something that—because Harry is an orphan and has to mature much faster than children with caring parents who allow them to progress normally towards adulthood—is inherent yet fantastically ushered along in the *bildungsroman* that is the Harry Potter series. Though Hagrid enables Harry's initial departure from the Dursleys and from the mundane reality of the life he has known thus far, the initial focus of this analysis will be on the ways that fantasy conventions intervene to save Harry's life on multiple occasions throughout the series, thereby allowing for the continuation of his transition to adulthood—and thus, his continued psychological development. Of course, as a fantasy series that centers on the adventures of a young wizard, Rowling's Harry Potter books are first and foremost a series centered on the recurrent fantasy trope of magic. What follows, then, is an analysis of how magic—as fantasy convention—will continue to intervene in order to save Harry's life and to perpetuate his transition to adult family life throughout the series.

The first time that Harry encounters mortal danger comes in the tenth chapter of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, "Halloween," when Harry, Ron, and Hermione come face-to-face with a mountain troll. Trapped by the troll in the small space of the girl's bathroom, the three have no choice but to fight their way out. Ron performs a floating spell on the troll's club, causing the club to float high above the air and fall

squarely on its owner's head, knocking the troll unconscious. When the teachers discover the students, Professor McGonagall emphasizes the real danger that Harry and the others were in when she says, "What on earth were you thinking of? You're lucky you weren't killed" (177). We can imagine a similar situation in a text devoid of fantasy; for example, if Harry, Ron, and Hermione would have been cornered in a bathroom by a murderous adult intent on killing them, there is no guarantee that any of them would have survived. However, because of Rowling's invocation of fantasy, Harry and his friends endure through this potentially deadly encounter.

This is hardly the only time that magic intervenes to save Harry's life in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. Another illustration of this sort of magical salvation comes during the following chapter, in which Harry plays his first ever Quidditch match. During the match, Harry's broom suddenly begins to act on its own, with a seemingly malicious intent towards its rider: "His broom had started to roll over and over, with him only just managing to hold on. Then the whole crowd gasped. Harry's broom had given a wild jerk and Harry swung off it. He was now dangling from it, holding on with only one hand" (190). Though the danger soon subsides and Harry is not only able to remount his broom but also to win the match for his House team, we later grasp the real danger that Harry was in towards the conclusion of the book when Harry confronts Professor Quirrell, the man whom we learn had been behind the Quidditch incident and the troll encounter as well. In this final confrontation with Quirrell, the malevolent professor (whom we also discover has been playing host to the parasitic remains of Lord Voldemort), we not only learn that Quirrell was the man responsible for Harry's near-death experience on the Quidditch field, but that it was once again magic that saved

Harry's life: "Another few seconds and I'd have got you off that broom. I'd have managed it before then if Snape hadn't been muttering a counter-curse, trying to save you" (289). Here, Quirrell makes it explicit that magic—in the form of Snape's counter-curse—saved Harry from Quirrell's attempts to kill him on the Quidditch field.

However, this final confrontation with Quirrell in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* provides another opportunity for illustrating the ways that magic intervenes to save Harry's life throughout Rowling's series. When Quirrell tries to destroy Harry with a killing curse, Harry grabs Quirrell's face and "Quirrell rolled off him, his face blistering, too, and then Harry knew: Quirrell couldn't touch his bare skin, not without suffering terrible pain" (295). What Harry does not know at this point, however, is that it is magic that is protecting Harry from Quirrell. When Harry asks Dumbledore why Quirrell could not touch him, the headmaster tells Harry: "[Voldemort] didn't realize that love as powerful as your mother's for you leaves its own mark [. . .] to have been loved so deeply, even though the person who loves us is gone, will give us some protection forever" (299). Though Dumbledore does not specifically call the protection Harry's mother gives him "magic," Voldemort himself later makes explicit the idea that Harry's mother provided him magical protection when she martyred herself for her son when he says that, "His mother left upon him traces of her sacrifice [. . .] This is old magic, I should have remembered it" (*The Goblet of Fire* 652-53). Though these three instances—Harry's encounters with the troll, with the bewitched broom, and with Quirrell/Voldemort—provide us with an explicit illustration of the ways that magic (as fantasy convention) intervenes to save Harry's life in this first book in the series, this is only the beginning of a pattern that recurs throughout the remainder of the texts.

In the next book, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, the first instance of Harry's magical salvation comes during his encounter with Aragog, the giant spider that was once accused of killing Hogwarts students when Hagrid was suspected of being the one who opened the Chamber of Secrets many years ago. When Aragog's children capture Harry and Ron in the Forbidden Forest and bring them to Aragog, he orders his offspring to kill Harry and Ron. Just as Ron and Harry are about to be devoured by the mass of giant spiders, Mr. Weasley's enchanted car barrels into the forest, scattering the spiders and allowing the two boys to make their escape from the Forbidden Forest and from the death that would have inevitably occurred at the hands of Aragog's children.

One more important instance of Harry's salvation through the intervention of magic comes towards the conclusion of the text, when Harry has gained access to the Chamber of Secrets and confronts the younger form of Lord Voldemort, Tom Riddle. Riddle summons a basilisk, a giant snake capable of killing a person with a single stare, which is exactly what Riddle orders the basilisk to do to Harry. Though Harry is victorious in his battle with the basilisk, he receives what would have otherwise been a mortal wound when the giant snake manages to sink his fang into Harry's arm just before he dies. Fortunately for Harry, Fawkes the mystical phoenix had joined in Harry's struggle with the basilisk and is there to heal Harry's wounds with his tears—tears that, according to Riddle himself, have “healing powers” (322). Moreover, as Riddle raises his wand to kill Harry, Harry manages to grab one of the basilisk's fangs and plunge it straight into the core of the diary that Voldemort had left the shadow of his younger self within. The venom from the basilisk's fang contained the sort of magical power capable of destroying the diary and, thus, the younger Voldemort. Here, the magical properties of

two different mystical creatures—the phoenix and the basilisk—intervene to save Harry’s life and give us further illustration of how the conventions of fantasy perpetuate Harry’s progression from abused orphanhood to adult family life in this second book of the series.

In *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, the pattern of magical salvation continues. In the latter part of the text, Harry discovers that Sirius Black—the man who was accused of selling out Harry’s parents to Voldemort—is innocent and that Peter Pettigrew, the man who had been masquerading as Ron’s pet rat Scabbers for the last twelve years, is the man responsible for the deaths of James and Lily Potter. After taking Pettigrew hostage, the group—Harry, Ron, Hermione, Sirius, and Professor Remus Lupin—begin to head back to Hogwarts in order to turn Pettigrew over to Dumbledore. However, the group is unfortunately stalled by the appearance of the full moon, as Professor Lupin (a werewolf) begins to transform in front of them, putting the entire group in mortal danger. Fortunately for Harry, Sirius is an Animagus—a wizard capable of using magic to transform into an animal—and he uses this ability to fight off Lupin in his werewolf form, thereby saving Harry and his friends in this particular instance. However, one more illustration of Harry’s salvation through magic comes in the subsequent chapter, when Sirius—injured by his fight with the werewolf Lupin—lies bleeding and helpless, surrounded by Dementors, creatures described thus:

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 will be left with nothing but the worst experiences of your life. (*Prisoner of Azkaban* 187)

Harry, intent on saving his new-found godfather Sirius, attempts to protect him with a Patronus charm, a spell devised specifically to counter the effects of the Dementors. However, Harry's spell proves too weak at that point in time, and Harry nearly succumbs to the "Dementor's Kiss," in which a dementor literally sucks the soul from body of its victim. As the dementor lifts his hood to perform the kiss, Harry "could feel its putrid breath . . . His mother was screaming in his ears . . . She was going to be the last thing he ever heard" (384). Luckily for Harry, it is at that moment that a fully-formed Patronus comes barreling into the fray, scattering the dementors and saving Harry's and Sirius's lives. Though Harry initially believes the Patronus to have been conjured by the ghost of his father, he later learns that it was actually his future self who conjured the Patronus by means of using Hermione's Time-Turner, a magical device that allows the carrier to go backward in time for short period. In terms of Harry's development, this instance is significant; as an orphan, he has hitherto had only the memories of his parents' friends and teachers (as well as his own idealizations) to draw upon and on which to build a sense of self. The fact that Harry here learns that it was he himself who summoned the Patronus (and not his father) shows him that he is capable of his own great feats and does not need to rely on some idealized image or "ghost" of his father for protection. Without the invocation of fantasy, there is no guarantee that Harry would have learned this vital lesson. Here, Rowling's use of fantasy has allowed Harry a space for self-acknowledgment, which is a crucial step for any adolescent on the journey towards

adulthood. Moreover, through the intervention of two forms of magic—the Patronus charm and the Time-Turner—Harry’s life is once again saved and he is allowed to mature through the intrusion of the fantastic convention of magic.

Next, in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, Harry unwillingly becomes a contestant in the Tri-wizard Tournament, a centuries-old wizarding competition between the schools of Hogwarts, Beauxbatons, and Durmstrang. Historically, several witches and wizards have died in the tournament; however, in the incarnation of the tournament that Harry competes in, there is much more safety for the contestants than in the medieval years in which death was common during the competition. In fact, although the tasks that Harry undergoes in the Tri-Wizard tournament are indeed dangerous, the fact that he is always in the presence of his Hogwarts professors—most of whom, undoubtedly, would come to his aid if he were in any real mortal danger—means that Harry does not actually face the possibility of death during the tournament. However, as soon as Harry finds himself in the absence of his protectors, he also has yet another confrontation with death, and it is up to the conventional fantasy trope of magic to intervene and save his life once again.

In the third task of the tournament, the contestants are asked to navigate a perilous maze and obtain the Tri-Wizard Cup that has been placed within it. However, unbeknownst to Harry, the cup itself had been bewitched and made into a “portkey,” an enchanted object capable of teleporting a person to a specific location upon being touched. This particular portkey transports Harry to the grave of Tom Riddle’s father, and Harry must watch helplessly as his friend Cedric Diggory is killed and Voldemort himself is resurrected by Peter Pettigrew, the man who betrayed Harry’s parents when

Harry was an infant. Once Voldemort recovers his own body, he puts Harry through intense torture before deciding to finally kill him. However, as Voldemort fires the killing curse at Harry, Harry directs his own spell back at the evil wizard, resulting in “a narrow beam of light [. . .] neither red nor green, but bright deep gold” (663). Though Harry does not discover the cause of this bizarre connection until later, he is nonetheless saved once again by magic in this instance when, as soon as the connection between them is broken, Harry uses a summoning spell to bring the portkey (the Tri-Wizard cup) back to him—allowing him to return to Hogwarts and escape death once again through the use of magic.

Then, in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, Harry’s brushes with death start from the very outset of the novel. In this first chapter, Harry and his cousin Dudley are attacked in broad daylight by dementors, and Harry, struggling to summon the happiness needed to invoke the Patronus charm, momentarily resigns himself to his own death at the hands of the hooded creatures: “He was never going to see Ron and Hermione again” (18). However, in that same moment, Harry somehow manages to cast a full Patronus and, with this intervention of magic, he succeeds in saving his own life and that of his cousin. The novel is actually bookended by Harry’s encounters with death, as the latter section of the novel finds Harry in the Ministry of Magic’s Department of Mysteries, where he encounters several Death-Eaters—Lord Voldemort’s followers—while attempting to retrieve a prophecy about himself and the Dark Lord. Just after Voldemort arrives and confronts Harry, he aims a killing curse straight at him; however, at this point, “the headless golden statue of the wizard in the fountain had sprung alive, leaping from its plinth, and landed on the floor with a crash between Harry and

Voldemort. The spell merely glanced off its chest as the statue flung out its arms, protecting Harry” (813). It is at this moment that Dumbledore appears and we learn that it is his spell that caused the giant statue to come between Voldemort’s killing curse and Harry. Here, Dumbledore’s magic intervenes to save Harry’s life from the Dark Lord, and after the battle concludes, we learn something about the nature of Harry’s being made to live with his horrible aunt and uncle in the conversation between Harry and Dumbledore that follows. Specifically, Dumbledore tells Harry that the blood magic that had saved his life as an infant extends to his mother’s bloodline, thereby providing Harry with magical protection from Voldemort and his followers: “While you can still call home the place where your mother’s blood dwells, there you cannot be touched or harmed by Voldemort” (836). This blood magic—put into place by the sacrifice of Harry’s mother when Harry was effectively orphaned—even further emphasizes the idea that magic (as fantasy convention) repeatedly intervenes to save Harry’s life, especially since—unbeknownst to Harry—it has done so since the day he was first orphaned and taken in by his Aunt Petunia.

In *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, the pattern of magical salvation continues during Harry and Dumbledore’s quest to destroy the Horcruxes, dark enchanted objects that harbor part of a person’s soul—in this case, Voldemort’s—in order to prolong the life of the spell-caster indefinitely. In this sequence of events, Harry and Dumbledore venture into a dark cave with a deep, black lake that runs through it. To get to the Horcrux, the two must cross the lake in a ramshackle boat. Unfortunately for the two wizards, the lake itself is infested with Inferi, mindless corpses that blindly attack anyone who breaks the surface of the lake they reside in. Dumbledore and Harry do make

it to the center of the lake without incident; however, they soon discover that in order to access the Horcrux, one of them must consume a debilitating potion that brings whoever drinks it to the point of death. Dumbledore volunteers to be the victim, and as he lies helpless after consuming the potion, Harry attempts to revive him with water from the lake. As he breaks the surface of the water, the Inferi erupt from within, attacking the two wizards en masse, and although Harry tries his best to defend himself and the weakened Dumbledore from the Inferi's attack, he is overwhelmed by the zombie-like creatures:

“he felt arms enclose him from behind, thin, fleshless arms cold as death, and his feet left the ground as they lifted him and began to carry him, slowly and surely, back to the water, and he knew there would be no release, that he would be drowned” (576).

However, it is at this moment that a vast ring of fire—the Inferi's only weakness—is conjured by the semi-recovered Dumbledore, saving Harry from the watery death that no doubt awaited him at the hands of this army of the dead. Here, Dumbledore's fire spell gives us yet another illustration of how the fantasy convention of magic intervenes to save Harry's life in this penultimate installment of the series.

Finally, in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, the final text in the series, the pattern of magical salvation persists, perhaps more so than in the other texts in the series.²³ For my purposes, I will focus on two of the most significant instances, both involving a confrontation between Harry and his archenemy, Lord Voldemort. The first occurs in the beginning of the text, when Harry is permanently removed from his aunt

²³For example, in addition to the two key scenes I examine here, there is the wedding scene where Harry is saved from Death Eaters by “disapparating,” or using a disappearing spell in chapter 8; the scene in Godric's Hollow in chapter 17 where Hermione hits Voldemort's snake Nagini with a curse as it was about to strike Harry; Harry is also saved in chapter 19 from drowning in an icy lake by Ron (who used a teleportation spell to appear near Harry and then followed a Patronus to his exact location); in chapter 23, Harry and his friends are rescued from Malfoy Manor through Dobby the house-elf's magic, which allows him to teleport in and outside of the house—something that human witches and wizards are unable to do.

and uncle's house following the dissolution of his mother's protective charm. Ultimately, Voldemort appears on the scene and begins firing killing curses at Harry, but Harry's wand intervenes: "His wand acted of its own accord. He felt it drag his hand around like some great magnet, saw a spurt of golden fire through his half-closed eyelids, heard a crack and a scream of fury" (61). The scream, no doubt issued from Voldemort himself, is in response to his frustration at his own inability to kill Harry while their wands share the connection that allows Harry's wand to act independently. More importantly, this scene gives us another illustration of how magic is used to prolong Harry's life in this final installment of the series. The next (and final) instance of magical salvation that I will point out occurs in the latter portion of the novel, when Harry and Voldemort have their ultimate showdown during the climactic final battle at Hogwarts. When Harry surrenders himself willingly to Voldemort in order to save his friends, the malevolent wizard accordingly hits Harry with a killing curse. Awakening in a liminal space that resembles King's Cross Station, Harry comes face to face with the ghost of Dumbledore, who informs Harry that he is not, in fact, dead and then the former headmaster explains why:

You were the seventh Horcrux, Harry, the Horcrux he never meant to make. He had rendered his soul so unstable that it broke apart when he committed those acts of unspeakable evil, the murder of your parents, the attempted killing of a child. But what escaped from that room was even less than he knew. He left part of himself latched to you. (709)

In other words, what Voldemort "killed" when he struck down Harry was the part of his own soul that he had unintentionally left inside Harry the night that he killed James and

Lily Potter. Although the creation of Horcruxes is forbidden “dark” magic, it is this instilling of Voldemort’s soul into Harry’s body that ultimately saves him from the Dark Lord, and it gives us one final example of how magic intervenes to save Harry’s life throughout the series.

To reiterate, the essential result of this prolonging of Harry’s life through the intervention of the conventional fantasy trope of magic is that it allows Harry a continued space to develop a sense of self throughout the narrative. Without the conventions of fantasy in place, there is no guarantee that Harry would have ever moved beyond his abused, orphaned mentality and experienced the personal growth that he inevitably undergoes. In fact, Winnicott’s own studies on adoption and orphanhood tell us that if Harry had been reared until adulthood under the harsh treatment of the Dursleys, he would have no doubt remained emotionally stunted: “if a baby cannot be brought up by the real parents, then the next best thing is for that baby to be taken into a family and brought up as one of the family . . . the internal tendency towards development and the very complex emotional growth of each [child] require certain conditions . . . a child must be loved” (*The Child and the Outside World* 47). We need only look at the opening pages of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* to know that Harry was neither “loved” nor “brought up as one of the family.” However, because of Rowling’s invocation of fantasy, Harry does not have to suffer the arrested development that could have awaited him if left to the devices of a more realist narrative.

Additionally, the fact that Harry is repeatedly saved throughout the majority of the series by others and by sheer magical “accident” allows us to draw a sharp contrast between those instances and Harry’s final showdown with the Dark Lord. In this final

confrontation in which Harry saves not only his own life but the lives of all of his surviving friends and loved ones at Hogwarts, he demonstrates his level of maturity by manifesting the ultimate goal of psychosocial development: altruism, or the capacity to care for others.²⁴ Furthermore, the family unit that is created through Harry's marriage to Ginny Weasley shows us that he continues his own normative development long after the events at the conclusion of *The Deathly Hallows*, as Harry's "unwanted," orphan identity is sublimated by refiguring his family dynamic and by replacing it with the paternal role that Harry comes to occupy.

Aetonormativity and the Oedipal Conflict

Towards the conclusion of *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, Harry and Dumbledore have an in-depth conversation regarding the prophecy involving Harry and his nemesis, Lord Voldemort. In essence, Dumbledore recounts Harry's years at Hogwarts as he has witnessed them, giving excuses—most of which are related to Harry's youth—as to why Dumbledore never revealed the prophecy to Harry until this moment. In fact, the majority of the conversation seems to relate in some way or another to Harry's age. Regarding Harry's recent battle against Voldemort and his Death-Eaters at the Ministry of Magic, Dumbledore says, "you fought a man's fight" (837), and in speaking of the series of events during the previous year's Tri-Wizard Tournament, he tells Harry that he "once again met challenges even grown wizards have never faced" (838). Dumbledore's repeated reference to the adult-oriented trials and tribulations that Harry has gone through effects an aetonormative, or "adult-normative," orientation to

²⁴ See Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents* (pp. 24-25), where he discusses the necessary progression from egotism (or self-centeredness) to altruism. Anna Freud echoes her father's ideas in *Normality and Pathology in Childhood* when she asserts that the normative path of childhood development progresses "from the young child's egocentric view of the world and his fellow beings to empathy, mutuality, and companionship with his contemporaries" (64)

Harry's story. Relegating the things that Harry has done to the realm of the mature, "adult" world means that Harry has been forced to "grow up" prematurely in order to face these dangerous situations. As an orphan, Harry is unable to follow the same developmental path as children who possess the fundamental parental basis needed for normal psycho-development; this parental deficit explains, in part, why Harry is made to mature much faster than his peers, especially considering that he has had to learn several important life lessons for himself as he has grown throughout the course of the series.

This sort of hyper-development is much different from the typical narratological structure of the *bildungsroman*, or coming-of-age story, in which the character's maturation to adulthood throughout the course of the narrative is a given due to the personal growth of the protagonist. In other words, Harry is not allowed to mature in the same way as the characters in a typical coming-of-age story like Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* (1951), for example, where the protagonist Holden Caulfield undergoes a process of self-identity creation through association with peers and adults—much in the same way that adolescents in the real world typically mature and establish a sense of self. In contrast to the more natural form of maturation found in many realist children's novels, Harry is prematurely forced to take on adult roles on many occasions, and, moreover, these instances invariably involve some form of interaction with magic. I would argue, then, that these "adult" situations that Harry is confronted with come through the interruption of the fantastic into the narrative, forcing a maturity on Harry that allows him to develop more quickly than other children.

From an aetionormative standpoint, the tendency of the narrative to assign increasingly adult tasks to Harry comes through the repeated deaths of his various father-

figures throughout the series, deaths that are unwaveringly brought about by the fantasy convention of magic. This systematic destruction of Harry's paternal substitutes resounds with Oedipal implications, as Harry ultimately comes to take on the roles of the deceased following their respective deaths. From a Freudian perspective, the Oedipal struggles inherent in the child effect an antagonism for the father that borders on the murderous. According to Freud, as we mature, these destructive impulses are sublimated through one of two ways: repression of those desires or identification with the paternal figure. Kelly Noel-Smith, one of the first scholars to draw attention to the Oedipal implications of the Harry Potter series, discusses the concept in terms of the deaths of Harry's biological parents, James and Lily Potter: "unconsciously, the deaths of Harry's parents represent a wonderful fulfillment of Oedipal phantasies" (202). According to Noel-Smith, the way that this wish fulfillment happens is that Harry's father dies in order to "preserve the mother/baby dyad" (203), and the mother dies to protect the son, giving over her entire life and being for his sake. Therefore, for Harry, there is no need for the traditional conflict with the same-sex parent that generally arises during the Oedipal stages of development.

Nevertheless, what Noel-Smith does not discuss is the multitude of paternal substitutes that Harry encounters throughout the series. As Ronnie Carmieli notes, "Harry, as a child who lost his father at a very young age, is particularly dependent on 'strangers' to supply him with paternal figures. Many characters in the septology step up to this task, the most significant being Remus Lupin, Sirius Black, Albus Dumbledore, and Severus Snape" (12). Due to the abundance of strong, paternal substitutes for Harry's father throughout the series, I disagree with Noel-Smith when she asserts that: "the main

characters of the Harry Potter books then, allow the reader to enjoy a phantasy which denies the reality of the Oedipal configuration” (206). In fact, I would argue that the continual presence of paternal substitutes actually *allows* for the perpetuation of Harry’s Oedipal dilemma. The Oedipal situation itself arises when the child begins to recognize the mother as a separate and independent entity. The conflict inherent in the Oedipal struggle comes from the child’s concurrently recognizing the father as having had possession of the mother, something that the child—in its id-driven primal urges—wants solely to itself. Although Freud attributes this jealousy primarily to id-based sexual drives, such a configuration must work slightly differently in terms of paternal surrogates, as those surrogates (usually) have not sexually possessed the mother in the way that the biological father has. Harry’s Oedipal situation can be found in the idea that all of his paternal surrogates—Sirius Black, Remus Lupin, Albus Dumbledore, and Severus Snape—all possess years of intimate, personal memories of Lily that Harry can never hope to have. It is only natural, then, that the type of jealousy that arises from the typical Oedipal situation is accordingly transferred to Harry’s paternal surrogates in their “possession” of these memories of Lily. Again, in terms of resolving the Oedipal dilemma, Freud tells us that there are two options: repression, in which the negativity that stems from the child’s jealousy is buried deep in the unconscious, and identification, in which the child itself becomes increasingly identified with the same-sex parent—or, in Harry’s case, the same-sex parental surrogate.

However, Harry never really has to repress any potential unconscious jealousy, as the fantastic convention of magic repeatedly steps in to eliminate all of those paternal substitutes who possess a part of Lily that Harry can never hope to gain. Instead, through

their deaths, Harry undergoes the second—and, according to Freud, the normalizing, non-pathological—process of becoming increasingly identified with those paternal substitutes who die throughout the course of the series. From Harry’s first real confrontation with the death of a paternal substitute in *The Order of the Phoenix*—the murder of Sirius Black by his cousin Bellatrix LeStrange—to the death of Dumbledore in *The Half-Blood Prince*, and on to the subsequent demise of Remus Lupin and Severus Snape in *The Deathly Hallows*, the systematic eradication of Harry’s substitute father-figures ensures that he can no longer rely on them for protection and that he must assume the adult roles left vacant by their deaths. The way that Harry’s assumption of these adult roles fits into the concept of aetnormativity is that, by identifying with his paternal surrogates, he is concurrently identifying with the function of these male adults—the role of the father—thereby making adulthood itself the normative goal of the resolution of Harry’s Oedipal conflict.

Harry experiences the loss of a significant paternal substitute for the first time in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* with the death of his godfather Sirius Black. In the battle between the Order of the Phoenix and the Death-Eaters, Sirius engages with his cousin Bellatrix LeStrange. In the midst of their battle, Bellatrix fires a curse at Sirius, one that “hit him squarely on the chest” (805), forcing him to fall backwards through the Veil, a one-way portal between the land of the living and the land of the dead. Here, the magic from Bellatrix’s wand and the Veil (itself a magical device), ensures the destruction of one of Harry’s paternal substitutes—one of his most significant, in fact, since Dumbledore mentions that Sirius was “the closest thing to a parent that [Harry] has ever known” (824). Sirius’s death gives us an illustration of how magic—despite the

tendency to save Harry's own life—actually *causes* the death of his paternal surrogates, which is a trend that continues throughout the series.

This systematic eradication of Harry's Oedipal rivals continues in *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* with the death of Albus Dumbledore, the benevolent headmaster of Hogwarts. After returning from the cave in which Harry and Dumbledore retrieved what they believed to be one of Voldemort's Horcruxes, they are met by Draco Malfoy at the top of the astronomy tower. Weakened by the series of events in the cave, Dumbledore is disarmed by Draco, although the young boy cannot bring himself to kill the headmaster. Harry, having been bound by Dumbledore's spell, remains hidden one floor below while the next sequence of events takes place, ensuring that he cannot interfere with what is about to happen. Soon thereafter, Severus Snape appears, "rais[ing] his wand and point[ing] it directly at Dumbledore" (595). Snape fires a killing curse, blasting Dumbledore from the top of the tower to the ground below. Here, magic works in two ways to continue the elimination of Harry's paternal surrogates: the first, and most obvious, is the killing curse that Snape uses to take Dumbledore's life. The second is the binding spell that Dumbledore himself placed on Harry, ensuring that he would not interfere in Snape's killing of the headmaster.²⁵

The next step in the resolution of Harry's Oedipal conflict occurs in the final text in the series, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, with the death of Remus Lupin during the final all-out battle between Voldemort's Death-Eaters and the benevolent witches and wizards who oppose him. Although we are not privy to the specific circumstances surrounding Lupin's death, we can assume through the description of his

²⁵ We later learn in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* that Dumbledore foresaw the series of events that took place here at the astronomy tower, and made Snape agree to take his life when the time came. See *Deathly Hallows* 682-83.

body that is eventually laid out in the Great Hall at the end of the battle—“pale and still and peaceful-looking” (661)—that he more than likely met his end at the hands of Dolohov’s killing curse, a spell that leaves no visible marks on the body. Here, Lupin’s battle with Dolohov and his death at the hands of the Death-Eater’s killing curse enable the death of yet another of Harry’s paternal surrogates through the intervention of magic. Harry’s last remaining Oedipal rival and father-figure, Severus Snape, also meets a tragic end in this final book in the series when Voldemort decides to kill Snape in order to take full possession of the Elder Wand. However, Voldemort does not personally take Snape’s life. Rather, he has Nagini—his magical pet snake who is also a Horcrux—do the job for him: “[Snape’s face] whitened as his black eyes widened, as the snake’s fangs pierced his neck, as he failed to push the enchanted cage off himself, as his knees gave way and he fell to the floor” (656). Voldemort’s use of an enchanted serpent in taking the life of Harry’s last remaining father-figure gives us one final illustration of the ways that magic is used to perpetuate the aetionormative thrust of the Harry Potter series.

With all of his paternal surrogates (and Oedipal rivals) dead, Harry is able to assume the adult role that those deaths have been pushing him towards throughout the series. Accordingly, he does just that at the conclusion of the series, when he sacrifices himself in order to protect all of the witches and wizards at Hogwarts, taking over a protective role that began with his biological father and continued down through the years in the form of his paternal surrogates Sirius Black, Remus Lupin, Severus Snape, and Albus Dumbledore. Though Harry does not die from being hit by Voldemort’s curse, he does wake up in a strange liminal space that resembles King’s Cross Station, and it is here that he meets the ghost of Dumbledore, who confirms the adult role that Harry has

now assumed despite his literal child status: “Harry . . . you wonderful boy. You brave, brave *man*” (707, emphasis mine). Furthermore, when Harry returns to consciousness (and to the final battle at Hogwarts), he manifests this adult, protective role that he has now assumed by taking on Voldemort directly in order to avoid any more deaths resulting from this Second Wizarding War.

As Attebery notes, this type of comic resolution is a staple of the fantasy genre: “the characteristic structure of fantasy is comic. It begins with a problem and ends with resolution. Death, despair, horror, and betrayal may enter into fantasy, but they must not be the final word” (15). True to popular children’s fantasy form, Harry defeats the Dark Lord, good triumphs over evil, and order is restored. However, what is more psychologically important for Harry is that he takes the normalizing path in resolving his Oedipal conflict. From James Potter, to James’s closest friends Sirius Black and Remus Lupin, to Lily Potter’s childhood friend Severus Snape, and finally on to Albus Dumbledore, the benevolent headmaster who has watched over Harry for nearly all of his life, all of Harry’s potential Oedipal rivals have served the role of protector. Due to the intervention of fantasy convention, Harry never has to repress any potential Oedipal jealousy against his paternal surrogates because they all die at the hands of some form of malevolent magic. Instead, by becoming the collective protector of all the students at Hogwarts, Harry *identifies* with his paternal surrogates, and it is this identification with the adult males in his life that allows for the successful resolution of the Oedipal dilemma throughout this decidedly aetnormative series. Furthermore, on an unconscious level, this identification with his paternal surrogates is a part of the crucial process of *integration* that Erikson asserts is vital to the establishment of identity and the avoidance

of role confusion (261).²⁶ Much like Jones in *Charmed Life* and Dahl in *James and the Giant Peach*, Rowling has given us—through the use of fantasy conventions—an external manifestation of inner psychological processes in the Harry Potter series. In this case, Harry’s ultimate magical confrontation with Voldemort and his decision to protect those he cares about shows us that he has successfully matured in terms of normative Freudian paternal identification and in terms of Erikson’s ideas of integration.

The Carnavalesque and the Loss of Innocence

One of the more prominent qualities of Mikhail Bakhtin’s concept of the “carnavalesque” is the veritable role-reversal in terms of traditional power dynamics. The most obvious way that the carnivalesque typically manifests in works written for children is that the child protagonists are often empowered to accomplish tasks that adults are incapable of, thereby reversing the traditional power dynamic between adult and child. In Bakhtinian terms, the core of the carnivalesque lies in its subversive nature.²⁷ Of course, subversion itself has long been a dominant trait of the fantasy genre. In fact, one of the most important theoretical texts on fantasy in the late twentieth century is Rosemary Jackson’s *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*, the title of which serves to illustrate just how important the subversive element is to the fantasy genre. In terms of analyzing the necessary psychological development of orphan Harry throughout the series, we can observe that several ascertainable illustrations of his maturation occur through the subversive quality of fantasy and its tendency towards the carnivalesque reversal of traditional power dynamics. The first instance occurs towards the end of the fourth book

²⁶ See Erikson’s discussion of his fifth stage of the “Ages of Man”—“Identity vs. Role Confusion”—in *Childhood and Society*, pp. 261-62.

²⁷ See also Alison Lurie’s *Don’t Tell the Grown-Ups: The Subversive Power of Children’s Literature* (1990) for an in-depth discussion of the subversive nature of narratives written for children.

in the series, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, when Harry encounters his nemesis Lord Voldemort. During this confrontation in the graveyard at the end of *The Goblet of Fire*, Harry faces Voldemort head on and thus displays the sort of power and agency inherent in the development of an autonomous sense of self. Whereas most of the adult wizards in the series fear to even speak his name, Harry faces his nemesis in such a way that makes even Voldemort himself comment on the act: “And now you face me, *like a man* . . . straight-backed and proud, the way your father died” (660, emphasis mine). As I have already pointed out in my discussion of the ways that magic intervenes to save Harry’s life in this scene, Harry not only faces Voldemort, but he does much more: he engages the Dark Lord in a magical duel, thwarts his attempts to destroy Harry, and escapes with his life intact. Harry confronts and defeats Voldemort on multiple occasions, with this graveyard encounter being one of the most prominent. This empowerment of the child over and against the adults in the narrative demonstrates a diminishing of the type of helplessness that is a large part of popular notions of childhood “innocence.” Critic M. Katherine Grimes has also noted the lessening of Harry’s “innocence” through his encounters in the graveyard: “young Harry loses any illusion that he will emerge unscathed by his horrible grand adventures when his friend Cedric Diggory dies before his eyes. If Harry had not really understood the power of evil before, he does after this point, and his innocence is lost” (104). Though Grimes is clearly working with a general definition of childhood “innocence” that is centered on the supposed naïveté of the child, I would add to this the idea that this sense of lost innocence—which is really little more than the general sense of worldly ignorance attributed to children—is just one example of how Harry continues to mature throughout the series. Moreover, it is through Harry’s use

of magic that he is able to stand against the Dark Lord in this fourth book of the series. It is through magic (as fantasy convention) that Harry continues to mature, providing us yet another illustration of how those formulaic fantasy conventions continue to work as a narrative mode that allows Harry to resolve the psycho-developmental struggles of the orphan figure in the Harry Potter series.

The second illustration of Harry's assumption of agency and power comes during the fifth text in the series, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, in Harry's assumption of a leadership role in "Dumbledore's Army," the codename for a group of Harry's friends and schoolmates that assembles regularly in the mystical Room of Requirement in order to learn to fight dark magic. The most compelling reason that Harry's leadership role in Dumbledore's Army exudes a definitive level of maturation is that Harry teaches his classmates the kind of defensive magic whose instruction has been (at this point in time) forbidden by the governing body of the adult wizarding community, the Ministry of Magic. As opposed to being taught a realistic approach to defending themselves against potential enemies, Harry and his classmates have been limited to a non-practical Defense Against the Dark Arts lesson-plan, and Dolores Umbridge, their instructor in this watered-down version of the class that they have taken for the past four years, explains: "it is the view of the Ministry that a theoretical knowledge will be more than sufficient [for the purposes of this class]" (243). However, Harry and his friends are not content with a simple theoretical knowledge of magical defense. Following the events of the previous year during the Tri-Wizard tournament—events that included the return of the evil Lord Voldemort, they are justifiably desperate for knowledge that will enable them to realistically defend themselves against the dark wizards who are slowly

resurfacing. When the students find the mystical Room of Requirement, a space that allows them to practice defensive spells without fear of repercussion from the restrictive Ministry, Hermione suggests that the group of students elect a leader for their secret practice sessions. When Cho Chang, one of the students in the group, asserts that Harry should be the group leader, Hermione responds with: “Yes, but I think we ought to vote on it properly [. . .] it makes it formal and gives him authority” (391). Harry is unanimously elected leader, and, now imbued with the “authority” given to him by the newly-formed Dumbledore’s Army—a group whose very existence relies on the intervention of magic (in this case, the mystical Room of Requirement)—Harry instructs the group on the practical application of defensive magic whose teaching has been restricted by the Ministry. Berk discusses the beneficial role of taking on tasks like this when she asserts that: “extracurricular activities at school . . . teach important social skills, such as cooperation, leadership, and contributing to others’ welfare. As a result, participants gain in self-esteem, responsibility, and community involvement” (*Child Development* 11). The leadership that Harry demonstrates in taking on the responsibility of “Dumbledore’s Army” illustrates once again how Harry’s sense of self continues to develop throughout the series.

The final example of Harry’s empowerment and continued psychological development that I want to draw attention to occurs in the penultimate chapter of the final book in the series, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. While I have already mentioned the final confrontation between Harry and Lord Voldemort in my discussion of the ways that magic intervenes to save Harry’s life, I now want to revisit this climactic duel in order to show how it also provides evidence of the power and authority that Harry

assumes in his transition from powerless, unwanted orphan to young adult leader. Earlier in this final text in the series, Remus Lupin chastises Harry for not using the killing curse against the Death-Eaters who were pursuing them: “Harry, the time for disarming is past! These people are trying to capture and kill you! At least stun if you aren’t prepared to kill!” (64). Harry, refusing to be swayed by the increasing pressure to kill his enemies, firmly states: “I won’t blast people out of my way just because they’re there [. . .] that’s Voldemort’s job” (65). Harry’s refusal to bend to this increasing pressure attests to the empowerment and agency that he possesses in this final text of the series, and this demonstration of Harry’s power and agency extends into the final confrontation with Lord Voldemort. In this final clash between the benevolent child wizard and the evil Dark Lord, Voldemort aims a killing curse at Harry, and Harry responds with yet another disarming curse, causing the evil wizard’s deadly curse to rebound and destroy him, ridding the wizarding world of the Dark Lord for good. Even under the imminent threat of death, Harry refuses to compromise his principles by using a killing curse, even against the person who had taken the lives of both of Harry’s parents—not to mention a host of Harry’s friends and loved ones. The power that Harry is imbued with in this scene—power that allows him to accomplish what every other benevolent *adult* wizard in the series never could—gives us yet another example of Harry’s maturation, offering us yet another example of how magic (as fantasy convention) intervenes in order to allow the orphan child to develop despite the absence of crucial parental influence.

Neither Can Live While the *Other* Survives

In terms of its treatment of the orphan figure, one of the most interesting features of the Harry Potter series is the juxtaposition of Harry and his archenemy, the evil Lord

Voldemort. Despite standing at nearly polar opposites of the moral spectrum, the two characters are, in fact, extremely similar. Tom Riddle, the spectral embodiment of Voldemort's former self, mentions this similarity explicitly in *The Chamber of Secrets*: "There are strange likenesses between us, after all. Even you must have noticed. Both half-bloods, orphans, raised by Muggles. Probably the only two Parselmouths to come to Hogwarts since the great Slytherin himself. We even look something alike" (317). For the purposes of this study, what is particularly interesting is that, through its treatment of the two most prominent orphan figures in the texts, the series gives us two very different paths for the orphan child. On one hand, we have Harry, the successfully individuated family man; on the other hand, there is Voldemort, the orphan who wholly rejects the normative path towards adulthood and ultimately dies in open rebellion against the norms of his own society. The narrative of the series seems to weigh the outcome of this struggle of good versus evil on the prophecy that Sybil Trelawney passed to Dumbledore, a prophecy that contains the following line: "either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives" (*Order of the Phoenix* 841). Since, according to the prophecy, one of the two orphans must die, it is fitting in a text written for children that "good" wins and that the "evil" that Lord Voldemort represents is ultimately vanquished. However, I would offer a different reading of the ending of the series—one that goes beyond the basic narratological tropes inherent in the genre of children's literature.

In light of my overarching argument—that fantasy orphan narratives like the Harry Potter series resolve psycho-developmental struggles for their protagonists, one could make the case that the reason that Harry lives and Voldemort dies is that Harry

embodies the successful resolution of those developmental issues, whereas Voldemort embodies both the potential chaos that can issue from those unresolved anxieties as well as the dark side of the pathological sense of self that is created during the failure to successfully negotiate crucial psycho-developmental stages. Carmeli claims that, in Voldemort's case, "the son himself is trying to become omnipotent, while social law does not apply to him. He sees his father as an impotent Muggle, and cannot accept his mother's choice of his father over him. This is why he does not resolve his Oedipus complex at all, and cannot internalize norms of social conduct" (14-15). Although Carmeli does not push his claim beyond this brief observation, I would argue that it is Voldemort's inability to resolve his Oedipal situation and other similar developmental issues that dictates his ultimate demise, even more imperatively than the idea that he is "evil." In other words, even though the two orphans are remarkably similar, Harry becomes the vehicle for the successful resolution of childhood developmental stages for the orphan figure in the absence of crucial parental influence, whereas Voldemort comes to embody all of the unwanted, pathological possibilities that can arise from the unsuccessful resolution of those psycho-developmental issues. The Dark Lord is, undoubtedly, the "other" to the "self" that is created through the creation of Harry's own identity, a successfully individuated personality that illustrates the success of Harry's resolving his own developmental struggles by allowing him to become the benevolent, adult patriarch who has been integrated into wizarding society. In fact, Colin Manlove, in his *The Order of Harry Potter* (2010), asserts that: "Voldemort's growth is in constant contrast to Harry's, for he spends almost the entire series trying to get back what he was [while] Harry's progress is partly that of a boy towards adulthood, partly an increase in

self-knowledge, and partly a development in moral conduct” (n.p.). A solid recognition of this ultimate difference between Harry and Voldemort is fundamental to understanding what is at stake in these orphan fantasy narratives. In other words, these narratives present us with an inherently tragic situation in the form of the orphan protagonist; as I have been arguing thus far, the conventions of fantasy intervene to ensure the orphan’s normative psychological development in the absence of direct parental influence. In the Harry Potter series, Voldemort explicitly represents what an orphan character that does not develop normally would look like and instead provides us with a pathological, murderous, self-absorbed tyrant who could not possibly fulfill the comic function of the children’s fantasy narrative. In contrast to Harry, who assimilates the positive personality traits of his parental surrogates throughout the series and forms a coherent sense of self, Voldemort literally fractures his own “self” in his creation of the Horcruxes. By doing so, Voldemort gives us an explicit example of the destructive potential of the orphan figure and shows us why it is all the more imperative that orphans themselves find some way to resolve issues of childhood development. In Rowling’s case, she invokes the fantastic to effect such a resolution for Harry; however, without the fantastic in place, Harry could just as easily become yet another “Voldemort,” or eventual pathological adult.

Phantasy and the Trauma Narrative

Although Rowling’s entire series centers on an orphan character, one might wonder why the series itself does little to nothing with the idea of the *realities* of orphanhood. While some may dismiss this exclusion of social realities to the inherent fantasy of Rowling’s series, we must remember that although Harry’s narrative is indeed a fantasy, the psychological impact of the death of his parents and Harry’s inherent

orphanhood are very *real* issues. Nevertheless, Kidd posits this aversion to social reflection as a typical characteristic of certain types trauma writing, or what he calls the “children’s literature of atrocity,” as these narratives tend to “turn away from rather than confront the difficulties of [their] subject matter, opting for simplistic narratives of character empowerment adopted from self-help literature” (*Freud in Oz* 185). As we have seen in the Harry Potter series, such a straightforward narrative can indeed be useful in terms of allowing the orphan protagonist to process trauma through his or her own empowering experiences. However, Harry’s development throughout the series is hardly reflective of “self-help” literature, as he almost always receives some sort of help through the intervention of fantasy conventions and only rarely through his own actions.

One of Freud’s earlier ideas in relation to dream interpretation is the notion of “phantasy,” or various forms of imaginative, unconscious wish-fulfillment. Unlike Freud, however, Melanie Klein saw “phantasies” as unconscious workings of the mind during infancy; for Klein, these “infantile feelings and phantasies leave, as it were, their imprints on the mind, imprints that do not fade away but get stored up, remain active, and exert a continuous and powerful influence on the emotional and intellectual life of the individual” (290). Klein’s ideas on phantasy derive almost entirely from her work with children, whereas Freud was more interested in the effects of phantasy on adults. Considering the wish-fulfilling aspect of the idea of phantasy, it is no wonder that contemporary fantasy fiction—itsself a creative manifestation of phantasy which is often confused with its psychological counterpart—is often dismissed as escapist. However, as Kidd notes in his discussion of trauma narratives, even creative phantasies can have beneficial effects in terms of allowing child readers to process traumatic events. While

this study does not consider the effects of these stories on their child-readers, it is certainly possible that the sort of simplistic, aversive, character-empowering trauma narrative that Kidd discusses can create dangerous phantasies of a society that, while certainly affected by war, remains psychologically and socially sound. In terms of post-war culture, this sort of ego-bolstering through shared phantasy can serve the purpose of reinforcing the cultural ego, thereby creating a simplistic narrative of the resolution of the after-effects of war that is simply not true to life. However, in terms of socio-cultural and national identity, perhaps the sort of phantasy that is created through post-war children's narratives like Rowling's series is not necessarily detrimental. In other words, while Harry's development of a sense of self and creation of a new family unit at the end of the series does seem to mirror the "recovery" inherent in trauma work, the transformation of the orphan character—the "outsider" in relation to the core concept of family—concurrently reaffirms the importance of the ideals of family, ideals which are central to the national identity of family-based, Anglo-American cultures. Perhaps more importantly, Harry reaches adulthood and completes the intrinsic goal of the *bildungsroman*; from a socio-cultural perspective, Harry's maturation is fundamental to the success of the narrative since, as Roberta Trites asserts, "adolescent literature is at its heart a romantic literature because so many of us—authors, critics, teachers, teenagers—need to believe in the possibility of adolescent growth" (15).

Conclusion

To reiterate one of my central arguments in this chapter, J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter series is, among other things, a seven-part narrative about the physical and emotional after-effects of war. From the outset, readers are confronted with a young

orphan whose parents sacrificed themselves during the first large-scale conflict between benevolent wizards and their malevolent counterparts, the Death-Eaters. Moreover, the entire series continues to deal with the past, present, and future repercussions of war throughout. The nomenclature behind the central struggles of the book—the First and Second Wizarding Wars—likely evokes the British experience of the First and Second World Wars in any reader who is familiar with this history and who is subsequently confronted with the war-time experiences of the text.

In “Storying War: A Capsule Overview,” Mitzi Myers asserts that children’s literature centered around the theme of war “coincides with accelerating late-twentieth century violence and reflects adult preoccupations with human evil: all forms of moral, psychological, and material destruction; past and present genocides, from the Holocaust . . . to the ever-present possibility of nuclear disaster” (328). For Anglo-American cultures, these anxieties lie not only in the fear of war-time devastation, but also in confronting the fragility of certain socio-cultural ideals that war can lay bare. As James Dawes claims in his illuminating study on war and literature, *The Language of War* (2002), “violence achieves bare truth negatively, by shattering the cherished fictions . . . of national purpose, history, and identity” (131). In post-war Anglo-American societies, the nuclear family idealism that serves as the foundation of those cultures is immediately disrupted when faced with war’s capacity to figuratively or even literally tear the family asunder through psychological trauma, physical absence, and death. In children’s fiction, these anxieties are given voice by the orphan figure, as its presence exposes the frailty of the nuclear family unit and the tenuous foundation of its underlying idealism. The recognition of the fragile nature of the family makes the orphan figure particularly

worrisome, as its presence evokes socio-cultural anxieties surrounding not only personal identity but also the national identity of a given culture. As Erik Erikson reminds us, “nations, as well as individuals, are not only defined by their highest point of civilized achievement, but also by the weakest one in their collective identity” (*Childhood and Society* 284). By creating a narrative of familial re-constitution that relies heavily on the conventions of fantasy, Rowling has also effectively created a socio-cultural “phantasy” that unconsciously bolsters the self-image of a national community. Whether this potentially bibliotherapeutic bolstering of the adult cultural ego works for the betterment or the detriment of Anglo-American society is, perhaps, a question best left for proper psychoanalysts or historians. What is certain, however, is that Rowling’s series, by focusing its narrative through the eyes of the orphan, facilitates the processing of the childhood developmental struggles of its orphan protagonist through the fantasy convention of magic, and the trauma inherent in the series makes the comic ending that is assured through the intervention of fantasy all the more crucial .

CHAPTER IV
THE FAMILY ROMANCE IN PHILIP PULLMAN'S
HIS DARK MATERIALS

Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials series (1995-2000)—comprised mainly of *Northern Lights* (or *The Golden Compass* in the U.S.), *The Subtle Knife*, and *The Amber Spyglass*²⁸—is a highly controversial children's fantasy series. Despite the title of his second book in the series, Pullman's sharp, anti-religious stance throughout the trilogy is anything but subtle, and his contentious position has certainly not gone unnoticed by conservatives who attack the series as deliberately inflammatory, denigrating to organized religion, and even downright offensive in its portrayal of the literal death of God. Regardless of some of the more pointedly conservative diatribes that have been leveled against Pullman outside of academia, there is a strong inclination in scholarly criticism to view Pullman's work in the context of other canonical British writers, particularly John Milton and C.S. Lewis. Perhaps this tendency stems from Pullman's own repeated references to Milton and Lewis in interviews and in his own essays on writing the His Dark Materials trilogy.²⁹

One of the two most dominant strains of criticism on Pullman's *His Dark Materials* series places the series in relation to Milton's biblically-based epic *Paradise Lost* (1667). This tendency to compare Pullman's work with Milton's comes most clearly

²⁸ These three novels form the main arc of the *His Dark Materials* series. However, two novellas—*Lyra's Oxford* and *Once Upon a Time in the North*—which take place at varying times during the main story arc have been published since the release of *The Amber Spyglass*. Furthermore, a third post-trilogy installment—tentatively titled *The Book of Dust*—is scheduled to be released sometime in the year 2016.

²⁹ See Pullman's "Voluntary Service" (2002), "All around You Is Silence" (2002), "Lost the Plot" (2003), and "Theater—The True Key Stage" (2004), all in *The Guardian*.

from the fact that Pullman obviously derived the title of his popular fantasy series from a line found in the second book of Milton's epic, which reads:

Into this wilde Abyss,
 The Womb of nature and perhaps her Grave,
 Of neither Sea, nor Shore, nor Air, nor Fire,
 But all these in their pregnant causes mixt
 Confusedly, and which thus must ever fight,
 Unless th' Almighty Maker them ordain
His dark materials to create more Worlds,
 Into this wilde Abyss the warie fiend
 Stood on the brink of Hell and look'd a while,
 Pondering his Voyage. (2:910-919, emphasis mine)

In addition to writing an introduction to *Paradise Lost* for Oxford's World Classics (2005), Pullman originally undertook the writing of the trilogy as a conscious attempt to emulate Milton. In fact, in discussing the prospective series with his publisher, one of the first things that Pullman said was: "Well, what I'd really like to write is *Paradise Lost* for teenagers in three volumes" (Parsons and Nicholson 126). The debt that Pullman owes to Milton has not been lost on literary critics. In fact, several studies have been devoted to the ways in which Pullman adheres to (and veers away from) Milton's original biblical epic.³⁰ Nevertheless, Milton-related criticism on *His Dark Materials* is only one of two

³⁰ See, for instance, Karen D. Robinson's "His Dark Materials: A Look into Pullman's Interpretation of *Paradise Lost*," Burton Hatlen's "Pullman's His Dark Materials: A Challenge to the Fantasies of J. R. R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis, with an Epilogue on Pullman's Neo-Romantic Reading of *Paradise Lost*," Carole Scott's "Pullman's Enigmatic Ontology : Revamping Old Traditions in *His Dark Materials*," Anna Gurley's "Chaos and Dust: The Origins of Evil in Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Pullman's His Dark Materials Trilogy," Rachel Falconer's "Recasting John Milton's *Paradise Lost*: Intertextuality, Storytelling, and Music," Stephen Burt's "Fighting Since Time Began: Milton and Satan in Philip Pullman's His Dark

prevailing approaches to the trilogy, the other dominant approach being critical responses to Pullman's stance on the fantasy genre.

While Pullman's Miltonian influence is apparent in his popular children's fantasy series, what several other critics (myself included) find much more interesting are not his views on the supposed ills of organized religion but his position on the genre of fantasy. During much of the initial surge in popularity of Pullman's series, he adamantly maintained a strange position on his own writing, asserting that he considered himself a "realist" as opposed to a fantasy writer, despite his clear use of fantasy conventions throughout the narrative of *His Dark Materials*. With witches, harpies, anthropomorphic armored bears, angels, and "daemons," Pullman's *His Dark Materials* series is replete with characters that embody conventions of the fantasy genre. Nevertheless, Pullman himself maintains that he works within the confines of the realist narrative, claiming that he merely "uses the apparatus of fantasy to say something that [he] thinks is true about human psychology and about the way we grow up and about the difference between innocence and experience and so on" (Welch, "Philip Pullman"). Perhaps this aversion to the fantasy genre stems from Pullman's own disdain for other popular children's fantasy writers like J. R. R. Tolkien and (particularly) C.S. Lewis, whose brand of fantasy Pullman has publicly denounced on several occasions as "closed," "solipsistic," and "escapist," to say nothing of the more incendiary comments leveled against Lewis's Christian-based fantasy by Pullman.³¹ Despite Pullman's distaste for being labeled as a

Materials,'" William Oram's "Pullman's Matter: Lucretius and Milton in *His Dark Materials*," and Lauren Shohet's "His Dark Materials, Paradise Lost, and the Common Reader."

³¹ As critic Michael Ward notes in his essay on Pullman and Lewis, "Pullman despises the Narnia Chronicles. 'Grotesque', 'disgusting', 'ugly', 'poisonous', 'nauseating' are just some of the adjectives he has applied to the Narnia septet" ("Pullman's Attack on Narnia: A Defense" n.p.). Ward also goes on to discuss Pullman's further criticisms of the Narnia series as racist, sexist, and "life-hating."

fantasy writer, there is little doubt that he belongs to that list of popular children's writers who work within the fantasy vein.

As a matter of fact, there have been several critical studies dedicated to showing just how much Pullman's trilogy belongs to the category of children's fantasy fiction. For instance, Marek Oziewicz and Daniels Hade's "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell? Philip Pullman, C.S. Lewis, and the Fantasy Tradition," argues that, despite Pullman's rather public opposition to the fantasies of Tolkien and Lewis, he belongs more to that tradition than he is willing to admit. In fact, Oziewicz and Hade spend the bulk of their study drawing explicit parallels between Pullman's *His Dark Materials* and Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia*, ultimately showing Lewis's decided influence on Pullman's anti-religious children's fantasy narrative. Furthermore, in Shelley King's "'All Wound Up': Pullman's Marvelous/Uncanny Clockwork," King discusses the indispensable role that Pullman's particular use of the fantasy mode plays in his creative work. Though she spends the majority of her analysis discussing Pullman's *Clockwork, or All Wound Up* (1996),³² she also spends a good deal of time discussing *His Dark Materials*, ultimately reconciling Pullman's adamancy about the realism of his work with his undeniable use of the fantastic by asserting that "as *His Dark Materials* demonstrates, Pullman shares this tendency to ground fantasy in the real, to combine history with science and technology in the service of the marvelous" (69). In another take on Pullman's use of fantasy conventions, Kristine Moruzi's "Missed Opportunities: The Subordination of Children in Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*" argues that Pullman's particular blend of

³²*Clockwork* is a modern fairy tale that weaves together the stories of Karl, a clockmaker's apprentice, and Fritz, a budding storyteller, as they both struggle to fulfill the functions of their occupations and avoid utter failure. Pullman relies heavily on the intrusion of the fantastic in the story to further both Karl and Fritz's goals, particularly when one of Fritz's characters comes to life and strikes a Faust-like bargain with Karl.

children's literature and fantasy ultimately "fails to take advantage of the freedoms these two genres provide and reinforces current conceptions of children and their role in society" (55). While I will return to this idea of what the trilogy does with childhood developmental processes and the fantasy genre later in this chapter, I first want to point to one last article that discusses Pullman's use of the fantasy narrative: Peter Hitchens's "A Labour for Loathing: Peter Hitchens on the Worship of Philip Pullman, Who Has Set Out to Destroy Narnia." While Hitchens starts out by berating Pullman for his unrelenting position as "anti-Lewis," he echoes critics like Oziewicz and Hade by drawing numerous parallels between Lewis and Pullman, ultimately asserting that, "In an age where most stories written for grown-ups are about nothing very much at all, Lewis and Pullman have addressed the great issues of this time and all time" (19).

While many critics have dedicated time and research to illustrating the ways in which Pullman either adheres to or subverts the fantasy genre that he publicly opposes, the psychology inherent in Pullman's series is something that is rarely explored in existing criticism on *His Dark Materials*. In terms of addressing this lack of psychoanalytic focus, I am interested in concentrating on something that has not yet been discussed in critical studies of *His Dark Materials*. This analysis is specifically concerned with the ways in which Lyra Belacqua and Will Parry embody the figure of the "virtual orphan," or the child whose parents are technically living, yet absent—a fact which places the child on a parallel psychological level with actual orphans, as both "virtual" and actual orphans lack the fundamental parental basis for normalizing childhood development. Through this analysis of the virtual orphan in *His Dark Materials*, I hope to show how childhood psycho-developmental struggles are portrayed in the first and

second book of the series and how the trilogy offers its virtual orphan protagonists the opportunity to process these crucial developmental struggles by taking them through the necessary stages via fantasy genre conventions, focusing especially on the issue of the “family romance.” It is in the interest of adding to existing discussions of orphanhood in children’s literature—seen here in Pullman’s work in the unconventional form of the “virtual orphan”—that my own analysis of *His Dark Materials* begins.

His Dark Materials and the “Virtual Orphan”

In Lydia Murdoch’s *Imagined Orphans: Poor Families, Child Welfare, and Contested Citizenship in London* (2006), she discusses the role of the orphan in the prevailing socio-cultural discourse of Victorian England, pointing to the ways that the figure of the orphan was used to further issues of social reform. Murdoch tells us that “reformers continued to assert that poor children needed to be separated from their impoverished parents in order to be fashioned into citizens” (7) and that, in the predominant discourse of child social welfare that was being spread across nineteenth-century England, “the children’s parents were either completely absent from these narratives or restricted to the role of fiendish villains” (9). What this sort of malevolent characterization means is that, in order to emphasize the need for child welfare reform, the figure of the child orphan was used to evoke sympathy in the general public and that—in many cases—children whose parents were very much alive and well were dishonestly depicted as “orphans” in order to garner support for a particular cause. While some of those who used this misleading orphan narrative were genuinely concerned for the cause of child welfare, the vast majority of those who took advantage of these orphan stories simply used the poverty-stricken children at the center of these tales in order to

glean money from sympathizers. Ultimately, what these feigned reformers sought to do was to create a sympathetic figure—an “imagined” orphan, as Murdoch would put it—in order to spin a pitiable tale that would enable them to collect money for a cause, most of which would go to the collector’s pocket as opposed to the cause’s treasury.

Murdoch goes on to talk about how the figure of the “imagined orphan” changes in the twentieth century with the social repercussions of the First and Second World War, both of which left thousands of real-life orphans in their wake. Following on the heels of these worldwide conflicts, the narrative of the orphan persisted in socio-cultural discourse, though with far less insidious motivations. In other words, Murdoch claims that in the wake of these devastating historical events, Anglo-American society began to adopt a genuine, altruistic concern for the orphan and for child social reform in general. Although Murdoch herself does not make this connection, I would argue that her articulation of the “imagined orphan” has historical implications for the current embodiment of what is now known more popularly in the discourse of child welfare as the “virtual orphan.” In the simplest terms, the “virtual orphan” is a child whose parents are living yet absent. However, in the context of current debates regarding child welfare, “virtual orphans” can also be children who live with parents who are physically and emotionally unavailable, thus rendering those children responsible for their own psychological and physical upbringing.

In terms of psychoanalysis, some argue that it is because of this focus on the psychology involved in the construction of the orphan figure that we even have this notion of the “virtual orphan” to begin with. Even before Murdoch’s fascinating study on orphans in Victorian culture, writer and psychologist Eileen Simpson published her own

study on the intersections of orphan portrayals in both actual social discourse and in popular literature in her fascinating study, *Orphans: Real and Imaginary* (1987). According to Simpson, the reality of orphanhood takes on metaphorical connotations in the wake of two important, late twentieth-century socio-cultural phenomena: the drop in actual rates of orphanhood and the steadily increasing influence of psychoanalysis. In other words, Simpson asserts that—in addition to the steady decline of literal orphans in Anglo-American society—the increasing attention to child-rearing that came in the wake of the boom of childhood development theory also brought with it a sort of hyper-awareness of the physical and emotional presence of parental figures and how the absence of parents influences the psychological development of children. For those children who grow up with parents either physically or emotionally absent, Simpson contends that they eventually come to be considered what she calls “psychic orphans,” although in contemporary discourse involving child welfare they are known today as “virtual orphans.”³³ Undoubtedly, the increased attention to child welfare has brought more attention to this figure of the “virtual orphan,” and its presence resonates even in the fiction that Anglo-American society produces and consumes.

In Pullman’s *His Dark Materials* series, both main characters—Lyra Belacqua and Will Parry—serve as poignant examples of this “virtual orphan” figure. Throughout nearly half of *Northern Lights*, the reader is given the impression that Lyra herself is an orphan who had been left in the care of the headmaster at Jordan College by her uncle, Lord Asriel. It is not until much later in the text, that she discovers that Lord

³³ The World Orphans Organization, a Christian-based group dedicated to the cause of assisting orphans worldwide, discusses the phenomenon of the “virtual orphan” at length in terms of the current need for orphan aid. <www.worldorphans.org> Also, the Hope House group outlines the plight of the “virtual orphan” on their own website: <<http://hopehousehouston.org/virtual-orphans/>>.

Asriel—the man she has always been told is her uncle—is actually her father and that the woman she is seeking refuge from, Mrs. Coulter, is her mother. At the beginning of the series, Lyra is twelve years old and has grown up without the direct parental influence of either her mother or her father. Furthermore, throughout her early childhood she had always been led to believe that she was a literal orphan, a fact which positions her squarely in the role of the “virtual orphan” throughout most of *Northern Lights*. Although Lyra later confronts both adults with the new knowledge of her parentage, neither parent changes his or her general attitude towards their daughter, and Lyra is left psychologically in the very same position she was in at the beginning of the series, thus perpetuating her status as a “virtual orphan.”

In terms of the representation of the “virtual orphan” in *His Dark Materials*, we must also remember that Will Parry—the protagonist of *The Subtle Knife*, the second novel in the series—also serves as an embodiment of that figure. We learn early on in *The Subtle Knife* that Will’s father disappeared before he was born. Furthermore, due to her husband’s sudden disappearance, Will’s mother quickly deteriorated psychologically, causing Will to have to care for her throughout his own childhood. The combination of his father’s physical absence and his mother’s mental and emotional absence places Will squarely within the role of the “virtual orphan,” as he has neither mother nor father to care for him during his childhood. By recognizing Lyra and Will as “virtual orphans,” we are able to explore their function as embodiments of this particular orphan figure within the context of the *His Dark Materials* series. What follows is an analysis of how the “virtual orphan” evokes issues involving the “family romance” and how the formulaic

conventions of fantasy enable the genre's use as a mode for the resolution of that childhood developmental stage.

Northern Lights and Lyra's Family Romance

In the beginning of the first text in the series, *Northern Lights*,³⁴ readers are introduced to Lyra Belacqua—a young (apparently orphaned) girl who has spent the majority of her childhood being raised by the host of quirky academics who surround her at Jordan College on the grounds of an alternate-world Oxford University. Before leaving the College with Mrs. Coulter, Lyra is given an “alethiometer” by the Master at Jordan. The alethiometer is an enchanted device that can give its user the answer to any query if the user has the skill to read the device correctly. Lyra soon grows tired of Mrs. Coulter's somewhat abusive attempts to reform her, and she and her daemon Pantalaimon escape from Mrs. Coulter's home and seek refuge with the Gyptians, a nomadic tribe of people whom Lyra later discovers are secretly planning to invade the headquarters of the General Oblation Board in order to ascertain what it is that they do to the children that they have been systematically kidnapping for months. From here, Lyra travels to Bolvangar where she is taken hostage by the General Oblation Board and where she learns about the horrifying process of *intercision*, or the means by which members of the Board sever a child from its daemon. Soon after escaping Bolvangar, Lyra discovers that her father is being held at Svalbard by a group of *panserbjorne*, or armored bears. Lyra and her friend Roger are eventually taken to her father, Lord Asriel. To Lyra's dismay and horror, her father had been plotting their arrival the entire time and, at the first opportunity, he kidnaps Roger and performs his own fatal version of intercision on the

³⁴Note: Throughout this chapter, I will be referring to the first book in the series using its original, British title, *Northern Lights*.

young boy, killing Roger and allowing a dimensional portal to open. The text concludes with Lyra and Pantalaimon following Lord Asriel through the portal into an unknown dimension.

Though Lyra's adventures throughout this first installment of the series are extensive and life-altering, the text gives us little doubt from the outset that Lyra embodies the figure of the virtual orphan from its description of her upbringing at the hands of the scholars at Jordan College: "they were men who had been around her all her life, taught her, chastised her, consoled her, given her little presents, chased her away from the fruit trees in the garden; they were all she had for a family. They might have even felt like a family, *if she knew what a family was*" (17, emphasis mine). Sadly for Lyra, she does not know what a family is, having been abandoned by both of her parents at a young age. Even after she meets her biological mother Mrs. Coulter, she still never gets to experience the feeling of family that she longs for. To her, Lord Asriel is still her perpetually absent "uncle," and Mrs. Coulter is no more than a seemingly benevolent albeit slightly suspicious woman who takes Lyra under her wing. Because of her ignorance as to the true nature of her biological parents, Lyra initially imagines scenarios in which she does, in fact, possess a family and is able to experience the parental attention that she longs for. For example, after Mrs. Coulter takes Lyra away from Jordan College and moves the young girl into her home, we learn that Lyra harbors secret wishes that she and Mrs. Coulter will one day go north and "meet Lord Asriel [...and] perhaps he and Mrs. Coulter would fall in love, and they would get married and adopt Lyra" (75).

However, the two people that she fantasizes about are, in fact, her biological mother and father. This fact allows us to look at Lyra's imaginative scenarios

psychoanalytically. Freud tells us that when young children begin to envision scenarios about idealized familial situations like these, they are experiencing a stage of childhood development that he calls the “family romance,” or the psycho-developmental stage during which children begin to create psychologically-based ideals involving their own ancestry. In fact, Freud tells us that “a younger child [like Lyra, for example] is very specially inclined to use imaginative stories” in order to enact the family-based “phantasies” that he says are inherent in the formation of the family romance (“Family Romances” 240). Though the creation of this family-based psychological fantasy is a normalizing, childhood developmental process, Freud warns us that the failure to subvert this fantasy through more realistic acknowledgments of the failures of the parental figure can lead to neuroses involving the family romance. Specifically, Freud asserts that:

The liberation of an individual, as he grows up, from the authority of his parents is one of the most necessary though one of the most painful results brought about by the course of his development. It is quite essential that that liberation should occur and it may be presumed that it has been to some extent achieved by everyone who has reached a normal state.

Indeed, the whole progress of society rests upon the opposition between successive generations. (237)

Considering Freud’s ideas on the importance of moving beyond the confines of the family romance, it is all the more important that Lyra moves beyond these familial fantasies and recognize the reality of the flawed nature of her parents, Lord Asriel and Mrs. Coulter. Building on her father’s ideas, Anna Freud takes the notion of the family romance and applies it specifically to orphans, claiming that: “reactions to adoption are

most severe in the later part of the latency period when, according to the normal disillusionment with the parents, all children feel as if adopted and the feelings about the reality of adoption merge with the occurrence of the “family romance” (68). Considering that Lyra—herself a “virtual orphan”—is not aware that Mrs. Coulter is her mother and still assumes at this point that she is being “adopted” by Mrs. Coulter herself, the need to resolve the issues of the family romance become all the more imperative for Lyra, lest these “most severe” reactions occur. Furthermore, in discussing the normative progression from childhood dependence to adult maturation, Anna Freud asserts a series of characteristics that allow one to gauge an individual’s healthy psychological progress towards adulthood. One of the most important steps in this psycho-developmental line is:

the post-oedipal lessening of drive urgency and the transfer of libido from the parental figures to contemporaries, community groups, teachers, leaders, impersonal ideals, and aim-inhibited sublimated interests, with fantasy manifestations giving evidence of disillusionment with and denigration of the parents (“family romance,” etc.). (66)

Even in contemporary psychology, Sigmund Freud’s focus on early relationships in childhood is still foundational:

Another aspect of Freud[ian] theory that has had a lasting influence on psychology is his emphasis on the importance of early experience and close relationships, an emphasis that has served as the cornerstone of modern-day attachment research. . . this research has established that the nature of the infants’ relationship with their parents not only affects

behavior in infancy but also has important long-term effects on close relationships throughout life. (Siegler 341)

In other words, eliminating the idealism associated with one's parents and transferring that psychological focus to another adult and the community at large is a crucial step in the normal psychological progression from childhood to adulthood. In the context of this study, it is only fitting then that Lyra comes to know the imperfect and even terrifying traits of her parents through the text's use of fantasy conventions—most specifically, through Pullman's use of "daemons," or the animistic, spiritual counterparts to human beings that exist in the universe of the *His Dark Materials* series.

One of the first moments in which Lyra's idealized image of her mother is shattered through the use of fantasy genre tropes comes during Lyra's initial stay at Mrs. Coulter's home. When the two have their first disagreement—an argument over a trivial fashion accessory—Mrs. Coulter's daemon suddenly springs at Lyra's daemon Pantalaimon, with the result being that the golden monkey daemon that belongs to Mrs. Coulter had "one fierce black paw around his throat and his black paws gripping the polecat's lower limbs [...then] he took one of Pantalaimon's ears in his other paw and pulled as if he intended to tear it off. Not angrily, either, but with a cold curious force that was horrifying to see and even worse to feel" (76). Whatever idealized perception of her mother that Lyra had formed before this scene, it is clear that this encounter with Mrs. Coulter's daemon changes the way she sees her. When Lyra is approached by a journalist named Adele Starminster in the following scene, the first question she asks Lyra after taking her aside is "What's she like?" Lyra responds by telling Adele that Mrs. Coulter is "very clever"; however, the text goes on to tell us that "before this evening, she would

have said much more, but things were changing” (80). Things do change indeed, as Lyra’s first violent encounter with her mother leaves her in a state of mistrust and apprehension about her mother’s intentions, something that is made explicit through Lyra’s thoughts: “she and Pantalaimon could sense each other’s horror. She wanted to go away by herself . . . she wanted to leave the flat; she wanted to go back to Jordan College and her little shabby bedroom on Staircase Twelve; she wanted to find Lord Asriel” (84). Though this scene gives us undeniable evidence that Lyra’s estimation of her mother has altered considerably from the idealized version of her that Lyra initially fantasized being adopted by, Lyra continues to learn truths about Mrs. Coulter that dismantle this romanticized vision. For example, when Lyra finally discovers the truth about her parentage—that Lord Asriel is her father and Mrs. Coulter is her mother—she is also told by John Faa the Gyptian that “as for your mother, she wanted nothing to do . . . with you. She turned her back. The Gyptian nurse told me she’d often been afraid of how your mother would treat you, because she was a proud and scornful woman” (109). The fact that this new knowledge further alters Lyra’s perception of her mother is manifest in Lyra’s thoughts following her conversation with John Faa: “To see Lord Asriel as her father was one thing, but to accept Mrs. Coulter as her mother was nowhere near so easy. A couple of months ago she would have rejoiced, of course, and she knew that, too, and felt confused” (115). Although Lyra’s discovery of the history of her parentage gives us evidence that Lyra’s initial romanticized vision of her mother has altered considerably since their first encounter, the complete and total eradication of this idealized image occurs later in the text when Lyra discovers what Mrs. Coulter and the General Oblation Board actually do to children and their daemons.

When Lyra first encounters Tony Makarios, a small boy who has undergone the horrible process of *intercision*—the means by which Mrs. Coulter and the General Oblation Board sever a child from his or her daemon—we are told that “her first impulse was to run, or to be sick. A human being with no daemon was like someone without a face, or with their ribs laid open and their heart torn out: something unnatural and uncanny that belonged to the world of night-ghasts, not the waking world of sense” (188). The way that Lyra processes this new information about her mother is once again manifested in the description of her thoughts: “Lyra feared Mrs. Coulter and thought about her often. And whereas Lord Asriel was now ‘father,’ Mrs. Coulter was never ‘mother’” (202). Here, we see that Lyra’s idealized version of her mother has completely altered from that of a kind benefactress that Lyra hoped would one day adopt her to that of a horrible torturer of children whom Lyra deeply fears. Although this glimpse into Lyra’s mind lets us know that she no longer idealizes her mother, it also tells us that she still retains the romanticized vision of her father. According to Freud’s ideas on the “family romance,” this paternal ideal is something that she will have to overcome if she is to avoid neurosis later in life. Appropriately, the shattering of this parental ideal happens once again through the fantastic existence of “daemons” towards the conclusion of *Northern Lights* when Lord Asriel—Lyra’s biological father—murders her best friend Roger.

Although Lyra’s idealized image of her mother has clearly been shattered by the time she meets up with her father at his prison cell in Svalberd, it is equally evident from the first confrontation that the two have in Svalberd that Lyra still maintains a naïve image of her father, Lord Asriel. When Lyra sees Lord Asriel for the first time since their

last meeting at Jordan College in the opening chapters of the text, her friend Roger notices a certain, predatory nature in Lord Asriel that Lyra simply ignores. After their initial encounter with Lyra's father, Roger tells her: "I'm afraid of your uncle . . . I mean your father" (321). Lyra tries to justify her father's reaction to her and Roger's presence by reassuring him that Lord Asriel was "just shocked" (321) to see the two children in Svalberd. However, Roger—uninhibited by the naïve vision of Lord Asriel that Lyra possesses—is not so easily calmed by Lyra's rationalization and maintains that not only is he not "imagining it" (as Lyra says), but that: "I'm more scared of him than I was of Mrs. Coulter, and that's the truth" (321).

Lord Asriel's obvious displeasure in seeing his daughter at Svalbard slowly begins to chip away at Lyra's own, romanticized notion of her father. The tension surrounding her father's keeping secret his true identity for the entirety of her life comes to a head during Lyra's outspoken questioning of her father's motives, and the text gives us evidence that the naïve vision of Lord Asriel that Lyra once held dearly is slowly beginning to erode:

You en't human, Lord Asriel. You en't my *father*. My *father* wouldn't treat me like that. Fathers are supposed to love their daughters, en't they? You don't love me, and I don't love you, and that's a fact. I love Farder Coram, and Iorek Byrnison; I love an armored bear more'n I love my father. And I bet Iorek Byrnison loves me more'n you do. (323)

Although Lyra's feelings toward her father evoke childish spitefulness more than anything else at this point, those feelings become much more hateful after Lord Asriel separates Lyra's best friend Roger from his daemon, killing him in the process. In

describing these passionately negative feelings towards her father, the text tells us that Lyra: “felt wrenched apart with unhappiness. And with anger, too; she could have killed her father; if she could have torn out his heart, she would have done so there and then, for what he’d done to Roger. And to her, tricking her: how *dare* he?” (349).

From this textual description, we now know that Lyra’s former, idealized image of her father has been forever shattered by the things he has done to her and to her best friend Roger. However, we must also remember that Lyra once held the same romanticized notions about her mother, Mrs. Coulter, before finding out the truth about her and about her work with the General Oblation Board. What these two events have in common—apart from their shared effect of Lyra’s recognition of her parents’ own flawed natures—is that Lyra’s idealized image of her mother and father are permanently crushed through the intervention of the fantastic into the narrative, specifically through the existence of *daemons*, or disembodied spirits that take the form of animals in the mythos of the His Dark Materials series.

As Brian Stableford notes in the *Encyclopedia of Fantasy*, demons are “spiritual beings [. . .] often animistically associated with storms, deserts, and other inimical aspects of nature” (“Demons”). Stableford also makes mention of the alteration through Christian belief of the original Latin “daemon” into something inherently evil, which—considering Pullman’s distinctly anti-religious sentiments—could explain why he reverted to the original Latin spelling in his own use of the word. Nevertheless, as Stableford reminds us, despite the fact that the concept of the “demon” comes from a decidedly metaphysical and subsequently religious background, the figure has been used in fantasy fiction since

the 1600s—its even longer history in epic, myth, and romance notwithstanding³⁵—in novels like Johannes Kepler’s *Somnium* (1608). In nineteenth century literature, the figure of the demon was personified and often relegated to Faustian roles in the writings of the Romantics but was also a prominent figure in popular works of Gothic fiction. Although the demon figure lost some of its popularity with the decline of the Gothic novel in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the figure still remains a recurrent trope even in modern fantasy narratives like Diana Wynne Jones’s *Howl’s Moving Castle* (1986) and of course Pullman’s *His Dark Materials* trilogy. Though texts like Jones’s treat the demon figure ambivalently while still retaining the personified qualities of its nineteenth-century incarnations,³⁶ Pullman himself uses the demon figure in its animistic aspect through his depiction of the “daemons” as various animals. His own take on the demon as a spiritual complement to its human counterpart is what makes his particular approach to this fantasy trope most notable and, most importantly for this study, what enables Lyra to overcome her idealistic notions of her parents. In other

³⁵ Although Pullman uses a distinct form of the “daemon” that is limited to works like Kepler’s and C. L. Moore’s “Daimon” (1946), there is a much longer history of conventional thought on the “daemon” that goes back at least as far as ancient Greek writings. Susan Bobby’s “What Makes a Classic? Daemons and Dual Audience in Philip Pullman’s *His Dark Materials*,” draws on other research and ties these classical ideas to Pullman’s trilogy: “Socrates, for instance, believed he had a daimon, an entity much like the daemons in Lyra’s world, that would warn him of consequences of his actions and that served as a spirit guide or conscience to him to lead him through his life. Daimons in the Greek tradition were demigods, and their ability was akin to a second sight. Reginald Merton, in ‘The Nature of the Daimon,’ states that some men heard the voice of the conscience clearly and believed an ‘intelligent being was about them’ and called it a daimon (1). According to Merton, Socrates said ‘the favor of the gods has given me a marvelous gift, which has never left me since my childhood. It is a voice which, when it makes itself heard, deters me from what I am about to do and never urges me on’ (1). This description fits both the daemon and alethiometer in Pullman’s trilogy. Merton goes on to say that Socrates’ daimon had an intelligence separate from his own, but could also see both past and future events and the consequences of his [Socrates’] actions (1-2). Raghavan Lyer discusses in the “daimon” concept in a Roman context in ‘The Daimon,’ explaining ‘the philosophic conviction that each human being is guarded by his or her own spiritual genius was strongly held in Roman times’ (1). The belief in these ‘mediating spirits’ was tradition in ancient Athens and Vedic India, and even Gandhi spoke of his ‘inner voice’” (Bobby n.p.).

³⁶ In Jones’s *Howl’s Moving Castle*, Calcifer the fire demon is not depicted as being inherently evil. Furthermore, the personality traits he exudes throughout the novel—including fear, worry, and the occasional crankiness—position Calcifer as rather human, despite his demonic nature.

words, “daemons” are significant in the shattering of Lyra’s family romance because they are literally embodiments of the inner self. By seeing what her mother’s “inner self” is truly capable of, Lyra comes to the normative disillusionment with her. The same is true when she sees Lord Asriel kill Roger—he becomes quite literally a “destroyer of the self” when he kills Roger, allowing Lyra to see the danger in retaining her previous idealized paternal image. Interestingly, this is entirely in keeping with Freud’s ideas on the necessary resolution of the ideals surrounding the family romance, as the failure to eliminate these ideals would result in the equal failure to differentiate between generations. Though Freud is undoubtedly speaking hyperbolically when he claims that “the whole progress of society rests upon the opposition between successive generations,” the hyperbolic dimension of Freud’s statement has resounding implications in terms of the disillusionment of Lyra’s “family romance” in *His Dark Materials*. In other words, what we have witnessed throughout the narrative of *Northern Lights* is indeed a sort of hyperbolic, externalization of the internal, psychological process that the child undergoes through normative disillusionment with his or her parents following the “family romance.” While non-orphans have the constant presence of their parents upon which internalized ideals can be eliminated gradually, Lyra—as a “virtual orphan”—does not have that constant parental presence and is thus only allowed to experience this necessary disillusionment through the repeated intervention of fantasy into the narrative.

Through the severing of children from their daemons, both Mrs. Coulter and Lord Asriel come to embody a horror that permanently changes their daughter’s romanticized perception of them. However, we must remember that, in the context of Freud’s ideas on the “family romance,” this dismantling of the child’s parental ideals is a necessary

occurrence during childhood, lest the idealized notion of the child's parents leads to neurotic obsessions with those images later in life. Through this systematic dismantling of Lyra's "family romance," we know that Lyra is in danger of no such neuroses, and her independence and agency is, in fact, made explicit in the final chapter of *Northern Lights* when she decides to defy both of her parents by choosing to save the Dust that both her mother and father seek to destroy. Rather than linger in the delusional fantasy of the "family romance," Lyra takes up her own mantle and chooses to pursue her own, individual destiny: "So Lyra and her daemon turned away from the world they were born in, and looked toward the sun, and walked into the sky" (351). In doing so, Lyra leaves behind the psycho-developmental struggle of the "family romance" that is inherent in her status as virtual orphan. However, in this—the universe of Pullman's highly successful fantasy series—Lyra is not the only virtual orphan, and in the same way that the formulas of fantasy enable its use as a mode for resolving the psychological struggles of the virtual orphan in *Northern Lights*, those same conventions continue to serve the same function in resolving the psychological dilemmas of another virtual orphan, Will Parry, the protagonist of the second book of the series, *The Subtle Knife*.

Will's Own Family Romance in *The Subtle Knife*

In the second installment of the His Dark Materials series, *The Subtle Knife*, readers are not immediately provided with a continuation of the story from the preceding novel. Instead, we are introduced to an entirely new character by the name of Will Parry, a young boy who is different from Lyra—the protagonist of the previous installment in the series—in nearly every way, save one: they are both stark examples of the "virtual" or "psychic" orphan, or the orphan with living albeit absent parents. *The Subtle Knife* begins

with Will taking his mother to a neighbor's house for safety from the men who have been trying to raid their home. Once Will's neighbor, Mrs. Cooper, agrees to watch after his mother, Will briefly returns home to find that same group of men invading it. Will accidentally kills one of the men in self-defense and flees, eventually encountering an inexplicable, invisible wall that leads him to another dimension. This new land, a place called Cittagazze, is where Will meets Lyra, the protagonist from the first installment of the series. Lyra's alethiometer reveals that the two should seek out Dr. Mary Malone, a scientist who is researching "dust." In their dealings with Dr. Malone, the two meet a mysterious man named Sir Charles Latrom, who steals Lyra's alethiometer and uses it to blackmail Lyra and Will into retrieving an enchanted knife from Cittagazze. When the two retrieve the object, they learn that it is a legendary tool known as "the subtle knife" and that it has the ability to cut portals between universes.

After a series of adventures involving the war between the religious institution of the Magisterium and the rebellion of Lord Asriel against the Magisterium's forces, Lyra and Will finally meet face-to-face with Will's father John, who had been hiding out as a shaman named Jopari. Through this interaction, Will learns how his father was once the wielder of the subtle knife, and how it caused him to be trapped in his current dimension, thus permanently separating him from his wife and son. John instructs Will in what he must do as the bearer of the knife—which, in this case, is to assist Lord Asriel in his rebellion against the Magisterium and the forces of Metatron. Though Will comes from a different universe, he and Lyra share many qualities, not the least of which is that, up to the point at which they are introduced to the reader, neither protagonist has known an effective parental figure, thus "orphaning" them both from a psycho-developmental

perspective. In the first chapter of *The Subtle Knife*, Will's virtual orphan status is immediately made apparent. The novel begins with Will practically dragging his mother to the home of their neighbor, Mrs. Cooper. Will needs someone to look after his mother while he is gone, and he pleads with Mrs. Cooper to do so. The important thing to realize in this encounter is, primarily, that Will has to take care of his mother, reversing the natural order of parent and child. He drops his mother off with the neighbor much as an adult would do with a small child, and when Mrs. Cooper asks if there is no one else who could take Mrs. Parry, Will responds with: "We haven't got any family. Only us" (3). What is more crucial for the purposes of this study is that Will himself not only has no extended family, but he effectively has no parents either. As the text reveals, Will's mother loses her sanity not long after the disappearance of her husband—Will's father, John Parry. From that point on, Will has lived every day of his childhood taking on the parental role of caring for his mentally-ill mother in the absence of his father, thus effectively robbing him of both a mother and father—the fundamental basis upon which children build a coherent sense of self. The physical absence of his father—along with the mental and emotional absence of his mother—illustrates Will's status as a virtual orphan in this second installment of the series and places him in a situation very much like Lyra's at the beginning of *Northern Lights*; in other words, though both children have parents who are very much alive, both children are effectively on their own in terms of the responsibility for their own normative psychological upbringing. Because of this virtual parental deficit, something must happen in order to move these "virtual orphans" along the normalizing path towards adulthood. In *The Subtle Knife* (as in *Northern*

Lights), Pullman's invocation of fantasy is what allows this necessary maturation to occur.

In addition to Will's identification with the virtual orphan figure, his relationship to his father John also creates issues inherent in the adolescent process of *individuation*, or the creation of a sense of self. Successful individuation entails first an increasing identification with the same-sex parental figure, followed by a period of differentiation in which the child begins to manifest his or her own specific personality traits, thereby creating a unique self-identity. In the beginning of *The Subtle Knife*, the first stage in this process is manifest in the textual description of Will's relationship to his father. Will's mother—before she loses her sanity—tells him that: "One day you'll follow in your father's footsteps. You're going to be a great man too. You'll take up his mantle" (9). When Will hears this, we are told that he "understood the sense of it, and felt uplifted with pride and purpose. His father was alive . . . and he was going to rescue him and take up his mantle. It was worth living a difficult life, if you had a great aim like that" (9). Here, the "pride and purpose" that Will feels in the prospect of taking on his father's responsibilities lets us know that Will himself is experiencing the first stages of individuation in his increasing identification with his father. However, the image of his father that Will is beginning to identify with is an idealized image, one conjured from the depths of Will's imagination and his mother's memories. This idealization tells us that Will himself has not moved past his own "family romance" in this romanticized notion of his father. If Will is to successfully individuate and not slip into some neurotic form of identification with his paternal figure, he must at some point begin to dissolve this paternal ideal and to differentiate from his father John.

In other words, Will—like Lyra—must also move beyond the idealization of his parental figures and dissolve the “family romance” in order to mature successfully. We know that Will’s issues surrounding the family romance are not so very different from Lyra’s because, at one point, he tells Lyra explicitly about his father that:

I used to pretend he was a prisoner and I’d help him escape [. . .] or else he was on this desert island and I’d sail there and bring him home. And he’d know exactly what to do about everything—about my mother, especially—and she’d get better and he’d look after her and me and I could just go to school and have friends and I’d have a mother and a father, too. (233)

The fact that Will’s father John is literally an otherworldly paternal figure means that Will does not have the reality of his father’s presence to counteract the parental idealization that the “family romance” perpetuates. Nevertheless, Will’s idolizing of his father must also be undone if he is to move past the psychological naïveté inherent in the “family romance.” In terms of the present study, it is only fitting then that the fantastic steps in to allow Will the opportunity to do just that when he is able to transcend dimensional boundaries using the “subtle knife,” which allows him to finally meet his father John face-to-face and to discover ways that he can differentiate himself from and eliminate the idealism inherent in the paternal figure who has otherwise been physically absent from Will’s entire life. Of course, this sort of confrontation is something that might never have been possible without the invocation of fantasy; Pullman bypasses this negative possibility through the use of the magical portals that bring Will directly face-to-face with his absent father.

In terms of Pullman's invoking of fantasy conventions, critic Karen Patricia Smith highlights the ways that Pullman's series borrows from existing popular works of "high fantasy," or fantasy narratives that take place in another world which is markedly (in some way or another) *not* our own. In her essay, "Tradition, Transformation, and the Bold Emergence: Fantastic Legacy and His Dark Materials," Smith identifies five conventions of high fantasy that Pullman specifically utilizes throughout the His Dark Materials series. These fantasy conventions include:

Young protagonists (sometimes greatly troubled) who have an important life mission that may be addressed through a crucial, otherworldly adventure; an excursion into an invented world that may have well-defined boundaries (possibly mappable) or more abstract configurations; perilous journeys that provoke mind (and life) altering events and consequences; adult (and other) guides who offer information and assistance to major characters; a return to the primary world with new information, insights, and abilities to address the problems that the protagonist left behind. (136)

In her discussion of Pullman's *The Subtle Knife*, Smith points to Pullman's inclusion of the second convention that she defines—the "excursion into an invented world"—in having Will move between worlds throughout this second installment of the series. Though Smith shows how Pullman follows in the tradition of C.S. Lewis's *Prince Caspian* (1951) and Susan Cooper's *The Dark Is Rising* (1973) by including these interdimensional portals, she also asserts that Pullman puts his own spin on the convention by having Will "learn to literally carve his way into new worlds via the use of [the subtle] knife" (141). Although Smith does not consider texts like Andrew

Lansdown's *With My Knife* (1992), in which the main character Colyn uses a knife to cut a portal into another dimension, Smith does demonstrate how these interdimensional portals are themselves established fantasy conventions. Additionally, Farah Mendelsohn dedicates an entire chapter to the formulaic fantasy convention of the "portal" in her *Rhetorics of Fantasy* and devotes a fair amount of time to exploring the nuances of these types of narratives—texts she dubs "portal-quest" fantasies.³⁷ With the conventionality of these portal fantasy narratives in mind, we can now turn to an examination of how this particular fantasy convention allows for the resolution of Will's psycho-developmental struggles.

Again, the biggest obstacle to Will's psychological development is his idealization of his father, John Parry. Because Will has never had any real personal interaction with his father, it has been impossible for Will to have any image of John other than his own personal, romanticized notions—ideas which are, no doubt, fueled even further by his mother's wistful, rose-tinted memories of her long-lost husband. However, through Pullman's use of the formulaic fantasy convention of interdimensional portals, Will is able to finally come face-to-face with his father John and to see him for the fallible man that he truly is. After Will and Lyra make camp one night, Will—unable to sleep—decides to go for a walk. Suddenly, he is accosted by a strange man who first

³⁷Representative titles that Mendlesohn points to include: Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900), Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* (1950), Bradley's *The Spell Sword* (1974), Ende's *The Neverending Story* (1979), and Edding's *Pawn of Prophecy* (1982). I would add to this list Lewis's *The Magician's Nephew* (1955), Cooper's *Dawn of Fear* (1970), and Jones's *The Lives of Christopher Chant* (1988), among others. Additionally, Lori Campbell's *Portals of Power: Magical Agency and Transformation in Literary Fantasy* (2010) discusses the portal trope at length; children's fantasy stories that Campbell discusses specifically include the fantasy works of E. Nesbit, Barrie's *Peter and Wendy*, Tolkien's Lord of the Rings series, and Rowling's Harry Potter series. Campbell's final chapter focuses on Susan Cooper, Alan Garner, and Diana Wynne Jones and builds upon earlier studies like Charles Butler's *Four British Fantasists: Place and Culture in the Children's Fantasies of Penelope Lively, Alan Garner, Diana Wynne Jones, and Susan Cooper* (2006) which also focuses in part on the trope of the portal and interdimensional travel in children's fantasy.

cures the wound that Will suffered in his fight for the subtle knife. Then, the old man tells Will what he must do now that he is the knife-bearer: Will must help Lord Asriel and his forces in their fight against God. For the sake of Will's psychological development, this encounter is essential because Will, in recognizing that the man before him is his own father, finally sees him as a real man and not some idealized figure or nostalgic memory. The text illustrates the contrast when we learn that Will's first image of his father is of "a handsome man, a brave and clever officer in the Royal Marines, who had left the army to become an explorer and lead expeditions to remote parts of the world" (9). In this first and also final real encounter with his father, it is important to recognize the disparity between Will's image of his father and the actuality of the man before him, a man with "blazing blue eyes in a haggard face with several days' growth of beard on the stubborn jaw, gray-haired, drawn with pain, a thin body hunched in a heavy cloak trimmed with feathers" (284). From the contrast between the first and last image of Will's father that we are given, the text illustrates how Will's perception of his father has altered dramatically during this encounter. Again, we must remember that Will's virtual orphanhood lies at the heart of his need to resolve this particular psycho-developmental dilemma. Without his father's consistent physical presence, Will has—up to this point—not been allowed to know John Parry for who he really is and has only been relegated to memories and idealizations of his father upon which to base any possible differentiation. Unlike children with present parents, he has not been allowed to constantly observe personality traits of his father and to psychologically integrate or reject them as is common with non-orphans. However, with Pullman's invocation of fantasy, Will is able to experience on an external, hyperbolic level—much like Lyra's experience in *Northern*

Lights—the sort of differentiation that must occur in both the processes of dismantling the “family romance” and in the course of individuation.

In terms of the present study, what is important is that Will’s idealized image of his father is crushed in this encounter and that their meeting is made possible by the established fantasy convention of interdimensional travel, a central characteristic of that which Mendlesohn dubs “portal-quest” fantasy. Through Will’s and John’s abilities to utilize these fantastic portals between worlds, Will is able to overcome the potential problems stemming from the unresolved “family romance” by destabilizing naïve idealizations of his father in this real-life encounter with John Parry. We know that Will has successfully resolved his issues because of the level of maturation that he has undergone by the end of the novel—a level of psychological growth that is perhaps best illustrated in the final pages of the text when Will decides to literally “take up his father’s mantle” and help Lord Asriel in his fight against God. In this final scene, we see a decidedly more mature Will Parry that no longer lives under the shadow of his father’s memory. Will has finally stopped allowing his paternal idealism to dictate his actions, and although this idealized quest for his father has driven Will’s endeavors throughout the majority of *The Subtle Knife*, we see in these final pages that Will has become much more independent and capable of choosing his own actions: “I’ll fight. I’ll be a warrior. I will. This knife, I’ll take it to Lord Asriel, wherever he is, and I’ll help him fight that enemy. I’ll do it” (286).

Will and Lyra’s Identities “Settled”: A Note on *The Amber Spyglass*

In terms of the major difference between children and adults in the His Dark Materials series, we are reminded throughout the trilogy that the most evident disparity

between the two age groups is that the daemons of adults are inalterable, whereas the daemons of children are constantly shifting forms throughout the child's psychological and physical maturity. The texts in Pullman's series point to the onset of puberty—and thus, the familiarity with sexuality—as that which most clearly demarcates the divide between child and adult. With the child's burgeoning adolescence comes the process of “settling,” or the fixation of a daemon into an inalterable form.

For Will and Lyra, it becomes evident that the two have transitioned from child to adult—thus illustrating their successful psychological development—in the penultimate chapter of the series, when the two embrace one another's daemons. The sexual undertones of this encounter add emphasis to this idea of the transformation of the children into adults:

Knowing exactly what he was doing and exactly what it would mean, [Will] moved his hand from Lyra's wrist and stroked the red-gold fur of her daemon. Lyra gasped. But her surprise was mixed with pleasure . . . with a racing heart she responded in the same way: she put her hand on the silky warmth of Will's daemon, and as her fingers tightened in the fur, she knew that Will was feeling exactly what she was. And she knew, too, that neither daemon would change now, having felt a lover's hand on them.

(447)

In terms of childhood development, this is an important illustration of Will and Lyra's continued maturation. While Erikson admits that sexuality itself is a part of the struggle for identity (particularly in his “Identity vs. Role Confusion” stage), the next step in his “Eight Ages of Man”—“Intimacy vs. Isolation”—posits an establishment of those

identities and an inherent trust in others that Lyra and Will undoubtedly demonstrate here through the co-mingling of their fantastic “daemons.” Specifically, Erikson tells us that: “the young adult, emerging from the search for and the insistence on identity, is eager and willing to fuse his identity with others” and warns that “the avoidance of such experiences . . . may lead to a deep sense of isolation and self-absorption” (263-64). Once again, this normally internalized psychological process is given hyperbolic, external manifestation in the “fusion” of Will and Lyra’s identities via the intermingling of their daemons. Here, Lyra and Will’s daemons taking on a permanent shape through their quasi-sexual encounter indicates a clear shift on the part of both characters, a transformation that—in the context of the His Dark Materials mythos, a world in which the alteration of a daemon into a fixed form is a literal indication of the end of childhood—unequivocally places them within a new, adult role that allows them to *literally* manifest their newly established, permanent sense of self through the “settling” of their daemons.

Furthermore, the text emphasizes this idea of the two orphans’ maturity when Mary Malone later describes Will and Lyra: “the Dust pouring down from the stars had found a living home again, and these *children-no-longer-children*, saturated with love, were the cause of it all” (451, emphasis mine). With respect to this sort of adult gesturing, critic Kristine Moruzi argues that: “The children progress from a state of innocence to one of experience, and the consciousness associated with their sexual awakening allows them to save the universe, but this development does not allow them the opportunity to move beyond the subordinate roles they inhabit as children in their home worlds” (55). While Moruzi attributes this persistent child subordination to an adult need for children to

be placed in a position inferior to their elders, I would argue that Will and Lyra's acts of heroic autonomy throughout the series show us that they are very much capable of moving beyond their "subordinate" child roles. From Lyra's responsibility for the altheiometer, her freeing of the children from the G.O.B. prison, and her decision to plunge into an unknown world in order to find the source of Dust in *Northern Lights*, to Will's caring for his mother and his assumption of responsibility for the subtle knife and for closing up all of the rifts that it has opened to other dimensions, and finally on to Lyra and Will's decision to save all of the souls in the Land of the Dead and their ultimate assumption of their destined roles as the new Adam and Eve in *The Amber Spyglass*, Lyra and Will consistently demonstrate their burgeoning "adult" maturity throughout His Dark Materials. Furthermore, I believe that these adult tasks that Lyra and Will are forced to take on throughout the series are indicative of the *aetonormative*, or adult-normative, slant of the trilogy, which is even further emphasized by the "settling" of their daemons and the establishment of their new, adult identities.

Conclusion

As I have demonstrated above, the conventions of formula fantasy work to enable its use as a mode for resolving psycho-developmental dilemmas for "virtual orphans" Lyra and Will in the first two books of His Dark Materials, especially in terms of their ability to overcome issues surrounding the "family romance." The fact that Lyra and Will are both able to dissolve their parental idealism and to transfer that libidinal energy onto each other is proof of the psychological development of these characters. That Lyra's mother and father, as well as Will's father—who is the sole obstacle in overcoming Will's own family romance—are all dead by the conclusion of the series seems to

emphasize just how far Will and Lyra have moved beyond their initial idealization of their biological parents. Through Pullman's invocation of fantasy, he has allowed the psycho-developmental struggles inherent in childhood to be resolved for these "virtual orphans" despite their lack of the fundamental parental basis that typically serves to resolve these struggles for non-orphans. Moreover, he has given us an explicit, external manifestation of what the successful dismantling of the "fantasy romance" looks like—a process which was only possible for Lyra and Will through the genre of fantasy. Again, the idea of *His Dark Materials* as a psychological narrative is something that is rarely explored in existing criticism on the series; this lack of psychoanalytic focus, coupled with the reality that there is little to no mention of the virtual orphanhood of both Lyra and Will, demonstrates that the juxtaposition of orphan and fantasy is a combination that remains unexplored to any great extent in *His Dark Materials*. While I have attempted to supplement this critical gap in my own analysis of the "virtual orphan," the idea that the "virtual orphans" that Pullman creates in his popular children's fantasy trilogy are rarely analyzed—with most critics choosing to focus instead on Pullman himself—tells us that there is much more to be said about the presence of the orphan in *His Dark Materials*.

CHAPTER V
RESOLVING IDENTITY ISSUES IN LLOYD ALEXANDER'S
CHRONICLES OF PRYDAIN

From the legendary story of Romulus and Remus and the early Judaic tales of the infant Moses to the late nineteenth and twentieth century sagas of Mowgli in Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book* (1894) and Tarzan in Edgar Rice Burroughs' Tarzan of the Apes series (1912-65) as well as Prince Lir from Peter Beagle's *The Last Unicorn* (1968) and various characters throughout Terry Pratchett's Discworld series, the "foundling" orphan has pervaded both the history of storytelling and the creation of myth. Foundling orphans are children who have been abandoned as infants and subsequently found and raised either by low-born individuals or, in many cases, by animals. Since the Greek tale of Oedipus and, indeed, including our own twentieth-century legends—the renowned comic book hero Superman, for example—the foundling trope has remained popular in myth. Although foundlings are not always orphans, the foundling's persistent presence throughout literature and oral folklore explains why these specific types of orphans were influential during the development and articulation of early psychoanalytic theory. One of my goals in this chapter is to show that the foundling orphan story in children's fantasy is unique in that foundlings have absolutely no parental background on which to build a sense of self. In other words, unlike other orphans examined in this study, foundlings have neither personal nor shared memories of their parents. Because of this complete and total lack of parental influence, this chapter will examine how fantasy conventions enable the use of fantasy as a mode through which the psycho-developmental issues of its orphan protagonist are resolved despite this utter absence of direct parental influence.

Oedipus and Psychoanalysis

Of all the founding myths in the history of human culture, perhaps the one that has enjoyed the most continued popularity is the Greek legend of Oedipus. In the best-known version of the tale, Oedipus's father Laius is given a prophecy that warns him that his own son will one day kill him and that this same son will also ultimately end up marrying his own mother. In an effort to prevent this outcome, Laius binds his child's feet together and leaves him to die in the wilderness. However, Oedipus is found by a group of shepherds and subsequently raised by Polybus and Merope, the king and queen of Corinth. Oedipus eventually grows into a young adult without ever knowing that he is not the biological child of Polybus and Merope. Nevertheless, as Oedipus comes of age, he learns of the prophecy that his biological father Laius had tried so desperately to keep from coming to pass. Assuming that the prophecy pertains to his foster-parents, Oedipus leaves the kingdom he grew up in and ventures out into the world. Along his journey, he encounters an old man, and the two quarrel over who should give way in the road. A fight ensues, and Oedipus kills the stranger, effectively making himself a half-orphan. Of course, it is not until much later that Oedipus realizes that he has actually fulfilled the Oracle's prophecy by killing the old man, who turns out to be Laius himself. To make matters worse, in his ignorance of his biological parentage, Oedipus does in fact unwittingly end up marrying his own mother and even fathering four children by her. When Jocasta (Oedipus's birth mother) and Oedipus discover what they have done, she commits suicide—fully orphaning Oedipus—before Oedipus blinds himself and goes into self-imposed exile.

It is this relationship between patricide and incestuous maternal attachment in this story that Freud brings to bear on the development of what is arguably the most famous of his psychoanalytic concepts: the Oedipus complex. In fact, Freud utilizes the notorious founding narrative of Oedipus in order to articulate the psychological struggle of the child against the same-sex parent during psychosexual development. In terms of Freudian psychoanalysis, the child goes through five distinct stages of psychosexual development, with each stage corresponding to a particular area of the body. According to Freud, that sequence plays out in a consecutive series: oral, anal, phallic, latency, and genital (the final stage of development) (*Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* 46). During this “Oedipal stage,” which corresponds with the latency period, the child engages in a sort of psychological battle against the parent of his or her own gender for the affections of the parent of the opposite gender. According to Freud, the hostile attitudes towards the same-sex parent are sublimated in various, culturally-acceptable ways during the child’s normal progression towards adolescence and adulthood. If the individual does not resolve these hostile feelings, then he or she risks developing neurotic tendencies. Most relevant to the present study is Freud’s insistence on the need to effectively resolve the Oedipal struggle in order to avoid a neurotic progression to normative adulthood.

If, as Freud argues, we all experience this sort of developmental psychological struggle, it is only logical that the Oedipal dilemma and other childhood processes like it would inevitably be woven into the fabric of our cultural unconscious through the creation and dissemination of fictional narratives. This human tendency to manifest unconscious content through storytelling was not lost on Freud and was, in fact, given much attention in his seminal text on dream analysis, *The Interpretation of Dreams*

(1900). This essential Freudian text was the first of his works to introduce the concept of the Oedipus complex. It would be years before Freud would fully articulate all of the nuances of the theory; nevertheless, the ties between the unconscious, the Oedipal struggle, and the founding narrative are clearly asserted in this proto-theoretical formulation:

There must be a voice within us which is prepared to acknowledge the compelling power of fate in the Oedipus. His fate moves us only because it might have been our own. King Oedipus, who slew his father Laius and wedded his mother Jocasta, is nothing more or less than a wish-fulfilment—the fulfilment of the wish of our childhood. (85)

Freud's former protégé Carl Jung—who took the idea of the Oedipus complex in a decidedly gendered direction when he asserted an equal (and opposite) reaction in women, dubbed the “Electra complex”—also draws from the well of Greek tragedy in articulating his own theory, as Electra arranged (and, in some versions of the tale, aided in) the death of her mother Clytemnestra as revenge for Clytemnestra's murder of Agamemnon, Electra's father. However, Freud does not differentiate between genders regarding the Oedipus complex. In fact, Freud felt that the idea applied equally to both sexes and dismissed Jung's notion of an “Electra complex” as the female counterpart to the Oedipus complex, instead insisting that although females often tended towards hostility against the mother as opposed to the father, both sexes had the potential to manifest hostility towards the parent of the opposite sex as well, resulting in what he dubbed “the negative Oedipus complex” (“Female Sexuality” 192). Contemporary psychology puts far less emphasis on the Oedipal conflict (as it is nearly impossible to

quantify empirically), but still maintains that: “although this idea [the Oedipus complex] might seem outlandish, many family stories are consistent with it” (Seigler 338). Despite their difference in approach to the connections between incestuous attachment and homicidal instincts toward parental figures, both Freud and Jung clearly insisted upon the shared experience of the two instincts during human development, and it is certainly worth noting that both chose as the means of illustrating this psycho-developmental phenomenon characters who—by the end of their respective tales—would eventually become orphans.

Chronicles of Prydain as Modern Mythopoeic Foundling Tale

One of the most popular foundling orphan narratives of the twentieth century³⁸—the story of Taran in Lloyd Alexander’s *Chronicles of Prydain* (1964-68), which I will summarize shortly—perpetuates the mythic trope of the foundling in late twentieth-century American fantasy fiction written for children. Following the myth-making tradition of Tolkien’s *The Hobbit* (1937) and *Lord of the Rings* texts (1954-55) and of C.S. Lewis’s *Chronicles of Narnia* (1950-56), Alexander’s *Chronicles of Prydain* participates in the creation of a secondary fantasy world, complete with its own characters, geography, and in some cases, its own language—all characteristics of what Tolkien himself defined as “mythopoeia” (*Tree and Leaf* 83). Nevertheless, despite this series’ containing both Newbery Honor and Newbery Award-winning installments, there has been very little critical work on the *Chronicles of Prydain*, even at the height of its popularity. The amount of scholarship on this series—Alexander’s most popular work—

³⁸ Alexander’s books have garnered both Newberry Honor (*The Black Cauldron*, 1965) and Newbery Medal (*The High King*, 1969) awards. *The Black Cauldron* was adapted as an animated film in 1985, and the series continues to sell and to produce new editions to this day.

appears even more scant when compared with the voluminous amount of printed research on Tolkien and Lewis, Alexander's mythopoeic predecessors.

Much of what has been written on Alexander's texts pertains to its incorporation of traditional Welsh mythology.³⁹ However, Marek Oziewicz examines Alexander's perpetuation of the mythopoeic tradition in terms of both the popularity of the mythopoeic fantasy narrative and what he calls the "intimate tethering of mythopoeic fantasy to general social concerns" (90), especially the ways in which this type of fantasy is "driven by a redemptive urge [that] aims to create in its readers a state of mind in which fantasy 'fiction' becomes a 'true narrative' about the possibility of real change" (7). Critics such as Judith Mitchell—in her article "The Boy Who Would Be King" (1984)—endeavored several years earlier than Oziewicz to analyze the ways in which social idealism finds its way into the construction of the series' central orphan character, Taran. Drawing parallels between the medieval practice of constructing a social sense of self around the figure of the king, Mitchell argues that fantasy texts like Alexander's can also participate in this process by instead constructing a king (albeit a fictional one) based on their own social ideals. In the sparse criticism on the *Prydain Chronicles*, Mitchell's study stands out in its analysis of social constructionism and in its elucidation of what fantasy texts like Alexander's do for the adult culture that produces them. In many ways, Oziewicz's work hearkens back to earlier studies on the *Chronicles of Prydain* and social reflection like Mitchell's.

³⁹ See Elizabeth Lane's "Lloyd Alexander's *The Chronicles of Prydain* and the Welsh Tradition" in *Orcrist: Bulletin of The University of Wisconsin J. R. R. Tolkien Society* 7 (1973) and Norma Bagnall's "An American Hero in Welsh Fantasy: The Mabinogion, Alan Garner, and Lloyd Alexander" in *The New Welsh Review* 2.4 [8] (1990).

However, for my purposes, what is most important about Alexander's mythopoeic creation is not so much that his Prydain Chronicles constructs an idealized child character in the form of Taran, but that the texts themselves actively do something with that narrative construction by allowing Taran—a foundling orphan who knows absolutely nothing about his own mother and father and, therefore, lacks even the most basic parental foundation upon which to build a sense of self—a space in which he can resolve crucial childhood psycho-developmental struggles *in loco parentis* through the use of established conventions of fantasy literature. Throughout Taran's beginnings as Assistant Pig-Keeper in *The Book of Three*, his trials and tribulations throughout *The Black Cauldron*, his encounters with the evil Queen Achren in *The Castle of Llyr*, his quest for identity in *Taran Wanderer*, and his final confrontation with Arawn Death-Lord in *The High King*, Taran is aided by magic and other fantasy conventions along his journey. By the time the series concludes, Taran has been confronted with several psycho-developmental struggles for which the fantasy narrative more easily facilitates a resolution. Though this chapter will survey how these processes occur throughout the entirety of Alexander's Chronicles of Prydain, I will be focusing mostly on *The Book of Three* (1964)—the first book in the series—in order to show how the first book sets up the processes of childhood psychological development that will continue throughout the series.

The Foundling Orphan and Individuation

In the opening chapters of *The Book of Three*, readers are first introduced to Taran, the central character of the series. From these initial chapters, we learn that Taran is a foundling orphan, one discovered by Dallben—a powerful, well-respected wizard

who is, incidentally, also a foundling himself—and has been brought up in an agrarian lifestyle on a farm in Caer Dallben, the wizard’s home. Taran’s parentage remains a mystery throughout the series, and his own lack of knowledge regarding his ancestry is made apparent from the outset when he first encounters Prince Gwydion, a son of the House of Don and another major character in the series. Taran explains to Gwydion that: “I have always lived at Caer Dallben. I don’t think I have any kinsmen. I don’t know who my parents were. I suppose [. . .] I don’t even know who I am” (21). Here, Taran’s ignorance should not be surprising. In fact, Taran’s story is quite typical of the traditional foundling orphan tale, as many (if not most) of these children generally have no knowledge of their own ancestry and usually do not discover anything about their own history until entering adulthood—if they ever learn anything at all. Because of this lack of ancestral knowledge, it is easy to see why the foundling narrative was such an attractive choice for Carl Jung, whose archetypal theories on individuation—or the psycho-developmental task of mental separation from one’s parents in order to create and develop a unique sense of self—could easily utilize the figure of the foundling orphan as a veritable “blank slate” in terms of personal development, as the foundling has neither mother nor father to identify with or against.

However, adolescents like Taran are in an especially precarious place in terms of identity development. Not only does the foundling orphan have to deal with the lack of an initial identifying foundation in childhood, but he or she is at a stage of particularly imminent identity struggles. As Robert Siegler asserts in *How Children Develop* (2006): “caught between their past identity as a child and the many options and uncertainties of their future, adolescents must resolve the question of who they really are or live in

confusion about what roles they should play as adults” (Siegler 341). This idea correlates directly with Erikson’s psychosocial stages of development, particularly the final stage of childhood development—Identity versus Role Confusion—in which adolescents must create an autonomous sense of self or risk living in a state of psychological confusion as to what role they should play as adults. As I mentioned above, the foundling orphan’s identity issues are given explicit illustration early in *The Book of Three* during Taran’s first conversation with Prince Gwydion. When Taran describes his own orphanhood and virtual lack of identity, he evokes the process of individuation, or the creation of a personal sense of self. Drawing on Jungian psychology, Carol Pearson tells us that the orphan figure calls to mind “experiences in which the child in us feels abandoned, betrayed, victimized, or disillusioned” (83).⁴⁰ This initial encounter between Taran and Prince Gwydion will ultimately serve as a definitive starting point for Taran’s psychological progression throughout the entirety of the series. The overarching psycho-developmental journey of the Prydain Chronicles can be easily gauged by observing the stark contrast between Taran at the outset of *The Book of Three*—a frustrated, lonely orphan boy who is completely dispossessed of any sense of identity—to the mature, young adult and High King of Prydain that Taran becomes at the conclusion of *The High King*, by which time Taran has spent the span of five novels developing a sense of self through the fantasy conventions that Lloyd Alexander invokes during the course of this psycho-developmental narrative.

⁴⁰See also Jung’s *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (1934), in which Jung focuses largely on foundling stories to explain the significance of the orphan figure in recurring cultural narratives. For Jung, the foundling provides an inherently mythical dimension to the psychological process of *individuation* that the orphan—as a major facet of the “child” archetype—symbolically represents, since the lack of any identifiable parentage or background for the foundling orphan opens up an entire world of mythopoeic and self-creative possibility.

Let us once again examine the situation at the outset of *The Book of Three*. Taran, the protagonist of Alexander's series, spends his days looking after a fortune-telling pig named Hen Wen, who is "the only oracular pig in Prydain, and the most valuable" (10). Hen Wen, in her capacity to see the future and to impart her knowledge to the human characters who know how to receive it, serves as an example of a creature imbued with fantastic abilities. In the vast collection of entries on fantasy in literature by contributors who both write and study fantasy fiction—aptly titled *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy* (1997)—Hen Wen would be a perfect example of what David Langford calls "imaginary animals," or "creatures invented as integral features or plot devices of particular fantasies" ("Imaginary Animals").⁴¹ These creatures, which include legendary mythical creations such as the Sphinx of *Oedipus Rex*, the centaurs, minotaurs, and chimeras of ancient Greek tales, and other mythical animals from various historico-cultural backgrounds, have long been a popular trope in fantasy fiction and can be seen throughout popular children's fantasy including Lewis Carroll's *Alice* books, Beatrix Potter's animal stories, and—as we see here in the case of Alexander's Chronicles of Prydain—even in late twentieth-century children's fantasy fiction. *In Defense of Fantasy*, Anne Swinfen's 1984 text on fantasy theory, offers a rationale behind the recurrence of these sorts of creatures in fantasy literature: "however strangely we may have evolved

⁴¹ The *Encyclopedia of Fantasy* is not the only source to discuss imaginary animals as a fantasy convention. See also Chris Brawley's *Nature and the Numinous in Mythopoeic Fantasy Literature* (2014), which views the imaginary animal as embodying "fantasy's potential to subvert normative views of the world in favor of a more sacramental vision of nature" (119); Maija-Liisa Harju's "Anthropomorphism and the Necessity of Animal Fantasy" in *Towards or Back to Human Values?: Spiritual and Moral Dimensions of Contemporary Fantasy* (ed. Marek Oziewicz), which discusses the history of imaginary animals that have been used in animal fantasy for over a century; Antje Lehn's "Harry Potter, Spiderwick, and the Tradition of the Bestiary," which traces the use of imaginary animals in children's literature to their precursors in medieval bestiaries; for an example of how imaginary animals continue to be a recurrent trope in fantasy literature, see J. K. Rowling's *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* (2009), written under the pseudonym Newt Scamander.

from our primeval ancestors, however much we may seem to differ on the surface from the animals now found on earth, we are still physically animals, and at a very fundamental level of our being we feel a deep affinity with them” (13). Furthermore, Matthew Dickerson and David O’Hara, tracing a line from the talking animals of eighteenth-century fairy tales to modern fantasy, discuss Hen Wen specifically in their *From Homer to Harry Potter: A Handbook on Myth and Fantasy*, where they tell us that “in modern fantasy also, talking animals continue to make an appearance. In Lloyd Alexander’s *Chronicles of Prydain* [. . .] Caw the crow is an important companion to the hero Taran. Even more important is the oracular pig Hen Wen, who speaks through magical sticks” (141). The importance of Dickerson’s observations on the recurrence of these types of fantastic animals is that he is able to show how this particular trope has been a convention of fantastic literature for hundreds of years.

Insofar as this study is concerned, although Hen Wen’s identity as fantasy trope is instrumental, her role as the one who initiates Taran’s developmental journey is even more crucial. Early in *The Book of Three*, Dallben expresses to Taran his anxiety about the workings of Arawn Death-Lord, specifically regarding the ever-growing presence of the Horned King: “things always happen sooner than one expects [. . .] it troubles me. I fear the Horned King may have some part in this” (6). Dallben’s concerns are clearly shared by all of the animals at Caer Dallben, especially Hen Wen. In fact, when she senses the coming of the Horned King, this malevolent creature “for whom death is a black joy” (8), Hen Wen frantically digs her way out of her pen and escapes into a neighboring forest. Taran, without thinking twice, chases after her. This sequence of events, beginning with the appearance of the Horned King and the disappearance of Hen

Wen, sets in motion the “circular journey”⁴²—the home, away, and back again pattern—that has long been a staple of both myth and fantasy literature and which has served as a prominent focus of literary criticism for decades. More importantly, however, it serves as the first step in a journey that takes Taran from a socially abject, “othered” position as a low-born, foundling orphan to the ruler of an entire kingdom, creating a true sense of self for Taran and—more importantly—allowing him to successfully mature psychologically into young adulthood. Moreover, each step of this journey is facilitated by an established fantasy convention, demonstrating once again how fantasy (as formula) can be used as a mode to enable the resolution of psycho-developmental issues for orphan protagonists in the absence of direct parental influence.

Taran’s journey, and its resulting effect in Taran’s development of a true sense of self, is initiated through the disappearance of Hen Wen, the fantasy-steeped oracular pig. One of the reasons that this occurrence is significant is because, at this point in the narrative, Taran’s only sense of identity is “assistant pig-keeper.” Therefore, the deeper implications of this scene are found upon recognizing that by losing Hen Wen, Taran is also losing the only sense of self that he has at this early point in the series. After meeting Prince Gwydion, Taran and his new companion search exhaustively for Hen Wen, stopping only when they are accosted by a group of Cauldron-Born, terrible zombie-like servants of Arawn Death-Lord. The Cauldron-Born, Alexander’s own fantasy creation,

⁴² Though today this pattern is most commonly referred to in children’s literary criticism as the “circular journey”—for examples, see John C. Stott’s “Fantasy and Self-Realization in Children’s Fiction,” Jerry Griswold’s *Audacious Kids* (1993), Maria Nikolajeva’s *Aspects and Issues in the History of Children’s Literature* (1995), Claudia Fenske’s *Muggles, Monsters, and Magicians* (2008), and Elizabeth Thiel’s *The Fantasy of Family* (2013)—it was perhaps given its most thorough treatment by Joseph Campbell in his popular study on culture and myth, entitled *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949). Campbell refers to this tri-partite pattern of departure, adventure, and return as the “hero’s journey” and traces its origins back to ancient myth.

capture Taran and Gwydion and remove them to the Spiral Castle, the home of Queen Achren, who is rumored to be Prydain's most powerful enchantress.

Of course, we need no recourse to authoritative texts on fantasy literature in order to make the point that magic is a long-established convention of fantasy; in fact, one would be hard-pressed to find a children's (or even an adult) fantasy text written in the past one-hundred years that does not invoke the use of magic in one way or another. However, Achren herself does embody the fantasy character trope of the "witch," a recurring figure throughout fantasy fiction that Grant traces back to classical mythology: "Western Europe inherited a series of witch-images from classical myth and literature, including femmes fatales like Circe and Medea and hag wives like Erichtho in Lucan's *Pharsalia*" (Grant, "Witch"). We see these figures disseminated throughout the centuries in Western literature, from Early Modern drama (such as Shakespeare's *Macbeth*) on through late nineteenth-century American fiction (like Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown"). Attebery also makes note of the evolution of this fantasy trope from mythical incarnation to their modern manifestations as "female authority figures in fantasy [. . . from] H. Rider Haggard's *She* and in both the wise and protective Galadriel and the devouring spider Shelob of Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* [. . . to] the White Witch of Narnia or the brutal lesbian Fairy Hardcastle of *That Hideous Strength*" (80).

As mentioned previously, the Celtic origins of Alexander's fantasy series have been examined by several other critics. Using this type of analysis, one could make the case that Queen Achren's presence in the *Chronicles of Prydain* is owing to her Celtic mythical precursors—other "witch" figures such as the Calatin sisters, Irnan, and Ceridwen, to name a few. However, since the Celtic influence of Alexander's work has

already been examined by those mentioned above, for my purposes—the task of analyzing fantasy in children’s literature—I believe that this particular figure is perhaps best traced from sixteenth and seventeenth century Italian and French fairy tales, since modern children’s fantasy is in many ways the successor to the sanitized, child-friendly versions of these earlier Italian and French tales which would later emerge during the nineteenth century. From these original fairy tales, such as Barbot de Villeneuve’s “La Belle et la Bête” (or “Beauty and the Beast”) and similar, early nineteenth-century fairy tales from the likes of Hans Christian Anderson and the Brothers Grimm, the witch figure continued to manifest as a recurring presence in children’s fantasy fiction through texts like L. Frank Baum’s Oz series (1900-20), Enid Blyton’s Old Thatch series (1934-60), and C.S. Lewis’s Chronicles of Narnia, just to name a few. Though Baum is fairly straightforward in the cut-and-dried, good-versus-evil depiction of his witch characters as either diabolical evil or sage benevolence, Alexander is much more ambivalent in his depiction of Queen Achren. Though undoubtedly an evil force to be reckoned with in *The Book of Three*, both Achren’s power and malevolence decrease greatly throughout the course of the series, as she loses much of her power after the first book and becomes systematically less powerful (and less “evil”) as the series progresses. However, what is important to recognize here in Taran’s first encounter with Achren—an encounter in which Taran is brought before Achren and tempted to betray Gwydion—is that it is as a representative fantasy convention (via magic and her status as witch) that she helps move Taran along his path towards psychological maturity and a sense of identity. In fact, Bettelheim asserts that “the witch . . . is a reincarnation of the all-good mother of infancy and the all-bad mother of the oedipal crisis. But she is no longer seen halfway

realistically, as a mother who is lovingly all-giving and an opposite stepmother who is rejectingly demanding, but entirely unrealistically, as either superhumanly rewarding or inhumanly destructive” (94). For Taran, Achren is both—she offers him the potential for reward if he betrays Gwydion and promises him fierce revenge if he refuses. However, in Bettelheim’s positioning of the witch as maternal stand-in, the implications of Taran’s encounter at the Spiral Castle can be found in that Taran’s initial enchantment (and subsequent disillusionment) with Queen Achren mirrors the child’s normative disillusionment with the mother during the normal course of the “family romance.” Indeed, it is quite possible that it is for this very reason that Achren’s power and presence diminish after Taran’s first encounter with her; in other words, once she has ushered him along his journey towards selfhood, she loses her function as a fantasy convention that enables the resolution of his psycho-developmental issues (and thus, her deeper purpose in the series).

After his first encounter with Queen Achren, Taran is thrown into the dungeons of Spiral Castle, where he meets a young girl named Eilonwy, an extremely talkative young princess who irritates Taran initially and who is, incidentally, also an orphan. Eventually, the two conspire to escape from Spiral Castle and set out through a series of underground tunnels, lighting their way with what Eilonwy calls her “bauble,” an enchanted golden sphere that casts a bright light all around it. When the two are seemingly trapped in an ancient barrow, Eilonwy removes a sword from the decayed body of one of the barrow’s inhabitants, and, at that point: “A great crash resounded deep within the hill. Spiral Castle was bathed in blue fire [...and then] in a violent explosion that seemed ripped from the very center of the earth, Spiral Castle crumbled in on itself. The mighty stones of its walls

split like twigs, their jagged ends thrusting at the sky” (72). Here, the enabling of Taran and Eilonwy’s escape—and the furthering of Taran’s psycho-developmental journey—comes from the help of two enchanted objects: Eilonwy’s bauble and the sword that Eilonwy takes from the ancient barrow. We later learn that the sword is the mystical weapon Dyrnwyn, a legendary weapon in the history of Prydain and, moreover, in the tradition of Welsh mythology.

Regarding enchanted objects such as these as fantasy tropes, David Langford tells us that, “any object may be enchanted in almost any way, notably amulets, armour, rings, talismans, etc.” and, although swords are particularly noticeable, “magic swords are endemic” (“Weapons”). The “endemic” nature that Langford attributes to swords like Dyrnwyn tells us just how often one expects to see these kinds of magical instruments throughout fantasy literature. Dickerson and O’Hara echo the prevalence of these types of objects in fantasy literature when they tell us that the genre has almost always been suffused with the idea of enchantment, and that in fantasy texts “there are magic rings, used for both good and evil, and magic cloaks and staffs” (54). Of course, in terms of the progression of Taran’s journey and the ultimate resolution of his developmental identity struggles, what is most important to take away from this entire sequence of events is that, through the intervention of the Cauldron-Born and Queen Achren and through the use of Eilonwy’s “bauble” and the legendary sword Dyrnwyn— all elements that clearly serve as embodiments of fantasy convention—Taran meets and escapes with Eilonwy.

One reason that this fantastic escape is crucial to Taran’s psychological development is because Eilonwy is Taran’s future wife; therefore, her survival is integral to the resolution of Taran’s identity issues—issues that no doubt stem from his utter lack

of ancestral knowledge and his orphan status. Because of this reliance on Eilonwy's future presence as wife and matriarch, the events surrounding the destruction of Spiral Castle—those occurrences of fantastic intervention that allow for her continued existence—establish a pattern that persists throughout the subsequent installments of the series. For example, in *The Black Cauldron* (1965), the second book in the series, Eilonwy secretly follows Taran and his companions on their journey to retrieve the Black Cauldron. When her presence is discovered by Taran himself—who does not realize that the rustle he hears in the bushes is Eilonwy—he raises his sword to strike but “a golden beam flashe[s] in his eyes and a squeal of indignation str[ikes] his ears” (*The Black Cauldron* 37). Here, Eilonwy's “bauble”—an enchanted device—saves her from being struck down by her own future husband.

Though Eilonwy—like most of Taran's former companions—does not appear in *Taran Wanderer* (1967), the fourth book in the series, the pattern of her salvation through fantastic intervention returns along with her character in *The High King* (1968), the final book of the Chronicles of Prydain. As Taran, Eilonwy, and their companions are seeking to reclaim the castle of Mona from Magg, one of Arawn's subordinates, Eilonwy is suddenly accosted by an archer who, having the higher ground and a clear shot, has a very real opportunity to take her life. However, when Eilonwy and the others had recently visited the home of Gwystyl—a dwarf like his brethren Doli—Gwystyl gifted Eilonwy with a bundle of incendiary mushrooms. As Eilonwy soon discovers, these enchanted objects have the power to create fire upon impact. Though Eilonwy could have easily been killed in this encounter with an enemy archer in *The High King*, we are told that Eilonwy “drew a mushroom from her cloak and flung it at the warrior [. . .] the flames

leaped in a roaring, searing cloud. The bowman shouted in terror and staggered back. His arrow whistled past her head” (*The High King* 73). Here, Eilonwy is saved once more through the intervention of established conventions of fantasy, first through the dwarf Gwystyl and then through his enchanted gift to her.

However, in terms of the resolution of Taran’s identity issues, the deeper narrative function of Eilonwy’s salvation comes at the end of *The High King*, when she and Taran are wed. Taran’s emphasis on his low-born status, especially in relation to Eilonwy’s royal heritage, stresses the incongruous nature of their match and the social conventions that underlie it. Without Alexander’s invocation of fantasy throughout Taran’s maturation, an Assistant Pig-Keeper—which he very likely would have remained—like Taran would most likely never have been allowed to overcome such a social incongruity. However, through the intervention of the fantastic, Taran—empowered by his newfound confidence in defeating Arawn—defies social convention and demonstrates his own sense of agency by proposing to a princess. However, as we have now seen, this final illustration of Taran’s power and agency is merely the end of a recurrent pattern of the systematic completion of Taran’s identity creation throughout the Prydain Chronicles. Here, at the conclusion of the series, Taran is no longer “othered” by his lack of identity. He now has his own family and, in his appointment as High King, Taran’s entire identity shifts from foundling orphan to husband, patriarch, and leader. Through this sequence of events, Taran’s entire family situation has been reconstituted, thus allowing a space for Taran to leave off his orphan child identity and to take up an adult, paternal role in his new kingdom or “family.” Other critics have marked this familial reconstitution as a recurring narrative trope in what some call children’s “mystical fantasy.” For example,

Leona Fisher claims that: “The relationships among the increasingly mature children [like Taran and Eilonwy] thus comes to represent an idealized (and reconstituted) family in which knowledge and morality are achieved supernaturally rather than through a scheme of social rewards and punishment” (39). As Fisher points out, it is through the “supernatural” means by which the family is created that Taran—the foundling orphan who initially lacked even the most basic identifying parental bases—comes to establish his own sense of self by the time the series concludes.

Aetonormativity in The Chronicles of Prydain

Scholars of children’s literature and culture have long noted the ways that language is used by American adults to “other” children based on mere age difference. In fact, Beverly Clark’s *Kiddie Lit: The Cultural Construction of Children’s Literature in America* (2003), with its titular tongue-in-cheek jab at academic elitists who belittle the study of children’s literature, spends a good deal of time discussing the ways that immaturity is used to devalue the state of childhood. This sort of collective cultural push towards adult maturation also plays a significant role in Nikolajeva’s theory of “aetonormativity,” or the systematic elimination of childhood traits for the sake of the normative goal of adulthood. Alexander’s *Chronicles of Prydain* could easily be read as an aetonormative series, one that ultimately forces Taran from an “othered” orphan child position to an adult, paternal role in his appointment as High King. I use the word “forced” intentionally, as the orphan must inevitably take up the responsibilities of adulthood prematurely in the absence of his or her biological parents—adults who might have otherwise taken on those responsibilities for them. In this way, aetonormativity (in terms of orphans like Taran) becomes a means of hyper-maturation that denies the

gradual development of the typical *bildungsroman* and replaces it with a necessary, accelerated psychological growth. Despite the hurried nature of the orphan's development in aetonormative texts, aetonormativity nevertheless remains another way of resolving the identity issues of the foundling orphan, and Taran's psycho-developmental journey throughout the Chronicles of Prydain—in true aetonormative fashion— entails his repeated assumption of adult roles and tasks throughout the series.

In the opening chapters of *The Book of Three*, readers find Taran in a pitiable state of wretched boredom. Taran longs for adventure, and Dallben repeatedly chastises him for it: “From what I saw this morning, your head is full of nonsense about feats of arms. Whatever notions you may have, I advise you to forget them immediately. You are barely on the threshold of manhood” (8). With statements like these, Dallben's adult wisdom is set against Taran's juvenile naïveté, marking a clearly adultist tone for the aetonormative narrative that proceeds throughout the rest of the series. Taran's conforming to adult normativity in the Prydain Chronicles begins in *The Book of Three* when Taran shares his frustrations with Coll, the farmer who works the land at Caer Dallben, who responds patronizingly by proclaiming Taran “Assistant Pig-Keeper” and telling him that he will “take care of Hen Wen: see her trough is full, carry her water, and give her a good scrubbing every other day” (10). Though Coll is making this show partly in jest, he nonetheless provides Taran with a title and a job, something generally reserved for the *adults* in Prydain. We have already established Hen Wen's fantastic status as supernatural animal in the discussion of her role in the initiation of Taran's journey towards individuation; however, in this scene, we see that Hen Wen also enables Taran's first step towards adulthood in his appointment as her “official” caretaker. As the fantastic events

in the series continue to unfold, Taran will be expected to assume many more arduous adult responsibilities and characteristics as he progresses towards his inevitable aetornormative state of adulthood.

The first of these more adult-oriented roles and tasks comes shortly after Taran's and Eilonwy's escape from Spiral Castle, after the two meet the creature Gurgi and the bard-king Fflewddur Fflam. Taran, in possession of the legendary sword Dyrnwyn, resolves to take the weapon to Prince Gwydion in Caer Dathyl, Gwydion's home and the seat of Math, the High King of Prydain. Not only does Taran resolve to take on this difficult (and markedly adult) task, but he also assumes command of and responsibility for the band of travelers as they make their way to Caer Dathyl. Emphasizing the adult nature of his task and journey, Fflewddur Fflam tells Taran: "Ordinarily, I prefer to be in charge of this type of expedition myself. But, since you are acting for Lord Gwydion, I accept your authority as I would accept his" (92-93). Putting Taran on par with Prince Gwydion in this instance literally places Taran in a role that is typically reserved for an adult. However, it is important to remember that the entire reason for this particular part of Taran's journey is to take the legendary sword Dyrnwyn—which we have already established as an "enchanted object" that serves as a conventional fantasy trope—to Caer Dathyl, where he plans to give the sword to Gwydion. In this way, and in the examples that follow, the conventions of fantasy continue to enable his psychological maturation from adolescence to adulthood—as he progresses through his journey.

Another instance of the furthering of Taran's aetornormativity through the intervention of fantasy genre tropes comes during the group's continued journey⁴³ to Caer

⁴³While many could view the "quest" itself as a fantasy trope, that narrative pattern is hardly limited to the fantasy genre.

Dathyl, when the travelers come upon a wounded young *gwythaint*—one of the host of large predatory birds that viciously—albeit unwillingly—serve the will of Arawn Death-Lord. We have already established through our discussion of the oracular pig Hen Wen that the fantasy convention of imbuing animals with magical or mystical properties is recurrent in fantastic narratives, but the *gwythaints* give us a markedly malevolent manifestation of that fantasy trope. However, although Taran had been taught to fear and avoid the *gwythaints*—dubbed the “Eyes of Annuvin” by the citizens of Prydain—he takes pity on the small, helpless creature that he happens upon at this particular point in his journey. The *gwythaint* he encounters is described thus: “No larger than a raven, it was young and barely out of its first moult; the head seemed a little too big for its body, the feathers thin and quilly” (154). In effect, the *gwythaint* fledgling is described in infantile terms; moreover, the language used in describing Taran’s care of the fantastical creature is telling: “the *gwythaint* did not struggle when Taran applied the poultice; soaking a piece of cloth torn from his jacket in another healing brew, he squeezed the liquid drop by drop into the bird’s beak” (156). Certainly, older children are fully capable of caring for younger children without necessarily being deemed “adult” for their efforts. However, in this scene, Taran’s wrapping of the young bird in a poultice is reminiscent of a mother swaddling a young infant, and the squeezing of medicinal liquid into the *gwythaint*’s mouth is even more evocative of a mother nursing her child. In this way, Taran’s task of nursing the young *gwythaint* back to health places him in a decidedly adult, maternal role. Furthermore, the fact that this assumption of a positive, maternal role on Taran’s part comes after his interactions with Queen Achren shows us that he is developing along the normalizing path by rejecting the negative aspects of the most

pervasive (yet extremely flawed) “mother” figure that he has known throughout the series and, instead, illustrating his own positive, nurturing maternal qualities.

Before moving on, I would like to point to one more instance in *The Book of Three* that further emphasizes the aetonormative bent of Taran’s quest, albeit in a more observably holistic way than the other examples offered thus far. This final instance comes towards the end of *The Book of Three*, once Taran and his companions have returned to Caer Dallben. The dialogue that occurs here makes a very clear statement about the maturity that Taran has experienced throughout the text. In this ultimate chapter, gone is the malcontent, stubborn, naïve Taran that longs for adventure and for escape from the home in which he has grown up thus far. In fact, one of the first things that Taran expresses to Dallben upon his return is that: “I have dreamed often of Caer Dallben and I love it—and you and Coll—more than ever. I asked for nothing better than to be at home, and my heart rejoices” (186). As Taran reflects further both on his journey and on his return home, he remarks that: “It is a curious feeling. I have returned to the chamber I slept in and found it smaller than I remember.” Dallben, in his turn, replies that: “It is not Caer Dallben which has grown smaller. You have grown bigger. That is the way of it” (186). In this discussion, Dallben’s tone towards Taran has changed from that of an impatient parent to that of a wise comrade, sharing valuable knowledge without being patronizing. This conversation between orphans Taran and Dallben emphasizes the psycho-developmental narrative of maturity that is Taran’s journey from Caer Dallben and back again, and it is imperative to remember that every step of this aetonormative journey was perpetuated by marked fantasy conventions—from the appearance of the Horned King, to the disappearance of Hen Wen, to Taran’s entrapment and escape from

Spiral Castle, to the encounters with the mystical Fair Folk and King Eiddileg, and finally on to the rescue of the gwythaint and the final confrontation with the Horned King himself.

Moreover, this pattern of aetornormativity through fantasy convention is not limited to the first book in the series; in fact, it is a pattern that recurs throughout the Chronicles of Prydain. For example, in *The Black Cauldron*, we see more of Taran's assumption of adult roles and tasks after the death of Adaon, the son of Chief Bard Taliesin who serves as leader of Taran and his companions throughout the majority of this second installment in the Prydain series. Before passing away, however, Adaon bequeaths an enchanted brooch to Taran, a brooch that Taran later learns is "filled with power [. . .] for Menwy the Bard cast a mighty spell on it and filled it with dreams, wisdom, and vision" (127). In the beginning, Taran is unaware of the brooch's origin and power and only recognizes that the visions it gives him enable him to lead the group to the Marshes of Morva, where they will ultimately retrieve the Black Cauldron. However, it is important to recognize that the combination of two separate fantasy tropes—the mystical Huntsmen of Annuvin (as embodiments of the fantasy trope of magic) and Adaon's brooch (as enchanted object)—enable Taran to take on Adaon's adult leadership role following his death. Adaon's murder by the Huntsmen allows Taran the space to assume an adult leadership role, and the supernatural insight that Adaon's brooch provides Taran gives the group more confidence in his leadership abilities. Moreover, the enabling of Taran's continued assumption of adult responsibility by these two fantastic elements adds further evidence of the perpetuation of the pattern of aetornormativity throughout the Prydain Chronicles.

A few more examples will serve to provide evidence of the continued pattern of Taran's aetnormativity throughout the rest of the series. In *The Castle of Llyr*, Eilonwy is kidnapped and taken away by Magg, whom we later discover is working under the orders of the evil Queen Achren. King Rhuddlum and Queen Teleria (Eilonwy's guardians in the opening chapters of this third installment of the series) fail to protect her from the clutches of the evil Achren; furthermore, their responsibilities as monarchs prevent them from leaving their kingdom to seek the lost Princess. Therefore, Taran must assume the adult responsibilities of the King and Queen by recovering Eilonwy himself. Furthermore, it is certainly worth noting that Taran, an orphan who has never even known his own parents, has to assume the responsibilities of someone else's parents in this particular instance. In *The Castle of Llyr*, Queen Achren—whom we have already established as an embodiment of the fantasy “witch” trope—serves to perpetuate Taran's aetnormativity by kidnapping Eilonwy, compelling Taran to assume this adult responsibility of pursuing and rescuing the young princess—which, again, is really the responsibility of the King and Queen of Mona.

Moving forward in the series, one of the most striking examples of aetnormativity occurs in *Taran Wanderer*, when Taran's process of self-identification is disrupted by the appearance of Doli the dwarf. Though I have already briefly discussed Taran's developmental path towards identity creation on a more holistic level, *Taran Wanderer* stands out in terms of this process, as Taran's many interactions with the various cultures he encounters in this fourth text of the series parallels perfectly the process of successful identity creation. As Erikson reminds us, the sort of identity crisis that Taran experiences at the beginning of the series is typical of the maturing adolescent;

however, Erikson goes on to assert that “successful resolution of this crisis involves the construction of a coherent identity—that is, an identity that is an integration of various aspects [. . .] into a consistent whole that is stable over time and across events” (433). Typically, this sort of identity construction comes through integrating and rejecting personality traits from one’s parents and immediate social circle; however, for orphan Taran, who—in the beginning—has neither parents nor a social circle outside of Dallben and Coll, there is no guarantee that he would have undergone this necessary identity construction if not for the fantasy conventions which allow him to leave Caer Dallben at the beginning of *The Book of Three*. However, due to the experiences that Taran has garnered along his fantastic journey, Dallben affords him the respect that is necessary to allow him to go out and seek his own identity in the world, which is the core of the narrative of *Taran Wanderer*. Indeed, from Taran’s exchanges with the immature high-born lords of Cantrev Caddifor, he learns to abandon his previous desire for noble birth and to appreciate the simplicity of his own life. From his numerous run-ins with the bandit Dorath and his gang of cutthroat thieves, he learns the potential for wickedness that resides in every human. During the months he spends on a farm with a man named Craddock and finally on to the many apprenticeships he undertakes in the Free Commots (the village of skilled workers), Taran learns the physical and mental value of working with one’s hands—although it is equally important that Taran does not adhere to any one lifestyle that he observes; this sort of differentiation from others is, after all, the central purpose of self-identity creation.

Keeping in mind that the resolution of Taran’s identity crisis is arguably part of the aetnonormative thrust of the series, we turn finally to *The High King*, the final text in

the series. Here, the departure of Gwydion and the remaining members of the House of Don—along with all of the magical humans and creatures in Prydain—facilitate Taran’s assumption of the most adult and authoritative role in the entirety of his mythical, secondary world: the High King of Prydain. The departure of Gwydion and his kin forces a return of the members of the House of Don (and, indeed, all traces of magic in Prydain) to the “Summer Isles,” where the Sons of Don are rumored to have come from centuries ago in order to aid the race of men in defeating Arawn Death-Lord. Clute attributes this collective departure of all things magical to the more benign facet of the fantastic convention of “thinning,” in which “the passing away of a higher and more intense reality” (Clute, “Thinning”) takes place. A similar “thinning” occurs in Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings* series when the race of Elves depart Middle-Earth at the conclusion of the series. In *The High King*, the removal of magic from Prydain through the fantasy trope of “thinning” concurrently means the removal of all of the current possible heirs to the position of High King, leaving Taran to assume the throne and to complete the psycho-developmental, aetnormative journey towards establishing his own sense of self. It is also worth noting that the completion of Taran’s maturation concurrently means the removal of magic in the series, since magic itself has served as the central fantasy mode through which Taran has matured from foundling orphan to High King of Prydain.

Conclusion

The foundling story is a recurrent trans-cultural narrative whose roots can be found thousands of years ago in the Judaic religious tale of Moses and the Roman foundational legend of Romulus and Remus. I have argued throughout this chapter that the perpetuation of these stories in latter twentieth century children’s fantasy speaks to

the inherent human psychological processes (i.e., the resolution of identity crises) that these tales can evoke in their own psycho-developmental narratives. Perhaps this ability to draw out unconscious struggles is why Freud chose the myth of Oedipus—arguably the most historically pervasive foundling figure—to articulate his theories about human psychological development. These stories can create an external narrative that also evokes fundamental inner psychological processes. This evocation offers us an explanation as to why children’s fantasy narratives like Alexander’s often use the very conventions of their genre to effect the resolution of childhood developmental processes that their orphan protagonists must still undergo despite the absence of the direct parental influence—an influence which developmental psychologists tell us are fundamental to successfully resolving childhood psychological dilemmas.

In light of this recurrent, fantastic resolution of the psycho-developmental struggles in children’s fantasy fiction, one might wonder whether these narratives ultimately serve some greater purpose, apart from simply allowing their protagonists to mature. According to critic Marek Oziewicz, mythopoeic fantasy like Alexander’s aims to evoke a sense of transformative possibility and is primarily concerned with “exploring components of a new mythology for a unified humanity” (11). In other words, although these stories often feature wholly imagined, otherworldly races and creatures, the focus of the narrative is centered on the ways that all of these different races or people come together for a common cause. Oziewicz’s claims suggest, then, that these narratives are less about the resolution of psychological struggles and more about creating a narrative that emphasizes this idealized “unified humanity.” In discussing the rationale behind this ideal, Oziewicz states that: “mythopoeic fantasy is strongly related to hopes and anxieties

produced by the cultural discourse it participates in” (5). Therefore, according to Oziewicz, these narratives serve to sublimate cultural anxieties that might be prevalent at the height of their popularity.

However, relegating mythopoeic fantasy like Alexander’s to the realm of mere hopeful optimism robs us of a deeper understanding of the inner psychological processes that these narratives evoke. Furthermore, the idea that foundling narratives like Taran’s only serve to proffer ideals of unified humanity denies us an understanding of the ways that orphan protagonists mature in their own unique ways through fantasy narratives. In the transformation of orphan foundlings into “high kings” through the use of formula fantasy as a narrative mode, the mythopoeic foundling tale does indeed embody a sense of unification—though, in my analysis, it is one that represents the coming together of various personality traits that have been accumulated throughout the psycho-developmental journey and establishing a true sense of self. For foundling orphan characters like Taran who are completely devoid of any notion of identity at the outset of these psychological narratives, this means successfully resolving their own “identity crisis” and averting role confusion, a definitive step in the psychological progression of the adolescent into young adulthood and an assurance of the “comic” ending of children’s fantasy fiction despite the orphan’s intrinsically tragic state.

CHAPTER VI
ID AND INDIVIDUATION IN URSULA LEGUIN'S

A WIZARD OF EARTHSEA

Ursula LeGuin is one of the most prolific science fiction and fantasy writers of the twentieth century. As she has penned dozens of novels, short story cycles, non-fiction pieces, and poetry collections, it is unsurprising that LeGuin was awarded the Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters in 2014 by the National Book Foundation. Although LeGuin is noted for her ability to move seamlessly among age groups and genres from one novel to the next, it is her series of fantasy novels for children and young adults—most famously known as the Earthsea series (1968-2001)—that first brought LeGuin to prominence in the literary community. The series, originally conceived as a trilogy, would later gain three additional installments with *Tehanu* (1990), *The Other Wind* (2001), and finally, the collection of short stories *Tales from Earthsea* (2001). LeGuin's Earthsea series is a unique blend of traditional high fantasy, Jungian archetypal theory, and Taoist philosophy mixed with deep, symbolic explorations of the human psyche. Though each of the books focuses on a different protagonist, there is only one recurring character throughout the series—Ged, the hero of the first installment of the series, *A Wizard of Earthsea* (1968).

Perhaps it is owing to her pronounced blending of psychological theory, philosophy, and genre conventions in writing fantasy for younger audiences that LeGuin's Earthsea series has known neither shortage of scholarly attention nor lack of diversity in the critical approaches to the texts. For example, Christopher Robinson's "The Violence of the Name: Patronymy in Earthsea," takes a post-structuralist approach

to the process of “naming” in the Earthsea series, analyzing the ways in which the “true names” of the characters embody their subjectivity. Sheila Cuneen also picks up on the process of naming in the series in her “Earthseans and Earthteens,” asserting that “LeGuin’s ‘naming’ is every adolescent’s identity crisis, for whether we realize it or not, as teenagers we are in the process of finding which of the many faces we put on is most truly us” (68). Elizabeth Cummins devotes a chapter of her book *Understanding Ursula K. LeGuin* (1990) to the Earthsea series, focusing on the ways that LeGuin weaves Jungian theory into her secondary world mythos in order to create both an effective vehicle for Ged’s self-exploration and a unique coming-of-age story by having Ged confront his inner psychological turmoil *externally* in the form of his shadow-self. In “Cultural Anthropology and the Rituals of Exchange in Ursula K. Leguin’s ‘Earthsea,’” W.A. Senior analyzes the act of gift-giving in *A Wizard of Earthsea*, asserting that LeGuin employs a “sociological theory of exchange” (101) in order to establish the idea that gift-giving “tells us something about the giver and receiver and establishes a system of relationships” (102). Patricia Dooley’s “Magic and Art in Ursula LeGuin’s Earthsea Trilogy” examines the ways that LeGuin forms a metaphor for art through her description of magic as a highly stylized and intensely skilled practice, while M. Teresa Tavormina’s “A Gate of Horn and Ivory: Dreaming True and False in Earthsea,” focuses on LeGuin’s infusion of Western classicism that she claims critics like Dooley—who focus solely on LeGuin’s Eastern philosophical influence—tend to gloss over. Though many early feminist reviews of LeGuin’s Earthsea series denounced what they viewed as her chauvinist treatment of women, more recent analyses like Melanie Rawls’s “Witches, Wives, and Dragons: The Evolution of Women in Ursula K. LeGuin’s Earthsea” examine

the ways that women are transformed throughout the series from “weak and ineffective figures to powerful agents of social change” (129). Finally, Marek Oziewicz devotes nearly a third of his book on children’s fantasy—*One Earth, One People: The Mythopoeic Fantasy Series of Ursula K. Le Guin, Lloyd Alexander, Madeleine L’Engle and Orson Scott Card* (2008)—to a discussion of how LeGuin’s unique brand of mythopoeic fantasy offers “a new mythology for a unified humanity” (11).

Although the scholarly work on LeGuin’s Earthsea series is extensive, critics do not devote much time or attention to Ged’s orphan status. Perhaps this lack of focus on Ged’s orphanhood is because Ged’s father is alive at the beginning of the series; however, from a purely denotative standpoint, an orphan can be a child with either one of no parents. For my purposes, Ged’s lack of a mother means that Ged himself serves as an embodiment of what is most commonly known as the “half-orphan,” or the orphan with only one living parent. In the canonical body of children’s literature, we see these types of characters appear fairly frequently, from Jim Hawkins in Robert Louis Stevenson’s *Treasure Island* (1883) to Peter Rabbit in Beatrix Potter’s animal fantasy texts, to Colin in Frances Hodgson Burnett’s *The Secret Garden* (1911), to Karana in Scott O’Dell’s *Island of the Blue Dolphins* (1960), and on to more recent examples like the four Penderwick sisters in Jeanne Birdsall’s *The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four Sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy* (2005), and also more teen-oriented characters like Katniss Everdeen in Suzanne Collins’s Hunger Games series (2008-2010). Although Ged (and other half-orphan characters like him) are not fully orphaned and, therefore, do not have the complete absence of parental influence, they nevertheless illustrate issues of

identity in the face of the absence of either their biological mother or father, especially when viewed through the lens of psychoanalytical and developmental theory.

Psycho-developmental Threads in *Earthsea*

A Wizard of Earthsea is, on a superficial level, the typical *bildungsroman*. The narrative follows Ged from his low-born childhood as the son of a blacksmith to his coming-of-age and ascension as one of the greatest and most powerful young wizards in his own mythopoeic fantasy world. However, *A Wizard of Earthsea* occupies a peculiar place in terms of genre. Roberta Trites, who specifically cites LeGuin's text as a representative example of the young adult genre, asserts that "the basic difference between a children's and adolescent novel lies not so much in how the protagonist grows but with the very determined way that YA novels tend to interrogate social constructions, foregrounding the relationship between the society and the individual rather than focusing on Self and self-discovery as children's literature does" (20). Ironically, *A Wizard of Earthsea*—which Trites claims is a YA novel—is, in fact, *very* concerned with the self and with self-discovery. Moreover, to dismiss LeGuin's first children's novel as simplistic hero-fantasy is to gloss over the rich history of psychological and developmental theory that she draws upon in her creation and execution of Ged's story in this first novel of the series. LeGuin has often mentioned the influence of Jungian archetypal and developmental theory on her creative work, probably most explicitly in her collection of essays on fantasy and science fiction entitled *The Language of the Night* (1979).

One of Jung's most famous theories is his notion of the "collective unconscious," or the idea that humanity as a whole inherently possesses a shared region of the psyche,

an idea that explains the appearance of similar symbols (or “archetypes,” as Jung calls them) across varying cultures throughout the world, regardless of physical location or ethnic background. One way that LeGuin incorporates this Jungian concept is explained by the author herself in her essay “The Child and the Shadow”: “How do you find your own private entrance into the collective unconscious? Well, the first step is often the most important, and Jung says that the first step is *to turn around and follow your own shadow* [emphasis mine]” (63). “Following his own shadow” is exactly what Ged does in *A Wizard of Earthsea*, and the psycho-developmental process underlying Ged’s quest in this first novel leads us to yet another Jungian-based theory that LeGuin weaves into Ged’s quest—the concept of *individuation*. From a purely Jungian standpoint, individuation is the “process of differentiation” (Jung 561) by which a particular “type”⁴⁴ of individual distinguishes himself or herself from other types, resulting in the creation of a distinct self-identity. For Jung, this process of individuation is an ambivalent psycho-developmental phenomenon in which an individual concurrently seeks a sense of individuality while unconsciously *introjecting* traits (in other words, assimilating them—though the term is certainly not limited to Jung) of other types that allow for an increasing identification with the collective unconscious.

Following Jung, child developmental theorists of the early twentieth century would use his ideas about self-identity creation outside of the context of the collective unconscious and his discussion of types in order to formulate an idea of individuation that corresponds more closely with the fundamental adolescent task of creating and

⁴⁴ See Jung’s *Psychological Types and the Psychology of Individuation* in the *Collected Works of C.G. Jung, Volume Six* (Princeton UP, 1971) for a full articulation of all of the major psychological “types” that Jung defines.

developing an autonomous sense of self.⁴⁵ Erik Erikson, in articulating the patterns of human development in what he calls the “eight ages of man,” sees the process of individuation as one of “identity versus role confusion” and asserts that:

The growing and developing youths, faced with this physiological revolution within them, and with tangible adult tasks ahead of them are not primarily concerned with what they appear to be in the eyes of others as compared with what they feel they are, and with the question of how to connect the roles and skills cultivated earlier with the occupational prototypes of the day. (261)

Like Jung’s notion of individuation, this idea also relies on differentiation for personal identity formation but is not limited to how an individual unconsciously differentiates from other “types,” as Jung would have it. Melanie Klein also discusses the process of personality differentiation and integration during the onset of puberty but adds that the process of adolescent maturation is one of continuing to conquer childhood fears and anxieties: “[the child] has developed his various interests and activities to a great extent with the object of mastering that anxiety, of overcompensating for it and of masking it from himself and others. He achieves this in part by assuming the defiance and rebelliousness that is characteristic of puberty” (*Psychoanalysis* 122). Winnicott, on the other hand, concentrates more on the idea that individuation is largely a process of learning how to create a sense of self that is compatible with one’s own society and culture and places emphasis on the notion of *play* as instrumental to creating these external, social connections (*The Outside World* 143-44). For the purposes of this study, I

⁴⁵ For in-depth studies on identity creation during childhood, see Erikson’s *Childhood and Society* (1950), Horney’s *Neurosis and Human Growth* (1950), Klein’s *Psychoanalysis of Children* (1960), and Winnicott’s *The Child and the Outside World* (1957).

will be using the more current use of the concept that takes into account all of the relevant ideas of these influential theorists. As it is now commonly understood, individuation occurs on a personal, familial, and social level, since—as contemporary psychologist Claudio Barbaranelli asserts— individuation is:

A state in which a person is differentiated, to some degree, from other parts of his or her social and physical environment. This state can be produced by both individual and social factors, as well as by physical aspects of the environment. If a person chooses to become more individuated, he or she must be cognizant of others in the immediate environment and, on the basis of social comparison processes, must determine how he or she can differ from them. (Barbaranelli 75)

In terms of LeGuin's work, this definition of individuation effectively sums up the core of Ged's story in *A Wizard of Earthsea*, as Ged's maturation throughout the novel often relies on how he sees himself in comparison to his family, friends, peers, and mentors. However, what is most relevant to the current study is that nearly all of the bases upon which Ged builds his sense of self are introduced only through LeGuin's invocation of the fantastic in *A Wizard of Earthsea*.

The novel begins with the introduction of a small boy named Duny, the son of a blacksmith whose wife died while giving birth to him. When Duny is still a very young boy, he begins to spend more and more time with his mother's sister, a low-level village witch who deals in small-time magic and usually takes advantage of naïve, low-born townspeople. However, through his interactions with his aunt, Duny soon discovers that he possesses strong, inherent magical abilities, and his aunt begins to teach him how to

properly utilize his powers. Not long thereafter, Dunny masters all of his aunt's low-level spells and begins to yearn for greater magical knowledge. He gets his chance to learn more advanced magic soon enough when the roving warriors from the Kargish Empire invade the isle of Gont that Dunny and his family call home. Though the agrarian villagers have no practical knowledge of war and are initially doomed to suffer at the hands of the Kardish invaders, Dunny weaves a fog-spell that cloaks the entire village in an impenetrable layer of mist, thwarting the efforts of the attacking army. Dunny's efforts become recognized throughout the region, and he is soon visited by Ogion the Silent, a great mage who offers to take Dunny on as an apprentice. Ogion gives Dunny his "true name"—Ged—and the two leave the village and journey to Ogion's home, where Ged lives for a year. Soon thereafter, the young boy, tired of Ogion's unhurried approach to teaching him the ways of magic, goes prying into Ogion's private spell-book collection and unwittingly casts a malevolent spell that nearly destroys him.

After saving the boy, Ogion offers Ged a choice—he can either stay with Ogion and learn his approach to magic, or he can go to the Isle of Roke, where there is an entire school dedicated to the study of magic. Ged chooses to go to Roke, and after a few years of tutelage, he becomes one of the most prominent students of his age. Unfortunately, Ged's unwieldy temper—bolstered by his stubborn pride—causes him to succumb to the taunts of one of his peers, and he attempts to weave a forbidden spell for summoning the dead. Though Ged displays his inherent power by successfully performing the spell, he also unwittingly unleashes a malevolent shadow that immediately attacks him upon entering Ged's realm. If not for the intervention of the Archmage, who gives his life for

Ged's, the boy would have undoubtedly been destroyed by the shadow creature. Ged does not emerge unscathed, however. Physically—and, no doubt, psychologically—scarred for life, Ged continues his training on Roke until he decides to take a meager wizarding position at a nearby village. After a series of adventures that takes Ged across various parts of Earthsea, he ultimately decides to confront the malevolent shadow that has been hunting him since the attack on Roke. With the assistance of his best friend and fellow wizard Vetch, Ged finds and confronts his shadow-self at the edge of the world and defeats it, bringing the first novel in the series to a close.

From his humble beginnings on the Isle of Gont to his ascension as one of the greatest young wizards of all time, Ged's story is one of differentiation and the creation of self-identity. One of the ways that this narrative quest for identity ties into the course of the present study is Ged's status as a "half-orphan," or the child with only one living parent. However, what is particularly interesting about Ged is that, although his father is still technically alive, Ged never sees him again once he leaves his home and becomes an apprentice to Ogion the Silent. What this permanent parental absence does is to effectively fully "orphan" Ged from a psychological standpoint and leave him to the influence of the string of paternal surrogates that he will encounter throughout the rest of the novel. Nevertheless, this parental separation—made possible through the death of his mother and the physical estrangement from his father—opens up the possibility for the creation of self-identity. Moreover, these narrative developments serve as a physical manifestation of the psychic need for separation from the parental figures that spurs the process of individuation itself. The way that Ged's half-orphanhood plays so well into the narrative of individuation that LeGuin creates is by eliminating the mother figure early in

Ged's life, leaving him with only his low-born, uneducated blacksmith father to identify against, which Ged does whole-heartedly. The process of individuation and the inherent means of differentiation that occur during that process begin with identification with the same-sex parent. Therefore, when Ged's mother dies, Ged is left with only the company of his father. Because Ged has no other parental figure to identify with or against, it is only natural that he begins to notice the dissimilarities between himself and his father much earlier than most children. Unlike his hard-working father who is both content and fulfilled in working at a trade, "there was not much work to be got out of Duny . . . his father made him work as a smith's boy, at a high cost in blows and whippings [. . . but] he was always off and away; roaming deep in the forest, swimming in the pools of the River Ar, or climbing by cliff and scarp to the heights above the forest" (2). Ged (or Duny's) half-orphanhood draws a stark contrast with his father that spurs the initiation of his differentiation from his surviving parental influence; however, as I will now demonstrate, it is owing to the formulae of fantasy that Ged's process of individuation is enabled.

In terms of individual identity formation, the first place that the adolescent child looks for the differentiation inherent in individuation—or the process of creating an independent self-identity—is to his or her own parents. Introjecting what the child sees as the desirable traits of his or her mother and father and rejecting those traits that the child deems unfavorable, this same pattern of introjection and rejection is projected onto the child's immediate and larger social circle until the process of identity formation is complete. However, with only one parent from whom to begin this crucial psycho-developmental process, the half-orphan is at a disadvantage in terms of immediate

possibilities for increased identification with and against his or her first objects of differentiation—the mother and father. Furthermore, as early childhood psychological theorists like John Bowlby (and later, Mary Ainsworth) remind us, parents form a “secure base” which—for the child—serves as the foundation for their later personal and social relationships: “if caregivers are accessible and responsive, young children come to expect interpersonal relationships to be gratifying and to feel that they themselves are worthy of receiving care and love [...] if children’s attachment figures are unavailable or unresponsive, children develop negative perceptions of relationships with other people and of themselves” (Bowlby 268). While it could be argued that Ged’s aunt could have served the function of a maternal surrogate, she could never serve as a “secure base” for Ged since, as the text makes clear: “she had business of her own and once he could look after himself at all she paid no more heed to him” (2). Because of the lack of a parental “secure base,” half-orphan characters like Ged can face difficulties in identity formation by having limitations placed on their possibilities for an autonomous, parentally differentiated sense of self that can form healthy relationships with others and function in society. Fortunately for half-orphans like Ged, LeGuin’s text, in the same fashion as other orphan texts already discussed in this study, utilizes recurring narrative conventions of the fantasy genre—in this case, magic—to enact the resolution of Ged’s psycho-developmental struggles throughout *A Wizard of Earthsea*.

Fantastic Individuation in Earthsea

In Matthew Dickerson’s *From Homer to Harry Potter: A Handbook on Myth and Fantasy* (2006), he traces the historical trajectory of modern day fantasy from its roots in epic myth, folk lore, and fairy tales to some of its more contemporary twentieth and

twenty-first century manifestations. One of the more recent fantasists that he focuses on is LeGuin, and—like many other critics—he lauds her ability to create unique high fantasy texts which incorporate the rich history of myth and folklore that modern fantasy draws upon while at the same managing to create something fresh and new. One of the observations that Dickerson makes about LeGuin’s approach to fantasy is her incisive assertion that, contrary to current popular belief, “fairy tale and myth are not primarily for children” (171), something Tolkien discussed at length in “On Fairy Stories.”⁴⁶ Indeed, the modern fairy tale genre (with its origins in mythic folklore) is historically rooted in adult entertainment and wisdom.⁴⁷ What Dickerson (via LeGuin) is asserting is the ability of fantasy—with its roots in myth and folklore—to communicate the universal truths of humanity, something that LeGuin’s interest in Jungian theory, particularly the idea of archetypes and the collective unconscious, definitely manifests throughout her Earthsea series.

In *A Wizard of Earthsea*, Ged’s entire story serves as an explicit illustration of the process of individuation. The payoff for Ged, the half-orphan protagonist of LeGuin’s text, is that his shadow-self is reintegrated through this process of individuation; however, we must remember that Ged’s maturation and development of a sense of self is only made possible through certain conventions of the fantasy genre, making fantasy

⁴⁶ In fact, Tolkien devotes an entire section (entitled “Children”) of his essay “On Fairy Stories,” to this very topic. See *Tree and Leaf*, 33-46.

⁴⁷ See the Introduction to Jack Zipes’s edited collection, *The Great Fairy Tale Tradition* (2001), which briefly discusses the origins of the modern fairy tale genre in sixteenth and seventeenth century Italy and France as oral stories told amongst adults and their subsequent shift to a more child-centered audience in the nineteenth century. For an even more detailed discussion of the adult-centered origins of the fairy tale, see chapter one of Zipes’s *Fairy Tale as Myth* (1994), in which Zipes asserts, among other things, that “the fairy tale is myth” (5). See also Elizabeth Harries’s *Twice Upon a Time: Women Writers and the History of the Fairy Tale* (2001), Ruth Bottigheimer’s *Fairy Godfather: Straparola, Venice, and the Fairy Tale Tradition* (2002) and *Fairy Tales: A New History* (2009), as well as Charlotte Trinquet’s “On the Literary Origins of Folkloric Fairy Tales” and Nancy Canepa’s ““Entertainment for Little Ones?”” for more evidence of the historically adult-oriented origins of the fairy tale genre.

itself the very mode through which Ged accomplishes this psycho-developmental task. To be more specific, Ged exists as a socially abjected member of his own village through his half-orphanhood and through his refusal to bend to the social conventions of his home society. If left to his own devices, Ged (or Duny, as he is known at this point in the story) may never have undergone reintegration into his own society. Furthermore, the loss of his mother is especially significant because, as Erikson claims, the child's development of the essential ability to trust (and to, therefore, not develop antisocial personality traits based on an inherent distrust of those around him) relies on the quality of early maternal care (248). However, because Ged's story is high fantasy, the conventions of that particular type of narrative—specifically, the trope of magic—intervene to make a place for Ged in his own world. For example, when Duny is still just a “tall, quick boy, loud and proud and full of temper” (2), his aunt—the village witch—discovers that he has inherent magical abilities when she catches him repeating magical commands that he had overheard her use the day before and using them to gain power over a herd of goats in the village. The fact that this intervention of magic is instrumental to the beginning of Ged's journey towards individuation is even made explicit by the text itself: “This was Duny's first step on the way he was to follow all his life, the way of magery, the way that led him at last to hunt a shadow over land and sea to the lightless coasts of death's kingdom” (5).

As I discussed in chapters two, three, and four, one of the markers for the beginning stages of individuation is the increased tendency towards differentiation from the same-sex parent. In *The Corsini Encyclopedia of Psychology* (2010), an authoritative reference tool for psychologists for over twenty-five years, psychoanalytic scholars Daniel Lapsley and Paul Stey assert in their article on Separation-Individuation that,

during the process of differentiation, “The adolescent must disengage from or transcend the internalized representation of caregivers formed in early childhood and establish a sense of self that is distinct and individuated, thereby reducing psychological dependence on parental introjects [or assimilated personality traits] for approval, self-esteem, and standards of conduct” (1). The contrast between Ged and his father is made more explicit through Ged’s gradual acquisition of magical knowledge, something his father neither understands nor necessarily approves of for his son. However, the starkest instance of contrast between Duny and his father is found in the description of the village’s conflict with the Kargish invaders that have come to occupy and pillage their land.

Though some of the villagers of Ten Alders flee in fear of the Kargs, Ged’s father decides to stay and fight. The contrast between Ged (or Duny) and his father is drawn out even further once the Kargish invaders arrive in the village of Ten Alders. Unlike his aunt, Ged is forced by his father to remain in the village. As Ged’s father and the few villagers who remain stand ready to feebly attempt to defend Ten Alders from the onslaught of the Kargs, Ged begins to weave a fog-spell that—if successful—will cover the village in a thick mist, barring the progress of the invaders and allowing the villagers the opportunity to drive them back and to reclaim their home. His father, ignorant of what Ged is doing, violently interrupts him: “Even as he [cast the spell], his father coming up behind him struck him hard on the side of the head, knocking him right down. ‘Be still, fool! Keep your blattering mouth shut, and hide if you can’t fight!’” (11). Undeterred by his father’s violent protest, Ged continues to weave the fog-spell, eventually driving out the Kargish invaders and saving his home village.

In this instance, the repeated contrast that is drawn between Ged (or Duny) and his father serves to establish the differentiation between the two that marks the beginnings of Ged's process of individuation. During the invasion, his father tries to force the child into the role that *he* believes best suits the boy; it is significant, then, that the young boy is powerless to do anything against the Kargs while he is relegated to the tasks which his father assigns him during the invasion: "[Duny's] arms so ached and trembled from that work [that his father forced him to do] that he could not hold out the spear that he had chosen. He did not see how he could fight or be of any good to himself or the villagers" (9). However, it is equally significant that when the protagonist begins to manifest his own individual identity as a mage—a role that is wholly his own—he is actually able to successfully weave the fog-spell that ends up saving the entire village. It is only through LeGuin's invocation of fantasy (i.e., magic) that Duny is able to successfully manifest his own ability. Given the text's description of Duny's refusal to bend to the conventions of his own society, it is very likely that he would have grown up with an anti-social personality that would no doubt have led him to much trouble later in life. However, LeGuin subverts the threat of Duny's possible pathological development by invoking the fantasy convention of magic and allowing the boy the mature normatively, despite his initial social ostracism. As an illustration of his maturation, when Ogion arrives at Ten Alders, he speaks with the boy's father and gives Duny his true name—Ged. This conferring of a "true" name is significant for two reasons: first, the naming of a young boy in the social context of Ged's home village is indicative of his becoming a "man." Considering that maturation is one of the central goals of psychological individuation, this naming ceremony marks a definitive step forward in

Ged's own process of self-creation. Secondly, the initiation of the process of self-identification is made manifest by this bestowing of a "true name" to the young boy; he is no longer Duny, the socially-abjected orphan child of Ten Alders. By casting off his old name—which the text tells us is "all his [mother gave] him" (3)—and abandoning his old life, Ged is taking a marked step forward in terms of his identity formation by metaphorically (in terms of his mother) and literally (in terms of his father) moving beyond his parents' influence. In his new apprenticeship with Ogion, he is now Ged, a budding young mage who has now begun a magical journey toward selfhood that will comprise the bulk of the remainder of the narrative. That Ged is still quite young when he ventures beyond the confines of his home at Ten Alders reinforces the idea that orphanhood often necessitates a sort of hyper-development that is unlike the gradual psychological progression of the typical *bildungsroman* protagonist.

Although the social customs of his village mark him as a "man" through his name-giving, the text makes it clear that Ged is far from full maturity, especially in terms of his progression towards his identity as a powerful, independent young mage. When Ged is goaded into a display of his magical prowess by a young girl from a neighboring village, she taunts him by telling him that he is "too young" (23) to perform the kinds of spells that he claims to be able to weave. Ged, in a display of his emotional immaturity, "would not endure" (23) the girl's taunts and goes to his master's bookshelf in order to glean a powerful spell from the contents of one of Ogion's ancient tomes. In his ignorance—itself an illustration of his immaturity—Ged unwittingly summons a powerful dark force that nearly consumes him before he is saved at the last minute by Ogion. The master-wizard chastises Ged for his ignorance and juvenile stubbornness:

“Have you never thought how danger must surround power as shadow does light? This sorcery is not a game we play for pleasure or for praise. Think of this: that every word, every act of our Art is said and is done either for good, or for evil. Before you speak or do you must know the price that is to pay!” (25). Ged, realizing the immaturity of his actions, yields to “his shame” (25) and lashes out verbally against his master: “How am I to know these things, when you teach me nothing?” (25). Ogion does not immediately respond to Ged’s question, but ponders the situation for some time before ultimately offering Ged an important life choice: Ged must either stay on Gont with Ogion and continue as his apprentice or travel to the Isle of Roke where he will be schooled in the high arts of magic by some of the greatest wizards in all of Earthsea. Ged ultimately chooses to go to Roke and attend their school of magic, but Ogion’s offering of this choice is important to an understanding of Ged’s continuing individuation—especially in terms of the underlying thesis of this study—because the choice that Ged makes, a choice that is initially spurred by the fantastic intervention of magic through his deadly encounter with the dark shadow-creature that he unwittingly summoned in Ogion’s hut, enables the continuation of Ged’s process of individuation by allowing him the opportunity to go to Roke and continue his progression towards self-identity.

A further illustration of the ways that magic continues to enable Ged’s individuation comes during a subsequent scene, when a strong storm nearly capsizes the *Shadow*. As the ship’s captain is on the verge of making the final decision to abandon the voyage to Roke Island and simply dock at the nearest available port, Ged “saw for a moment over the dark smoking water a light between the clouds, as it might be the gleam of sunset: but this was a clear light, not red” (34). Ged later learns that the light he saw is

only visible to those who possess inherent magical abilities and are actively seeking the Isle of Roke. In this way, the magical lighthouse allows for Ged's arrival at Roke, and thus perpetuates his move towards self-identity, a progression that begins in earnest with his arrival at Roke's school for wizards.

When Ged first departs from his shipmates aboard *Shadow* and makes his way towards the wizarding school, he is met by the doorkeeper of the institution who challenges him to enter the doorway "if [he] can" (39). Here, it should be noted that Ged is only able to enter the school for wizards by stating his true name, which is itself the first manifestation of his progress towards self-identity. The furthering of Ged's individuation continues in the scene immediately following, when he encounters another young wizard named Jasper. First, Jasper shows Ged around the grounds of the school and acclimates him to what will be his new lifestyle for the foreseeable future. When Jasper takes Ged to the wardrobe room, Ged chooses a cloak for himself and Jasper responds by informing him: "Now you are one of us" (41). Here, Ged has not only been officially established as a student at Roke's school for wizards, but he has also taken a major step towards the establishment of his own identity as a budding young mage.

Ged subsequently completes his first year at the Roke Island school for wizards, and he excels at all of the high arts that he studies during his time as a "prentice." At the end of this first year, we find Ged wandering around Roke Isle, pondering his tutelage of the past year and reflecting on his current circumstances. As he makes his way back toward the school, we are told that: "he came in the wet dusk past Roke Knoll, and saw bright werelights playing in the rain over the roofs of the Great House, and he entered there and was welcomed by his Masters and companions in the firelit hall. It was like a

homecoming to Ged, who had no home to which he could ever return” (53). This description of Ged’s frame of mind establishes two things that are ultimately important to Ged’s creating his self-identity. First, although Ged is only a half-orphan and does, in fact, have a home to return to at Ten Alders, it is clear from this passage that Ged has become—on a psychological level, at least—fully orphaned and that he has severed all connections with his home in the small village on Gont. Secondly, this brief sketch of Ged’s mental state indicates that he has moved past this sort of orphaned mentality and has become incorporated into the familial society of mages at the wizarding school.

Unfortunately for Ged, while he may have moved past the sort of orphaned mentality that consistently calls to mind the absence of family on a psychological level, the text makes it clear that he has not matured beyond a juvenile, child-like mentality, despite his technically being a “man” in terms of his home village’s social standards and his completion of his first year of magic training. Ged illustrates his own immaturity very explicitly when he enters into a heated argument with Jasper over Ged’s own innate magical abilities. Ged is goaded into action every time Jasper challenges him, and in the midst of their childish display of pettiness, Ged’s friend Vetch asks him: “will you be a *man* and drop this now?” (63, emphasis mine). Ged does not, and the events that follow illustrate Ged’s persistent immaturity during his continued antagonism with Jasper.

Angered by the egotism which Ged exhibits, Jasper challenges Ged to summon a spirit from the dead. Ged accepts Jasper’s challenge, and does indeed summon up the spirit of Elfarran, a mythical woman from one of the oldest legends in Earthsea, the *Deed of Enlad*. Unfortunately for Ged, Elfarran is not the only entity to break through the spiritual portal that Ged has created. In fact, the shadow creature that Ged accidentally

summoned long ago at Ogion's home at Re Albi follows Elfarran through the portal and attacks Ged: "it was like a black beast, the size of a young child, though it seemed to swell and shrink; and it had no head or face, only the four taloned paws with which it gripped and tore" (67). I would argue that what we are seeing here in this exchange between Ged and the shadow-creature is a manifestation of Ged being consumed by his own immaturity and childishness, something that the text itself emphasizes by describing the shadow as child-like. This event, made possible by the fantastic intervention of magic, marks a distinct step in Ged's process of individuation, and the progressiveness of this step is emphasized in the text's subsequent description of Ged's persona. The proud, arrogant, self-assured young prentice mage that accepted Jasper's challenge on Roke Knoll is now gone, and left in the wake of this tragedy that left the Archmage Nemmerle dead and Ged scarred for life is a young mage who has been very much changed by his second encounter with the shadow creature: "He had been light and lithe and strong. Now, lamed by pain, he went about hesitantly, and did not raise his face, the left side of which was white with scars. He avoided those who knew him and those who did not" (71). Though this description marks a distinctive shift in Ged's persona, it is only later after years of recovery and further studies amongst the Masters of the college that he begins to realize the gravity of his own personal changes: "Now they came back to him, on this night he was seventeen years old. All the years and places of his brief broken life came within mind's reach and made a whole again. He knew once more, at last, after this long, bitter, wasted time, who he was and where he was" (76). This epiphany serves the purpose of establishing Ged's own personal growth throughout this first crucial stage of his individuation and illustrates the fact that Ged now recognizes his own individual

development. However, though it is tempting to think that this instance demonstrates that Ged has achieved complete individuation, Ged still has more maturing to undergo before he finally establishes his “true self” at the conclusion of the novel.

When Ged turns eighteen, he is given the choice to leave Roke and to seek his way in the world as a full mage. He does just that, and the description of his departure illustrates yet another phase of Ged’s individual change and growth: “when he left again he wore a heavy, dark-blue cloak, the gift of the township of Low Torning, whereto he was bound, for they wanted a wizard there. He also carried a staff of his own height, carved of yew-wood, bronze-shod” (81). Here, we no longer see the proud, arrogant young Gontish apprentice who first entered into the wizarding school four years prior. Ged has developed into a powerful young mage, one made wiser and more humble by the lessons he has gleaned from his various Masters and from the darkness that he has unleashed into the world. Ged moves from an identity as a budding young mage into the role of the resident wizard of Low Torning. The gravity of this change in Ged’s persona is illustrated in the text’s description of his acceptance of his new position. When Ged first entered the school at Roke, he had haughty aspirations of grandeur among the wizarding community and proudly believed that his inherent magical abilities would one day make him an extraordinarily famous wizard, if not Archmage. However, when the Archmage offers Ged this job at Low Torning, he emphasizes the fact that “There is no comfort in this place [. . .] no fame, no wealth, maybe no risk” (84). Marking an explicit change in attitude, we are told that Ged replies “I will go,” and, as the narrative adds, his response was “not from obedience only. Since the night on Roke Knoll [when Ged unleashed the shadow creature] his desire had turned as much against fame and display as

once it had been set on them. Always now he doubted his strength and dreaded the trial of his power” (84). Although this change in personality is a significant step along the way towards Ged’s establishment and recognition of his own identity, it is only one step among many that will lead him along this continued path of self-identity creation.

When Ged arrives at Low Torning, he learns that the village is plagued by a fear of the young dragons that reside on the nearby island of Pendor. Ged endeavors to confront the eldest dragon and to secure its promise that the dragons will never attack the archipelago on which Low Torning stands. After arriving at Pendor, Ged is attacked by six of the elder dragon’s nine children before being accosted by their father, an ancient creature named Yevaud. Ged’s possession of Yevaud’s true name is what ultimately wins him power over the creature. In this encounter, a significant moment occurs—a moment that serves to illustrate Ged’s personal growth since his early days as a mage-scholar. When Ged confronts Yevaud with the knowledge of his name—which is tantamount to demonstrating his control over the creature—Yevaud cunningly responds by offering to tell Ged the name of the shadow-creature that seeks to destroy him.

In the context of the Earthsea mythos, knowledge of someone’s “true name”—be they human or non-human—gives one power over that creature. Here, by offering Ged the name of the creature that seeks to destroy him, Yevaud is concurrently offering Ged power over the shadow-creature. After hearing Yevaud’s offer, we are told that “Ged’s heart leaped in him, and he clutched his staff, standing as still as the dragon stood. He fought for a moment with sudden, startling hope” (100). Although Ged is tempted to abandon his quest to secure the safety of the residents of Low Torning, he ultimately decides to set aside his own selfish desires in order to keep his word with the people of

the village: “It was not his own life that he bargained for. One mastery, and only one, could he hold over the dragon. He set hope aside and did what he must do” (100). In contrast to the young boy who guilelessly opened his master Ogion’s spell-book for the purposes of expanding his own magical repertoire or the adolescent young mage who foolishly performed a dangerous summoning spell for no other reason than to prove his own power to an antagonist and a small group of his peers, we see a decidedly more mature Ged here in this exchange with Yevaud—one who altruistically chooses to protect those that he has vowed to defend over deciding to give into the selfish desire to gain power over the shadow-creature that hunts him across the entirety of Earthsea. Ged’s choice here is particularly significant in demonstrating his increasing maturity; as Anna Freud tells us, one of the more ascertainable characteristics of a child’s normal psychological development is his or her progression “from the young child’s egocentric view of the world and his fellow beings to empathy, mutuality, and companionship with his contemporaries” (64). That the illustration of Ged’s newfound altruism is demonstrated through his encounters with a dragon is significant in terms of reiterating the notion that LeGuin’s invocation of fantasy allows her orphan protagonist a space to mature along the normative path to adulthood.

This display of Ged’s maturation continues once he returns to Low Torning after securing Yevaud’s promise. After a night of celebration with the residents of the village, Ged follows through on his decision to go out into the world and seek the shadow-creature that has followed him since the day he first summoned it back on Re Albi, the home of Ogion. When Ged decides to return to Roke and seek out the counsel of the Archmage before departing on his quest for the shadow creature, he finds a ship whose

captain has heard of his deeds with the dragons and gladly accepts him aboard. However, when the ship is nearly halfway to the Isle of Roke, a dangerously strong wind comes up against the ship, stalling its progress. Contrary to earlier instances in the book, Ged is noticeably reluctant to perform magic: “Sudden great gusts came whistling out of the south, and meeting these they were driven back westward again. The clouds broke and boiled in the sky, and the ship’s master roared out ragefully, ‘This fool’s gale blows all ways at once! Only a magewind will get us through this weather, Lord.’ Ged looked glum at that” (105). We see in this instance a definitively more mature Ged than the young boy who succumbed to the taunts of the enchantress’s daughter at Re Albi or the young mage who succumbed to the pressures of Jasper’s goading on Roke Knoll. In fact, in his reluctance to perform magic in this instance, it seems that Ged has finally taken to heart the warning of his former master Ogion who once warned him that: “every word, every act of our Art is said and is done either for good, or for evil. Before you speak or do you must know the price that is to pay!” (25). Indeed, Ged’s hesitation to alter the weather while onboard the ship seems to speak to his capacity to weigh the possible consequences of his actions before simply carrying them out, thus illustrating a stark contrast between the childish orphan boy he used to be and the young man that he has become.

To add to the wisdom that Ged has garnered along his path towards individuation, we also encounter instances in the text that show us that Ged has not only moved past the naïveté of his orphaned childhood, but that he has also learned how to temper his pride along the way. In the past, Ged’s pride often got the better of him. For example, his eagerness to display his power to both the young girl at Re Albi and, later on, to Jasper on Roke Knoll is ultimately the cause of both of his terrifying encounters with the shadow-

creature up to this point in the narrative. Underlying both of these rash decisions was Ged's impatience to prove himself to everyone, and since he believed that he was destined for greatness, his overbearing pride was undoubtedly at the heart of most of the negative experiences of his youth. However, just as the text shows us that Ged has moved beyond the naïveté of his younger days, it also shows us that he has greatly diminished this detrimental, egocentric pride. For example, after Ged learns that the magic surrounding the Isle of Roke will not let him return—hence the reason for the gale-force wind that barred the ship Ged was sailing on from entering the perimeter of the island—he decides to seek passage on another ship that will take him further towards where he believes the shadow-creature lies in wait for him. To Ged's dismay, the ship that he finds is in no need of a mage, and its master does not accept the only currency that Ged has to offer for passage. Rather than succumb to egocentric pride of his youth, however, Ged offers to work as a mere oarsman without reservation: "so, laying his staff and his bag of books under the rowers' bench, Ged became for ten bitter days of winter an oarsman of that Northern ship" (111). Although Ged's overcoming of his childish pride—coupled with the wisdom that he has gained throughout his adventures—certainly mark progressive steps forward in his path to individuation, it is important to note that although readers can recognize the strides that Ged has made in his progress towards self-identity creation, Ged himself has not yet fully realized his own new identity and thus has not yet completed his journey towards individuation.

This lack of cognizance on Ged's part is made explicit in a subsequent scene, when he leaves the Oskillian ship on which he served as oarsman and makes his way to the Court of Terrenon. In this place, Ged re-encounters a familiar face from his youth—

the “Lady of O” who once visited the Isle of Roke when Ged was still a mage-scholar there. In this, the first conversation he has had with her since his days as a young prentice at the Roke school for wizards, we learn that Ged “was not himself. Not the self he had been” (120). Ged makes this lack of identity explicit when he tells the Lady of O, “I do not know what I am” (120). Here, the text makes it clear that although Ged has made significant strides in his progress towards the creation of self-identity, he has not yet manifested this identity nor has he even become cognizant of it. To make matters worse, when Ged is later pursued by the soldiers of the Lady of O’s husband, he escapes by turning himself into a hawk and flying away from the Court of Terrenon. This physical change is significant in the mythos of Earthsea because there are essentially two modes of magical transformation: there is “illusion,” in which the form of a person or object is only *seen* to have changed. On the other hand, there is what is called “true” change, in which the inherent nature of something is actually transformed through magic. In his transformation into a hawk, Ged participates in the latter of the two types of changing, and the danger inherent in this type of “true” change is made explicit when Ged arrives at his former master Ogion’s home at Re Albi. Ogion, recognizing Ged despite his altered state, thinks back on his childhood and remarks upon the dangers of this type of change: “As a boy, Ogion like all boys had thought it would be a very pleasant game to take by art-magic whatever shape one liked, man or beast, tree or cloud, and so to play at a thousand beings. But as a wizard he had learned the price of the game, which is *the peril of losing one’s self*” (135, emphasis mine). Here, Ogion’s memories serve to illustrate that this is exactly what Ged has done in his prolonged transformation into a hawk; in literally losing himself in this magical transformation, Ged reminds us that he has not yet

fully individuated. In fact, through LeGuin's use of the fantastic, I would argue that we are seeing yet another hyperbolic representation of a crucial stage of psycho-development: Erikson's "Identity vs. Role confusion" stage. In Erikson's theory, he posits the growing adolescent (or young adult) as one who will either "settle into an occupational identity" or risk losing his or her sense of self altogether (262). As Ged cannot yet settle into his "occupational identity" as a mage due to his failure to overcome his own dark side, it is only natural that we see the sort of "role confusion" that Erikson warns as a dangerous outcome of this particular stage played out hyperbolically in Ged's fantastic transformation into a hawk. Moreover, despite the great strides he has made in maturation, Ged himself makes it clear that his journey towards maturation and self-identity creation has not yet reached its conclusion when he tells Ogion: "I have come back to you as I left you: a fool" (137). Here, we realize that although Ged has certainly matured since his more former days at Re Albi, he is very much the same naïve boy that he was in his youth. One reason for this personal inertia is that Ged has not yet established his own identity, and the underlying cause behind his failure to do so lies with his failure to recognize the shadow-creature for what it is—his own dark side.

The Abject and the Self

Julia Kristeva, one of the pre-eminent postmodern theorists—especially in terms of psychoanalytic approaches to literature and culture—is most known for her concept of the *abject*, through which she attempts to further theorize the Freudian "uncanny" in light of the psycho-linguistics of Jacques Lacan. Through Kristeva's articulation of the abject, something she defines as that which "disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules" (*Powers of Horror* 4), we acknowledge that the concept

inevitably embodies all that exists outside of the self—the “not-I,” the foreign, that which is expelled from the body. Kristeva later adds a more nuanced dimension to the concept of the *abject* in *Strangers to Ourselves* (1994), her own psycho-historical approach to the socio-cultural construction of the “stranger” or “foreigner” in various cultures. In her discussion of the “foreigner”—itself a psycho-social manifestation of the abject—Kristeva asserts that this particular facet of the abject exists as “a black angel clouding transparency, opaque, unfathomable,” and that “the foreigner lives within us: he is the hidden face of our identity, the space that wrecks our abode [. . .] the foreigner comes in when the consciousness of my *difference* arises” (1, emphasis mine). This social embodiment of the abject is especially relevant to my analysis of individuation in *A Wizard of Earthsea*, as differentiation is the very process by which an individual begins to create and establish a sense of self. Moreover, this idea of projecting the undesirable aspects of our own identities onto the figure of the foreigner or stranger finds a literal illustration in the pages of LeGuin’s novel. The shadow-creature that Ged encounters and struggles to overcome throughout the majority of the text—itself a literal “black angel clouding transparency”—turns out to be none other than the abjected qualities of Ged’s own identity, giving us another example of how LeGuin’s invocation of fantasy is used to hyperbolically externalize the psycho-developmental struggles of her orphan protagonist.

Although we get hints as to the identity of the shadow creature during later parts of the narrative,⁴⁸ we learn the true nature of Ged’s nemesis towards the conclusion of the novel, when Ged engages in the final confrontation with the shadow that has haunted him throughout the majority of the narrative. We are told that: “aloud and clearly, breaking

⁴⁸ E.g., “He [Ged] saw all at once, with a qualm at his heart, how the shadow had tricked him with his own trick, bringing that mist about him on the sea as if bringing it out of his own past” (156). Here, the text is subtly hinting at the oneness of Ged and his nemesis, something Ged will not discover until later.

that old silence, Ged spoke the shadow's name and in the same moment the shadow spoke without lips or tongue, saying the same word: 'Ged.' And the two voices were one" (194). Though Ged has noticeably matured throughout the course of the novel, it is not until this climactic moment that he fully individuates. Ged could not have possibly formed a coherent sense of self prior to this encounter, as he would have been leaving out crucial aspects of his own personality. However, in confronting his shadow-self, Ged has successfully recognized both the dark and light aspects of his identity and has come to terms with the existence of both, and the text makes Ged's completed individuation explicit: "Ged had neither lost nor won but, naming the shadow of his death with his own name, had made himself whole: a man . . . knowing *his whole true self*" (196, emphasis mine).

This textual description definitively illustrates that Ged has achieved individuation and formed a coherent sense of self. That the shadow which hunted Ged throughout most of the narrative became stronger as Ged matured only serves to emphasize the idea that the shadow itself was nothing more than a peripheral embodiment of the negative side of Ged's own identity. In casting off those unwanted traits onto an external being, LeGuin gives us a very poignant (and rather literal) illustration of how social abjection functions. Although it takes Ged several years to recognize it, he ultimately comes to understand that the dark being—the "foreigner," as Kristeva would call it—is nothing more than a creation of his own abjected identity traits. It is only fitting then that Ged finally recognizes this incarnation of his own abjected qualities for what it is in the end and that he reabsorbs this expelled materialization of his own self in order to complete his individuation. As Kristeva asserts, "the foreigner comes

in when the consciousness of my difference arises, and he disappears when we all acknowledge ourselves as foreigners” (1). Accordingly, this sort of acknowledgement is exactly what happens with Ged and his shadow-self.

Most important for this study, however, is the realization that this small-scale illustration of abjection and reabsorption for the purposes of self-identity creation is only made possible through the use of the fantasy convention of magic. In other words, by casting his summoning spell on Roke Knoll in a childish attempt to impress his peers and bolster his own ego, the younger Ged unwittingly unleashes his own shadow-self and begins a process of maturation and personality reintegration that lasts throughout the remainder of the text. That Ged is able to undergo this process on an external level through the use of magic speaks to the essential role of fantasy in the process of Ged’s self-identity creation. From the discovery of his own inherent magical abilities as a young orphan boy in the village of Ten Alders, to his education in the high arts of magic on the Isle of Roke, and on to his final confrontation with the shadow-creature that ultimately proved to be nothing more than the abjected qualities of his own identity, the inclusion of the fantasy convention of magic perpetuates Ged’s individuation at each step of his journey, allowing Ged to finally establish “his whole true self” (196) by the time the novel concludes.

Conclusion

Ursula LeGuin’s Earthsea texts remain one of the most popular and widely-respected high fantasy children’s series of the late twentieth century.⁴⁹ Although

⁴⁹ In the last ten years, two adaptations of the Earthsea texts—the Sci-Fi Channel’s *Earthsea* (2005) mini-series and Studio Ghibli’s *Tales from Earthsea* (2006)—have appeared, attesting to the series’ continued popularity. Furthermore, world-renowned novelist Margaret Atwood has recently called LeGuin’s Earthsea series “one of the wellsprings of fantasy literature” when proposing *A Wizard of Earthsea* for the Wall

LeGuin's oeuvre is hardly limited to children's fantasy, it is this series of fantasy-steeped adolescent narratives that LeGuin is most known for. Perhaps the popularity of the Earthsea novels is owing to their status as definitive examples of the *bildungsroman*, or coming-of-age story. Certainly, the maturation of characters like Ged (and, in later stories, Tenar in *The Tombs of Atuan*)⁵⁰ is familiar to any reader who is either currently undergoing the psycho-developmental struggles of adolescence or who has previously experienced this sort of psychological development. However, Ged's transformation from socially abjected half-orphan into a fully-integrated member of his own society models ideal psychological development despite his initial maternal lack, for as Erikson reminds us, "only an identity safely anchored in the 'patrimony' of a cultural identity can produce a workable psychosocial equilibrium" (412).

Through this analysis, I have attempted to show how the half-orphan, through its loss of one parental figure, evokes issues of individuation. Again, in Ged's case, the loss of his mother is especially relevant because, as Erikson claims, the child's development of the essential ability to trust relies on the quality of early maternal care (248). Furthermore, as Anna Freud asserts, the "failure of the mother to play her part as a reliable need-fulfilling and comfort-giving agency will cause breakdowns in individuation" (67). Despite the possibility that Ged could develop a permanent anti-social personality based on general mistrust and the threat of these "breakdowns" in Ged's construction of a sense of self, LeGuin's invocation of formulaic fantasy conventions—in this case, Ged's use of and instruction in magic—enable fantasy (as a

Street Journal's Book Club ("Margaret Atwood Chooses *A Wizard of Earthsea*," *Wall Street Journal* Oct. 16, 2014).

⁵⁰ Tenar is the protagonist of the second novel in the Earthsea cycle, *The Tombs of Atuan* (1971). *The Tombs of Atuan* shares the coming-of-age, *bildungsroman* format of *A Wizard of Earthsea*. Even the later texts in the series deal to some extent with coming of age.

narrative mode) for resolving the issues of self-identity formation that might have never been resolved if Ged had been left to be reared as a social outsider in the custody of his abusive father. These psycho-developmental implications add to the existing critical discussion of LeGuin's Jungian influences, and, although others do not discuss the series specifically in terms of Jung's concept of individuation, I have tried to add a nuanced dimension to that critical conversation by showing how the concurrence of fantasy conventions and the orphan narrative perpetuate this process of individuation throughout texts like LeGuin's.⁵¹ Ultimately, what is important to take away from this analysis is the recognition that fantasy narratives like *A Wizard of Earthsea* serve more than just the purpose of mere escapism and, in fact, offer a supernatural means of processing childhood psycho-developmental stages like individuation for their orphan characters.

⁵¹ Other texts in which fantasy conventions (and magic, in particular) play a role in the protagonist's individuation include Boston's *Children of Green Knowe* (1954), Alexander's *Chronicles of Prydain* (1964-68), Cooper's *The Dark is Rising* (1973), Dahl's *The Witches* (1983), Rowling's *Harry Potter* series (1997-2007), and Gaiman's *Coraline* (2003), among others.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Whether we view the figure as a cultural archetype, narrative trope, or psychological *tabula rasa*, the fact is that the orphan has remained a narrative staple throughout the history of human storytelling. Perhaps Freud was correct in asserting that we all, at some point, feel as though we have been orphaned when we experience the “family romance.” Though Jung has long been abandoned by modern psychoanalysts, perhaps there is something to be said about his idea that the orphan is a heroic archetype that has become embedded into our collective unconscious. Regardless of the ideology we ascribe to the orphan’s pervasive presence throughout literature, we must admit that there is something that attracts us to this figure—otherwise, the orphan figure could never have achieved the sort of far-reaching longevity that it has over the centuries. However, we must also acknowledge that—for characteristically “comic” modes like fantasy (and especially children’s fantasy)—the use of the orphan as a protagonist carries with it intrinsic complications (i.e., its inherently tragic state). Again, invoking the orphan figure invites the destructive potential that comes in its possible pathological development; the ambivalent psychological possibilities of the orphan create a narrative conundrum—an authorial “puzzle”—for which children’s fantasy authors must select the appropriate pieces in order to reach the necessary solution.

As Anna Freud asserts, the child’s only “vital process” (in terms of psychoanalysis) is his or her progress towards maturation (55). As I have demonstrated through various claims by Anna Freud, Melanie Klein, Erik Erikson, and D.W. Winnicott, nearly every early childhood development theorist agrees that parental

attentiveness to the child's basic needs in infancy plays a fundamental role in that child's progress towards maturation; in fact, Winnicott goes so far as to claim that "the needs of infants and small children are not variable; they are inherent and inalterable" (179). The problem for the orphan child is that they do not have the fundamental parental basis to meet these "inherent and inalterable" needs, allowing for deviations from the normal path towards maturations that could lead to dangerous pathologies later in life. Therefore, for my purposes, the orphan exists as a narrative quandary—a figure that we will always return to but which must, in comic modes like children's fantasy, be allowed to develop normally in order to effect the requisite comic ending.

I have argued throughout this study that fantasy orphan narratives of the late twentieth century use some of the more formulaic conventions of the genre to enable the use of fantasy as a narrative mode for the successful resolution of child psycho-developmental stages. In all of the texts included in this study, what the authors have given us through their use of the fantasy genre are hyperbolic, externalized representations of what are typically internal psychological processes. As I have already pointed out, both early and contemporary childhood development theory tells us that there are certain psychological processes that we all undergo during childhood, regardless of our national or cultural background. These developmental struggles can include some of the more ambivalent cycles—such as regression—but can also include some of the more positive processes like overcoming separation anxiety and creating and establishing a sense of self. Using childhood developmental theory and ideas from some of the best known fantasy theorists of the late twentieth century (i.e., Todorov, Jackson, Rabkin, Attebery, Mendlesohn, and others), I have aimed to show how orphan figures in

children’s literature—like the world-renowned Harry Potter—reflect these developmental dilemmas from our childhood. Furthermore, by drawing on Attebery’s definition of fantasy as both formula and mode, I have endeavored to demonstrate how conventions of the fantasy genre—like magic, for instance—create a narrative that walks the orphan protagonist through these psycho-developmental stages, thereby allowing those child characters the opportunity to process fundamental psychological processes that might never have been resolved within the limits of other narrative modes. Ultimately, what I have tried to do in this study is to offer a more nuanced study of the orphan figure in children’s fantasy as well as a more positive and even potentially therapeutic rationale for the ever-increasing readership of children’s literature.⁵²

However, one still might ask: why is it important that the orphan overcomes these psychological struggles or why does it even matter that they do? While I have isolated specific orphans and individual psycho-developmental struggles in order to offer a study that feels more akin to the psychoanalysis that it draws so heavily upon, I would not have my approach obscure the fact that there is a larger issue at stake in these orphan narratives. In fact, we need look no further than Rowling’s Harry Potter series as a representative example of the fundamental need for the orphan to develop normatively in order to ensure the comic mode that is required of children’s fantasy literature. The stark contrast between orphans Harry Potter and Tom Riddle (or Lord Voldemort), Cat and

⁵²For studies on the increase in the adult readership of children’s literature, see, for example, Rachel Falconer’s book-length study *The Crossover Novel: Contemporary Children’s Fiction and Its Adult Readership* (2009); for more localized discussions, see Ben Summerskill’s “Playtime as Kidults Grow Up At Last” (2000), Tom Holman and Joel Rickett’s “Busy Bologna Targets Fiction” (2002), Boyd Tonkins’s “Whitbread: An Inevitable Victory for a Dark and Complex Fable” (2002) and “Once Upon a Time in the Marketing Department” (2002), Frank Furedi’s “The Children Who Won’t Grow Up” (2003), S.F. Said’s “The Grown Up World of Kidult Books” (2003), Steven Barfield’s “Of Young Magicians and Growing Up: J. K. Rowling, Her Critics, and the ‘Cultural Infantilism’ Debate” (2005), and Ruth Graham’s “Against YA: Adults Should Be Embarrassed to Read Children’s Books” (2014).

Gwendolen in *Charmed Life*, and even Ged versus his destructive “shadow,” show us what happens when the orphan is allowed a normalizing path towards adulthood; however, this contrast also shows us the destructive potential for the orphan who develops pathologically. As I have mentioned throughout the study, I believe that Attebery explains the underlying issue best when he tells us that: “the characteristic structure of fantasy is comic. It begins with a problem and ends with resolution. Death, despair, horror, and betrayal may enter into fantasy, but they must not be the final word” (15). Because children’s literature demands the comic narrative mode, the psychological struggles of the orphan—an inherently *tragic* figure—must be resolved in order to effect the comic resolution that is required of children’s literature, whether through fantasy conventions or through some other narrative device. Without direct parental influence, the healthy progression through the psycho-developmental tasks of childhood are not always *realistically* possible for orphans, which allows for the possibility of pathological orphan protagonists who could not possibly fulfill the comic function of children’s fantasy fiction—hence the use of fantasy as a mode for this sort of psychic resolution.

Fantasy and the Orphan: Some Clarifications

While I have spent the entirety of this analysis focusing on the fantasy genre, my decision to concentrate on fantasy should not be taken as an assertion that fantasy is the best or the only way that childhood developmental problems might be resolved through the narrative of children’s literature. Rather, I have chosen to focus on fantasy orphan narratives first and foremost because nearly all of the existing book-length studies on the orphan figure in both children’s and adult literature that I have located concentrate solely on realist narratives of the nineteenth century. While this trend in studies on the orphan in

works of fiction certainly makes sense in terms of the high rate of actual orphanhood during that time period, I believe that the orphan's recurrence in twentieth century fantasy narratives demands exploration. In the decidedly realist texts of the nineteenth-century, orphans were a recurring figure because the cultural narratives created during that time period reflected the significant number of actual orphans in society, although that number was not nearly as high as some of the propagandists who used the orphan cause for profit purported. However, the high rate of orphanhood and the discourse of social welfare surrounding the orphan child are not nearly so pervasive in contemporary Anglo-American society.⁵³ Despite this shift, the orphan tale has remained a recurrent cultural narrative throughout the twentieth century and even beyond, as I will demonstrate shortly. The pursuit of potential underlying causes for the orphan's persistence has served as the core purpose of my study.

From a philosophical position, some have argued that "in the twentieth century, when the death of God has been widely pronounced, the Orphan has been the dominant philosophical position" (Pearson 204). Rather than delve into a metaphysical exploration of the orphan figure, I have found that a psychoanalytic approach has been more suited to my purposes. In terms of historicity, the twentieth century has seen more large-scale military conflicts than any other hundred-year period in Anglo-American history since America established itself as an autonomous nation. Of course, with any major war comes its impact on the culture of the nations that participate in it. For twentieth-century

⁵³This diminishing of the orphan phenomenon between the twentieth and twenty-first centuries can be seen in research from AFCARS (Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System), especially in its twelfth report, which showed a persistent decline of children in foster care from the year 1998 (approx. 559,000 children) to 2002 (approx. 533,000 children). The latest AFCARS report shows that the steady decline in Anglo-American orphanhood has persisted in the last decade, with the latest recorded year (2013) reporting an approximate number of 402,378 children in foster care.

Anglo-American societies, dealing with the consequences of war has meant repeatedly confronting the psychological and emotional fallout of military battle, as nearly every decade gave way to a new international conflict.⁵⁴ Of course, when families are torn apart by the recurrence of large-scale military struggle, this destabilization of the family—undoubtedly the basis of Anglo-American society—brings up cultural anxieties regarding the stability of the family unit and, concurrently, causes individuals to question the stability of society in general.

Perhaps it is this post-war cultural anxiety that accounts for at least part of the recurrence of the orphan figure, even in a time in which the rates of literal orphanhood were significantly lower than in previous centuries. In this way, the orphan fantasy narratives that I have examined in this study could very well be a means for Anglo-American society to create a cultural narrative in which the family becomes whole once again, and the fears involving the orphan—a figure that evokes anxiety regarding the instability of the family unit—become effectively sublimated by means of the fantasy genre. After all, as Jack Zipes reminds us in his “Why Fantasy Matters Too Much,” itself an analysis of the socio-cultural uses of the fantastic in literature, “it is through fantasy that we have always sought to make sense of the world, not through reason” (78).

Therefore, it is possible that through this sort of narrative psychological sublimation—spread throughout the fabric of Anglo-American culture through the sheer pervasive

⁵⁴ As previously mentioned in the introduction to this study, military conflicts in which both the U.K. and U.S. were involved in the twentieth century include World War I (1914-1918), the Allied Intervention in the Russian Civil War (1918-20), World War II (1939-45), the Korean War (1950-53), the Vietnam War (1955-75), the Gulf War (1990-91), and the Bosnian War (1992-95). Individually, the U.K. had a lengthier history of military conflict, which included the Anglo-Aro War (1901-02), the Turkish War of Independence (1919-23), the Third Anglo-Afghan War (1919), the Irish War of Independence (1919-21), the British-Zionist Conflict (1938-48), the Suez Crisis (1956-57), the Falklands War (1982), and the Kosovo War (1998-99). The U.S. was also involved in the Banana Wars (1898-1934), the Border War (1910-19), the Bay of Pigs Invasion (1961), the Dominican Civil War (1965-66), and the Invasion of Panama (1989-90).

popularity of these children's stories—the fantasy orphan tale creates a narrative of restoration that is rife with cathartic potential for Anglo-American societies who have been jaded, disillusioned, and ravaged by both the short and long-term effects of war.

Alternatively, perhaps the orphan figure itself is nothing more than a psychological blank slate onto which child-readers can project their own developmental struggles. As Brian Attebery tells us, “the pleasure [in fantasy novels] is in seeing believable analogs of humanity acting out the patterns of fairy tale or myth—the more realistic the discourse of the actor [or character], the more strongly we identify with his shock or pleasure at finding himself transformed into actant” (86). In an analysis like Attebery's, the orphan's psychological resolution becomes the reader's, much in the way that Bettelheim argues that fairy tales can have therapeutic effects on children. On the other hand, perhaps the orphan is simply an effective narratological vehicle for enabling the magical adventures that happen *in absentia parentis* throughout children's fantasy texts. Whatever the underlying cause may be, this analysis has set out to analyze a recurrent pattern of psycho-developmental resolution in orphan fantasy texts for children and does not seek to make any sort of psychoanalytic claims towards either the child or adult readers of these popular fantasy narratives.

Future Directions

This study has been my attempt to show how fantasy genre conventions are used to enable a narrative mode which allows for the resolution psycho-developmental issues for the central orphan characters of some of the most popular children's texts of the later twentieth century. However, my examination of what occurs in these wildly successful children's fantasy narratives could hardly be called exhaustive in terms of the

possibilities for continuing to examine what is undoubtedly one of the most recurrent figures in children's literature—the orphan. Although my study has implied the possibility of therapeutic benefits as a potential rationale for explaining the prevalence (and recurrence) of the orphan figure in children's fantasy texts, there remain untapped resources for further exploration of this possibility in many areas.

One particular field that is loaded with scholarly potential is bibliotherapy, or the branch of clinical psychology that utilizes works of literature in order to allow patients to work through psychological issues. While my research has focused predominantly on what the texts themselves do, perhaps others—specifically those involved in bibliotherapeutic approaches to children's literature—could take this research to the empirical level in order to ascertain whether there is real therapeutic potential for either children or adults in reading these orphan fantasy narratives. In addition to exploring whether or not these fantasy orphan narratives actually do have ascertainable psychological benefits for their readers, other scholars could even take a gendered approach to determining the potential bibliotherapeutic uses of fantasy orphan narratives and explore whether or not the psychological benefits that might be reaped from the readership of these texts apply equally to both male and female readers. These scholars might take into consideration the focalizing characters of each orphan narrative, exploring whether the gender of each protagonist affects the bibliotherapeutic potential of the texts themselves.

In addition to the potential bibliotherapeutic applications of the ideas I have presented in this study, variations in historical approaches also offer future possibilities for research. While I have focused predominantly on children's fantasy texts of the latter

twentieth century, perhaps others might focus on earlier twentieth century orphan fantasies like L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900), Edith Nesbit's *The House of Arden* (1908) and *The Magic City* (1910), J.M. Barrie's *Peter and Wendy* (1911), Edgar Rice Burrough's Tarzan series (1914-65), John Masefield's *The Midnight Folk* (1927), Mervyn Peake's Gormenghast series (1946-59), or Tolkien's *The Hobbit* (1937) and *Lord of the Rings* books (1954-55), for example. Alternatively, one could choose to concentrate on how the orphan fantasy narrative persists through the twenty-first century in texts like Garth Nix's *The Seventh Tower* series (2000-2001), Jonathan Stroud's *Bartimaeus* series (2003-2005), Charlie Fletcher's *Stoneheart* series (2006-2007), Neil Gaiman's *The Graveyard Book* (2008), Jasper Fforde's *Chronicles of Kazam* (2010-2014), and Eva Ibbotson's *The Ogre of Oglefort* (2012). There is also much potential for further study of the orphan figure through exploration of its persistent appearance in comic books and graphic novels, from the pages of DC Comics' Superman (1938-present) and Batman (1939-present) series to Marvel Comics' Spiderman (1962-present) and Daredevil (1964-present) sagas, and even on to Japanese-based manga series like *Dragon Ball Z* (1989-95), *Inuyasha* (1996-2008), *Fullmetal Alchemist* (2001-2010), and *Naruto* (1999-2014).

Furthermore, while I have focused explicitly on orphan narratives, other scholars might choose to explore non-orphan narratives in order to determine whether my ideas on fantasy and its use as a mode for resolving psycho-developmental issues apply equally to children's texts that do not feature orphan protagonists. For example, one might examine a text like Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* (1950) to see whether the characters in that novel evoke childhood development issues and whether or not the

fantasy conventions that work to resolve those psychological dilemmas in orphan narratives might do the same for their non-orphan counterparts. One could also analyze whether or not the presence of parental figures might affect the psychological possibilities of the fantasy narrative and whether the result contributes to Lewis's continued popularity in contemporary culture.

Of course, assessment of the orphan figure in children's literature does not have to be limited to its appearance in popular fantasy texts. While I have spent my own analysis focusing on how childhood development issues are resolved through the use of fantasy conventions, perhaps others could explore whether the same holds true for some of the more popular realist children's texts of the twentieth century like Burnett's *A Little Princess* (1905) and *The Secret Garden* (1911), L.M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* (1908), Eleanor Porter's *Pollyanna* (1913), Esther Forbes's *Johnny Tremain* (1943), or S.E. Hinton's *The Outsiders* (1967). In this sort of analysis, critics might take a popular children's realist text like Jerry Spinelli's Newberry Award winning novel *Maniac Magee* (1990) and explore whether or not children's realist narratives offer the same possibilities for processing childhood psycho-developmental issues for the orphan protagonist. Furthermore, since the more practically-based realist narratives depend much more on verisimilitude than their fantasy counterparts, other critics might focus on how the realist narrative deals differently with those same psychological issues.

Closing Remarks

My aim in this study has been to draw further attention to the recurring presence of the orphan in children's fantasy and to the ways in which the orphan experience is represented in popular children's narratives of the later twentieth century, a historical

time period that saw a steep decline in the presence of actual orphans in Anglo-American society. In an age in which the legitimacy of children's literature as a branch of literary study continues to be called into question, establishing the relevancy of studies in children's literature and culture remains crucial. Children's author Natalie Babbitt once said that fantasy literature "is not a sop for the terminally optimistic but an affirmation of one of the things that makes us, as a species, unique: the always present hope that something will happen to change everything for the better" ("The Purposes of Fantasy" 180). In the twentieth century, when Anglo-American societies saw families torn apart by the emotional fallout of multiple large-scale wars, and where unprecedented, rapid rises in technology ensured the potential for alienating entire generations of people, perhaps these orphan fantasy texts provided readers with a hopeful counter-narrative to some of the literal and cultural orphanhood that resulted from these significant (and often traumatic) historical moments. If so, then the persistence of long-term wars and rapid advances in technology in Anglo-American society of the twenty-first century might also explain the endurance of these orphan fantasy narratives even in contemporary culture. Whatever the underlying causes may be, what is undeniable is that the narrative of the orphan in twentieth century children's fantasy has permeated the fabric of Anglo-American culture in wildly successful series like Rowling's Harry Potter novels and that its presence continues to manifest itself in contemporary children's fantasy fiction. While my study has included several different fantasy writers whose work approaches the genre in varying ways, my use of the psychoanalytic approach as the central means of investigation means that there are many more theoretical methods that could be applied to this orphan phenomenon. Because of this open-ended possibility for theoretical

exploration, there is clearly much more work to be done on the orphan figure in children's literature and it is my hope that this study spurs further investigation of this recurrent literary figure.

WORKS CITED

- Adorno, Theodor W. *Aesthetic Theory*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1997. Print.
- AFCARS Report*. Rep. no. 21. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 29 Sept. 2014. Web. 13 June 2015.
- Alexander, Lloyd. *The Prydain Chronicles*. New York: Guild, 1991. Print.
- Alcott, Louisa May. *Eight Cousins, Or, The Aunt-Hill*. Boston: Little, 1996. Print.
- Algeo, John. "The Nature of Fantasy." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 11.3 (1986): 155-56. Print
- Alger, Horatio. *Ragged Dick, and Mark, the Match Boy*. New York: Collier, 1962. Print.
- Apter, Terry. *Fantasy Literature: An Approach to Reality*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1982. Print.
- Ariès, Philippe. *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*. Trans. Robert Baldick. London: Vintage, 1965. Print.
- Ashley, Mike. "Dwarves." *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*. Eds. John Clute and John Grant. New York: St. Martin's, 1997. *Google Book Search*. Web. 29 July 2014.
- Attebery, Brian. *Strategies of Fantasy*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1992. Print.
- Babbitt, Natalie. "Fantasy and the Classic Hero." *Innocence and Experience: Essays and Conversations on Children's Literature*. Ed. Barbara Harrison and Gregory Maguire. New York: Lothrop, 1987. 148-55. Print.
- . "Something Has to Happen." *The Lion and the Unicorn* 9.1 (1985): 7-10. Print.
- . "The Purposes of Fantasy." *Innocence and Experience: Essays and Conversations on Children's Literature*. Ed. Barbara Harrison and Gregory Maguire. New York: Lothrop, 1987. 174-81. Print.

- Bagnall, Norma. "An American Hero in Welsh Fantasy: *The Mabinogion*, Alan Garner, and Lloyd Alexander." *The New Welsh Review* 2.4 (1990): 20-21. Print.
- Bakhtin, M. M. *Rabelais and His World*. Trans. Helene Iswolsky. Cambridge, MA: MIT P, 1968. Print.
- Banerjee, Jacqueline. "Ideas of Childhood in Victorian Children's Fiction: Orphans, Outcasts, and Rebels." *The Victorian Web: Literature, History, and Culture in the Age of Victoria*. n.p., n.d. Web. 21 Dec 2013.
- Barbaranelli, Claudio, Gian Vittorio Caprara, and Christina Maslach. "Individuation and the Five Factor Model of Personality Traits." *European Journal of Psychological Assessment* 13.2 (1997): 75-84. Print.
- Barfield, Steven. "Fantasy and the Interpretation of Fantasy in Harry Potter." *Topic 54* (Fall 2004): 24. Print.
- . "Of Young Magicians and Growing Up: J. K. Rowling, Her Critics, and the Cultural Infantilism Debate." *Scholarly Studies in Harry Potter*. Ed. Cynthia Hallett. Lampeter: Mellen, 2005. 175-98. Print.
- Barrie, J. M. *Peter and Wendy*. New York: Scribner's, 1911. Print.
- Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulacra and Simulation*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1994. Print.
- Baum, L. Frank. *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Rockville, MD: Arc Manor, 2008. Print.
- Behr, Kate E. "'Same-as-Difference': Narrative Transformations and Intersecting Cultures in Harry Potter." *Journal of Narrative Theory* 35.1 (2005): 112-32. Print.
- Bennett, Andrew, and Nicholas Royle. "The Uncanny." *An Introduction to Literature, Criticism, and Theory: Key Critical Concepts*. London: Prentice, 1995. 34-41. Print.

- Berk, Laura E. *Child Development*, 9th ed. Boston: Pearson, 2006. Print.
- Bettleheim, Bruno. *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*. New York: Knopf, 1976. Print.
- Bird, Anne-Marie. "Women Behaving Badly: Dahl's Witches Meet the Women of the Eighties." *Children's Literature in Education* 29.3 (1998): 119-29. Print.
- Bloom, Harold. "Can 35 Million Book Buyers Be Wrong? Yes." *Wall Street Journal* 11 July 2000: n.p. Web. 5 Jan. 2015.
- . "Dumbing Down American Readers." *The Boston Globe* 24 Sep. 2003: n.p. Web. 5 Jan. 2015.
- Bobby, Susan. "What Makes a Classic? Daemons and Dual Audience in Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials." *The Looking Glass: New Perspectives on Children's Literature* 8.1 (2004): n.p. Web. 5 Jan. 2015.
- Bosmajian, Hamida. "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory and Other Excremental Visions." *Lion and the Unicorn* 9 (1985): 36-49. Print.
- Boston, Lucy. *The Children of Green Knowe*. New York: Harcourt, 1955. Print.
- . *The River at Green Knowe*. New York: Harcourt, 1959. Print.
- Bottigheimer, Ruth B. *Fairy Godfather: Straparola, Venice, and the Fairy Tale Tradition*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2002. Print.
- . *Fairy Tales: A New History*. Albany, NY: State U of New York P, 2009. Print.
- Bowlby, John. *Attachment and Loss*. New York: Basic, 1969. Print.
- . "Separation Anxiety." *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 41 (1960): 89-113. Print.

- Brawley, Chris, Donald E. Palumbo, and C.W. Sullivan III. *Nature and the Numinous in Mythopoeic Fantasy Literature*. Jefferson: McFarland, 2014. Print.
- Bresnick, Adam. "Prosopoeitic Compulsion: Reading the Uncanny in Freud and Hoffmann." *The Germanic Review: Literature, Culture, Theory* 71.2 (1996): 114-32. Print.
- Burn, Andrew. "Potterliteracy: Cross-Media Narratives, Cultures, and Grammars." *Papers* 14.2 (Nov. 2004): n.p. Web. 7 Jan. 2015.
- Burnett, Frances Hodgson. *A Little Princess*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1963. Print.
- . *The Secret Garden*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1962. Print.
- Burt, Stephen. "Fighting Since Time Began: Milton and Satan in Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials." *Milton in Popular Culture*. Ed. Laura Knoppers. New York: Palgrave, 2006. 47-58. Print.
- Butler, Charles. *Four British Fantasists: Place and Culture in the Children's Fantasies of Penelope Lively, Alan Garner, Diana Wynne Jones, and Susan Cooper*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 2006. Print.
- Byam, Paige. "Children's Literature or Adult Classic? The Harry Potter Series and the British Novel Tradition." *Topic54* (Fall 2004): 7-13. Print.
- Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1972. Print.
- Campbell, Lori M. *Portals of Power: Magical Agency and Transformation in Literary Fantasy*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2010. Print.

- Canepa, Nancy L. "'Entertainment for Little Ones'? Basile's Lo Cunto De Li Cunti and the Childhood of the Literary Fairy Tale." *Marvels & Tales* 17.1 (2003): 37-54. Print.
- Carmeli, Ronnie. "Four Models of Fatherhood: Paternal Contributors to Harry Potter's Psychological Development." *Harry Potter's World-Wide Influence*. Ed. Diana Patterson. Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2009. 11-34. Print.
- Cart, Michael. "What Rowling Has Wrought." *Booklist* 15 Apr. 2004: 1438. *Gale Biography in Context*. Web. 7 Jan. 2015.
- Chaston, Joel. "Baum, Bakhtin, and Broadway: A Centennial Look at the Carnival of Oz." *The Lion and the Unicorn* 25.1 (2001): 128-49. Print.
- Cherland, Meredith. "Harry's Girls: Harry Potter and the Discourse of Gender." *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* 52.4 (Dec. 2008): 273-82. Print.
- Chevalier, Noel. "The Liberty Tree and the Whomping Willow: Political Justice, Magical Science, and Harry Potter." *The Lion and the Unicorn* 29.3 (2005): 397-415. Print.
- Clemens, Samuel Langhorne. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. New York: Grosset, 1946. Print.
- . *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. New York: Acclaim, 1997. Print.
- Clute, John, and John Grant, eds. *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*. New York: St. Martin's, 1997. *Google Book Search*. Web. 29 May 2014.
- Coats, Karen. *Looking Glasses and Neverlands: Lacan, Desire, and Subjectivity*. Iowa City, IA: U of Iowa P, 2007. Print.

- . "Underwriting the Uncanny: The Role of Children's Literature in the Economy of the Subject." *Paradoxa: Studies in World Literary Genres* 3.3-4 (1997): 489-497. *MLA International Bibliography*. Web. 25 Feb. 2014.
- Colas, Santiago. "Telling True Stories, or the Immanent Ethics of Material Spirit (and Spiritual Matter) in Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials." *Discourse* 27.1 (2005): 34. Web. 18 Nov. 2014.
- Cooper, Susan. *The Dark Is Rising*. New York: Atheneum, 1973. Print.
- Cruikshank, George, and Allen Robert Branston. *The Pleasing and Renowned History of Dick Whittington, Who Was Afterwards Lord Mayor of London: With the Surprising Adventures of His Cat*. Banbury: Rusher, 1840. Print.
- Cummins, Elizabeth. *Understanding Ursula K. LeGuin*. Columbia, SC: U of South Carolina P, 1990. Print.
- Cuneen, Sheila. "Earthseans and Earthteens." *English Journal* 74.2 (1985): 68-69. Print.
- Dahl, Roald. *George's Marvellous Medicine*. London: Puffin, 2001. Print.
- . *James and the Giant Peach*. New York: Knopf, 1961. Print.
- . *The BFG*. New York: Scholastic, 1982. Print.
- . *The Witches*. New York: Farrar, 1983. Print.
- Dash, Rajendra Kumar. "Chasing the Shadow: Is the Harry Potter Series a Political Discourse?" *Language in India* 12.3 (March 2012): 458-67. Print.
- Davies, Helen, et. al. "The 21 Best-Selling Books of All Time." *Editors of Publications International, Ltd*. 17 September 2007. Web. 7 Jan. 2015.
- Dawes, James. *The Language of War: Literature and Culture in the U.S. from the Civil War through World War II*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2002. Print.

- Deer, Patrick. *Culture in Camouflage: War, Empire, and Modern British Literature*.
Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009. Print.
- DeFalco, Amelia. *Uncanny Subjects: Aging in Contemporary Narrative*. Columbus: Ohio
State UP, 2010. Print.
- Demaue, Lloyd. "The Evolution of Childhood." *The History of Childhood*. Ed. Lloyd
Demaue. Lanham, MD: Rowman, 1974. 1-74. Print.
- Derrida, Jacques. *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the
New International*. Trans. Peggy Kamuf. New York: Routledge, 1994. Print.
- Dickens, Charles. *Oliver Twist*. New York: Dodd, 1941. Print.
- Dickerson, Matthew T., and David O'Hara. *From Homer to Harry Potter: A Handbook
on Myth and Fantasy*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2006. Print.
- Donaldson, Eileen. "Spell-Binding Dahl: Considering Roald Dahl's Fantasy." *Change
and Renewal in Children's Literature*. Ed. Thomas Van der Walt. Westport, CT:
Praeger, 2004. 131-40. Print.
- Dooley, Patricia. "Magic and Art in Ursula Le Guin's Earthsea Trilogy." *Children's
Literature* 8.1 (1980): 103-10. Print.
- Edmonds, Jeff. "Kristeva's Uncanny Revolution: Imagining the Meaning of Politics."
Psychoanalysis, Aesthetics, and Politics in the Work of Kristeva. Ed. Kelly Oliver
and S. K. Keltner. Albany: State U of New York P, 2009. 213-28. Print.
- Eisenstadt, Marvin. *Parental Loss and Achievement*. Madison, CT: International
Universities P, 1989. Print.

- Elick, Catherine. "Animal Carnivals: A Bakhtinian Reading of C. S. Lewis's *The Magician's Nephew* and P. L. Travers's *Mary Poppins*." *Style* 35.3 (2001): 454-71. Print.
- Ende, Michael. *The Neverending Story*. Trans. Ralph Manheim. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983. Print.
- Erikson, Erik. *Childhood and Society*. London: Paladin, 1977. Print.
- Falconer, Rachel. "Recasting John Milton's *Paradise Lost*: Intertextuality, Storytelling, and Music." *Critical Perspectives on Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials: Essays on the Novels, the Film and the Stage Productions*. Ed. Steven Barfield and Katharine Cox. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2011. 11-27. Print.
- . *The Crossover Novel: Contemporary Children's Fiction and Its Adult Readership*. New York: Routledge, 2009. Print.
- Fforde, Jasper. *The Last Dragonslayer*. Toronto: HarperCollins, 2014. Print.
- Fenske, Claudia. *Muggles, Monsters and Magicians: A Literary Analysis of the Harry Potter Series*. Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2008. Print.
- Fisher, Leona W. "Mystical Fantasy for Children: Silence and Community." *The Lion and the Unicorn* 14.2 (1990): 37-57. Print.
- Forbes, Esther. *Johnny Tremain*. Boston: Houghton, 1943. Print.
- Freier, Mary P. "The Librarian in Rowling's Harry Potter Series." *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* 16.3 (2014): n.p. Web. 7 Jan. 2015.
- Freud, Anna. *Normality and Pathology in Childhood*. London: Hogarth, 1966. Print.

- Freud, Sigmund. "Family Romances." *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume IX (1906-1908)*. Trans. James Strachey. London: Hogarth, 1986. 235-42. Print.
- . "Female Sexuality." *The British Journal of Psychiatry* 79.324 (1933): 192. Web.
- . *Five Lectures on Psychoanalysis*. Trans. James Strachey. New York: Norton, 1952. Print.
- . "Mourning and Melancholia." Trans. James Strachey. *The Freud Reader*. Ed. Peter Gay. New York: Norton, 1989. Print. 584-89.
- . *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Trans. A.A. Brill. New York: Macmillan, 1900. Print.
- . *The Uncanny*. Trans. David McLintock. London: Penguin, 2003. Print.
- . *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. Trans. James Strachey. New York: Basic, 1975. Print.
- Frosh, Stephen. "Hauntings: Psychoanalysis and Ghostly Transmission." *American Imago* 69.2 (2012): 241-64. Print.
- . "On Reason, Discourse, and Fantasy." *American Imago* 58.3 (2001): 627-47. Print.
- . "The Other." *American Imago* 59.4 (2002): 389-407. Print.
- Frye, Northrop. *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1973. Print.
- Furedi, Frank. "The Children Who Won't Grow Up." *Spiked* 29 July 2003: n.p. Web. 7 Jan. 2015.
- Gaiman, Neil. *Coraline*. New York: HarperCollins, 2002. Print.
- . *The Graveyard Book*. New York: HarperCollins, 2008. Print.

- Galway, Elizabeth A. "Reminders of Rugby in the Halls of Hogwarts: The Insidious Influence of the School Story Genre on the Works of J. K. Rowling." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 37.1 (2012): 66-85. Print.
- Garner, Alan. *The Weirdstone of Brisingamen: A Tale of Alderley*. New York: Walck, 1969. Print.
- Graham, Ruth. "Against YA: Adults Should Be Embarrassed to Read Children's Books." *Slate Book Review* 5 June 2014: n.p. Web. 11 Dec. 2014.
- Grimes, M. Katherine. "Harry Potter: Fairy Tale Prince, Real Boy, and Archetypal Hero." *The Ivory Tower and Harry Potter: Perspectives on a Literary Phenomenon*. Ed. Lana A. Whited. Columbia, MO: U of Missouri P, 2002. 89-124. Print.
- Griswold, Jerry. *Audacious Kids: Coming of Age in America's Classic Children's Books*. New York: Oxford UP, 1992. Print.
- Gubar, Marah. *Artful Dodgers: Reconceiving the Golden Age of Children's Literature*. New York: Oxford UP, 2009. Print.
- Gupta, Suman. *Re-reading Harry Potter*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2003. Print.
- Gurley, Anna. "Chaos and Dust: The Origins of Evil in Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Pullman's His Dark Materials Trilogy." *Philological Review* 35.2 (Fall 2009): 1-11. Print.
- Hall, Jordana. "Embracing the Abject Other: The Carnival Imagery of Harry Potter." *Children's Literature in Education* 42.1 (2011): 70-89. Print.
- Harju, Maija-Liisa. "Anthropomorphism and the Necessity of Animal Fantasy." *Towards or Back to Human Values? Spiritual and Moral Dimensions of Contemporary*

Fantasy. Ed. Marek Oziewicz. Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2006. 173-84. Print.

Harries, Elizabeth Wanning. *Twice upon a Time: Women Writers and the History of the Fairy Tale*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2001. Print.

Harrison, Barbara, and Gregory Maguire, eds. *Innocence and Experience: Essays and Conversations on Children's Literature*. New York: Lothrop, 1987. Print.

Hatlen, Burton. "Pullman's His Dark Materials: A Challenge to the Fantasies of J. R. R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis, with an Epilogue on Pullman's Neo-Romantic Reading of *Paradise Lost*." *His Dark Materials Illuminated: Critical Essays on Philip Pullman's Trilogy*. Ed. Millicent Lenz and Carole Scott. Detroit: Wayne State UP, 2005. 75-94. Print.

Hinton, S. E. *The Outsiders*. New York: Viking, 1967. Print.

Hitchcock, Peter. "Uncanny Marxism: Or, Do Androids Dream of Electric Lenin?" *Popular Ghosts: The Haunted Spaces of Everyday Culture*. Eds. María Del Pilar Blanco and Esther Peeren. New York: Continuum, 2010. 35-49. Print.

Hitchens, Peter. "A Labour of Loathing: Peter Hitchens on the Worship of Philip Pullman, Who Has Set Out to Destroy Narnia." *Spectator* 18 Jan. 2003: 18. Web. 9 Dec. 2014.

Hoffmann, E. T. A. *The Sandman*. Trans. John Oxenford. London: Chapman, 1844. *Project Gutenberg*. Web. 28 Nov. 2014.

Holden, Anthony. "Why Harry Potter Doesn't Cast a Spell Over Me." *The Guardian* 25 June 2000: n.p. Web. 5 Jan. 2015.

- Holman, Tom, and Joel Rickett. "Busy Bologna Targets Fiction." *The Bookseller* 18 April 2002: n.p. Web. 7 Jan. 2015.
- Hopkins, Lisa. "Dyads or Triads? His Dark Materials and the Structure of the Human." *His Dark Materials Illuminated: Critical Essays on Philip Pullman's Trilogy*. Eds. Millicent Lenz and Carole Scott. Wayne State UP, 2005. 48-56. Print
- Horney, Karen. *Neurosis and Human Growth: The Struggle toward Self-realization*. New York: Norton, 1950. Print.
- Hunt, Peter. *An Introduction to Children's Literature*. New York: Oxford UP, 1994. Print.
- Ibbotson, Eva. *The Ogre of Oglefort*. New York: Dutton, 2011. Print.
- Jackson, Anna, Karen Coats, and Roderick McGillis, eds. *The Gothic in Children's Literature: Haunting the Borders*. New York: Routledge, 2008. Print.
- Jackson, Rosemary. *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*. London: Methuen, 1981. Print.
- James, Edward, and Farah Mendlesohn. *A Short History of Fantasy*. Faringdon: Libri, 2012. Print.
- . *The Cambridge Companion to Fantasy Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2012. Print.
- James, Kathryn. "Crossing the Boundaries: Scatology, Taboo, and the Carnavalesque in the Picture Book." *Papers* 12.3 (2002): 19-20. Print.
- Janosik, Ellen, and Elta Green. *Family Life: Process and Practice*. Boston: Jones, 1992. Print.

- Jones, Diana Wynne. *Charmed Life*. New York: HarperCollins, 1977. Print.
- . *Howl's Moving Castle*. New York: Greenwillow, 1986. Print.
- . *The Tough Guide to Fantasyland*. New York: Firebird, 2006. Print.
- Jung, C. G. *Psychological Types: Or, The Psychology of Individuation*. New York: Harcourt, 1926. Print.
- . *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*. New York: Pantheon, 1959. Print.
- Juster, Norton. *The Phantom Tollbooth*. New York: Epstein, 1961. Print.
- Keane, Beppie. "Of the Postmodernists' Party without Knowing It: Philip Pullman, Hypermorality and Metanarratives." *Papers: Explorations into Children's Literature* 15.1 (2005): 50-58. Web. 22 Nov. 2014.
- Kidd, Kenneth. *Freud in Oz: At the Intersections of Psychoanalysis and Children's Literature*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2011. Print.
- . "Psychoanalysis and Children's Literature: The Case for Complementarity." *The Lion and the Unicorn* 28 (2004): 109-30. Print.
- Killinger, John. *The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Harry Potter*. Macon, GA: Mercer UP, 2009. Print.
- Kimball, Melanie. "From Folktales to Fiction: Orphan Characters in Children's Literature." *Library Trends* 47.3 (Winter 1999): 558-78. Web. 18 Jan. 2013.
- Kincaid, James. *Child-Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture*. New York: Routledge, 1992. Print.
- King, Shelley. "'All Wound Up': Pullman's Marvelous/Uncanny Clockwork." *Children's Literature* 33.1 (2005): 66-93. Print.
- Kingsley, Charles. *The Water Babies*. New York: Watts, 1961. Print.

- Kipling, Rudyard. *The Jungle Book*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1964. Print.
- Klein, Melanie. *Love, Guilt and Reparation: And Other Works 1921-1945*. London: Virago, 1988. Print.
- . *The Psychoanalysis of Children*. Trans. Alex Strachey. New York: Grove, 1960. Print.
- Kristeva, Julia. *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. New York: Columbia UP, 1982. Print.
- . *Strangers to Ourselves*. New York: Columbia UP, 1991. Print.
- Kuznets, Lois R. "'High Fantasy' in America: A Study of Lloyd Alexander, Ursula LeGuin, and Susan Cooper." *The Lion and the Unicorn* 9 (1985): 19-35. Print.
- L'Engle, Madeleine. *A Wrinkle in Time*. New York: Farrar, 1962. Print.
- Lacan, Jacques. "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience." *Écrits: The First Complete Collection in English*. Trans. Bruce Fink. New York: Norton, 2002. 75-81. Print.
- . "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis." *Écrits: The First Complete Collection in English*. Trans. Bruce Fink. New York: Norton, 2002. 197-268. Print.
- Laetz, Brian, and Joshua Johnston. "What Is Fantasy?" *Philosophy and Literature* 32 (Oct. 2008): 161-72. Print.
- Lakoff, George. *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2002. Print.
- Lane, Elizabeth. "Lloyd Alexander's Chronicles of Prydain and the Welsh Tradition." *Orcist* 7 (1973): 25-29.

- Langford, David. "Giants." *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*. Eds. John Clute and John Grant. New York: St. Martin's, 1997. *Google Book Search*. Web. 29 July 2014.
- . "Imaginary Animals." *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*. Eds. John Clute and John Grant. New York: St. Martin's, 1997. *Google Book Search*. Web. 29 July 2014.
- . "Talents." *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*. Eds. John Clute and John Grant. New York: St. Martin's, 1997. *Google Book Search*. Web. 29 July 2014.
- . "Weapons." *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*. Eds. John Clute and John Grant. New York: St. Martin's, 1997. *Google Book Search*. Web. 29 July 2014.
- Lapsley, Daniel, and Paul Stey. "Separation-Individuation." *The Corsini Encyclopedia of Psychology*, 4th ed. Ed. Irving B. Weiner and W. Edward Craighead. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2010. Print. 1554-55.
- Le Guin, Ursula. *A Wizard of Earthsea*. New York: Houghton, 1968. Print.
- . *The Language of the Night: Essays on Fantasy and Science Fiction*. Ed. Susan Wood. New York: Putnam, 1979. Print.
- . *The Tombs of Atuan*. New York: Atheneum, 1971. Print.
- Lehn, Antje. "Harry Potter, Spiderwick, and the Tradition of the Bestiary." *Fastitocalon* 2.1 (2011): n.p. Web. 28 Dec. 2014.
- Lewis, C. S. *The Chronicles of Narnia*. New York: Harper, 2001. Print.
- Lurie, Alison. *Don't Tell the Grown-ups: Subversive Children's Literature*. Boston: Little, 1990. Print.
- Lyotard, Jean-François, Geoffrey Bennington, and Brian Massumi. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1984. Print.

MacLeod, Ann. *A Moral Tale: Children's Fiction and American Culture, 1820-1860*.

North Haven, CT: Archon, 1975. Print.

Masefield, John. *The Midnight Folk*. London: Heinemann, 1927. Print.

Masschelein, Anneleen. *The Unconcept: The Freudian Uncanny in Late Twentieth-Century Theory*. Albany: SUNY P, 2011. Print.

Mattson, Dirk P. "Finding Your Way Home: Orphan Stories in Young Adult Literature."

The ALAN Review 24.3 (Spring 1997): 17-21. Print.

McCartney, Kathleen, and Deborah Phillips. *Blackwell Handbook of Early Childhood Development*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006. Print.

McGillis, Roderick. "Self, Other, and Other Self: Recognizing the Other in Children's Literature." *The Lion and the Unicorn* 21.2 (1997): 215-29. Print.

McLean, Kristen, and James Howitt. *Understanding the Children's Book Consumer in the Digital Age*. N.p.: Bowker, 2013. Web. 7 Jan. 2015.

Mendlesohn, Farah. *Diana Wynne Jones: Children's Literature and the Fantastic Tradition*. New York: Routledge, 2005. Print.

---. *Rhetorics of Fantasy*. Indianapolis, IN: Wesleyan UP, 2008. Print.

Mills, Alice. "Archetypes and the Unconscious in *Harry Potter* and Diana Wynne Jones's

Fire and Hemlock and *Dogsbody*." *Reading Harry Potter: Critical Essays*. Ed.

Giselle Liza Anatol. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003. 3-13. Print.

Milton, John. *Paradise Lost: An Authoritative Text, Backgrounds and Sources, Criticism*.

Ed. Scott Elledge. New York: Norton, 1975. Print.

Mitchell, J. N. "The Boy Who Would Be King." *The Journal of Popular Culture* 17.4

(Spring 1984): 134-37. Print.

- Montgomery, L. M. *Anne of Green Gables*. New York: Grosset, 1983. Print.
- Moruzi, K. "Missed Opportunities: The Subordination of Children in Philip Pullman's 'His Dark Materials.'" *Children's Literature in Education* 36.1 (2005): 55-68. Web.
- Murdoch, Lydia. *Imagined Orphans: Poor Families, Child Welfare, and Contested Citizenship in London*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2006. Print.
- Myers, Mitzi. "Storying War: A Capsule Overview." *The Lion and the Unicorn* 24.3 (2000): 327-36. Print.
- Myss, Caroline. "The Four Archetypes of Survival." *Carolyn Myss Library*. Myss.com, n.d. 2 September 2014. Web.
- Nel, Philip. *J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter Novels: A Reader's Guide*. New York: Continuum, 2001. Print.
- Nesbit, E. *The House of Arden*. New York: New York Review, 2006. Print.
- . *The Magic City*. New York: SeaStar, 2000. Print.
- Nikolajeva, Maria. *Aspects and Issues in the History of Children's Literature*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1995. Print.
- . "Harry Potter—A Return to the Romantic Hero." *Harry Potter's World: Multidisciplinary Critical Perspectives*. Ed. Elizabeth E. Heilman. New York: Routledge-Falmer, 2003. 125-40. Print.
- . *Power, Voice, and Subjectivity in Literature for Young Readers*. New York: Routledge, 2010. Print.
- Nodelman, Perry. *The Hidden Adult: Defining Children's Literature*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2008. Print.

- Noel-Smith, Kelly. "Harry Potter's Oedipal Issues." *Psychoanalytic Studies* 3.2 (2001): 199-207. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 21 Aug. 2014.
- O'Gorman, Ellen. "History as Group Fantasy." *Cultural Critique* 74.1 (2010): 117-30. Print.
- Oliver, Chantal. "Mocking God and Celebrating Satan: Parodies and Profanities in Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*." *Children's Literature in Education* 43.4 (2012): 293-302. Print.
- Oram, William. "Pullman's Matter: Lucretius and Milton in *His Dark Materials*." *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* 23.3 (2012): 418-36. Print.
- "Orphan, n. and adj." *OED Online*. Oxford UP, December 2014. Web. 27 December 2014.
- Oziewicz, Marek. *One Earth, One People: The Mythopoeic Fantasy Series of Ursula K. Le Guin, Lloyd Alexander, Madeleine L'engle, and Orson Scott Card*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2008. Print.
- Oziewicz, Marek, and Daniel Hade. "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell? Philip Pullman, C. S. Lewis, and the Fantasy Tradition." *Mythlore: A Journal of J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature* 28.3-4 (2010): 39-54. Web. 15 Nov. 2014.
- Palmer, Paulina. *The Queer Uncanny: New Perspectives on the Gothic*. Cardiff: U of Wales P, 2012. Print.
- Panos, Angelea. "Harry Potter and Friends: Models for Psychological Resiliency." *Harry Potter's World-Wide Influence*. Ed. Diana Patterson. Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2009. 169-80. Print.

- Parsons, Wendy, and Catriona Nicholson. "Talking to Philip Pullman: An Interview." *The Lion and the Unicorn* 23.1 (1999): 116-134. Print.
- Pazicky, Diana Loercher. *Cultural Orphans in America*. Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 1998. Print.
- Pearson, Carol S. *Awakening the Heroes Within: Twelve Archetypes to Help Us Find Ourselves and Transform Our World*. New York: HarperCollins, 1991. Print.
- Pearson, Lucy. *The Making of Modern Children's Literature: Quality and Ideology in British Children's Publishing of the 1960s and 1970s*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: U of Newcastle-upon-Tyne P, 2010. Print.
- Pennington, John. "From Elfland to Hogwarts, or the Aesthetic Trouble with Harry Potter." *The Lion and the Unicorn* 26.1 (2002): 78-97. Print.
- Peters, Laura. *Orphan Texts: Victorian Orphans, Culture, and Empire*. Manchester, UK: Manchester UP, 2000. Print.
- Petrina, Alessandra. "Forbidden Forest, Enchanted Castle: Arthurian Spaces in the Harry Potter Novels." *Mythlore* 24.3 (Spring 2006): 95-110. Print.
- Phillips, Adam. "The Weird, the Strange, the Uncanny." *Equals*. New York: Basic, 2002. 115-118. Print.
- Porter, Eleanor. *Pollyanna*. New York: HarperFestival, 1999. Print.
- Prinzi, Travis. *Harry Potter & Imagination: The Way between Two Worlds*. Allentown, PA: Zossima, 2009. Print.
- Propp, Vladimir. *Morphology of the Folktale*. Baltimore: Port City, 1968. Print.
- Pullman, Philip. *The Golden Compass*. New York: Knopf, 1995. Print.
- . *The Amber Spyglass*. New York: Knopf, 2000. Print.

- . *The Subtle Knife*. New York: Knopf, 1997. Print.
- Rabkin, Eric. *The Fantastic in Literature*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1976. Print.
- Rawls, Melanie A. "Witches, Wives, and Dragons: The Evolution of Women in Ursula K. LeGuin's Earthsea—An Overview." *Mythlore* 26.3-4 (Summer 2008): 129-49. Print.
- Robinson, Christopher L. "The Violence of the Name: Patronymy in Earthsea." *Extrapolation* 49.3 (2008): 385-409. Print.
- Robinson, Karen D. "His Dark Materials: A Look into Pullman's Interpretation of Milton's *Paradise Lost*." *Mythlore* 24.2 (2004): 2-16. Web.
- Rodgers, Daniel T. "Socializing Middle-Class Children: Institutions, Fables, and Work Values in Nineteenth-Century America." *Journal of Social History* 13.3 (1980): 354-67. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 5 Feb. 2014.
- Rollin, Lucy, and Mark I. West, eds. *Psychoanalytic Responses to Children's Literature*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1999. Print.
- Rosenberg, Teya, et al., eds. *Diana Wynne Jones: An Exciting and Exacting Wisdom*. New York: P. Lang, 2002. Print.
- Rowling, J. K. [as Newt Scamander, pseud.]. *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*. New York, NY: Arthur A. Levine, 2001. Print.
- Rowling, J. K. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. Waterville, ME: Thorndike, 1999. Print.
- . *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*. New York: Random, 1999. Print.
- . *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. New York: Levine, 1999. Print.
- . *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. London: Bloomsbury, 2001. Print.

- . *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. New York, NY: Levine, 2003. Print.
- . *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*. New York, NY: Levine, 2005. Print.
- . *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. New York, NY: Levine, 2007. Print.
- Royle, Nicholas. *The Uncanny*. New York: Routledge, 2003. Print.
- Rudd, David. *Reading the Child in Children's Literature: An Heretical Approach*. New York: Palgrave, 2013. Print.
- Russell, Anna. "Margaret Atwood Chooses *A Wizard of Earthsea*." *Wallstreet Journal* 16 Oct. 2014: n.p. Web. 8 Jan. 2015.
- Said, S.F. "The Grown-Up World of Kidult Books." *The Daily Telegraph* 11 Jan. 2003: n.p. Web. 7 Jan. 2015.
- Saxena, Vandana. *The Subversive Harry Potter: Adolescent Rebellion and Containment in the J. K. Rowling Novels*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2012. Print.
- Schwab, Gabriele. "Replacement Children: The Transgenerational Transmission of Traumatic Loss." *American Imago* 66.3 (2009): 277-310. Print.
- Scott, Carole. "Pullman's Enigmatic Ontology: Revamping Old Traditions in His Dark Materials." *His Dark Materials Illuminated: Critical Essays on Philip Pullman's Trilogy*. Ed. Millicent Lenz and Carole Scott. Detroit: Wayne State UP, 2005. 95-105. Print.
- Senior, W.A. "Cultural Anthropology and Rituals of Exchange in Ursula K. LeGuin's 'Earthsea.'" *Mosaic* 29.4 (1996): 101-13. Print.
- "Separation Anxiety." *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders: DSM-V*. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association, 2013. n.p. Web. 12 Dec. 2014.

- Shepherd, Lynn. "If J. K. Rowling Cares About Writing, She Should Stop Doing It." *Huffington Post* 21 Feb. 2014: n.p. Web. 5 Jan. 2015.
- Shohet, Lauren. "His Dark Materials, *Paradise Lost*, and the Common Reader." *Milton in Popular Culture*. Ed. Laura Knoppers. New York: Palgrave, 2006. 59-70. Print.
- Shortsleeve, Kevin. "The Cat in the Hat: Dr. Seuss, Nonsense, the Carnavalesque, and the Sixties Rebel." *The Oxford Handbook of Children's Literature*. Ed. Julia Mickenberg. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011. 189-210. Print.
- Siegler, Robert, et al. *How Children Develop*. New York: Worth, 2005. Print.
- Simpson, Eileen. *Orphans: Real and Imaginary*. New York: Weidenfeld, 1987. Print.
- Smith, Dinitia. "The *Times* Plans a Children's Best-Seller List." *The New York Times* 24 June 2000: n.p. Web. 5 Jan. 2015.
- Smith, Karen Patricia. "Tradition, Transformation, and Bold Emergence: Fantastic Legacy and Pullman's *His Dark Materials*." *His Dark Materials Illuminated: Critical Essays on Philip Pullman's Trilogy*. Eds. Millicent Lenz and Carole Scott. Wayne State UP, 2005. 135-59. Print.
- Smyth, A.S.H. "Pullman Gives God a Break for Easter: The Author of His Dark Materials Talks to A.S.H. Smyth about the Latest Episode in the Saga in Which He Turns towards Politics—With a Nod to *The Magnificent Seven* along the Way." *Spectator* 18 March 2008: n.p. Web.
- Sorby, Angela. "Golden Age." *Keywords for Children's Literature*. Ed. Philip Nel and Lissa Paul. New York: New York UP, 2011. 96-99. Print.
- Spillius, Elizabeth Bott. "Freud and Klein on the Concept of Phantasy." *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 82.2 (2001): 361-73. Web.

- Spinelli, Jerry. *Maniac Magee*. Boston: Little-Brown, 1990. Print.
- Spyri, Johanna. *Heidi*. Trans. Nathan Dole. New York: Knopf, 1984. Print.
- Stableford, Brian. "Demons." *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*. Eds. John Clute and John Grant. New York: St. Martin's, 1997. Web. 27 Nov. 2014.
- . "Invisibility." *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*. Eds. John Clute and John Grant. New York: St. Martin's, 1997. *Google Book Search*. Web. 29 July 2014.
- Stott, Jon C. "Midsummer Night's Dreams: Fantasy and Self-Realization in Children's Fiction." *The Lion and the Unicorn 2* (1977): 25-39. Print.
- Summerskill, Ben. "Playtime as Kidults Grow Up at Last." *The Observer* 23 July 2000: n.p. Web. 7 Jan. 2014.
- Swinfen, Ann. *In Defence of Fantasy: A Study of the Genre in English and American Literature since 1945*. London: Routledge, 1984. Print.
- Tavormina, M. Teresa. "A Gate of Horn and Ivory: Dreaming True and False in Earthsea." *Extrapolation* 29.4 (Winter 1988): 338-348. Print.
- Thiel, Elizabeth. *The Fantasy of Family: Nineteenth-Century Children's Literature and the Myth of the Domestic Ideal*. London: Routledge, 2008. Print.
- Thomas, Jeffrey E., and Franklin G. Snyder. *The Law and Harry Potter*. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic, 2010. Print.
- Todorov, Tzvetan. *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*. Trans. Richard Howard. Cleveland: P of Case Western Reserve U, 1973. Print.
- Tolkien, J. R. R. "Mythopoeia." *Tree and Leaf: Including the Poem Mythopoeia; The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth, Beorhthelm's Son*. London: Harper, 2001. 84-85. Print.

- . "On Fairy Stories." *Tree and Leaf: Including the Poem Mythopoeia; The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth, Beorhthelm's Son*. London: Harper, 2001. 3-83. Print.
- . *The Hobbit, Or, There and Back Again*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1966. Print.
- Tonkin, Boyd. "Once Upon a Time in the Marketing Department." *The Independent* 6 Nov. 2002: n.p. Web. 7 Jan. 2015.
- . "Whitbread Award: An Inevitable Victory for a Dark and Complex Fable." *The Independent* 23 January 2002: n.p. Web. 7 Jan. 2015.
- Trinquet, Charlotte. "On the Literary Origins of Folkloric Fairy Tales: A Comparison between Madame d'Aulnoy's 'Finette Cendron' and Frank Bourisaw's 'Belle Finette.'" *Marvels and Tales* 21.1 (2007): 34-49. Print.
- Trites, Roberta Seelinger. "The Uncanny in Children's Literature." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 26.4 (Winter 2001): 162. Print.
- Tucker, Nicholas. "The Rise and Rise of Harry Potter." *Children's Literature in Education* 30.4 (1999): 221-34. Print.
- Turner-Vorbeck, Tammy. "Pottermania: Good, Clean Fun or Cultural Hegemony?" *Harry Potter's World: Multidisciplinary Critical Perspectives*. Ed. Elizabeth E. Heilman. New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2003. 13-24. Print.
- Wall, Barbara. *The Narrator's Voice: The Dilemma of Children's Fiction*. New York: Palgrave, 1991. Print.
- Ward, Michael. "Philip Pullman's Attack on Narnia: A Defense." *The Mars Hill Review* 21 (2003): n.p. Web. 24 Jan. 2014.
- Warner, Susan. *The Wide, Wide World*. London: Nisbet, 1853. Print.

- Weiss, Shira Wolosky. *The Riddles of Harry Potter: Secret Passages and Interpretive Quests*. New York: Palgrave, 2010. Print.
- Welch, Dave. "Philip Pullman Reaches the Garden." *Powells Books Blog*. Powell, 2006. Web. 9 Dec. 2014.
- West, Mark I. *Roald Dahl*. New York: Twayne, 1992. Print.
- . "The Grotesque and the Taboo in Roald Dahl's Humorous Writings for Children." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 15.3 (Fall 1990): 115-16. Print.
- . "Regression and Fragmentation of the Self in *James and the Giant Peach*." *Children's Literature in Education* 16.4 (Winter 1985): 219-25. Print.
- White, James M. *Dynamics of Family Development: A Theoretical Perspective*. New York: Guilford, 1991. Print.
- Whited, Lana A. *The Ivory Tower and Harry Potter: Perspectives on a Literary Phenomenon*. Columbia: U of Missouri, 2002. Print.
- Williams, Lydia. "We Are All in the Dumps with Bakhtin: Humor and the Holocaust." *Children's Literature and the Fin de Siècle*. Ed. Roderick McGillis. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2003. 129-38. Print.
- Windling, Terri. "Lost and Found: The Orphaned Hero in Myth, Folklore, and Fantasy." *Journal of Mythic Arts* n. vol. (Summer 2007). Web. 15 Jan. 2013.
- Winnicott, D.W. *The Child and the Outside World; Studies in Developing Relationships*. London: Tavistock, 1957. Print.
- . *The Child, the Family, and the Outside World*. London: Pelican, 1964. Print.
- Wolfreys, Julian. *Victorian Hauntings: Spectrality, Gothic, the Uncanny, and Literature*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2002. Print.

- Yeo, Michelle. "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets: Feminist Interpretations/Jungian Dreams." *SIMILE: Studies in Media & Information Literacy Education* 4.1 (2004): 1-10. Print.
- Yolen, Jane. *Sister Light, Sister Dark*. New York: Tor, 1988. Print.
- . "Traveling the Road to Ithaca." *Innocence and Experience: Essays and Conversations on Children's Literature*. Ed. Barbara Harrison and Gregory Maguire. New York: Lothrop, 1987. 188-89. Print.
- Ziarek, Ewa Plonowska. "The Uncanny Style of Kristeva's Critique of Nationalism." *Postmodern Culture* 5.2 (1995): n. pag. Web. 20 May 2014.
- Zipes, Jack. *Fairy Tale as Myth, Myth as Fairy Tale*. Lexington, KY: U of Kentucky P, 1994. Print.
- . *The Great Fairy Tale Tradition: From Straparola and Basile to the Brothers Grimm: Texts, Criticism*. New York: Norton, 2001. Print.
- . "Why Fantasy Matters Too Much." *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* 10.4 (2008): n. pag. Web. 20 May 2014.