



The Ivory Tower and Harry Potter: Perspectives on a Literary Phenomenon

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In this volume, contributors from Great Britain, the United States and Canada offer a serious critical examination of J.K. Rowling's "Harry Potter" books from a broad range of perspectives, including literature, folklore, psychology, sociology, and popular culture. A significant proportion of the book explores the Harry Potter series' literary ancestors, such as magic and fantasy works by Ursula K. LeGuin, Monica Furlong, and Jill Murphy, and even previous works about such topics as the British boarding school. Rowling's use of folkloric devices is examined in detail, particularly in terms of how these elements increase the books' appeal for children. Language issues such as translation and the handling of British slang in US and foreign-language editions of the books are also addressed. The books' appeal for adolescent boys, who have not recently been a presence in the reading market, is explored from a cultural frame of reference, and gender dynamics are discussed from the standpoint of contemporary feminist literary theory, focusing on the character of Hermione Granger. The concluding essays survey religious objections to the book, as well as the moral order presented by Rowling within the series. Written to ensure its accessibility not only to serious literary scholars but also to the general Potter reader, this volume should appeal to a broad audience.

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