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Salem Press Announces *Critical Insights: The Harry Potter Series*

Over the last twenty years, J. K. Rowling has captured the hearts and imaginations of readers around the world with her inimitable *Harry Potter* series, an adventurous tale of a young wizard's coming of age. In the course of seven books, this epic fantasy saga tells the story of Harry Potter, a boy wizard at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Together with his friends, Hermione Granger and Ronald Weasley, as well as other various modern-day wizards, witches, and Muggles, Harry fights an ongoing battle against Lord Voldemort, a dark wizard with an obsessive quest for power and immortality.

Edited by Lana A. Whited (English Professor and Director of the Boone Honors Program at Ferrum College) and M. Katherine Grimes (Associate English Professor and English Program Coordinator at Ferrum College), *Critical Insights: The Harry Potter Series* presents a collection of essays by established international scholars in such fields as children's literature, fantasy, and even Harry Potter studies. The newest addition to Salem Press' acclaimed *Critical Insights* series, this volume provides sixteen insightful essays that dig deep at the heart of J. K. Rowling and her fantastical magnum opus, examining both author and work from a multitude of angles.

The essays included in this brand-new compilation approach Rowling's seven-volume series in a number of ways. First, several essayists have provided background on J. K. Rowling and her works, from her first creative writings at the age of six to the creation of *Pottermore*, a website for current stories set in the *Harry Potter* universe. In "The Sustaining Power of Imagination," Laurie Adams provides a detailed biography of Rowling, surveying her life and the works, books, and articles written about the *Harry Potter* series. In his essay "J. K. Rowling: Author(ing) Celebrity," Saradindu Bhattacharya discusses the way in which Rowling's fame contributes to *Harry Potter*'s, and vice versa. Editor Lana A. Whited examines in depth the popular and critical reception of the series in her essay, "A Survey of the Critical Reception of the Harry Potter Series," and, in the introduction, M. Katherine Grimes suggests educational and scholarly ways to view the books.

Second, in the **Critical Contexts** section of this volume, four essays by current scholars offer differing perspectives on the cultural, historical, and critical contexts of *Harry Potter*. In her essay, "'Contemporary' Does Not Mean 'Modern': The *Harry Potter* Series as a Sampler of Western Literary Traditions," Editor M. Katherine Grimes asserts that the series is in fact a complex compendium of classics from the world of Western literature. In "The Once and Future Wizard: Arthurian (and Anti-Arthurian) Themes in the *Harry Potter* Series," Danny Adams

explores relationships between the series and the well-known legends of King Arthur. In “The Once and Future Wizard: Moral Ambiguity in Authority Figures in *The Hunger Games*, *Divergent*, and the *Harry Potter* Series,” Crystal Wilkins compares and contrasts the series to other popular, contemporary young adult works. In “A Survey of the Critical Reception of the *Harry Potter* Series,” Editor Lana A. Whited reviews how both the academic community and the general public handled the books’ release as a whole.

Finally, in the **Critical Readings** section of this volume, topics from renowned literary scholars vary greatly, from role models in Christina Vourcos’ “Mentoring in the Wizarding World: Dumbledore and His Literary Ancestors” to religion in Jenn Coletta’s “Morals vs. Christianity: How Harry Potter Goes Beyond Goodness to Godliness” to gender roles in Jeanne Hoeker LaHaie’s “Mums Are Good: *Harry Potter* and the Traditional Depictions of Women” and Danielle Bienvenue Bray’s “Rock Cakes and Reciprocity: Food and the Male Performance of Nurturing in *Harry Potter*.” Other essays discussed in this section include “Growing Up with *Harry Potter*: What Motivated Youth to Read the Harry Potter Series?” by Colette Drouillard, “The Dark Lord and the Prince: Machiavellian Elements in *Harry Potter*” by Todd J. Ide, “From Sorcerer’s Stone to Deathly Hallows: The Failed Quest for Immortality in the *Harry Potter* Series” by Editor Lana A. Whited, and more.

Each essay in *Critical Insights: The Harry Potter Series* is 2,500 to 5,000 words in length, and all essays conclude with a list of Works Cited and detailed endnotes.

Also included in this volume are **Appendixes** to provide readers with additional information and opportunities for further research, including a **Chronology of J. K. Rowling’s Life**, a list of **Works by J. K. Rowling**, an annotated **Bibliography**, biographies of the **Editors** and **Contributors**, and an alphabetical **Index**.

The *Critical Insights* Series distills the best of both classic and current literary criticism of the world’s most studied literature. Edited and written by some of academia’s most distinguished literary scholars, *Critical Insights: The Harry Potter Series* provides authoritative, in-depth scholarship that students and researchers will rely on for years. This volume is destined to become a valuable purchase for all.

Free Online with Print Purchase

In addition, *Critical Insights: The Harry Potter Series* comes with complimentary online access via <http://online.salempress.com>. A single purchase of the printed version is all it takes to gain access to this important title on the web.

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