The Librarian in Rowling's Harry Potter Series

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Abstract: In her article "The Librarian in Rowling's Harry Potter Series" Mary P. Freier discusses Hermione Granger's skills as a librarian and researcher which lead to the defeat of Lord Voldemort. In each novel in the series, Hermione's research provides the necessary information for the solving of the mystery. Throughout the series, Hermione proves to be the only character who can use books effec-tively without putting herself or others in danger. Hermione begins the series as a child who loves the library, but does not always know how to use it effectively, while Madam Pince begins the series as a stereotypical librarian and disappears entirely by *The Deathly Hallows*. Hermione's development as a character and scholar occurs as Madam Pince, the Hogwarts librarian, becomes even more of a stereo-type and ultimately disappears. In *The Deathly Hallows*, Hermione acts as the librarian for the search for the Deathly Hallows and the subsequent destruction of Lord Voldemort by not only using a library effectively, but creating her own library, as well as locating needed information outside a library.

Mary P. FREIER

The Librarian in Rowling's Harry Potter Series

In J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series Hermione Granger's skills as a librarian and researcher lead to the defeat of Lord Voldemort. In each novel in the series, Hermione's research provides necessary information for the solving of the mystery: "The answer invariably is in a book, but Hermione has to go and find it" (Cheeser <http://www.hpana.com/news.19542.html>). Hermione must locate information in books, because she proves to be the only character who can use books effectively without putting herself or others in danger. Hermione's development as a character and librarian occurs as the stereotypical librarian, Madam Pince, becomes even more of a stereotype and ultimately disappears. Hermione begins the series as a child who loves the library but cannot always use it effectively, while Madam Pince begins the series as a stereotypical librarian and disappears entirely by *The Deathly Hallows*. In *The Deathly Hallows*, Hermione acts as the librarian for the search for both the Deathly Hallows and the Horcruxes by creating her own library, as well as locating needed information. Over the course of the seven novels, Hermione develops into the Ideal Librarian in contrast to the stereotypical librarian.

Hermione is associated directly with the Hogwarts Library throughout the series and she always goes to the library to look for solutions to problems. She even meets her first boyfriend, Viktor Krum, in the library (*Goblet* 422). Ron says that Hermione's behavior can be summed up as "When in doubt, go to the library" (*Chamber* 255) and at one point in *The Deathly Hallows* Harry thinks that "She sounded much more like her old self than she had done of late; Harry half expected her to announce that she was off to the library" (318). Hermione uses the Hogwarts Library to make connections between texts and reality, as well as between texts and other texts. This use of text recalls various interpretations of the library as a place where scholars can interact with texts and where texts reference one another creating a scholarly conversation (Radford 631; Vilariño Picos <http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.1912>). Both Ernelle Fife and Leslee Friedman refer to Hermione as the "Ideal Reader" because of her intertextual abilities (Fife 142; Friedman 193, 203). But Hermione goes beyond being the Ideal Reader: she becomes the Ideal Librarian.

Hermione undergoes a transformation as the series progresses. Both Fife and Eliza T. Dresang posit that early in the series, her displays of intelligence are "annoying," but that, in the later novels as she matures, her intelligence becomes a virtue (Fife 151-52; Dresang 221-22). Katrin Berndt attributes this development to improving "self-confidence" because she "learns to trust both her instincts and her intellect" (164). However, Hermione's intelligence is most often linked to books and the library and her transformation is tied to both. While Hermione is tied closely to the library and reading, she never actually creates her own texts or stories. Hermione's lack of writing is significant because it differentiates her from the likes of Rita Skeeter and Dolores Umbridge (see Friedman 193), and because, in children's fiction, the use of metafiction, the act of writing stories, as well as reading them is particularly empowering (Moss 91). Hermione, however, is empowered by merely relating to texts, an activity which can show a subversive but legitimate questioning of a text's authority, or even respect for a flawed source of information (Nelson 230-33; Sanders 349, 357-58). While Hermione's reading certainly fits the pattern, she never writes her own story and creates only study schedules and class essays.

Scholarly articles and treatises are another form of writing in the series, still another form in which Hermione takes no part. We should find this omission surprising, since Harry describes Hermione as the brightest witch in his class (*Half-Blood* 70). The professional scholars in the series, the faculty of Hogwarts, also appreciate Hermione's intellectual gifts, but they never cultivate her as a future member of the Hogwarts faculty. Depictions of the Hogwarts faculty at Hermione's age bear no resemblance to Hermione, either in action or character traits. Albus Dumbledore was publishing in scholarly journals and carrying on correspondence with other scholars before he had left Hogwarts (*Deathly* 17). Neville Longbottom, who later becomes a Hogwarts professor (*Deathly* 757), is introduced originally as a near-Squib (*Sorcerer's* 125) whose only talent is herbology. Hermione is recognized for her intelligence and her abilities in all areas of witchcraft and wizardry (with the exception of divination), but she is never considered as a future member of the Hogwarts faculty, because Hermione's role is to put others in contact with information as a librarian and thus not a scholar.

Part of Hermione's librarianship is embodied in her use of books. Most of the written information the children use throughout the series comes in the form of books, although Rowling also depicts wizard newspapers, magazines, and scholarly journals. There are studies about Rowling's portrayal of written texts and Elizabeth Teare and Lisa Hopkins recognize a "book culture" in the novels (Teare 336; Hopkins 29; on children and the Potter series, see, e.g., Andersen <http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.1259>). For example, Ron's Aunt Muriel is excited about the prospect of the upcoming biography of Dumbledore: "I must remember to place an order at Flourish and Blotts!" (*Deathly* 153). Although it is clear that witches and wizards read for pleasure as well as information, Hermione's study habits are often made fun of early in the series and "book learning" is portrayed as inferior to bravery, strength, morality, or even good fortune (see Birch). A significant part of this critical discussion of books focuses on gender: Charles Elster, examining the early novels, claims that girls like Hermione are shown as successful students as opposed to boys like Harry and Ron, who are shown to be "successful at adventures" (208). Even detecting skills are considered gender-specific in these discussions: Hermione, as a girl-sleuth, typically uses "intellect, perseverance, and guile" as opposed to a boy sleuth who typically uses "powers, daring, and might" (Andrade 164-65, 177). Friedman notes that relationships with the written word in the series are gendered in the sense that the boys trust the handwritten, personal word, while the girls trust the printed, authoritative text (196).

I am not convinced that the representation of "book learning" is so tightly tied to gender. The series does depict texts as problematic, physically dangerous, emotionally damaging, untrustworthy as sources, or all of the above (see Friedman 198-99; Do Rozario 214-15; Schanoes 131, 141-42). However, books possess these qualities despite the gender of the reader. Books, unlike periodical publications such as *The Daily Prophet* and *Witch Weekly*, are often presented as nearly alive and as dangerous. They scream (*Sorcerer's* 206), wail (*Half-Blood* 381), and, in the case of *The Monster Book of Monsters*, "bite," "scuttle," attack people, and even attack one another (*Prisoner* 13, 53; *Deathly* 95). Early in the series, Ron warns Harry about the dangers of books: "there was one that burned your eyes out. And everyone who read *Sonnets of a Sorcerer* spoke in limericks for the rest of their lives. And some old witch in Bath had a book that you could never stop reading! You just had to wander around with your nose in it, trying to do everything one-handed" (*Chamber* 230-31). This association of books with danger might be Rowling's response to the accusations that her books are dangerous (Schanoes 139) or a suggestion that information can be harmful and should be treated with care (Maier 17). But these warnings are gender-neutral: books usually have identical effects on both men and women. Hermione is unusual because she is the only character, male or female, who can relate to books without putting herself or others in danger.

Ginny Weasley puts the entire school in danger through her encounter with Tom Riddle's diary in *The Chamber of Secrets*. When Ginny writes in the diary it nearly takes her life in order to embody its piece of Voldemort's soul. This journal is, of course, much more than a book: it is a Horcrux, a powerful magical object. However, even non-magical books can be dangerous, as is shown in Harry's relationship with the potions book in *The Half-Blood Prince*. He comes to think of the book as a mentor: whenever he has a problem, he consults it "hoping that the Prince would have scribbled something useful in a margin, as he had done so many times before" (*Half-Blood* 447). He even wonders if the Half-Blood Prince might be his father, although he knows that his father never showed a particular talent for potion-making. When he must part with the book after he tries a potentially fatal spell he finds in it, he grieves, for the book "had taught Harry so much … [and] had become a kind of guide and friend" (*Half-Blood* 525). This book has no magical powers, and Harry realizes that his own uncritical attitude toward the book created the problem: "In spite of the increasing nastiness of those scribbled spells, he had refused to believe ill of the boy who had been so clever, who had helped him so much" (*Half-Blood* 637). Harry's attempt to interact with a book, even a book that is not magical, is nearly as dangerous as Ginny's experience with Tom Riddle's diary, because Harry did not examine the book's information critically. Hermione, on the other hand, examines the book for magical powers, researches the Prince, and discovers that he is Harry's nemesis, Professor Snape (*Half-Blood* 193, 637-38). Unlike Harry and Ginny, Hermione recognizes the need to examine books critically both as objects and as information, because she is not only a critical reader, but a librarian whose job includes evaluating texts.

Hermione reads, but she also interacts with texts critically and evaluates all of the information given rather than simply accepting or dismissing the whole publication. While Harry considers the act of reading the potions book for pleasure an exception to normal behavior, it is typical behavior for Hermione who is "simply weird that way" (*Half-Blood* 237-38). She is the first of the Gryffindors to subscribe to the *Daily Prophet* (*Goblet* 340), although she knows it distorts the truth. She continues to read and reread *Hogwarts: A History* even after she realizes that it leaves out the house elves and possibly other less flattering aspects of the school (*Goblet* 238). Because of her all-embracing yet critical reading, she recognizes the value of Rita Skeeter's malicious biography of Dumbledore, and reads it cover to cover, while Harry cannot bring himself to read it at all (*Deathly* 393-94). In this regard, Hermione acts as the librarian who finds relevant information in even flawed sources and Hermione's acceptance of flawed sources reinforces her status as librarian. Throughout the novels, she expresses her concern about censorship and freedom of information. As Jennifer Flaherty notes, Hermione is outraged by the suppression or distortion of information in *The Order of the Phoenix* (93, 96). Her reaction to censorship is a librarian's reaction. Librarians kept the Harry Potter books on library shelves because of their opposition to censorship in general (see Nel 57). Hermione looks for value in all sources whether they are deemed scholarly or not.

Hermione also takes Dumbledore's bequest of *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* seriously, in spite of Ron's suggesting that reading children's stories might not be the most productive way to locate the Horcurxes (*Deathly* 202). Her study rewards her with the discovery of the handwritten, non-runic symbol at the top of the first page of "The Tale of Three Brothers"—the symbol also seen in the reproduction of Dumbledore's note in Skeeter's biography. Hermione makes the connection between the two texts, thus leading to the conclusion that Dumbledore believed in the existence of the Deathly Hallows (*Deathly* 394) and she uses the handwritten symbol at the top of "The Tale of Three Brothers" as Harry used the handwritten annotations in the potions book, but, in contrast to Harry's trust in the potions book, does not rely on the existence of the symbol alone. She verifies what is, an unbelievable theory by interviewing Xenophilius Lovegood, who explains to her that some people believe that the Hallows actually exist (*Deathly* 406). Thus as a good librarian Hermione considers all possibilities for sources.

Hermione's research is also a link to her creator, Rowling: "I might just have been a tiny bit Hermione-ish. I always felt I had to achieve, my hand always had to be the first to go up, I always had to be right" (Rowling qtd. in Fraser 23). The connection runs deeper, however, than anxious overachieving. Rowling describes the process of creating the world of the novels as "feeling like research" rather than invention because she was trying to discover why Harry was where he was (Rowling qtd. in Fraser 39). In other words, Rowling's creative process was like the investigation of the need for information and not the creation of an imaginary world. As a former researcher for Amnesty International (Nel 22), Rowling recognizes and appreciates research. Hermione learns to conduct research effectively over the course of the seven novels. María Teresa Vilariño Picos suggests that the library acts as an "ally" for children (<http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.1912>), but in the case of Hermione it is more of an adversary that she must conquer. Early in the series, Hermione finds the library difficult to use. In *The Sorcerer's Stone*, she has a search strategy planned (she makes a list of subjects and titles), but it is not effective (197-98). In *The Prisoner of Azkaban*, she cannot find an efficient way to locate the information needed to exonerate Buckbeak and in *The Goblet of Fire* she cannot find a way to help Harry breathe underwater. By the end of *The Goblet of Fire*, however, Hermione has mastered the Hogwarts Library. When the children cannot figure out how Rita Skeeter could possibly know what is happening at Hogwarts, Harry makes a remark about "bugging," and Hermione goes to the library to research Animagi and the regulations governing them. Hermione's research is successful, and she catches Rita as she spies on Hogwarts in the form of a beetle (*Goblet* 547-48, 727-28).

As Hermione masters the Hogwarts Library, she learns its limitations. She becomes frustrated by the inability of the Hogwarts Library to yield useful answers: in *The Goblet of Fire*, "She seemed to be taking the library's lack of useful information on the subject as a personal insult; it had never failed her before" (486) and in *The Half-Blood Prince*, "the Hogwarts library had failed Hermione for the first time in living memory" (381). These failures are the library's, not Hermione's. Its collections are apparently limited: in *The Order of the Phoenix*, Hermione is delighted to find that the Room of Requirement contains a library of books on the topic of Defense against Dark Arts (390). If the Hogwarts Li-

brary had a sufficient collection on the subject of Defense of Dark Arts, the books would not have appeared in the Room of Requirement.

Access and use of information become increasingly important as the series progresses, to the point that *The Deathly Hallows* is a book about research. By this time, Hermione has developed into the librarian who can most effectively locate and use information, but she also proves that she needs a better library and can create it. She has become the Ideal Librarian. By the beginning of *The Deathly Hallows*, Hermione has already learned how to create and destroy Horcruxes. Although books on the subject were no longer available in the Hogwarts Library, Hermione concluded that the books must be in Dumbledore's study after his death. She extracted them with a simple *Accio* spell: "I just did a Summoning Charm. You know—*Accio*. And—they zoomed out of Dumbledore's study window right into the girls' dormitory" (*Deathly* 102). Hermione also seems to have stumbled upon the easiest way to conduct a library search in the Wizarding World, since her charm managed to select only the books about Horcruxes, but not all of the books in Dumbledore's study.

The Hogwarts Library is not missed in *The Deathly Hallows*, because, as the Ideal Librarian, Hermione knows how to build her own library collection as well as how to locate relevant information effectively. She selects the appropriate resources for the journey, so many that Ron comments on "hunting down Voldemort in a mobile library" (95). But the books she selects prove necessary to their quest: for example, the Horcrux books and *Spellman's Syllabary* (95-96), which becomes vital as Hermione translates the original runic version of *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*. Hermione also discovers new resources along the journey. She borrows Kreacher's copy of *Nature's Nobility: A Wizarding Genealogy*, which becomes useful as it proves that the Peverell family might well have been the family of the three brothers of the Hallows (427). She also grabs Bathilda Bagshot's copy of Rita Skeeter's biography of Dumbledore (352), which provides information about Dumbledore's early life.

Rita's biography is a particularly problematic source. Rita is apparently the Kitty Kelley of the Wizarding world who writes unauthorized biographies of famous wizards such as the previously published *Armando Dippet: Master or Moron?* (*Deathly* 252). Rita does extensive research on her books, but she relies less on archives and libraries and more on personal interviews and Veritaserum, as well as her QuickQuotes Quill, whose veracity cannot be trusted (*Deathly* 355, 24; *Goblet* 266-67). Her use of sources is actually abuse: her thank-you note to Bathilda Bagshot reads "You said everything, even if you don't remember it, Rita" (*Deathly* 352). Rita seems most interested in the less flattering aspects of Dumbledore's life and in denigrating his achievements. However, although the biography is suspect, Hermione reads it with the same critical attention she bestows on other, less dubious texts. It reveals Dumbledore's past, information that she passes on to Harry so that he can eventually defeat Voldemort (*Deathly* 202). Hermione houses her library in her beaded bag with the use of an Undetectable Extension Charm. She has even arranged the books in order, although, when she shakes the bag, "it echoed like a cargo hold as a number of heavy objects rolled around inside it. 'Oh, damn, that'll be the books,' she said, peering into it, 'and I had them all stacked by subject'" (*Deathly* 162). The destruction of the order of her library doesn't disturb her much, nor does it impede her ability to retrieve information. As the Ideal Librarian, Hermione is not the stereotypical librarian, who is more concerned about order than in providing information. That role is taken by the Hogwarts librarian, Madam Pince.

Marie L. Radford and Gary P. Radford examined the stereotypes of libraries and librarians in popular culture and describe the stereotypical library as a complete, perfectly organized collection that inspires respect and fear because of its completeness and organization. While the modern library encourages the use and removal of materials, historically library collections were considered incomplete or flawed if any item were removed or relocated (see "Libraries" 318; "Power" 256). Thus, since the patron disrupts the stereotypical library's perfect order, the stereotypical librarian, as custodian of both the collection and its order, perceives the library user as a potential enemy (Radford 618-19). The most common character traits of this stereotypical librarian are "an obsession with order, sexual repression, matronly appearance, dowdy dress, fussiness, dour facial expressions, and monosyllabic speech" and her most common activities are "shelving, stamping, and shushing" (Radford and Radford, "Librarians" 60). While both real and fictional libraries inspire fear because they are physically and historically imposing, fear of the librarian is somewhat silly, since the stereotypical librarian is "only a woman," and her only real threat to the user is a nominal library fine. The librarian is merely the servant of the library's perfect order, but her service to that order can become an obsession

(Radford and Radford, "Librarians" 63; Radford and Radford, "Power" 251, 261). Madam Pince fits this stereotype, Hermione does not.

Rowling's use of these stereotypes is surprising, since she is a strong library supporter. She has been active in the United Kingdom's Love Libraries campaign, comparing libraries to C.S. Lewis's World-Between-the-Worlds in the Narnia books, "where visitors could enter a thousand different worlds by jumping into different pools … When I got my eldest daughter a library card I felt as though I had bought her citizenship of that same fabulous world" (Lea <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2006/may/15/salmanrushdie.jkjoannekathleenrowling/print>). Her affection for libraries apparently comes from a lifelong use of them. A self-described "bookish" child, she later used library materials to find information about literary agents (Nel 17, 32). However, in 2006 Rowling had to defend her creation of Hogwarts librarian Madam Pince by claiming that she could not portray her as a "pleasant, helpful librarian" because she would then be able to give Harry, Ron, and Hermione all the answers to the problems they were trying to solve (Cheeser <http://www.hpana.com/news.19542.html>). Since Hermione gradually takes on the role of the Ideal Librarian, the children get the answers they need. Rowling actually uses the stereotype to reinforce a positive image of librarians, by comparing the stereotypical Madam Pince to Hermione. The librarian stereotype is so entrenched that had Rowling presented a "young, energetic, and friendly" librarian, it would actually remind the reader of the "aging, scowling spinster" (Radford and Radford, "Libraries" 324-25). Radford and Radford suggest that a more effective way to combat the stereotype would be to simultaneously acknowledge the stereotype and defy it ("Librarians" 63, 67-68). Rowling uses this strategy by portraying the stereotypical librarian Madam Pince in comparison to Hermione, who eventually replaces Madam Pince and creates her own library because both the Hogwarts librarian and her library are found wanting.

From the beginning of the series, Rowling portrays libraries in a questionable light. Harry is surprised by his letter from Hogwarts because he never receives any mail: "he didn't belong to the library, so he'd never even got rude notes asking for books back" (*Sorcerer's* 34). When he enters Ollivanders wand shop, he "felt strangely that he had entered a very strict library; he swallowed a lot of new questions that had just occurred to him and looked instead at the thousands of narrow boxes piled neatly right up to the ceiling. For some reason, the back of his neck prickled. The very dust and silence in here seemed to tingle with some secret magic" (*Sorcerer's* 82). Libraries seem to be places that repress inquiry, are dusty, silent, and strict, yet, like Rowling's description of libraries in the Love Libraries campaign, they also have a "secret magic." The Hogwarts Library conforms to this description (Vilariño Picos <http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.1912>). However, the Hogwarts Library is certainly not magical in terms of providing easy access to information: the children are intimidated by "the sheer size of the library; tens of thousands of books; thousands of shelves; hundreds of narrow rows" (*Sorcerer's* 197-98). In order to research a topic, patrons must wander the shelves and page through large volumes, searching for information more or less at random. While magic replaces technology in many other instances in the novels (Steege 155), Wizarding libraries have no magic besides the potential to travel to other worlds using a book and imagination. Some readers of the novels interpret this lack of access positively: Philip Nel believes that the lack of technology in Wizarding life adds to the charm of the novels (14-15) and Lisa Hopkins delights in the benefits of serendipitous discovery: "one of the most strongly marked advantages of books as represented in the Harry Potter series is that they often prove to reveal information that the reader did not even know he or she was looking for" (28).

Unfortunately, the system also makes it impossible (or nearly so) to find the information that one is looking for. When Harry, Ron, and Hermione attempt to use the library to learn about Nicholas Flamel, they consult reference books in vain, and spend a great deal of time looking for the information (*Sorcerer's* 197-98). Ultimately, they find the answer with no help whatsoever from the library or its librarian: it is on the back of a Chocolate Frog card (*Sorcerer's* 218-19). Later, in *The Deathly Hallows*, Elphias Doge condemns Rita Skeeter's biography of Dumbledore by saying that it "contains less fact than a Chocolate Frog card" (*Deathly* 24). His remark reminds us that a Chocolate Frog card was one of the children's first sources of information in the series, and so his comment foreshadows the importance of Skeeter's book in the fight against Voldemort. When the children attempt to locate evidence to defend Buckbeak the Hippogriff in *The Prisoner of Azkaban*, they take books back to their

common room, and search by "slowly turning the pages of dusty volumes about famous cases of ma-rauding beasts, speaking occasionally when they [run] across something relevant" (*Prisoner* 221). Apparently, Wizarding books have no indexes or tables of contents. Magic cannot create access for a text for more than one reader at a time; in *The Chamber of Secrets*, Hermione is frustrated because all of the copies of *Hogwarts, A History* have been checked out and "there's a two-week waiting list" (*Chamber* 147).

Another fruitless library search is depicted in *The Goblet of Fire* when Harry must learn to breathe underwater. Harry, Ron, and Hermione spend hours in the library, looking for relevant and useful in-formation. Harry even sneaks into the library after hours using his Invisibility Cloak. The library ap-parently does not provide a system of collocation of materials on similar subjects, or finding aids, and Harry's search for information is thus frighteningly unfocused; he selects a wide range of materials, "books … on anything at all that might include one passing reference to underwater survival … search-ing them by the narrow beam of his wand." Once again, the information cannot be found in the li-brary; Dobby wakes Harry up ten minutes before the second task, telling him that "Dobby knew Harry had not found the right book, so Dobby did it for him!" At the end of the novel, Barty Crouch, Jr. re-marks on "all those hours in the library. Didn't you realize that the book you needed was in your dor-mitory all along?" implying that trying to find answers in a library is a waste of time (*Goblet* 482-90, 677). Indeed, the Hogwarts Library is not a place for intertextuality: connections cannot be made, and answers are most often found when books are separated from the collection. Thus, the Hogwarts Li-brary is in many ways, worse than the stereotype, and its librarian is similarly unhelpful.

Hermione's development as a character and librarian occurs as Madam Pince, the Hogwarts librar-ian, becomes even more of a stereotypical librarian and ultimately disappears. Madam Pince begins the series as a "worn-out stereotype" (Dresang 236) and disappears entirely by *The Deathly Hallows*. Her portrayal in the Harry Potter novels is such an example of the negative stereotype that Julia Eccleshare refers to her as "the unfortunately caricatured draconian librarian" ("Guide" 83). She is physically unattractive, looking like "an underfed vulture" (*Chamber* 163; *Goblet* 482). Madam Pince's duties seem to be more custodial than professional: she "[stamps] out books," puts out the lights and closes the library, and is seen "polishing the gilded cover of a large spellbook" (*Order* 655; *Goblet* 488; *Chamber* 200). Unfortunately, she is not capable of anything but the clerical and custodial. Alt-hough, in *The Sorcerer's Stone*, when Harry, Ron, and Hermione want to learn about Nicholas Flamel, "They [are] sure [Madam Pince]'d be able to tell them," in *The Goblet of Fire*, when Harry's life de-pends on his being able to breathe underwater, he asks Madam Pince for help, and she is no help at all (*Sorcerer's* 198; *Goblet* 482). Rowling also links Madam Pince romantically with the school custodi-an, Argus Filch (*Half-Blood* 308, 460). The association of Madam Pince with Filch reinforces the custo-dial nature of her position, and she is clearly of a status inferior to the faculty or even the school nurse, Madam Pomfrey. Hermione, by contrast, is romantically linked with an elite Quidditch player, a member of one of the oldest Pureblood families, and (erroneously) with Harry Potter himself.

As the series progresses, Madam Pince becomes violent in her enforcement of library rules. When she catches Ginny and Harry eating chocolate in the library, she not only rebukes them loudly, but ejects them magically: "whipping out her wand, she caused Harry's books, bag, and ink bottle to chase him and Ginny from the library, whacking them repeatedly over the head as they ran" (Rowling, *Order* 655-56). When she discovers Harry in possession of the Half-Blood Prince's annotated potions book, she goes berserk; she "[lunges] at [the book] with a clawlike hand" and hisses "Despoiled! … Desecrated! Befouled!" and when Harry protests that "It's just a book that's been written on!" it ap-pears "as though she might have a seizure" (*Half-Blood* 308). Unlike Madam Pince, Hermione is more concerned about the information in a book than in its condition. When she is Petrified in *The Chamber of Secrets*, Harry and Ron notice that she is clutching "a page from a very old library book." Hermione has torn a page from a library book, and has written "Pipes" on the page to explain how the infor-mation is relevant (*Chamber* 290). Madam Pince, as stereotypical librarian, cares only about books as artifacts to be polished and dusted, but Hermione, as the Ideal Librarian, is more concerned about using the information in the book than in the book's condition.

Madam Pince actually impedes learning. Her presence in the library is neither helpful nor condu-cive to a comfortable place to work, as Vilariño Picos notes (<http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.1912>). At one point, Harry thinks that "What they really needed was a nice long search without

Madam Pince breathing down their necks" (*Sorcerer's* 198). She chases students away from the Restricted Section, and "[prowls] the aisles menacingly, breathing down the necks of those touching her precious books" (*Sorcerer's* 198; *Order* 538). Worse yet, she spies on students by "[prowling] the shelves behind them" (*Half-Blood* 305). Hermione, however, not only helps others with their schoolwork, but creates Dumbledore's Army when she realizes that Hogwarts students will have no opportunity to learn Defense Against Dark Arts in *The Order of the Phoenix* (*Order* 325-26). Madam Pince never appears in *The Deathly Hallows*, although we see the rest of the faculty and staff of Hogwarts take part in the final battle: the house elves swarm up from the kitchen, Sybill Trelawney throws crystal balls down on the Death Eaters, and even Filch helps the underage students flee to the safety of the Hog's Head with Madam Pomfrey (*Deathly* 734-35, 746, 608). The Hogwarts Library is not used as a setting in this book, either. But Madam Pince and her library are unnecessary, for, by *The Deathly Hallows*, Hermione has completed her transformation into the Ideal Librarian, and has located the sources necessary to defeat Voldemort without being limited by a particular building or collection.

In conclusion, over the course of the seven novels in Rowling's Potter series Hermione transforms from a little girl who is unable to use the library effectively to the Ideal Librarian who is not limited to a particular collection to fulfill information needs. She begins *The Deathly Hallows* with a collection of texts, but adds other texts and other modes of information as she comes across them. She does not disdain the use of children's stories or popular biography to find the answers she needs. Without Hermione's ability to locate and use information even outside a library, the Horcruxes might have been discovered but never destroyed, and Harry, Ron, and Hermione would never have known about the Deathly Hallows. It is not merely Hermione's ability to translate runes or relate disparate bits of information that defeats Voldemort: it is her ability to collect, organize, and access information, as well as her ability to recognize what constitutes a legitimate answer to a question. Hermione is the Ideal Librarian Rowling could not depict in Madam Pince. However, by depicting Hermione alongside Madam Pince, Rowling overcomes the stereotype and honors real librarians.

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