

Feminist Characters in *Harry Potter*

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Abstract

J.K Rowling's Harry Potter Novels have been published in several countries and are a major success with readers of all ages. Alike many critics discharge of Harry Potter as mere children's literature and labelling it a non-literary text, it holds universal appeal and provides ample support for literary merit. One often-argued point against the novel is that, with a male lead and fewer female characters, the Harry Potter is sexist. J.K. Rowling claims that she never consciously wanted the novels to be seen as either sexist or feminist. But through the themes explored with the female characters in the Harry Potter Novels, Rowling has created feminist work of literature. The feminist ideals in "Harry Potter" are seen through the lead female character Hermione Granger, the Headmistress of Gryffindor Professor Minerva McGonagall, Ron's sister Ginny Weasley, Bellatrix Lestrange and Narcissa Malfoy. All of them stand out as remarkable female characters. The characters are strong and complex, bossy and more responsible, proud, conceited and vicious. Rowling's female characters constantly fight against the patriarchal subjugation inherent in both real and in their fictional world taking charge of their own identities and empowerment. J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series exemplifies a young adult feminist novel in many ways.

Keywords: *Harry Potter*, Feminist characters, J.K. Rowling

The feminist ideals in Harry Potter are most effortlessly observed through the lead female character, Hermione Granger, as she is an appearance of the author herself inside the content. "Hermione is me," Rowling has said in a few meetings, "An exaggeration of me when I was more youthful" (Conversation). Rowling has said that, as a child, "she was seen as being extremely bossy and frequently the most splendid one in her class, and those attributes she provided for Hermione" (Gladstein 50). The peruser sees Rowling's numerous qualities and shortcomings through the character of Hermione, making Hermione a standout amongst the most mind-boggling characters in the novels. Hermione, for instance, is more dependable than her male companions thus she is frequently trusted with greater risk. In Prisoner of Azkaban, when two characters must be spared from death, Professor Dumbledore allocates Hermione to spare them, not Harry. "Miss Granger, you know the law – you comprehend what's in question . . . good fortunes," Dumbledore says to her. In the interim, Harry is "puzzled" and "[does not] understand what [is] continuing" (Rowling, Azkaban 393). The basic male-centric sexual orientation jobs have been turned around and Hermione is enabled to take control of the circumstances, while Harry just pursues her heading. Through furnishing Hermione with Rowling's own qualities and shortcomings, the creator

"recommends that she means for Hermione to be a solid character who keeps on picking up quality and self-assurance as opposed to discovering it in transient" (Dresang 226).

A standout amongst the most fascinating highlights of the Harry Potter arrangement is the development of the youthful characters and through this development, the peruser starts to see Hermione developing from a hesitant young lady into an autonomous young lady. In the main book, *The Sorcerer's Stone*, Ron prods Hermione for being a 'know-everything': "It's no big surprise nobody can stand her . . . she's a bad dream, genuinely" (Rowling, *Sorcerer* 172). Multi-year-old Hermione's reaction to this individual assault is to keep running off to cry in the young lady's washroom. At the point when Hermione is more seasoned, she doesn't respond similarly. At the point when Malfoy calls Hermione's companion Hagrid "terrible" for being steamed at the loss of his hippogriff, "Harry and Ron both [make] irate moves towards Malfoy – however Hermione [gets] there first – SMACK!" (Rowling, *Azkaban* 293) Hermione volunteers face the torment. Notwithstanding when two of her male companions are remaining adjacent to her, Hermione does not rely upon them to battle for her. Rather than crying or simply fleeing from strife, Hermione goes to bat for her companion, demonstrating a developing office that was not as apparent when she was more youthful.

At fourteen years, Hermione goes to bat for what she has confidence in indeed demonstrates her actual feminist ideals when she establishes "The Society for the Promotion of Elfish Welfare" (S.P.E.W.) in the book, *The Goblet of Fire*. Hermione's rally to help free house mythical beings "is one basic to contemporary feminist points of view – comprehensiveness and worry for a wide range of suppression and underestimation as opposed to that of ladies alone" (Dresang 233). Hermione, through her assurance to battle against enslavement, demonstrates that she is, indeed, a feminist. However, Rowling enables Hermione to coordinate with male-centric ideals of what gentility ought to be when Hermione changes her appearance for the Yule Ball in *The Goblet of Fire*. For this vital occasion, Hermione required much exertion to make herself look more dazzling. While "radical-libertarian feminists keep up that females have the privilege to do whatever they need with their bodies" (Dresang 233), other more "radical-social feminists" gripes that Hermione is changing her appearance only with the end goal of male consideration. Be that as it may, what is clear in this section from *Goblet of Fire* is Hermione's certainty. Rowling says that Hermione was conducting herself with balance and grinning. These activities produce self-assurance that others find alluring. Hermione spruces up and settles her hair pleasantly, so she will like herself at this essential occasion. By liking her appearance, she feels certain, and this certainly makes her alluring to other people. Needing to look alluring ought not to be the differentiation to be a feminist. Hermione's difference in appearance does not pass on "low confidence" (Heilman 229) as much as her grin and her balance in a similar portrayal indicate Hermione winding up more confident.

Rowling incorporates a few other solid female characters in her accounts; one of the most grounded characters in Harry Potter is Professor Minerva McGonagall. Like Hermione, McGonagall is regularly censured for being dull, bossy, and for being simply second in order under a male dean. In any case, McGonagall holds an intense position as headmistress of the most regarded house at Hogwarts, Gryffindor. In addition, Professor McGonagall is second in direction after Albus Dumbledore. McGonagall is likewise an Animagus, which implies she can change into a creature frame without her

mind transforming into a creature's brain, a spell that not very many witches and wizards can perform. All through the arrangement, McGonagall is "consistently forcing and outstanding . . . a capable and positive figure" (Gladstein 57). In McGonagall, the offspring of Hogwarts have a solid grown-up female assume that they trust and regard. McGonagall successfully remains for her convictions even with her foe, when no other educator will, which additionally demonstrates what a ground-breaking power Minerva McGonagall is.

Ginny Weasley, Ron's younger sister, is additionally an extraordinary case of Rowling's women's liberation in the realm of Harry Potter, in spite of the fact that her first appearance in the storyline is as an unfortunate casualty. Voldemort picks up his capacity through Ginny similarly that men gain control by the apportionment of ladylike power in a man-centric culture: "Question's savagery towards Ginny is another example of the manly vampirizing the nurturing blood of the female" (Yeo 6). Tom Riddle can't open the Chamber of Secrets all alone; he must have power over Ginny with the goal that she can do it for him. By speaking to the activities of an ordinary man-centric male with the most insidious character in the Harry Potter arrangement, Rowling is censuring the impropriety of a general public where men don't hesitate to defraud ladies and take away their capacity.

As Ginny develops more established, she turns into an essential job in the Harry Potter arrangement, never again enabling herself to be abused or seen as simply Ron's more youthful sister. Ginny is great at games; she is a capable individual from the Gryffindor Quidditch group as a chaser and furthermore subbing for Harry as searcher when he can't play. Additionally, Ginny is individual from Harry Potter's mystery association, the D.A., which considers Defense Against the Dark Arts, in spite of the boycott of these practices by Professor Umbridge. She is a vital individual from the D.A. since she assets a few of its individuals and furthermore names the gathering. Other than naming the D.A., she is likewise a critical individual from the gathering because of her uncommon aptitudes in throwing spells. Indeed, even her sibling George says: "Estimate is no assurance of intensity . . . takes a gander at Ginny . . . you've never been forced to bear one of her Bat-Bogey hexes, make them rowling, (Order 100). Ginny is picking up power in the realm of Harry Potter and is being perceived for her quality and abilities. Ginny is picking up power in the realm of Harry Potter and is being perceived for her quality and abilities.

Despite the fact that Ginny is adulated for being a solid female character, faultfinders assault Ginny for being a "prostitute" on the grounds that, after she picks up certainty and turns out to be more outgoing, she has a bunch of paltry associations with a few distinctive young men. Ladies regularly get feedback for endeavouring to date whoever need similarly men do. Rather than being the accommodating defrauded "Madonna" that she was by all accounts when she was more youthful, she has turned into the "Prostitute," by being drawing in with young men and dating a significant number of them. The "Madonna" or "Prostitute" idea "proposes that there are just two personalities a lady can have" (Tyson 88). By inferring that these are the main two sorts of individuals that a lady can be, if Ginny is never again bashful, easy-going, and humble with regards to individuals from the contrary sex, at that point she should be a prostitute or a prostitute. Individuals that scrutinize Ginny's dating style are supporting the man-centric names that society puts on ladies. Indeed, even Ron dislikes Ginny dating such a large number of various young men:

‘Michael – but –’ said Ron, craning around his seat to stare at her. ‘But you were going out with him!’!

‘Not anymore,’ said Ginny resolutely . . .

‘Well, I always thought he was an idiot . . . good for you. Just choose someone – better – next time.’

‘Well, I’ve chosen Dean Thomas, would you say he’s better?’ asked Ginny vaguely.

‘WHAT?’ Shouted Ron, upending the chessboard (Rowling, Order 866).

In this talk among Ginny and Ron, Ron speaks to the run of the mill male-centric male endeavouring to control the female sexual personality. He encourages her to "pick somebody – better – next time" as though he realizes what is best for her. Ginny's proud reactions to Ron's responses demonstrate how her character does not permit man-centric definitions direct how she should act.

J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter arrangement represents a youthful grown-up feminist novel from numerous points of view. When perusing a book from a feminist perspective, "most feminist faultfinders search for character advancement and a solid depiction of females associated with non-conventional exercises" (Yeo 2). The precedents given in this paper demonstrate that Rowling's female characters are solid and complex. All the more vitally, all through the six years that the peruser has known the characters so far, the characters demonstrate development in which the female additions control and certainty, beating the man-centric world in which they live in. As the Witch/Wizard world that Rowling makes runs parallel to the "Muggle" world, the Witch/Wizard world will without a doubt reflect the man-centric motivation that the "Muggle" world so emphatically executes. Notwithstanding, Rowling's female characters continually battle against the man-centric oppression regular in both this present reality and in their anecdotal world, assuming the responsibility of their own personalities and strengthening.

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