

Harry Potter, Lord Voldemort, and the Importance of Resilience

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ABSTRACT

Literature and psychology inadvertently go hand in hand. Authors create characters that are relatable and seem real. This thesis discusses the connection between psychology and literature in relation to the Harry Potter series. This thesis focuses on the importance of resilience or lack thereof in the protagonist, Harry, and the antagonist Voldemort. Specifically, it addresses resilience as a significant difference between the two. In order to support such claims, I will be using Erik Erikson's Theory of Psycho-Social Development to analyze the struggles and outcomes of both Harry and Voldemort in relation to resilience and focus on the importance of strong, supportive relationships as a defining factor in the development of resilience.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

For many families across the globe, Harry Potter is a household name. From the novels to the films, the Harry Potter phenomenon has attracted both child and adult fans alike. First published in 1998, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (the first installment of the Harry Potter series written by J. K. Rowling) drops readers into the life of an emotionally abused eleven-year-old boy who soon discovers that he is a wizard. As the series continues, readers are exposed to the wizarding world through the eyes of Harry, the protagonist, and the dangers of being chased down by the most powerful and dangerous wizard in history, Voldemort. With the help of his friends Hermione and Ron, Harry navigates his way through adolescence, and gradually discovering his own power and strength. Along the way, though, readers learn that Harry and Voldemort might not be so different. The two share similar upbringings; they mirror each other in power; and, they are both Parselmouths, meaning that they can both speak a language used to communicate with snakes (Beahm 62). They even share similar physical features, like dark hair. That connection is something that draws readers in and keeps them hooked. It is the source of many questions and is one of the reasons why this series has gone on to become one of the bestselling series of all time. In 2003, the fifth book of the series, *Order of the Phoenix* sold 5 million copies the first day it was released, according to the *Wall Street Journal* (Lackey 1). Also, based on the *Wall Street Journal's* January 2003 report, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* sold 25.1 million copies, and *Chamber of Secrets*, the second book in the series, sold 22 million copies (Lackey 1).

But it is not just the honors that make this series great. With over 400 million copies sold in over 50 languages, the Harry Potter series clearly appeals to more than just children. From dark themes to dangerous characters, the Harry Potter series is one that explores the depths of the

human mind through many different views, ranging from religion to psychology. In recent years, Harry Potter has become the topic of classes at universities, of conferences, and of many academic articles, in addition to being a stepping stone into reading for children. In fact, based on Amazon's website in February 2003, the companion book *The Sorcerer's Companion: A Guide to the Magical Worlds of Harry Potter* was the "top-selling glossary-type companion book for the series" (Whited 418), in addition to several collections of essays focused on discussing the series, two of which I will be using in this thesis. The Harry Potter series is an excellent example of books that develop the moral conflicts of good versus evil, where good comes out on top, a theme that is portrayed in hundreds of ways throughout history.

Everyone enjoys an adventure story in which good triumphs over evil. Of the dozens upon dozens of academic articles and books that have been published about the series, several of them have focused on the theme of good and evil in the Harry Potter series, exploring such issues as the psychology of evil, fate and free will, and the goodness of the hero. For example, in "Ordinary Wizards: The Psychology of Evil in the Harry Potter Universe," published in *Terminus: Collected Papers on Harry Potter*, 2008, Mikhail Lyubansky discusses the issue regarding why Voldemort became so powerful. Lyubansky notes the correlation between Voldemort and Adolf Hitler, and the Death Eaters, Voldemort's disciples, and Nazis. He mentions the famous psychological study by American psychologist Stanley Milgram (1974). This study was done after World War II in order to understand why so many people were willing to follow Hitler, or in other words submit to authority in doing something clearly immoral. Milgram designed a study "in which students at Yale University and people living in the New Haven area were instructed by an authority figure in a white lab coat to administer increasing levels of a painful," and eventually, what they believed to be life-threatening, "electric shock to

another person as punishment for failing to master a learning task” (329). From this study, Milgram learned that in the face of authority, over 50% of the subjects administered a deathly level of shock to another person. Lyubansky relates this back to the Harry Potter series by stating that “wizards wind up joining or aiding the Death Eaters due to external social pressures” (336). He also points out that despite Rowling’s decision to “create a world in which people have the ability to determine who they are and what they stand for through the choices they make,” one cannot forget about the role of social pressures in the light of evil doers (336).

Different from Lyubansky, Julia Pond addresses the role of fate and free will in the battle between good and evil in her article “A Story of the Exceptional: Fate and Free Will in Harry Potter.” In her article, Pond argues that fate and free will balance each other out in regards to good and evil. This statement is clearly represented in Harry himself. In *Order of the Phoenix*, the fifth book in the series, Harry is exposed to the truth about his past through experiencing Dumbledore’s memories. Pond notes that Harry sees Professor Trelawney deliver the message:

“The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord approaches . . . Born to those who have thrice defied him, born as the seventh month dies . . . And the Dark Lord will mark him as his equal, but he will have the power the Dark Lord knows not . . . And either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives . . . [.]”

(187)

This prophecy “largely accounts for Harry’s unusual life, fame, and the increasingly difficult trials facing him each year he spends at Hogwarts” (187). While this prophecy does define Harry’s fate, Pond mentions that Harry continues to strive to be great and to improve himself within the boundaries of his fate because he has a “sense of social responsibility” (199). Pond argues that “fate determines futures, but characters can exercise free will within those futures,”

which can be seen throughout the series through Harry's heroic acts even after he learns his fate (202).

Another example of analyzing Harry Potter through the scope of the theme of good vs. evil can be seen in Cathy Colton's article, "Question Authority: Heroism and Leadership in the Harry Potter Series." Instead of looking at evil, though, Colton addresses the idea of good, specifically in Harry himself. Colton points out that "some of Harry's greatest virtues [. . .] are certainly bravery and his devotion to and love for his friends" (245). She explains that year after year, Harry has the opportunity to be courageous despite his fear in the face of danger. For instance, in the second novel, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, Harry chooses to find the monster that has been petrifying people over the course of the school year. Harry was never forced to take on such a grueling task, and yet he felt as though it was his duty to fight against evil. These qualities are what lead Harry to the realization of his role in the fight against Voldemort (246).

Continuing with the focus on Harry as a hero is Marjorie Cohee Manifold's essay "Harry the Hero: Archetype of a Real 21st Century Myth." In her essay, Manifold argues that a hero is "one who, despite fear, does his duty to his country" (305). She further supports this statement by pointing out the formation of Dumbledore's Army in *Order of the Phoenix*. Dumbledore's Army is a group of Hogwarts students, led by Harry in order to go against the headmistress Dolores Umbridge and her ridiculous decrees. She also mentions that "the hero can [not] deny what he has seen with his own eyes," referencing the countless amounts of evil that Harry is forced to witness. Despite witnessing such horrible situations, Harry still remains the hero in the face of adversity because he chooses to "bear the responsibility" of his fallen comrade (306). This fact is what separates Harry from his other counterparts and sets the stage for Harry's

eventual defeat of evil.

Besides analysis of the theme of good and evil, other scholars have focused on the series by analyzing how the author J.K. Rowling created her characters and developed the conflicts that drive the plot. Some have examined in particular the characteristics and qualities that separate Harry, who represents the ideal of “good,” and his arch-enemy, Voldemort, who represents the dark side of human nature, or evil. In “Harry Potter and the Extraordinariness of the Ordinary,” Roni Natov emphasizes the fact that Harry is an “orphan hero,” meaning that he demonstrates qualities such as vigilance, that is, a strong sense of understanding his surroundings, due to the lack of parental guidance. Natov argues that Harry’s absence of parental guidance puts a certain amount of pressure on Harry as a young child, which leads to him having to make many, if not all, of his own decisions. For children Harry’s age, making decisions about their own wellbeing is not a normal thought and there tends to be a deep reliance on an adult, according to Natov (311). Another characteristic that Natov points out that Harry demonstrates is sensitivity, meaning that Harry is thoughtful of his surroundings and the people with whom he interacts. Both of these are characteristics that Voldemort lacks (310).

Natov’s argument is supported by the fact that Harry is able to put others’ pain and suffering before his own, while Voldemort is consumed by his need for uncontested power. For example, in *Prisoner of Azkaban*, Harry is furious at Hagrid for “not telling him the truth about [Sirius] Black” and Black’s relationship with his father. When Harry, Ron, and Hermione go to visit Hagrid, the three soon find out that Hagrid is being summoned to court due to the actions of his hippogriff, Buckbeak. Instead of berating Hagrid, Harry “[can’t] bring himself to do it” because he had seen “Hagrid so miserable and scared” (*Prisoner of Azkaban* 219). Harry’s ability to put others before himself, specifically in their time of need, exemplifies the qualities,

like sensitivity, that Voldemort lacks. Putting others before oneself is a major characteristic of being resilient because it shows one's ability to separate personal emotions from the need to help a friend. Voldemort, if he ever had friends, would have never been able to put their needs above his own.

Another characteristic of the orphan hero, according to Natov, is "the childhood task of learning to deal in an unfair world" (311). She states that the "orphan archetype" is defined by a child's vulnerability and powerlessness in a world full of adults. This not only describes Harry as a character, but it also points out just what makes Harry so relatable. Through his powerlessness, Harry discovers his strength with the help of his friends and stand-in parental figures.

Patrick McCauley takes another look at the Harry Potter series from a different, more philosophical perspective. In his book, *Into the Pensieve: The Philosophy and Mythology of Harry Potter*, McCauley looks at the appeal of Harry Potter through the lens of human existence and what it means to be human. For example, in the third chapter, he discusses the importance of agency, or free will, in the series. He defines human agency as "the ability to make decisions in the real world" (34). McCauley calls attention to one of the most important aspects of free will: being able to change wish into action. He points to the ghosts who inhabit Hogwarts as an example of free will, noting that, despite being in the present and being able to speak and wander, they cannot physically do anything. They cannot turn their wishes into actions because they have given up that ability in their decision to remain behind in the living world. McCauley points out that even Nearly Headless Nick, the resident ghost of the Gryffindor tower, confesses that "[he] chose [his] feeble imitation of life instead [of dying]" in *Order of the Phoenix* (McCauley 39). According to McCauley, Rowling uses the ghosts, as well as portraits, as fantastical devices to discuss the border between life and death, a very prominent theme in the

series that is seen in the characterization of both Harry and Voldemort. The point McCauley tries to make is “death [. . .] as a means for addressing the issue of human power and agency” (40).

Moreover, there has been some discussion about the relationship concerning the characterization of other characters in the series aside from Voldemort and Harry. Layla A. Abuisba examines one of the other characters, Neville Longbottom. Abuisba points out that there may be more than one hero in the Harry Potter series and that this hero follows the same type of path as Harry, the main protagonist. The difference, though, is the portrayal of each boy. Neville is relatable because we as readers feel for him, not necessarily because we have been in his situation. He also represents the type of person we strive to be, strong, loyal, and brave. Not very many people have parents who have been tortured to the point of insanity and who cannot recognize their own son. He is essentially an orphan, just like Harry. Where the difference comes in is in each boy’s personality. Harry, as mentioned earlier, is brave and strong. Neville, while those things too, is not as sure about his great qualities. He lacks the confidence that Harry has because his grandmother is too protective. Thus, his character at the beginning of the first book in the series is socially awkward and lacks confidence. Abuisba writes “while we cannot all be Harry, the Boy Who Lived, [. . .], we can recognize ourselves in Neville because Neville is ordinary, yet heroic” (294). She continues on stating that “Neville provides a path for any child or adult hoping to overcome adversity, especially emotional adversity” (294). Abuisba steps outside of the norm when it comes to research on the Harry Potter series and brings to light one of the less talked about characters.

While Abuisba discusses the characteristics of Neville, Karin E. Westman discusses the characterization of Harry and the importance of his ability to love and to be loved in her essay, “The Weapon We Have is Love.” She points out that love is a “generative and protective force”

for Harry (193). This fact is something that is seen all throughout the series whenever Dumbledore discusses what is to come with Harry. Westman notes that Harry's ability to love and to accept love is the driving force that leads to his defeat over Voldemort. She also points out that the type of love that Harry feels and receives is what separates Harry from Voldemort. According to Westman, Harry experiences the type of love that is best "for our world" (197). I agree with Westman's argument because Harry is able to use the love derived from his strong relationships with friends and teachers as a power to defeat Voldemort. Where Harry has stand-in parental figures (the Weasleys, Dumbledore, and his godfather, Sirius, to name a few), as well as very supportive and loyal friends, Voldemort is a loner, never having any notable relationships outside of the master-servant relationship. It is Voldemort's inability to form real and compassionate relationships that leads to his downfall.

Where both Natov and Westman focus solely on Harry and his qualities, Virginia Zimmerman addresses the contrasting characteristics of Voldemort and Harry in her article "Harry Potter and the Gift of Time." She comments on the interesting importance of time when it comes to each character's growth and development. It is the way Harry and Voldemort approach the idea of time and the past that gives one an advantage over the other. Where Harry acknowledges his past, "prov[ing] himself able to make use of [it . . .], Voldemort remains static" (194). Zimmerman argues that it is "central to Harry's heroism" that he is capable of using his history to grow as a character, whereas "Voldemort has no interest in the past" (194, 196). This is most notable in Voldemort's actions to prevent his own death. Instead of growing and learning to accept death, Voldemort is obsessed with the idea of immortality. Voldemort's unwillingness to develop repeatedly contrasts with Harry's continual development. For Harry, Zimmerman notes, holding on to the past helps him become the man he turns into. He finds value in objects like

photographs and gifts from friends and family, whereas Voldemort ignores the significance of such objects. Zimmerman also points out the similar childhood that is shared between Harry and Voldemort. She discusses the fact that both Harry and Voldemort suffered from the loss of parents at a very young age. For Harry, though, his mother died to save his life; for Voldemort, his mother died because she could not live without Tom Riddle Sr.

Simple, yet significant, differences in the early lives of Voldemort and Harry are the key factors that separate Harry (good) from Voldemort (evil) and lead each on the paths that we follow them on. In the following thesis, I am proposing that the aforementioned qualities such as Harry's vigilance, his ability to love and accept love, and his pride in his past all stem from one characteristic: resilience. I will be discussing these factors on the basis of developmental psychology and specifically using Erikson's Psycho-Social Model of Development to point out and clarify the factors that promote resilience in Harry's life.

Developmental Psychology

Developmental psychology "is the field of psychology which examines the age-related maturational changes that happen to an individual across his or her entire lifespan" (Macgregor 36). The two main psychologists that influence child development theory today are Jean Piaget and Erik Erikson. Their work is significant because it defines developmental stages that are the basis for new psychological investigations and discoveries. Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget (1896-1980) was the first psychologist to study cognitive development, specifically in children. Before Piaget, children were considered little adults, meaning that it was thought that they were believed to be born with the abilities and thinking processes of adults. According to Piaget, "children are born with a very basic mental structure [. . .] on which all subsequent learning and knowledge is based" (McLeod). In his theory of childhood cognitive development, Piaget has

four stages: sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational. The first stage, sensorimotor, takes place between birth and age 2. During this stage a child learns object permanence, or knowing that an object still exists even if he cannot see it. The preoperational stage, age 2 to 7 years old, is where children begin to think symbolically, meaning that the child is able to make one thing stand for something else. For example, a child will learn that the word “firetruck” means a truck that puts out fires as well as a red vehicle. The concrete operational stage takes place between the ages of 7 and 11. This is where a child can begin to think logically and internally without having to be physically involved. Here children learn the idea of conservation, which is “the understanding that something stays the same in quantity even though its appearance changes” (McLeod). Last is the Formal Operational stage, which is ages 11 and older, into adulthood. Here a child learns to think abstractly and is able to understand abstract concepts such as time.

Piaget’s research and discoveries about the cognitive development in children paved the way for more modern psychologists. While his theories are crucial to other psychological discoveries, I argue that in order to truly understand the way in which someone develops, there must be more in-depth understanding about not only cognitive functions, but also the importance of social interactions and environment. Erik Erikson (1902-1994) proposed that one’s personality and development are greatly affected by the role of culture and society. He too developed a staged theory about development, called Erikson’s Stage Theory of Psycho-Social Development. According to Erikson, the successful completion of each stage leads to a healthy personality and “acquisition of basic virtues,” which are strengths that one can use to resolve crises (McLeod). His theory identifies eight stages: infancy, early childhood, preschool, school age, adolescence, young adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood. These stages are “defined by crises,

each one driven by internal conflict, typical for a particular developmental period” (Svetina 394). The individual’s purpose, or task, in each stage is to resolve the crisis and move into the proceeding stage of development.

Between birth and 18 months, or the infancy stage, a child develops a sense of trust with a nurturing caregiver through the caregiver’s consistent and predictable actions. The crisis during this stage is trust vs. mistrust. Because of this issue, feeding is a major event that takes place between the child and the caregiver. It is where a trust connection is formed between child and caregiver. The stable, trustworthy relationship or attachment to the nurturing adult is what enables a child to form relationships (companion and romantic) as well as learn to rely on others later on in life. If an infant’s care at this stage were to be inconsistent, characteristics of mistrust and withdrawal develop.

The second stage of Erikson’s theory is the early childhood stage. This stage ranges from 18 months to about 4 years old, and the internal crisis is autonomy vs. shame and doubt. During this stage a child develops a sense of awareness of himself, meaning that they “develop a sense of personal control of physical skills and a sense of independence” (Macgregor 39). A child in this stage is generally toilet trained, begins walking and talking, and begins to develop preferences such as what certain foods they enjoy. This stage is important in the development of physical confidence of a child and it is where a child’s determination and willpower are developed. The preschool stage (initiative vs. guilt), between ages 3 and 5, is where children begin to emphasize their control and power over the world. Here children are encouraged to explore and learn hands-on about the world around them. This is also where children begin to develop moral judgment. Children should emerge from this stage with a sense of purpose and courage. Children who do not successfully complete this stage are more likely to come away

from it with feelings of self-doubt and insecurities about themselves.

Following the preschool stage is the school age stage (industry vs. inferiority), occurring between ages 6 and 11. In this stage, children learn how to cope with the new demands that come from beginning school, such as social and academic pressures. Here children develop a sense of competence and skill through their academic successes and encouragement by parents and teachers. Next is what Erikson considers the most important stage of development, adolescence (identity vs. role confusion). This stage ranges from ages 12 to 18 or 19. During this stage, children ask the question “Who am I?” Usually this stage is where children explore their personal beliefs about politics, religion, sexuality, and even their future. If successfully completed, a child should “emerge with a clear sense of self and a feeling of independence and control” (Macgregor 44). Those who are unsuccessful in self-exploration generally remain unsure of who they are. They will feel more insecure and hesitant about their roles in society.

After adolescence are the adulthood stages including young adulthood (intimacy vs. isolation), ages 19 to about 35; middle adulthood (generativity vs. stagnation), ages 35 to about 55; and late adulthood (ego integrity vs. despair), ages 65 to death. In these stages there is an emphasis on personal relationships, work and parenthood, and reflection. In young adulthood, the task to complete is forming strong interpersonal relationships, specifically romantic relationships. In this stage, people generally have children and settle down. When entering into middle adulthood, the focus is more on the adult nurturing something (usually children) that will outlast them and finding a sense of usefulness and accomplishment in work. Following into late adulthood, adults who successfully accomplish this final stage should emerge with a strong sense of fulfillment, meaning that adults are able to look back upon their life without regret.

For this thesis, the discussion of these three stages will solely focus on Voldemort due to

the fact that he is already in late adulthood by the end of series and Harry is barely coming into young adulthood. It is important to note Voldemort's struggles and outcomes during these stages in relation to resilience, though. Resilience is a characteristic that develops during the infancy stage and remains present until death. Voldemort's lack of resilience can be seen throughout his life, even into his last days.

Using Erikson's theory of the stages of development, I will discuss the struggles and outcomes of both Harry and Voldemort in relation to resilience. I believe that Erikson's theory gives a more in depth method of looking into why people become who they are, because one is able to use environment and social interactions as a basis for development in addition to genes and cognitive functions.

Resilience

Resilience as defined by psychologists "refers to the process of overcoming the negative effects of risk exposure, coping successfully with traumatic experiences and avoiding the negative trajectories associated with risk" (Eisman et al. 1308). Several studies have been done to determine the factors that promote resilience in the real world. According to Kerry E. Bolger and Charlotte J. Patterson, in their article originally published in the book *Resilience and Vulnerability* edited by Suniya Luthar, "children who have experienced harsh or inadequate parental care and yet maintain or recover positive functioning offer compelling evidence of the possibilities for human growth and recovery" (157). They maintain the idea that an abusive upbringing can lead to the development of resiliency in children. Despite this, not all children develop resiliency. In their study, Bolger and Patterson participated in the Virginia Longitudinal Study of Child Maltreatment carried out in 2015. This study aimed "to identify associations between specific aspects of maltreatment and patterns of children's adjustment" (161). Bolger

and Patterson selected three cohorts of children in second, third, and fourth grade. In order to identify whether or not a child had been maltreated, Bolger and Patterson collected information from state social service records (161). They also determined the “sequelae of maltreatment dimensions, including specific types, age at onset, and chronicity” (162). These dimensions of maltreatment helped Bolger and Patterson explain why some children never adjusted. If a child experienced maltreatment that was more extensive, began earlier in life, and was more chronic, the likelihood of that child experiencing maladjustment was higher than those children who did not experience maltreatment as severe.

According to Bolger and Patterson, only 9.8% of abused children were categorized as high functioning at any time point in the study. They also discovered that only 1.5% of abused children were grouped as high functioning over time in general. Based on their study, Bolger and Patterson discovered that the “more well-adjusted children were actually exposed to fewer stresses” (158-59) which could include age of onset of abuse or less severe punishment over time. Another factor that Bolger and Patterson address is “protective factors” such as “advantageous personal characteristics, positive relationships with alternate caregivers, or attitudes that encourage a more optimistic view of life” (159). Most notably, though, were the “two domains with high potential to protect children against the ill effects of maltreatment,” which Bolger and Patterson identified as perceived internal control and perceived external control (159). According to Bolger and Patterson, “children with high levels of perceived internal control tend to believe that their own attributes or actions bring about their successes and failures, whereas those with high levels of perceived external control believe that other factors account for these outcomes” (159). Another factor that promotes resilience in children is the effect of strong interpersonal relationships. Based on their research, Bolger and Patterson noted

that “positive, reciprocal, and stable friendships may enhance children’s sense of security” (160).

These same ideals about what factors promote resilience can be found in John Grych, Sherry Hamby, and Victoria Banyard’s “Resilience Portfolio Model,” originally published in the journal *Psychology of Violence*. According to their study, “resilience is best understood as a dynamic process rather than a stable quality of a person because it depends on the constellation of stressors, risk, and protective factors that characterize a person’s life” (344). They note that each person’s adaptation to adversity is very dependent on the amount of assets (“characteristics of a person that promote healthy functioning”) and resources (“the sources of support outside of the person”) a person has (346). Some of these assets are “regulating emotions and behavior, building interpersonal relationships, and fostering meaning-making” (346). Based on their study, being able to regulate emotions and behavior has to do with one’s ability to “[sustain] and [support] goal-driven behavior both in the immediate situation and over longer periods of time” (346). This ability is otherwise known as having “perseverance and grit,” where one is able to “sustain and overcome obstacles while striving towards a goal” (346). Additionally, being able to build strong interpersonal relationships leads to the development of qualities like “gratitude, compassion, generosity, and forgiveness,” which are representative of resilience (347). Lastly, according to the “Resilience Portfolio Model,” being “able to make sense of the events that occur in their lives and to maintain coherence between events and their broader beliefs and values” is very important in dealing with adversity (347). This ability is what Grych, Hamby, and Banyard call meaning-making strengths.

Outside of these assets, Grych, Hamby, and Banyard address the importance of external resources that promote resilience, some of which are supportive relationships, environmental factors, and coping responses. For children, the relationship between child and caregiver is

crucial in the development of resilience. Children who have a secure attachment to a caregiver are more likely to become more resilient than those who lack that type of relationship. Also, “relationships with individuals [...] outside of the home” is very important for the child and his/her development (348). In addition to strong relationships, “certain environmental factors have effects on both the resources that promote resilience and the likelihood of being exposed to certain kinds of adversity” (348). For example, according to Grych, Hamby, and Banyard, “nurturing schools and community organizations characterized by supportive staff who model, teach, and reinforce pro-social behavior provide opportunities for children to develop important competencies and promote well-being” (348). Finally, one’s coping responses helps define the individual’s specific response “to adversity and how [those] actions may promote well-being” (348). “People who have a coherent sense of meaning may find it easier to fit stressful events into their world view and experience them as less negative and more controllable,” according to Grych, Hamby, and Banyard (348). This idea addresses both the assets and resources that promote resilience. The factors that define abuse described by Bolger and Patterson and Grych, Hamby, and Banyard will help to identify the types of abuse inflicted on Harry throughout his life, as well as set the stage for the outlining characteristics found within Harry, along with environmental factors, that promote resilience.

Character Analysis

To interpret characters, specifically from a psychological perspective, one must be able to separate the perception, or what readers observe, of literary characters and real people.

According to Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan in her book, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*, there are two arguments that involve the perception of characters and the analysis of such characters. One is the purist approach that “points out that characters do not exist at all except

insofar as they are a part of the images and events which bear and move them” (31-2). With this approach, it is important to note that characters do in fact only exist within the pages of the novel, and that to interpret a character outside of its fictional realm is illogical. For example, it is impossible to diagnose Tom Riddle (Voldemort) with antisocial personality disorder based on the information that is stated within the novel, because in order to truly diagnose him as a person, one would have to venture outside the realm of the novel and make assumptions about his life. By doing so, one would be going against the purist approach. Likewise, the other approach that Rimmon-Kenan discusses is the realist approach, where characters are interpreted as real people, where a character’s action may be based on drives completely outside of the novel. This approach “tends to speculate about that character’s unconscious motivations and even constructs for them a past and future beyond what is specified in the text” (32). This approach is essentially the opposite of the purist approach. That is, one would be able to diagnose Tom Riddle with antisocial personality disorder because, based on the realist approach, it is reasonable to step outside of the domain of the novel in order to fully understand a character.

With the intention of analyzing both Harry and Voldemort in a way that is reasonable and realistic, this thesis combines both the purist and realist approaches to define a boundary between the real world and the fictional world. Defining such a boundary makes it possible to apply real psychological theories in my interpretation of Harry and Voldemort. In other words, I examine J.K. Rowling’s fictional world as if it were a real world with real people, but where those people are confined to the rules and normalcies of that world. By doing so, I point out the crucial difference between Harry and Voldemort, something that I argue is the central characteristic of becoming a hero or a villain.

CHAPTER II: THE EARLY YEARS

Each stage Erikson's Theory of Development consists of a personal, internal crisis that one tries to overcome in order to move on to the next stage of development. While these crises are solely internal, the concept of crisis in relation to resilience research is external, meaning that it is usually "triggered by difficult life circumstances such as adversity, misfortune, or trauma" (Svetina 394). While these statements seem to contradict each other, the theories and research actually go hand in hand. For example, it is noted that resilience is closely related to an individual's belief and confidence that things will turn out okay (Svetina 395). This positive outlook, based on Erikson's model, is derived from the infancy stage when infants develop a "sense of hope in the future" (Macgregor 37). Developing the characteristics of resilience is something that occurs in infancy with one's attachment, or lack thereof, to a caregiver and is built up over the course of the lifespan. In this chapter I explore the first four stages of Erikson's Theory, infancy, early childhood, preschool, and school age, in relation to the development of resilience as seen in Harry and the lack thereof in Tom Riddle.

As a child, Harry knew very little about his parents. After their untimely death, he was sent away to live with his Aunt Petunia and Uncle Vernon. It is here where the emotional and psychological abuse and neglect begins. In *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, the Dursleys are described as "perfectly normal" and that they "could [not] bear it if anyone found out about the Potters" (1-2). Their fear of their dark secret leads the Dursleys to abuse and neglect Harry. In fact, according to Michael J. Martin and James Walters, "abusive families [have] more members in higher status positions and [are] more likely to have higher incomes, independent sources of incomes, and male heads who [have] gone beyond high school education," all of which can be assumed for the Dursleys based on the characterization of them in the novels (Martin 267). There are several types of abuse and neglect that are apparent in the Dursley

household, some of which are emotional abuse and some of which are emotional neglect. Emotional abuse, as defined by psychologist Richard E. Heyman and graduate student Danielle M. Provenzano, is “a non-physical behavior by a parent or caregiver that causes the child psychological harm or has a high potential for causing psychological harm” (106). For example, Harry is described as “Dudley’s favorite punching bag” (*Sorcerer’s Stone* 20). Additionally, there is emotional neglect, which is defined as “withholding emotional nurturance, support, or bonding necessary for normal child development” (Provenzano and Heyman 106). This can be seen whenever Harry is at home with the Dursleys, whether it be his room being a “cupboard under the stairs” or because Harry is always described as being almost malnourished (*Sorcerer’s Stone* 19).

This abuse and neglect are consistent throughout Harry’s whole childhood. Not only is Harry forced to have a room underneath the stairs, but also “the Dursleys often spoke about Harry [. . .] as though he wasn’t there” (*Sorcerer’s Stone* 22). Harry is required to stay with the Dursleys’ neighbor, Mrs. Figg, an old woman who seemed incapable of taking care of a child, whenever they decide to go out. If Harry did anything out of the ordinary, he was punished. For example, when Petunia cut Harry’s hair, it miraculously grew back “exactly as it had been before Aunt Petunia had sheared it off” (24). Despite Harry’s confused explanations, Petunia still punished him by locking him in his cupboard for a week. Also, Harry is ignored to the point where he is given very small amounts of food; sometimes Harry is even punished by having food withheld. For instance, after the debacle at the zoo where Dudley ended up inside of the python exhibit, Harry was disciplined by having all meals revoked (29). The fact that Harry is often punished by having food withheld is important because “children who are victims of emotional abuse are more likely to be smaller in stature, weigh less than same age peers and often fail to

meet expected developmental milestones,” all of which are descriptions used to characterize Harry (Iwanec et. al. 76). Petunia and Vernon “force Harry to survive on the bare minimum of physical sustenance and offer him no emotional support or caring” (Provenzano and Heyman 107).

The acts of abuse and neglect towards Harry by the Dursleys is a recurring behavior seen throughout the whole series. For example, in the second book, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, Petunia swings a “heavy blow at [Harry’s] head with [a] soapy frying pan” (10). She then continues to punish Harry by giving him work to do, “with the promise that he wouldn’t eat again until he’d finished” (10), all because Dudley claimed that Harry was performing magic. In *Prisoner of Azkaban*, not only is it mentioned that the Dursleys ignore him, Vernon’s sister, Marge, is a major player in the abuse to Harry as well. At one of Dudley’s birthday parties, “Aunt Marge had whacked Harry around the shins with her walking stick to stop him from beating Dudley at musical statues” (18). Aunt Marge also set one of her dogs on Harry, who has to climb a tree in order to avoid being mauled. To add to the physical abuse, Harry’s aunt and uncle either ignore the beatings by Aunt Marge or support them. Continuing into the fourth installment, *Goblet of Fire*, Petunia makes a point of treating Harry worse than Dudley to make Dudley feel better. This can be seen when the Dursleys go on a diet and Petunia gives Harry significantly less food than Dudley to “keep up Dudley’s morale” in the face of his diet (27). In *Order of the Phoenix*, Vernon’s “two large purple hands [reach] through [a] window and [close] tightly around [Harry’s] throat” when he thought that Harry had done magic (4). Also, after Harry saves Dudley’s life from dementors, Vernon tries to drive Harry out of the house despite Harry’s life being in clear danger. Even up into the sixth installment, *Half-Blood Prince*, Harry mentions that he tries to stay away from his uncle because “long experience had taught him to

remain out of arm's reach of his uncle whenever possible" (45).

These acts of abuse are not only done by Harry's aunt and uncle, but also by his cousin Dudley. The first five books in the series are filled with details in which Dudley and his friends find pleasure in beating up Harry; in fact one of their favorite sports is "Harry Hunting" (*Sorcerer's Stone* 31). Robin Franson Pruter argues in her essay "Unforgivable Acts: Bullying, Torture, and the Perpetuation of Violence in *Harry Potter*," that "Dudley uses his power over the other students to ostracize Harry" (311), which can be seen when Harry mentions that he was always picked last in gym at school "because no one wanted Dudley to think that they liked him" (*Sorcerer's Stone* 120). In *Chamber of Secrets*, Dudley mocks Harry for not receiving any birthday cards. In *Prisoner of Azkaban*, it is mentioned that "watching Harry being bullied by Uncle Vernon was Dudley's favorite form of entertainment" (18). And continuing into *Order of the Phoenix*, Dudley mocks Harry's vivid nightmares about the death of his fellow student, Cedric Diggory, to the point that Harry retaliates. Harry's retaliation is in response to the fact that as the boys get older, Dudley's abuse becomes more violent and is most likely only held in check by his fear of Harry's possible use of magic.

Despite the abuse, Harry seems to make it through the first eleven years of his life all right, meaning that he had not developed any antisocial, aggressive, or questionable behaviors. The major factor in Harry's ability to withstand such abuse is his secure attachment to his parents during the first fifteen months of his life, a time period which also set the stage for positive growth through the rest of his childhood. Based on Erikson's theory, because of the love and nurture that Harry's parents gave him, Harry was able to develop a secure attachment to his parents. In most instances, a securely attached infant has learned "that his needs are met by relatively constant, predictable carers," thus "developing a sense of trust in others and safety in

the world” (Macgregor 37). According to Dante Cicchetti and Sheree Toth in their article “Child Maltreatment,” “a secure attachment relationship [...] contributes to the integration of cognitive, affective, and behavioral capacities that influence ongoing and future relationships, as well as the understanding of the self” (419). That being said, Harry was able to develop a sense of trust in his relationship with his parents. The importance of developing a secure attachment as an infant is vital in a child’s development. A child must be able to cultivate strong relationships, especially in instances of abuse and neglect. If a child does not develop a secure attachment to a caregiver, the likelihood of that child being able to build strong interpersonal relationships is not very high. This attachment goes beyond infancy into school aged children. Children who do not have a secure attachment to a caregiver are more likely to have insecure attachment relationships throughout the rest of their life. Therefore, Harry’s ability to withstand the consistent maltreatment from the Dursleys stems directly from the fifteen months that he had with his parents before their death and his secure attachment to them.

Emerging from one’s attachment is one’s sense of independence and sense of purpose, which is developed in stages two and three of Erikson’s theory, respectively. Even though Harry does exhibit some loner tendencies (i.e., he does not have any friends and tends to be self-reliant), which could be caused by his abrupt loss of his nurturing caregivers and constant abuse, Harry stills seems to come out from these stages successfully. While there is no direct information about Harry’s life between the ages 1 and 10, since the series kicks off just as Harry turns 11 and begins his school career, it can be assumed, based on his choices and actions during his time at Hogwarts, that Harry did develop a strong sense of independence and purpose, thus evidencing Harry’s resilience. For example, it can be assumed that “Harry would have explored his environment and grown rather self-sufficient” between the ages 18 months and 4 years old

because he is confident in his natural athletic abilities (Macgregor 39). At Hogwarts, Harry becomes the youngest seeker in the past one hundred years to play on the Gryffindor Quidditch team. Children with secure attachments are more likely to display qualities such as confidence in their physical abilities. With that being said, though, Harry does demonstrate some instances of self-doubt, which is generally associated with a lack of resilience. This can be seen when Harry blows off Hagrid's claim that he is in fact a wizard (*Sorcerer's Stone*). Harry's intermittent feelings of self-doubt may be because, while he internally achieved at a young age by completing the stages of development, he was never encouraged to do so by a caregiver. Despite his doubts, though, Harry clearly is confident enough in himself to venture off into an unknown world with a stranger, which is what he does when he goes shopping with Hagrid for his school supplies soon after the revelation of his wizard status. He is open to the opportunity, not as a way to escape from his past, but as a way to become a new Harry.

While there is very little information about Harry's time between the ages of 6 and 11, it can be assumed based on Harry's time at Hogwarts that he developed a sense of competence in his intelligence. This is Erikson's fourth stage of development, or school age, where the internal crisis is industry versus inferiority. In this stage, children learn to "cope with new [. . .] demands" like social and academic demands (Macgregor 41). Children who successfully complete this stage find great pride in their achievements and in turn develop a sense "that they are competent and skilled" (Macgregor 42). Harry is always described as bright and capable, characteristics that are developed during this stage of development. Also in this stage, Harry most likely gained a sense of humility. Throughout the series, Harry is never one to boast or brag about his accomplishments, despite how great they are.

In contrast, where Harry's resilience is built upon his secure attachment to his parents and

sense of independence and purpose, Tom Riddle demonstrates a lack of resilience. Tom Riddle was born from the use of a “love potion” according to Dumbledore, in *Half Blood Prince*, when he was explaining Riddle’s backstory in an attempt to help Harry understand why Voldemort (Tom Riddle) is the way he is. Merope, Tom Riddle’s mother, had a burning passion for a young muggle man named Tom Riddle Sr., and in order to win his heart Merope had to use magic (213). Because that relationship was not based on love, but rather lust, there was no stability in it, which led to Tom Riddle Sr.’s abandonment of Merope and their son and eventually to Merope’s death. Because of this, the young Tom Riddle was never able to build any sort of attachment to his parents. He was sent away to live in an orphanage where he was never given the proper amount of attention or time to build any type of attachment or relationship with any caregiver. This falls under the definition of neglect as stated by Cicchetti and Toth, who argue that neglect “pertains to both the failure to provide minimum care and a lack of supervision” (410). According to Cicchetti and Toth, “children construct ‘internal working models’ of their attachment figures out of their interactions with their caregivers” (419). Due to the absence of such caregivers, Tom Riddle was never able to form proper interpretations of his behavior in relation to others. It is noted that young maltreated children generally have aberrations in their moral judgment and reasoning and that abused children are more likely to engage in disobedient behavior than those who are not abused (Cicchetti and Toth 421). Thus, Tom Riddle was incapable of learning the skills, like forgiveness and gratefulness, necessary to develop healthy relationships.

In addition, due to his lack of awareness of interpersonal skills, Tom developed a warped sense of independence and purpose. From their study, Cicchetti and Toth found that “maltreated children exhibit less empathy, fewer prosocial and more aggressive behaviors, and higher rates

of delinquency than to their nonmaltreated peers” (421). Based on Erikson’s model, those children that do not successfully complete stages two and three tend to become impulsive and ruthless. In fact, it is in stage three that children learn the differences between what is right and what is wrong. It is clear from a very young age that Tom Riddle’s moral judgement is skewed and so a “sociopathy begins to grow” (Macgregor 41). This sociopathy is apparent when Mrs. Cole, the matron of the orphanage, describes Tom as “odd” and points out that “he scares the other children” (*Half Blood Prince* 267). Tom’s evident lack of caring for other people’s feelings is expressed in harmful actions. For instance, despite his denial of the action, Mrs. Cole believed that Tom hanged “Billy Stubbs’s rabbit [. . .] from the rafters” (*Half Blood Prince* 267). This type of behavior is exactly the opposite of a child who is resilient, and occurs because Tom is “never made to feel appropriately guilty for [his] unkind or wrong actions” (Macgregor 41).

Despite the similarities in upbringing – the early loss of parents and their childhood abuse and neglect – both Harry and Tom developed different ways to cope with adversity. Harry’s strength lies with his secure attachment to his parents as a child. Although he was barely a year old when he lost his parents, Harry’s short time with them contributed to his ability to care for and trust others, as well as a strong sense of purpose and independence. Even as a child, Harry remained strong in the face of adversity, which in the future would lead to the development of healthy supportive relationships. Whereas Harry develops healthy characteristics, Tom expresses himself through anger and rage. Tom lacked the availability of nurturing parents or caregivers in general, and therefore, he was unable to cultivate the qualities needed to promote resilience. So, in order to cope, Tom became sadistic and careless. He began to develop negatively, meaning that he never learned any interpersonal skills, or the ability to develop healthy and supportive relationships. Regardless of his abuse, Harry was somehow able to maintain an even head,

whereas Tom Riddle, even in his early childhood days, was not capable of compassion, or maybe even emotions in general. The absence of interpersonal skills and abundance of negative, angry emotions would lead Tom down a dark and dangerous path, parallel to the healthy path of Harry that can be seen throughout the rest of novels.

CHAPTER III: THE HOGWARTS YEARS

For many in the wizarding world, receiving their Hogwarts letter is one of the best moments of their lives. Around age 11, young witches and wizards are sent away to Hogwarts to learn more about magic and its use. This age is also about when Erikson's fifth stage of development begins. Adolescence is one of the most important stages in Erikson's theory because there is a strong focus on the self and identity. People in this stage often ask the question "who am I?" Due to the uncertainty of identity, many adolescents look to what are considered role models of particular groups, which may lead to becoming "preoccupied with what they appear to be in the eyes of others as compared with what they feel they are" (Erikson 128). Adolescents are trying to find where they fit in within the society and within the social groups that they relate with. With a successful completion of this stage, adolescents emerge with a strong sense of self and a clearer idea of their futures. An unsuccessful completion leads to an uncertain sense of self, meaning that there is a tendency to "become fanatics about a particular cause or fanatical about a certain aspect of self" (Macgregor 46). People who do not successfully complete this stage are more likely to have a 'my way is the only way' attitude and will do whatever it takes to achieve it. In addition to self-exploration, an important aspect of this stage is the social scene, specifically at school. For both Harry and Tom, coming to Hogwarts is like being able to start again. Hogwarts is representative of the home they never had because it is the first place where the boys were able to progress socially, academically, and emotionally, due to the opportunities to build interpersonal relationships, not only with fellow students, but also with professors. The difference, though, lies in the relationships and choices that were made by the two boys over the course of their time at Hogwarts.

Teenagers during this stage "explore political beliefs, spiritual systems, career choices, and sexual role and orientation," all of which can be seen in our protagonist, Harry (Macgregor

44). Throughout the series, Harry is at odds with the Ministry of Magic, the overruling government within the wizarding world. The most apparent rejection of the Ministry can be seen in *Order of the Phoenix*, where Harry creates Dumbledore's Army, a club designed to teach other students how to apply the skills learned in the class Defense Against the Dark Arts to the real world. It is important to note that Dumbledore's Army is also "an underground resistance organization in political opposition against the perceived tyranny and censorship of the ruling power" (Macgregor 45). The creation of the DA is also a turning point in Harry's ideas about the future. Harry openly expresses his desire to become an auror, or a highly trained specialist officer trained to investigate crimes that are related to the Dark Arts.

While there is no said religious affiliation, Harry does have a strong sense of faith in the people he associates with and "their faith in [him]" (Ross 372). This faith, as well as Harry's ability to build and create healthy relationships, is a significant characteristic of being resilient. According to Eisman et al., "social support may help support healthy development, even when young people are exposed to risks" (1308). These risks may range from the consistent exposure to violence to emotional and physical neglect. It is important for Harry to develop strong peer relationships, or what Macgregor calls "a sense of familial identity," at Hogwarts because those relationships are what lead Harry to success (44). Specifically during adolescence, "peer groups become a primary focus", meaning that "friends can serve as a vital source of emotional support for youth, sharing concerns they may not otherwise share with adults" (Eisman et al. 1308). At Hogwarts, Harry is introduced to hundreds of people with several common interests and characteristics. All of the children with whom he interacts are his age and are going through the same stressful event of starting at a new school. Harry is for the first time on the same playing field as the rest of his peers, thus making it easier for him to explore his role in a relationship

with another person. The first of these is Ron Weasley, a ginger-haired boy in Harry's year. Within minutes of meeting, it is clear that Harry and Ron will be lifelong friends, not only because the two boys have commonalities, but also because Harry expresses his loyalty to Ron without even knowing him. Harry is very confident in his morals, especially loyalty, which comes from his "great dislike of bullying and [his feelings of] sympathy for outsiders like himself" (Ross 354) and his completion of Erikson's third stage of development. Harry's expression of loyalty to Ron is seen when he is first introduced to Draco Malfoy, a Slytherin boy in Harry's year, who "strongly remind[s Harry] of Dudley" (*Sorcerer's Stone* 77). Harry is offered a choice by Draco to pick between himself and Ron. Draco suggests that Harry should not "go making friends with the wrong sort," pointing out the economic status of the Weasleys (*Sorcerer's Stone* 108). For Draco, the wealth of a family is more important than the type of people he builds relationships with, but for Harry, the person is more important than the status. He replies to Draco, saying "I think I can tell who the wrong sort are for myself" (*Sorcerer's Stone* 109). Based on this first impression, Harry is a morally strong boy despite the abuse that he grew up with.

Another important friendship that Harry develops at Hogwarts is with Hermione Granger. Muggle born, or being born to non-magical parentage, Hermione is the top of her class. She is brave, clever, and very intelligent. She is also somewhat of a moral compass for Harry and Ron throughout the course of the series. At several points throughout the series, Hermione expresses her disappointment in Harry's actions, as in *Sorcerer's Stone* where she finds out that Harry was roaming the school at night when she chimes with "If Filch had caught you!" (175). Hermione is more than willing to stand by Harry in any situation; for example, in *Order of the Phoenix*, Hermione furiously announces that "[She] will not stay behind" when Harry decides to save

Sirius Black, his godfather, at the Ministry of Magic (763). In addition to Hermione, Harry develops very deep relationships with other students at Hogwarts. Neville Longbottom, a round, clumsy Gryffindor boy, looks up to Harry as almost an idol. Harry is one to stand up for the little guy and “to protect innocence from evil,” and Neville finds great honor in their friendship, especially when Harry fights for him (Ross 357). For instance, in the *Sorcerer’s Stone* when Neville returns to the common room after getting picked on by Malfoy, Harry, in response to Neville claiming to not be “brave enough to be in Gryffindor”, says that “[Neville is] worth twelve of Malfoy” (177). Harry gives Neville a confidence that he lacks and thus sets the stage for another supportive relationship.

The adolescence stage is also the time where teens explore their sexual identity in relationships. For Harry, his first romantic encounter was with a Ravenclaw girl in his year named Cho Chang, in *Order of the Phoenix*. This is the first time that readers see a new side of Harry that perfectly coincides with his being fifteen. It is clear that Harry, while curious about his new feelings, is still unsure about his role in a romantic relationship, specifically when Harry describes his first kiss as “wet” to his best friend Ron (*Order of the Phoenix*). There is a progressive transition from “the rather innocent infatuation with Cho, [. . .], to the more sexualized relationship with Ginny” (Ron’s younger sister) over the course of two years, from early in adolescence to later in the stage (Macgregor 44). Harry’s more serious look at relationships can be seen when Harry chooses to break up with Ginny in the *Deathly Hallows*, because she “represents the future and a normal life for him,” something that he believes is unattainable in his fight against evil (Ross 357). Harry’s newfound emotions exemplify his deepening and expanding ability to love, something that children who demonstrate characteristics of resilience find strength in.

In addition to being able to socialize and build friendships and romantic relationships, Harry was also introduced to several parental figures at Hogwarts. For maltreated children, having a strong role model is crucial in development. According to Eisman et al. “caregivers are the most critical resource for fostering resilience” because “they provide protection and nurturance for fostering development of qualities” like self-regulation, or being able to direct one's own thoughts, behaviors, and feelings to attain certain goals (347). It is also mentioned in Bolger and Patterson’s article “Sequelae of Child Maltreatment” that “positive relationships with alternate caregivers” are possible protective factors from maltreatment (159). A very important parental relationship for Harry is with Albus Dumbledore, the headmaster of Hogwarts. Wind Goodfriend points out in her essay “Attachment Styles at Hogwarts” that Harry’s “complete faith in Dumbledore’s abilities” proves the importance of their relationship in Harry’s life (89). This relationship serves as a natural mentor-student relationship. Dumbledore clearly “accepts Harry as a well-intentioned person” (Provenzano and Heyman 114). He always empathizes with Harry rather than expressing anger or disapproval. Especially when Harry overreacts to a situation or blatantly breaks a rule, Dumbledore always seems to know just what to say in order to make Harry feel normal in his reactions. For example, in the *Sorcerer’s Stone*, Harry continuously breaks curfew to visit the Mirror of Erised. Instead of punishing him, Dumbledore offers wisdom: “It does not do to dwell on dreams and forget to live” (157). He is there for Harry in a dark time, when Harry is obsessed with what could have been if his parents had survived and were alive to take care of him. This is true in several other instances throughout the series. In *Goblet of Fire*, “Harry succumbs to his curiosity and peers into Dumbledore’s pensieve” and in *Order of the Phoenix*, Harry wrathfully destroys Dumbledore’s office after his godfather, Sirius dies (Provenzano and Heyman 114). Dumbledore acts as a wall for Harry to rebound his

emotions off of. He is a safe place for Harry to truly be himself without fear of being ridiculed.

Dumbledore is also a mentor in the sense that he teaches Harry important lessons about life. Throughout Harry's life he was ridiculed and told he was wrong for the way that he acted by the Dursleys, but with Dumbledore, Harry is encouraged with positive reinforcement.

Dumbledore tries to prove to Harry that there is goodness within him. It is from Dumbledore that Harry learns about the significance of choices in relation to good and evil. In fact, Dumbledore gives Harry these words of advice after Harry returns from the Chamber of Secrets with the sword of Gryffindor: "It is our choices, [...], that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities" (*Chamber of Secrets* 256). Another lesson Harry learns from Dumbledore is being able to admit to making mistakes. Dumbledore even admits to the "flaw in [his] wonderful plan" when he is speaking to Harry about why he waited so long to tell Harry the truth of his fate (*Order of the Phoenix* 836). In the Dursley home, Vernon and Petunia can never seem to admit their own faults. They find it easier to blame others rather than accepting their own faults, so the fact that Dumbledore is open and willing to admit his mistakes is what gives him dominance as a supportive parental role model.

Moreover, Professor McGonagall is an additional parental figure in Harry's life. Minerva McGonagall is the head of Gryffindor (Harry's own house) and despite being a very stern woman, she is a kind and brave leader. Professor McGonagall is the one who is not afraid to punish Harry when he steps out of line. Professor McGonagall provides the discipline Harry needs. She is not concerned about being Harry's friend, but rather a person whom Harry can confide in. She supports Harry in almost all of his endeavors, especially Quidditch. McGonagall is the reason Harry is recruited to the Gryffindor Quidditch team as the seeker, after she sees him breaking the rules by flying to catch Neville's Remembrall. She praises Harry, saying that "the

boy's a natural" when speaking to Oliver Wood, the Gryffindor Quidditch captain (*Sorcerer's Stone* 124). She gives Harry support based on his strengths and gifts rather than basing her support on superficial attributes such as grades. Professor McGonagall is also the reason why Harry chooses to pursue his dream of becoming an auror. In their career consultation discussion, McGonagall consistently stands up for Harry when Dolores Umbridge repeatedly points out flaws in Harry's academic performance. McGonagall even decides to assist Harry in his dream of becoming an auror, stating that "if [she] has to coach [him] nightly" she will make sure that he achieves his goal (*Order of the Phoenix*). McGonagall is someone that "channels Harry's impulsive behavior into a positive, constructive opportunity for him to experience success and pride" (Provenzano and Heyman 116).

Similarly, Harry's friendship with the grounds-keeper of Hogwarts, Rubeus Hagrid, is another example of a good, supportive relationship. Hagrid is a huge, clumsy half-giant with a massive heart, and while he is representative of a brother-like figure, Hagrid's devoted friendship is what provides Harry the support he needs to succeed. There is nothing Hagrid would not do for Harry. In fact, Hagrid was the one who transported Harry from the rubble of the Potter house after Lily and James Potter were killed by Voldemort. Ten years later, Hagrid is Harry's first real introduction to the wizarding world and to the people of that world. He is the one whose famous words "Yer a wizard" change Harry's life for the better (*Sorcerer's Stone*). Hagrid is someone whom Harry feels he can confide in and vice versa. And where the previously mentioned relationships resemble more parental figures, Hagrid is the big brother. He is there to take care of Harry when needed. He lacks some of the characteristics necessary to be a father-figure, like caution when it comes to dangerous creatures and the ability to financially support a child, but Hagrid is a responsible figure in Harry's life and is someone that Harry can depend on. Harry's

relationship with Hagrid is “a close, confiding, natural mentoring relationship,” and one that offers Harry a different kind of friendship from his peers (Provenzano and Heyman 116).

Where Harry’s experience at Hogwarts is one that is supportive and warm, Tom Riddle’s experience was more secluded and cold. Tom’s progression through Erikson’s adolescence stage is bumpy and unsuccessful. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Tom displayed several characteristics of being a bully. According to Cicchetti and Toth, “maltreated children evidence more antisocial behaviors, including aggressiveness, meanness, and disruptiveness, and fewer prosocial behaviors such as leadership and sharing, [in addition to] causing distress in their peers than are nonabused children” (421). Tom Riddle displays all of these behaviors, almost exactly.

The fact that Tom Riddle was a very untrusting and wary child is what sets the stage for his experience at Hogwarts. Dumbledore points out that even before Tom was an adult he “was highly self-sufficient, secretive, and, [. . .], friendless” (*Half Blood Prince* 277). It is clear that Tom was not capable of building emotionally supportive relationships. According to Cicchetti and Toth, abused children have “difficulty developing and maintaining friendships” due to the high expressions of bullying characteristics (422). Even when abused children do develop a friendship, it is more likely to be riddled with conflict, especially in competitive circumstances. Tom Riddle, in addition to being a loner, always “wished to be different, separate, notorious” (*Half Blood Prince* 277). This vision that Tom Riddle had of himself followed him through his years at Hogwarts. Tom never had a true friend and it seemed as though he never wanted one. Due to the fact that “people designated as authority figures can have tremendous influence on behavior,” Tom Riddle always put himself in a role of authority (Franklin 172). Most of the time his “friends” were referred to as more like followers. He often manipulated his followers into committing petty crimes and misdeeds, which can especially be seen in his Death Eaters later on

in his life.

Dumbledore even points out that young Tom Riddle “was already using magic against other people, to frighten, to punish, to control” (*Half Blood Prince* 276). The key word in this statement is “control.” For children that are maltreated, having control in their life is a major component to feeling comfortable. According to Erikson, children with the “incapacity to assume a role forced on him by the inexorable standardization of adolescence” is likely to run away, whether it be by “dropping out of school, leaving jobs, or withdrawing into bizarre and inaccessible moods” in order to gain some sense of control, the last of which describes Tom Riddle in this stage (132). The need to control, as in Tom Riddle’s case, can bleed into situations and people that are uncontrollable. For people similar to Tom Riddle, perceived control generally falls on the external side, meaning that “people with high levels of perceived external control believe that other factors (e.g., powerful other people or unknown causes) account for” their successes and failures (Bolger and Patterson 159). For Tom, blaming his mother for dying and his father for leaving him is an easy way to justify his anger towards muggles and muggle born wizards, despite his own impure bloodline. This reaction is the pinnacle of perceived external control. Because of his high levels of perceived external control, Tom is wary of even going to Hogwarts. When Dumbledore comes to visit him in the orphanage, Tom does not believe that Dumbledore is telling the truth about taking him to Hogwarts. He exclaims “You can’t kid me! The asylum, that’s where you’re from isn’t it?” (*Half Blood Prince* 270). This scene demonstrates Tom’s need to be in control of every situation he is in.

Moreover, Tom Riddle demonstrated a strong desire to understand his heritage and ancestry. This quality branches from his need for control. As mentioned in the introduction, the adult Tom Riddle, otherwise known as Voldemort, is static, meaning that he never develops as a

character whether it be morally or emotionally (Zimmerman 194). This is due to his inability to see outside of his own world view. According to Macgregor, this obsession with one's own personal goal and achievement is called fanaticism (44). When it comes to his heritage, Tom was almost in denial about his mother being a true witch because he believed that if she were to have been magical, she would not have "succumbed to the shameful human weakness of death" (*Half Blood Prince* 363). Tom eventually comes to terms with the fact that his father, Tom Riddle Sr., was not the magical parent after obsessively searching for any trace of Tom Riddle Sr. in old school records and Wizarding history books and finding no trace of that name.

Tom Riddle clearly needed to know the power of his ancestors in order to justify who he was himself. His desire for information went beyond curiosity and slowly spiraled into mania, and he used his knowledge to harm others. Tom Riddle felt as though he was entitled to the power of his ancestor Salazar Slytherin and chose to take revenge on the muggle side of his heritage, a defining characteristic of fanaticism. If one does not successfully complete the adolescence stage, they emerge with a "weak sense of self," meaning that they are still reliant on those leaders of particular groups to help them make important personal decisions (Macgregor 43). Tom Riddle supported Slytherin's platforms condemning those who were not of pure blood with unusual vigor and loyalty, and in order to rid himself of his dirty blood that came from his muggle father, Tom Riddle murdered the Riddle family.

Arising from his obsession with the purity of blood and the guidance of his ancestors, Tom Riddle developed a strong desire to find the key to immortality. In his sixth year, around age 16, Tom Riddle went to the potions teacher at the time, Professor Slughorn, and asked about how to make horcruxes. A horcrux is an object in which a Dark wizard or witch has hidden a fragment of his or her soul for the purpose of achieving immortality. From Professor Slughorn,

young Tom Riddle learns that horcruxes can only be created after committing murder, the supreme act of evil. This act results in the literal splitting of one's soul in order to place the fragment in an item to hide it away. Tom's desire to reach immortality suggests that he was very insecure in himself and in what his future could have entailed, characteristics of an unsuccessful completion of Erikson's fifth stage of development and of a severe lack of resilience.

One quality that may not necessarily follow along with Tom Riddle's lack of resilience is his competency at school. According to Cicchetti and Toth, "abused and neglected children are at considerable risk for academic failure" (422). Tom Riddle's intelligence and excelling in school opposes this statement. Despite his bullying and aggressive characteristics that were displayed at the orphanage, Tom Riddle "showed no sign of outward arrogance or aggression" once he arrived at Hogwarts (*Half Blood Prince* 360). In fact, the students as well as the teachers were impressed by him. It can be assumed though, that based on his past habits, Tom used his charm to gain the trust of people who he knew would do his bidding, or in a professor's case, one who he knew would vouch for his innocence if need be. Even though doing well in school is a characteristic that is generally seen in those maltreated children who exhibit resilient traits, Tom Riddle inverts this theory by using his intelligence as a way to manipulate situations and people to gain control.

Overall, the relationships that were formed at Hogwarts for both Harry and Tom helped define one as more resilient than the other. Harry's ability to put aside his anger and confusion about his home life and build strong relationships with his fellow students and professors exemplifies his strength to withstand adversity. The friendships that Harry makes with Hermione Granger and Ron Weasley help him establish who he is as a person and where he stands in the world. He also is introduced to several parental figures in his time at Hogwarts. Rubeus Hagrid is

Harry's first introduction to the wizarding world and one could say that he is Harry's first real friend. Hagrid stands in as a supportive adult in Harry's life, even in the darker times. Another strong relationship that is developed is Harry's relationship with Professor McGonagall. Although she is a very strict and stern woman, she is still very supportive of Harry in his endeavors. She is always there for Harry when he needs someone to fight for him, which is something Harry was never accustomed to. Finally, though, is Harry's relationship with Albus Dumbledore. Dumbledore is a true mentor to Harry. He is someone that Harry really looks up to and he is someone Harry can depend on. As for Tom Riddle, though, he was never able to form any sort of supportive relationship. This is not because he was never introduced to such people, but it is because Tom lacked the qualities needed to build true friendships. He felt as though he were meant to be alone in his life because he was never able to form a healthy bond with a stable parental figure. The ability to form and maintain supportive relationships is a major aspect of a resilient person because they can put aside the adversities and trust other people.

CHAPTER IV: ADULTHOOD

As we age, the internal crises that we face become more focused on relationships and the acceptance of what lies ahead rather than on self-exploration (Macgregor 47). In Erikson's last

three stages there is a strong emphasis on personal relationships, work and parenthood, and reflection. When entering young adulthood (ages 19 to about 35 or 40), the task at hand is to form intimate personal relationships. Successfully completing this stage should lead to “a committed intimate relationship with a chosen person” (Macgregor 46). If not successfully completed, “the long-term disruptive effects of child maltreatment appear most markedly in later interpersonal relationships while cognitive or academic functioning is relatively unaffected” (Connolly 271). After young adulthood comes middle adulthood, when there should be an established family and work environment. The goal in this stage is to remain generative, meaning that one needs to be “capable of being creative and generating new ideas, inventions, goals, [. . .] and especially of mentoring younger people and guiding the next generation” (Macgregor 48). Moving into late adulthood, ranging between 60 or 65 to death, one must be able look back upon his or her life and feel satisfied about the life he or she has lived. It is important in this last stage to develop a sense of self where one feels as though his or her life has been meaningful.

Throughout the stages, the characteristics of resilience are present in one’s relationships with others and outlook on the future. While resilience has already developed through adolescence, the qualities of resilience are what continue to motivate people to continue through life in a positive and hopeful manner. In this chapter I reference the last three stages of Erikson’s developmental theory and relate the qualities that should be developed during these stages to the characteristic of resilience, drawing mostly on Dumbledore’s recitation of Tom’s history in *The Half Blood Prince*.

While Harry has not quite ventured into these last three stages within the series, Tom Riddle has completed each one. After leaving Hogwarts, around age 19 or so, Tom Riddle went to the headmaster of Hogwarts at the time, Armando Dippet, and asked for the job of Defense

Against the Dark Arts professor. When Dippet refused the offer, Tom became furious and continued his search for the trophies that he will eventually turn into horcruxes that he believed will successfully grant him immortality. His rage exemplifies the fact that Tom, while friendless during school, still remains solely focused on himself. During young adulthood, people who have successfully completed the past stages are looking to settle down and build a family. According to Jennifer Connolly, “close relationships are [...] a critical life task to be negotiated as family members” (270). For Tom, the idea of a family is something that does not even occur to him. In fact, Dumbledore mentions that Tom cannot “even intellectually understand the concept of love” due to his inability to form close interpersonal relationships, a quality that never developed during the early stages of development because of his lack of trust and insecure image of himself (Macgregor 47). Tom’s incapacity to understand the importance of love is what gives Harry strength to defeat him. Harry “is driven by the need for love,” while Tom is blind to the significance of having support (Ross 367). Dumbledore points this out when he says that Harry’s ability to love “is a great and remarkable thing,” in reference to Tom’s failure to understand love (*Half Blood Prince* 509).

Into young adulthood, Tom remains the antisocial, self-absorbed loner that he was during adolescence, thus exemplifying his lack of resilient characteristics. Those who do demonstrate qualities of resilience, while it may be more challenging, can build close interpersonal relationships. For example, in the epilogue of *Deathly Hallows*, there is a small glimpse into the adult life of Harry. Here readers can see an adult Harry married to Ginny Weasley, with three young children. Harry’s development of resilience led to his being able to trust others, his strong confidence in himself, and his strong sense personal identity, thus giving him the ability to form close bonds.

Through the rest of this stage, Tom demonstrates impulsive and irrational actions and choices that are the basis of an unsuccessful completion of the young adulthood stage. For example, after Tom's rejection by Armando Dippet, he flees alone to the mountains of Albania, in search for the lost Ravenclaw diadem. When he finds the owner, Tom proceeds to murder her and turn the diadem into a horcrux, which begins the string of murders that lead to the creation of Tom's horcruxes. Tom returns to England after creating the horcrux, where he is approached with several jobs in the Ministry of Magic, but instead he decides to accept a job at a small, retail shop residing in Knockturn Alley, Borgin and Burkes, trying to remain as alone as possible. At Borgin and Burkes, Tom befriends several very wealthy clients, one of which was Hepzibah Smith, the owner of two more Hogwarts relics: Salazar Slytherin's Locket and Helga Hufflepuff's Cup. He then proceeds to murder Ms. Smith and steal the artifacts, later to turn both into horcruxes (*Half Blood Prince*). Tom's continual creation of horcruxes demonstrates his "failed [development of] a conscience or inner consciousness," suggesting his complete and total lack of any resilient qualities (Hippard 89).

Indications in *The Half Blood Prince* are that by this time, Tom is about 30 or 35 years old. This marks the beginning of the middle adulthood stage in Erikson's developmental theory. The goal of this stage is for adults to create something that will outlast them, "often by having children or creating a positive change that benefits other people" (Macgregor 47). It is clear that by this time in Tom Riddle's life children are not a goal of his, and his idea of 'creating a positive change' is severely skewed. Tom believes that maintaining the pure blood of the magical world will lead to the domination of muggles by witches and wizards. While in his mind this may seem reasonable and logical, plans like this will hurt rather than benefit people. In order to accomplish his goal, Tom Riddle disappears for ten years, undergoing significant physical and

magical changes over the course of that time and openly taking on the name of Lord Voldemort to officially rid himself of his muggle father's name. While successful use of this time leads to a sense of accomplishment and usefulness according to Erikson's theory, Voldemort demonstrates a stagnant existence. He no longer becomes a valuable member of society due to his obsession with his immortality and his lack of concern for the wellbeing of others. Voldemort "embarks on a type of false Generativity" meaning that where most people find enjoyment in mentoring the new generation, Voldemort "attempted to achieve immortality by procreating himself" rather than using this time creatively to adopt new, progressive goals (Macgregor 48). Voldemort's false generativity lies in his obsession with immortality.

Voldemort's arrival into the last stage of Erikson's model, late adulthood, directly coincides with Harry's first year at Hogwarts and the start of the Harry Potter series, which gives readers insight into Voldemort's unsuccessful completion of this stage. The task of late adulthood is "to look back on life and feel a sense of fulfillment" (Macgregor 48). The fact that Voldemort is obsessed with his own immortality totally contradicts the task of this stage. Rather than being a positive model for a younger generation, Voldemort is "continually seeking to pull others over to the Dark side with him to gain control over them and to do his bidding" (Patrick and Patrick 223). He feels despair, which, according to Erikson, is "expressing the feeling that time is too short" (140). These feelings are often expressed through or "hidden behind a show of disgust, a misanthropy, or a chronic contemptuous displeasure with particular institutions and particular people" (Erikson 140), all of which Voldemort expresses repeatedly throughout the series towards many things ordinary people value. These characteristics also describe a lack of resilience. By the time someone reaches this age, according to Erikson's theory, one must be able to look back on his or her life and feel few regret and someone depicting high qualities of

resilience should reach this stage with a sense of accomplishment and wisdom (Macgregor 49). For Voldemort, fear has ruled his whole life to the point of obsession, and it is clear that he has not mastered this stage due to the fact that he still believes that death is the worst thing that can happen to anyone. Also, Voldemort has not built any lasting legacy, meaning that while he will forever be in the history books of young witches and wizards, there are no people who openly support his cause, are a blood relation to him (that is known), and he did not contribute anything good to society as a whole (Macgregor 49).

While the whole future that lies before Harry is unknown, it is apparent that he fully develops the characteristic of resilience based on the fact that he does get married and have children, thus completing the young adulthood stage and the middle adulthood stage of development. Voldemort, on the other hand, refused to build any such relationships, solely focusing on his goal of immortality. Voldemort's absence of resilience is the one character flaw that eventually leads to his death, during the battle of Hogwarts. Where Voldemort is fearful of what comes after life, Harry is brave. Even Dumbledore mentions that "it is the unknown we fear when we look upon death and darkness, nothing more" (*Half Blood Prince* 566). After his sixth year at Hogwarts, Harry embarks upon his most important endeavor: to find and destroy all of Voldemort's horcruxes and defeat Voldemort. Even though at this point in time Harry is barely emerging into young adulthood, he still expresses a deep sense of wisdom when he goes to face Voldemort for the last time. Harry develops a sense of responsibility because he knows his role in the future of the wizarding world, and instead of running away or placing blame, Harry steps up to the plate and faces his fears. This characteristic of Harry is one that Voldemort could never understand. Defeating the Dark Lord is, for Harry, not about himself. It is not about his reputation or the power he could gain. It is about the people he loves and the people who do not

have the power to defeat the evil that is ravaging the world. Harry fights for others no matter if they support him or not. This trust that Harry has in the goodness of people is something that Voldemort cannot have and will never understand. Voldemort expresses a deep disgust of Harry's ability to put others before himself – a disgust that signifies his own contempt of himself, thus signifying the fact that he never developed any qualities or characteristics of resilience.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

For me, Harry Potter, the boy who lived, is my friend; he is my companion. I was first introduced to the series when my grandmother purchased the first book for me. I can remember

countless nights of us sitting in bed reading *Sorcerer's Stone* over and over again. In fact *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* was the first book over one hundred pages that I read by myself. From that point on Harry Potter not only took over my bookshelf, but my to-watch list when the movies came out, and my closet because I had to have all of the memorabilia. I can remember waiting anxiously for the next books to be released just to read them in one sitting and wait again for the next one. Still, to this day, the Harry Potter series is an important part of who I am because it is something that has helped me grow, and many others feel the same way. The Harry Potter universe is a place I have always wanted to explore, so much so that it took over the summer before my senior year when I studied abroad in London for a Harry Potter class.

Based on my long-term relationship with the Harry Potter series, I chose to take a more academic approach in my reading and focus on an aspect of the series that I have never really considered. I have always been intrigued with the relationship between Harry Potter and Lord Voldemort. On the surface, the battle between the two is very clear: good versus evil. But as readers delve deeper into Harry and into Voldemort, it is apparent that their relationship may not be so simple. I find it very interesting that both Harry and Voldemort share so many similarities. For example, they both are orphans and experience severe forms of neglect and abuse, and yet they venture down two completely different paths. By using a psychological approach focused on development, I have attempted to analyze a significant difference between Harry and Voldemort. I believe that the characteristic that separates Harry and Voldemort is not one based on evil and good, but on the development (or lack) of resilience.

To analyze fictional characters from a psychological perspective, I chose to implement the combination of a purist and realistic approach as mentioned by Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan. The purist approach to analyzing characters emphasizes the importance of keeping characters

within their own world, meaning that one cannot apply real-world theories to the fictional world because it is not real. The other approach is the realist approach. This perspective of analyzing fictional characters stresses that it is important to assume certain aspects about a character's life or personality outside of their own fictional world. While I do not solely agree with either theory completely, I do believe that the best approach, specifically for this thesis, is to combine both approaches. By doing so, Harry and Voldemort can be analyzed as real people with real histories, disorders, and complexities, but within the boundaries of the Harry Potter universe. With that being said, I did not diagnose Harry or Voldemort with any disorder, but rather emphasized J.K. Rowling's use of psychological theory when characterizing both Harry and Voldemort.

Using Erikson's Theory of Psycho-Social Development, I have addressed each stage in both Harry and Voldemort's life, focusing on the development of resilience. Starting with Erikson's first four stages, I found that a child's attachment to a strong, supportive caregiver is what sets the stage for the development of positive personality qualities. Despite only having fifteen months or so with his parents, Harry was able to cultivate a secure attachment to his parents. This attachment gives Harry a strong base to stand on emotionally, especially when he is taken to live with his abusive aunt and uncle. Harry is able to develop a sense of trust in others which leads to his ability to build supportive relationships later on in his life. Also, Harry is able to obtain a strong sense of independence founded on his confidence in his athletic abilities. Harry has always shown high achievement especially within the realm of physical capabilities, and while one must assume what happened to him between the ages of 2 and 10, it is fairly clear, based on his athletic achievements attained at Hogwarts, that Harry did emerge from the first four stages of Erikson's Developmental Theory successfully. Tom Riddle, on the other hand, never had the opportunity to develop a secure attachment to any caregiver. The lack of

supportive caregivers and a secure attachment caused Tom to acquire angry and sociopathic characteristics. He displays strong antisocial tendencies, meaning that he never really shows any empathy towards others. Tom, while very capable, never engages in any social acts, unless he has something to gain. Tom also develops a warped sense of independence, finding it hard to rely on anyone but himself. Tom never develops any sense of interpersonal skills, which is a strong characteristic of someone who lacks resilience.

Moving into adolescence, the fifth stage of Erikson's theory, Harry begins his career at Hogwarts. In this stage, a child goes through what is called self-exploration, when he or she asks the question 'who am I?' Here, children explore his or her personal beliefs about politics, spirituality, and sexuality. It is also a very important stage in developing strong relationships, specifically friendships and romantic relationships. Harry, within his first few moments in the Wizarding world, meets Ron Weasley, and soon befriends him. His friendship with Ron is one of many that Harry gains over the course of his time at Hogwarts. Harry also cultivates romantic relationships, such as with Cho Chang, a Ravenclaw girl in his year, and Ginny Weasley, Ron's younger sister. Having strong and supportive relationships promotes the development of resilience, especially in children. Harry not only gains supportive friendships, but also he gains supportive parental-like relationships. These relationships are seen mostly within the professors at Hogwarts. One of Harry's most important relationships is that with Albus Dumbledore, the headmaster at Hogwarts. Dumbledore takes on the father figure role for Harry, being a consistent and caring role model through Harry's time at Hogwarts. In contrast to Harry's experience is that of Tom Riddle's. During this stage of development, Tom lacks the skills needed to build supportive relationships. While it is clear that Tom does gain some sort of following, those people are never considered friends to Tom. Tom's inability to form close, personal relationships

is a defining characteristic of his lack of resilience and it is a quality that eventually leads to his downfall.

Stepping into Erikson's last three stages of development, little is known about Harry's adulthood, but there is a glimpse into his future. In this preview, Harry is married with three children. Based on this, it can be assumed that Harry emerged from the previous stages of development successfully. Also, despite being in the adolescent stage, Harry expresses a strong sense of understanding his fate and his role in the future. Harry accepts the fact that he will die and chooses to approach death with confidence and without fear. While Harry's success through the stages of development is apparent, Tom Riddle's unsuccessful completion of the previous stages is expressed in his inability to produce something that will eventually outlive him. Tom Riddle's clear lack of resilience is further defined in these last three stages, when he is forced to face his fate head on. Tom has a deep fear of death and dying, something that is very apparent in his name change to Lord Voldemort, meaning "flight from death" (Macgregor 49). Tom, now Voldemort, is more concerned with his immortality than what he leaves behind for the future generations to come.

By using the combination of both the purist and realist approach, I applied Erikson's Theory of Development to my character analysis of Harry and Voldemort. Being able to fully analyze the characters of a work is a vital aspect of understanding literature, and while there has been much discussion about the concept of the hero and the conflicts of good versus evil found in the Harry Potter series, there has not been a significant discussion on the psychological characteristic of resilience in relation to the development of the characters identities. In my opinion, J.K. Rowling has described the fundamental features of resilience as well as Erikson's Theory of Psycho-Social Development through her characterizations of Harry and Voldemort

across the seven novels of the series. Although I am not sure of her intentions, Rowling follows the course of Erikson's theory almost exactly, demonstrating both the successful and unsuccessful completion of the various stages.

What has been of striking importance to me has been Rowling's clear depiction of the role of strong, nurturing, and supportive relationships in the development of positive personality characteristics, one of which is resilience. Without such relationships, Harry most likely would have developed similar characteristics seen in Voldemort. This insight opens the door for future psychological analysis, not only within the Harry Potter universe, but throughout the world of literature. Understanding a character's motivations and actions promotes a deeper understanding of the work, and thus a deeper understanding of literature itself.

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