

**HOW ALCOHOL USE IN J. K. ROWLING'S *HARRY POTTER* PERPETUATES  
LATE-VICTORIAN TRADITIONS OF RACISM, SEXISM, AND CLASSISM**

by

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## Abstract

This thesis examines the role of alcohol in the fantasy series *Harry Potter* by J. K. Rowling and analyses how the characters' class, race, and species shape the portrayal of their alcohol use. The *Harry Potter* series consists of seven books, published between 1997 and 2007. Initially, these books were marketed towards children, and are often considered children's literature, but they soon became popular with readers of all ages. While Rowling's series is often said to promote diversity and propagate an antiracist message, my thesis argues the use of alcohol by non-human characters continues a tradition of late-Victorian racism that creates a hierarchy based on race and species. The text frames alcohol use by any characters other than the most privileged human wizards as morally wrong. The same characters who are non-human are also lower on the socioeconomic hierarchy, which reinforces the privileging of human-wizards. Close reading of the text through lenses of critical race theories of Sara Ahmed, Richard Dyer, and David Roediger and class theory of Louis Althusser, along with late-Victorian historical contexts, suggests that *Harry Potter* perpetuates Victorian traditions surrounding race and class through the portrayal of alcohol use.

This thesis is divided into three chapters. Each chapter works to address a specific aspect of alcohol use within *Harry Potter*, in relation to late-Victorian traditions of racism, classism, sexism, or morality, building, incrementally, an intersectional and Althusserian analysis of drinking in the series. Chapter 2 looks at race and the way the magical community forces non-humans to internalize racism and attempt to "pass" as human-wizard. Chapter 3 considers how Ideological State Apparatuses function in the magical community to instil a sense of respectable drinking that favours the middle class, and especially paints men drinking as respectable and women drinking as improper. Chapter 4 examines Harry's position as moral authority within the magical community by exploring dichotomies that place protagonists above antagonists and human-wizards above non-wizards, without regard for conventional morality or consent. All three chapters work to position analysis at the intersections of race, species, class, and gender.

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## **Dedication**

Special thanks are owed to my parents, Maria Ilnyckyj and Cal Buchanan, for everything they have done for me. To them, I dedicate this thesis.



## Chapter 1: Introduction

Fantasy literature often portrays real-world cultural concerns and ideologies. It is remarkable how unimaginative such a purportedly fantastical genre can be: there is a broad body of literary criticism that has revealed just how staid fantasy literature can be in its depiction of race, class, gender. Although the depiction of race, class, and gender in the context of alcohol consumption in fantasy literature has not received much critical attention, alcohol has influenced almost every culture (Dietler 232; Hames 134) and also often appears in fantasy literature. Study of the racialized, classed and gendered depictions of alcohol consumption is warranted since, as historian Gina Hames writes, the way alcohol is used has “affected gender roles, class stratification, social hierarchies, and ethnic identities” (1).

My examination of the depictions of alcohol use in literature reveals the cultural concerns and ideologies of not only the fantasy world but of the larger cultural contexts surrounding the text. Popular culture often lauds J. K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* for being progressive because of the apparent diversity that exists within the series (Block n.pag.). Indeed, *Harry Potter* has been shown in a recent study to “[improve] attitudes towards stigmatized groups” by having characters fight “for a world free of social inequalities” (Vezzali *et al* 11, 2). An examination of the alcohol consumption, however, reveals that far from supporting diversity or undermining racism, classism, and sexism, the *Harry Potter* series perpetuates late-Victorian racist, classist, and sexist cultural attitudes and ideologies. Harry and the other protagonists purportedly work to ensure the equality of all wizards, regardless of blood-status. However, by examining ideologies revealed in the series’ treatment of alcohol consumption, I extend children’s literature scholar Giselle Liza Anatol’s argument that the *Harry Potter* series participates in the tradition of “stories of civilizing

missions, established hierarchies, and settled truths [that] sit so comfortably with readers that they do not notice the racism that lurks beneath the surface of the stories” (109). Using Anatol’s assertion of underlying racism within the series as a starting point, I argue that close reading and historical analysis using a framework that combines critical race theory and Althusserian theory uncovers how the text’s inscription of Victorian ideologies surrounding alcohol use reveals the books’ racist tendencies. This introduction provides a detailed methodology section outlining the critical race and whiteness theories, Althusserian theory, and intersectional theory that inform my analysis, before continuing with a historical context section to explain how my focus on the Victorian period informs the use of alcohol within *Harry Potter*. Finally, the introduction concludes with an overview of previous scholarly work on these issues in *Harry Potter* and an overview of the entire thesis.

## **Theoretical Framework and Methodology**

The racism of *Harry Potter* echoes late-Victorian ideologies of race. Therefore, the term race must also be placed in the context of the late-Victorians, and so before starting my analysis of racism in the text, I will define the term *race*. Although critical theorists (working alongside biologists) have shown that “race” is a culturally constructed category rather than a biological fact, the *Harry Potter* series is working with an older notion of race dating back to 1572, which is, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*: “[an] ethnic group, regarded as showing a common origin and descent; a tribe, nation, or people, regarded as of common stock” (“race”). This idea of race informed the work of Victorian anthropologists and physiologists and extended to “most educated Victorians, [who believed] by the mid-century, that we could divide human beings into a small number of groups, called ‘races,’ in such a

way that all the members of these races shared certain fundamental, biologically heritable, moral and intellectual characteristics with each other that they did not share with members of any other race” (Appiah 276). Since the nineteenth-century, the term’s usage has changed and, “[in] recent years, the associations of *race* with the ideologies and theories that grew out of the work of 19th-cent[ury] anthropologists and physiologists have led to the word often being avoided with reference to specific ethnic groups” (“race”). Despite the changes in usage, race is still often used as though it were a concrete biological referent — a practice the *Harry Potter* series participates in.

Attending to racialization in the series is doubly challenging, since the texts refer to non-human characters in the way late-Victorians framed racialized people. To look at the slippage between *race* and *species* in the series I use the works of intersectional feminist post-colonial scholar Sara Ahmed who asks, “how does identity itself become instituted through encounters with others that surprise, that shift the boundaries of the familiar, of what we assume that we know?” (7). People identify themselves by identifying what they are not, that is to say, by attempting to codify what is different about Others. Through the use of the term *Other* and the acknowledgement that everyone must interact with the Other, Ahmed argues that groups can only be defined within boundaries, which are created through exclusions. She writes that the Other “allow[s] the demarcation of spaces of belonging: by coming too close to home, they establish the very necessity of policing the borders of knowable and inhabitable terrains” (3). Xenophobia teaches people to feel the most comfortable when surrounded by the familiar. As a result, the Other, a figure that challenges the familiar, unsettles the majority group’s power. In a Western context, *whiteness* is the category that defines itself against Others. The production of *whiteness* as an in-group marker

is built upon exclusion: as David R. Roediger, a historian of racial identity, argues, “inclusion into whiteness has always been predicated on accepting the exclusion of others” (240).

Whiteness can only exist as a concept by defining who is not white.

Complicating the traditional notions of race, and by extension critical race studies, is the fact that in *Harry Potter* there are many non-human characters whom the text treats as though their species status is a late-Victorian version of race. Historically, the Victorians conflated race and species, framing Irish, Jewish and African-American people as members of distinct species (Dyer 52). This social construction of race is predicated on exclusion, and the speciesization that accompanied Victorian racialization provided a further demarcation of space in which the stranger subject is pushed from the boundaries of whiteness. Historical social constructs supported institutional racism by grouping races into separate biological categories beyond human. Avtar Brah, a sociologist of race and gender, writes that institutional racism has grown out of specific “economic, political and cultural circumstances” (Brah 508), circumstances reinforced by institutions such as schools and governments. Brah argues that this allows the dominant racial group to maintain the elite position in society (508). The social relations of power that exist in racism are also linked to the social relations of power that exist in a capitalist class system. Social constructions of power dynamics allow for the exclusion of groups who do not inhabit the unmarked position in society.

My examination of the socioeconomic hierarchy of *Harry Potter* reveals ideology upholding power dynamics favouring human wizards. Influential Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser argues that ideology that supports those in power is transferred from old to new ruling classes, and then internalized by those who are being exploited by those in power

(185). Within a capitalist state, there must exist a way to reproduce goods but also a way to reproduce the labouring class that works to create the goods and power the system, and ruling ideologies are the way to ensure acquiescence of classes within the system. The system requires the labour of the working class to function, but the bourgeoisie are the ones who benefit since they pay workers less than the monetary value their labour creates and keep the difference as profit. In order to have the working class continue as the working class, schools educate children in societal rules of good behaviour that reinforce working class children's role as labour power. Students not only learn the skills necessary for labour, but also "submission to the ruling ideology," which is to say, the ideology that supports the status quo (Althusser 132). The State institutions, such as schools, the church, or the army, help reinforce the ruling ideologies (133).

Society consists of two major divisions, the infrastructure, or the economic base, and the superstructure, which includes social sectors that are not directly related to the means of production. The State functions, in a classic Marxist sense, as a repressive apparatus used to ensure the ruling classes' "domination over the working class" and continue "capitalist exploitation" of the working class (137). Marxist theory distinguishes between State power and State apparatus. Building on Marx's theory, Althusser locates State power as the objective of class struggle and the use of State apparatus as belonging to the class holding State power (140). Thus, in a Marxist sense, State power must be seized in a class struggle in order for that class to gain control of the State apparatus (140).

Althusser complicates Marx's distinction between State power and State apparatus by calling the State apparatuses, as defined by Marx, "the Government, the Administration, the Army, the Police, the Courts, the Prisons, etc." the Repressive State Apparatus (RSA) (143).

Althusser then, perhaps most famously, posits the concept of the Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) (142). The ISAs consist of, in Althusser's words, "the educational apparatus, the religious apparatus, the family apparatus, the political apparatus, the trade-union apparatus, the communications apparatus, the 'cultural' apparatus, etc." (150). The key distinction between RSAs and ISAs is their function: RSAs function primarily through violence, while the ISAs function primarily through ideology. That being said, Althusser clarifies that "every State Apparatus, whether Repressive or Ideological, 'functions' both by violence and by ideology" (145). RSAs belong to the public domain, while ISAs are primarily private institutions, but as is exemplified by the Educational ISA, this public (RSA)/private (ISA) distinction does not always hold. Furthermore, according to Althusser, in contemporary society, the Educational ISA as the dominant ISA has replaced the Religious ISA as the dominant ISA (153-4). The ISAs, while not primarily functioning through violence, still can use violence to maintain the power structures (145).

The main goal of the ISA is to support the ruling class. Althusser states that no class could maintain control over the State power without the control of the ISAs and, moreover, the ISAs will be the location of class struggle as they offer more room for resistance and are the most difficult for the State to control because the ISAs "are multiple, distinct, 'relatively autonomous' [from the State] and capable of providing an objective field to contradictions which express . . . the effects of clashes between the capitalist class struggle and the proletarian class struggle" (149). While the ruling class centrally controls RSAs, those outside the ruling class can infiltrate ISAs. Following industrialization and the decline of religious ISA's power, the school is the dominant ISA and creates students, and citizens, who follow the ideology of the ruling class. For example, *Harry Potter* is, for the first six

volumes, a boarding-school narrative, and demonstrates how the school is extremely important in shaping ideology.

Ideology functions “by the subject and for subjects” (Althusser 170), which is to say it cannot operate without subjects. Ideology hails subjects and transforms them through a process of interpellation. Even if people believe they are outside ideology, there is no “outside”: everything occurs within ideology. Subjects are unconsciously compelled to behave as ideology dictates. Individuals are always interpellated, or hailed, as subjects. People at all levels in the class hierarchy are unaware that the State Apparatus has interpellated them to act and think in this way because they are subjects even before birth. For subjectivity to function, it requires the interpellation process; subjects need to be subjected; subjects need to recognize subjects, each other, and themselves; and finally must “recognize what they are [according to the way they have been interpellated] and behave accordingly” (181). Once this process of interpellation occurs, subjects can function within the ISAs as if following the ruling ideology of their own volition.

The interpellation process allows the ISAs to contribute to the reproduction of the working class labour power that sustains the capitalist system. The process of instilling the ruling ideology occurs at all levels of society through the RSAs and ISAs. Since the ISAs, rather than the RSAs, are the more likely location for conflict, the class that controls the ISA can hope to control State power: this is one area where Althusser differentiates himself from Marx (140). The means of production under capitalism are inherently exploitative, and ISAs serve as a location of class struggle. ISAs function in the interest of the ruling class and work against the interests of the exploited class. The dominant ideology, at its core, works to maintain the ruling class’ State power.

The educational ISA is the State Apparatus most present within *Harry Potter* and also the one most influential in guiding socially sanctioned alcohol use. My close reading of the novels through an Althusserian critical lens, paired with an intersectional approach to race, species, class, and gender, demonstrates how the subtleties of the late-Victorian ideologies of racism, classism, and sexism are reproduced in the text. To illustrate these late-Victorian traditions, I provide an analysis of historical nineteenth-century sources on the discourses surrounding alcohol.

### **Historical Context**

The late-Victorian period is defined here as ranging from the 1870s until Queen Victoria's death in 1901. My rationale for choosing this time period is that by the 1870s societies began to view alcohol use and abuse as a problem, including those in the United Kingdom and North America. The ideological undertones of writing on drinking from this time period show up, perhaps surprisingly, in the *Harry Potter* series. Through this time period the medical definition of addiction had been "updated to include the idea that addiction might be a nervous illness affecting white professional men" (Zieger 21). The Victorians' creation of the idea of *alcohol abuse*, as Annette Cozzi, a researcher on both Victorian literature and food studies writes, came from their "mania for taxonomization, and those figures who breached knowable categories ... were viewed with suspicion" (63). Men with a penchant for drunkenness thus breached acceptable categories, leading them to be viewed with suspicion. Therefore, it became possible for some formerly privileged white professional men to be viewed with suspicion, and thus 1870s society required changes to systems dealing with alcohol use. The solutions to the alcohol problem varied by location.



While in North America the solution was temperance and prohibition, in Britain the solution was a discursive legal framework used to construct the meaning of drunkenness. England instituted more stringent laws surrounding the service of alcohol from the 1870s onward. Drunkenness was not acceptable, writes Cozzi, and drinking was bound up in the creation of national identity: “the ability to balance indulgence with self-denial is one of the characteristics of the English” (147). In spite of traditions of self-denial, in the 1870s, drunkenness became an issue of English law, and legislation was put in place that shifted the blame for drunkenness from the imbiber onto the server (Jennings, “Policing” 65). The way late-Victorian society framed the alcohol problem continued to change, and so, by the 1890s, the concept of addiction began to take shape, and a medicalized view of addiction and inebriety (alcoholism) in society began to form.

No longer a private secret vice, the medical community saw inebriety as a major public issue by the 1890s, resulting in a racialized biological explanation for inebriety. Susan Zieger, a specialist in the areas of mass culture and Victorian literature, argues that “whereas earlier, the characteristic addict had been a white man harbouring an inner, secret ‘slave’ to the bottle, those racial signs of inner division now rise to the surface, becoming visible in physiognomic register of degeneration and biological defect” (25-6). The shift to a racialized, biological, formation of alcoholism means that addiction shifted from the realm of legal-social issue in the 1870s to the realm of medical science in the 1890s. Society’s willingness to attribute alcohol consumption to physical causes gave the medical community discursive power. American temperance historians John W. Crowley and William L. White note that despite the shift to medicalized discourse [from legal discourse], there were still a few caveats:

[The] medical model of inebriety was extended primarily to men, not to women, whose excessive alcohol consumption continued throughout the nineteenth-century to be defined almost exclusively in moral terms. There were also class distinctions. The set of those worthy to be rescued was restricted primarily to men of means who, after achieving some degree of success in life, had fallen on hard times as a direct consequence of alcoholism. Those of less wealth and less noble histories were more likely to be viewed not as inebriates worthy of rescue but as “common sots.” (8)

Society created a hierarchy around inebriety, and not surprisingly it was a hierarchy that favoured white middle-class British men. Brah argues “Racisms have variable historical origins but they articulate with patriarchal class structures in specific ways under given historical conditions” (512). The interaction of racism and patriarchal class structure surrounding inebriety leads to the demarcation of inebriates on social, racial, and gendered scales. Hierarchal stereotypes regarding race reinforce the existing British power structures while framing alcohol use as a problem.

In this thesis, in order to articulate late-Victorian attitudes surrounding alcohol, I examine newspapers, monthly magazines, editorials, government reports, nineteenth century advertisements, and medical journals. Applying this historical analysis to *Harry Potter* reveals how the texts perpetuate the late-Victorian attitudes surrounding alcohol use.

## **Literature Review**

*Harry Potter* scholarship is thriving, and while no one has yet studied alcohol use within the series, scholars have extensively studied race, species, class, and gender. Most critics seem to agree that the texts deal with racial issues; the main debate between critics is

whether the texts condemn *all* racism or if the depictions of non-human characters point to a more subtle prejudiced hierarchy. For example, Karin E. Westman believes *Harry Potter* critiques racist ideologies, while Farah Mendlesohn argues the opposite: that *Harry Potter* exemplifies prejudice. Elaine Ostry and Anatol take a moderate approach: while *Harry Potter* critiques some aspects of prejudice, the series manages to perpetuate others. Anatol in particular argues for a tradition of Victorian racism continuing in the texts (109). Of particular interest is the way critics approach giants, the internalized racism of half-giants and house-elves, bi-speciesism, the social standing of house-elves, slavery, social justice movements, gendered teachers, and the morality of Harry Potter and Albus Dumbledore.

Critics generally agree that the texts' depiction of giants depicts racism. Wizards misunderstand giants and critics generally agree that *Harry Potter* uses giants to illustrate racism. Jackie C. Horne describes giants as a racial Other who serve only to be differentiated from wizards, who in turn hunt and expel giants from Britain (80). In the texts giants only exist in a small group somewhere on the European continent. Anatol argues that giants are portrayed as grotesque Others that need to be segregated from the magical community to protect wizards (114-5). Giants are portrayed as the cultural opposite to wizards and indeed giants are culturally distinct because they are not wizards (115). Westman writes that the magical community shares a cultural belief that all giants are vicious, and Ron Weasley indoctrinates Harry with the universal wizarding cultural beliefs and ideologies (323-4).

Rubeus Hagrid, a half-giant, internalizes the racist and speciesist ideologies of the magical community. Anatol writes that Hagrid perpetuates the "absorbed racism" of the magical community when he shares the same racist cultural discourses about giants with Harry (116). Hagrid goes a step further and brings his half-brother Grawp back to Hogwarts

in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, a move that, Anatol argues, resembles a civilizing mission. She also argues that Hagrid disregards that giants have their own culture and motives and instead Hagrid forces Grawp to adapt to wizarding culture (116). Hagrid believes that Grawp will be better off behaving as a wizard, rather than as a giant, which, Anatol suggests, is a sign he has internalized the racism against giants and believes human-wizards are superior to giants. While Anatol points out that Hagrid is quite literally a physical Other because of his immense size, Farah Mendlesohn describes Hagrid as an infantilized character (Mendlesohn 166). Part of Hagrid's infantilization is his accent, which marks him as Other. Hagrid has an accent unlike the educated professors of Hogwarts, such as Albus Dumbledore, Severus Snape, or Minerva McGonagall. Despite living at Hogwarts for over fifty years, Mendlesohn points out Hagrid has an accent that not only marks him as a racialized Other, but also "more than a few social notches below" everyone at Hogwarts (166). Mendlesohn goes on to say Hagrid's "incompetence is because of his mixed blood" (166). Hagrid embodies the stereotypes associated with being half-giant and therefore Harry's acceptance of Hagrid points towards Harry's good character (166). Mendlesohn seems to be contradicting herself here, since she describes Harry's behaviour towards Hagrid as both patronizing and good.

*Harry Potter* not only contains hierarchies of race, but also of social standing. Shama Rangwala considers *Harry Potter* to be a class allegory that promotes "traditional middle-class values" and privileges the intelligentsia (127-128). Mendlesohn likewise argues that the series promotes nostalgia for "old Englishness" where the protagonists such as Harry and Dumbledore come from middle-class backgrounds (166-169). The series' privileging of human wizards leads to a hierarchical and prejudiced society that segregates magical people

from non-magical people (Mendlesohn 177). The wizarding community remains ignorant of the culture and values of everyone that is not familiar, from giants to muggles (Mendlesohn 177).

Human-wizards also benefit from the enslavement of non-human species. The magical community's most oppressed group is the house-elves (Rangwala 137). Rich wizarding households keep house-elves as slaves, including at Hogwarts, and even Harry himself becomes a house-elf's master in *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*. Peter Dendle argues that Harry is able to internalize the view that house-elves should be servants because it is the dominant cultural ideology (169). Dendle also argues that Harry learns from Dumbledore how to be a good house-elf master because Dumbledore is master to hundreds of house-elves (169). Mendlesohn argues, however, that while Dumbledore is a benevolent master to the hundreds of house-elves at Hogwarts, he only appears to be a good master because all the other examples are so terrible (177). Rangwala extends this argument: Dumbledore never offers his house-elves freedom and never enacts structural changes, despite telling Harry to be kind to house-elves (138). House-elves do not have the agency to pursue self-liberation. House-elves must instead be freed by wizards (Mendlesohn 178). Interestingly, Mendlesohn, in her reading of the series before all seven volumes were published, is convinced that house-elves will be freed by the end of the series (178). They are never freed. Instead the narration uses them as a source of humour. Most critics, including Anatol and Westman, point to the final, pre-epilogue scene in which Harry wonders if Kreacher (his house-elf) will bring him a sandwich, as proof that Harry Potter has no investment in challenging the systemic oppression of house-elves nor even any sense that the systemic oppression of elves is wrong. Anatol points out that, unlike Mendlesohn's

prediction of house-elf emancipation, the final line of the “main body of the novel[s] . . . embraces slavery, rather than firmly rejecting it” (113). Rowling often includes jokes at Dobby the house-elf’s expense, which undermines Dobby’s status as a free-elf. Westman argues that house-elves best exemplify the conflation of race and class: house-elves are born into slavery, their race a marker of their class (325-326). And indeed, Rowling has constructed house-elves so that they are incapable of self-emancipation. Other than Dobby, house-elves make no effort to free themselves.

Hermione Granger is the only one to pursue house-elf freedom or try to enact structural change. She founds S.P.E.W.: the Society for the Protection of Elfish Welfare, and tries to convince both house-elves they should be free and human-wizards to free house-elves, moves that many critics have discussed. Hermione claims that the house-elves live under a system of false-consciousness (Rangwala 137). In contrast to Rangwala, Mendlesohn argues that despite Hermione’s good intentions, Hermione is made to look “silly” in her efforts with S.P.E.W. (180). As Anatol and Horne both note, Harry is unconvinced by Hermione’s arguments, and shows no interest in freeing Kreacher (Anatol 113; Horne 83). Horne argues that the text suggests there is no need for Harry to take on Hermione’s social justice approach (83). Harry, instead, is able to take a personal approach to house-elves (which is to say, one that cannot actually lead to mass emancipation), opting to instead be kind to them, but continuing to perpetuate the system of slavery (Horne 84). Like Horne, Anatol argues that the series perpetuates slavery to the very end (113).

House-elves are not the only embodiment of class and labour issues in the series. Teachers are a crucial part of the construction of class in this boarding-school narrative. Many of the teachers in *Harry Potter* serve as stock background characters while others are

major characters. Megan L. Birch notes that teachers not only teach students the curriculum but also give students moral and ideological lessons (107). Teachers' personal and private lives blur together, meaning that there is little distinction between professional and private lives of teachers or students. (107). My analysis focuses on the professors who drink most often: Slughorn and Trelawney. Birch describes Trelawney as "kind, though ineffective" and does not mention Slughorn at all. There is a curious silence about Trelawney in *Harry Potter* scholarship. Elizabeth E. Heilman and Trevor Donaldson's study of female characters in *Harry Potter* does not mention Trelawney once.

In a series full of dubious characters, drunken professors, and oppressive wizards, Harry Potter is meant to serve as the moral centre of the magical community, but upon close analysis, his moral mettle is suspect. He, like the other characters, is always already an ideological subject. Mendlesohn writes that when it comes to Harry, "fairness and justice may be bent" (165) to suit the boy. While the Weasleys try to help shape Harry's morality, it is really Dumbledore who guides Harry and serves as Harry's moral parallel (Mendlesohn 173; 175). Anatol argues Dumbledore is the voice of moral authority (116). The text frames Dumbledore as superior, writes Rangwala, and Dumbledore plans Harry's life (134). Dumbledore is the headmaster of Hogwarts, an institution whose goal is the "moral and ideological socialization" of its students (Rangwala 134). Rangwala argues that Harry accepts his role as hero because of Dumbledore's guidance and that Dumbledore's example allows Harry to be a benevolent master to Kreacher (130). Dendle claims that the reader is meant to applaud Harry for his kind treatment of Dobby, and for freeing Dobby, but asks how the reader is meant to react to Harry's ownership of Kreacher (169). Harry is following in Dumbledore's moral footsteps and thus Dumbledore rewards Harry for his learned good

behaviour (Rangwala 129). Rather than setting up Dumbledore, who keeps enslaved house-elves, as a foil for Harry, who frees at least one, Phillip Nel notes a “morality of choice” within the series, where Voldemort’s choices always paint him as immoral, and Harry’s choices are always moral (282). Horne voices a similar argument: Harry is never allowed to be morally ambiguous. Despite other critics pointing out Harry’s flaws, Horne argues Harry is always morally correct no matter what he does (95).

## **Chapter Summary**

Throughout *Harry Potter*, the series perpetuates late-Victorian traditions of racism, sexism, and classism. My application of alcohol use as a case study shows the way these late-Victorian traditions function. The series conflates race and species, and so non-human characters suffer from racist treatment akin to white late-Victorian’s treatment of racialized people. Likewise, the classist treatment of drinking echoes nineteenth-century prejudice against the working class people who drink. Men drinking in *Harry Potter* are depicted differently from women, who are described with the same sort of sexist gender stereotypes as those women faced in late-Victorian Britain. Harry Potter stands as the moral centre of the novels, allowing his actions to be portrayed as morally correct, even when other characters performing the same actions paints them in an antagonist light.

This thesis is divided into three chapters. Each chapter works to address a specific aspect of alcohol use within *Harry Potter*, in relation to late-Victorian traditions of racism, classism, sexism, or morality, building, incrementally, an intersectional and Althusserian analysis of drinking in the series. Chapter 2 looks at race and the way the magical community forces non-humans to internalize racism and attempt to “pass” as human-wizards. Chapter 3



considers how Ideological State Apparatuses function in the magical community to instil a sense of respectable drinking that favours the middle class, and especially paints men drinking as respectable and women drinking as improper. Chapter 4 examines Harry's position as moral authority within the magical community by exploring dichotomies that place protagonists above antagonists and human-wizards above non-wizards, without regard for conventional morality or consent. All three chapters work to position analysis at the intersections of race, species, class, and gender.

## Chapter 2: Racializing Privilege

Despite being lauded as particularly diverse in its representations of race, the *Harry Potter* series is built on and reinforces late-Victorian racial hierarchies. Building upon Anatol's argument that the magical and nonmagical borders are as flexible and porous as the Victorian British Empire's racialized borders, Hogwarts and the larger wizarding world are not only pluralistic in terms of blood status, or magical versus non-magical parentage, but also of species. In the series, Rowling introduces characters of various species, including house-elves, giants, centaurs, werewolves, merpeople, goblins, acromantula (giant spiders), Veela, and vampires. These non-human characters, in many instances, are depicted as though their species is analogous to race, which is a troubling conflation similar to the late-Victorian labelling that often constructed racial Others as non-human. This chapter argues that through the text's depiction of half-giants, half-Veelas, and house-elves, and their interactions with alcohol, the *Harry Potter* series perpetuates the Victorian racist traditions which placed white upper- and middle-class men, read in the text as human-wizards, in positions of privilege, thus undermining the text's espousal of diversity and equality.

In order to support the claim that the *Harry Potter* series perpetuates the late-Victorian conflation of species and race, this chapter leads with an outline of the relationship of white British colonizers to Indigenous peoples in North America, Australia, and New Zealand, before examining the treatment of Indigenous peoples and their use of alcohol in nineteenth-century writing. It then compares late-nineteenth-century approaches to the medical treatment of inebriety to popular sources. The chapter then explores how giants are framed both within the text and in comparison to late-nineteenth-century descriptions of

Indigenous peoples. Wizards discriminate against England's Indigenous giants and force half-giants to pass as human within wizarding society. The traits of stereotypical-Indigeneity that are applied to half-giants are shown by their interactions with alcohol, which I show through a case study of the two bi-species, half-giant, characters in the novels. The next section examines the speciesization of the house-elves and low status within the wizarding world – that is that they are excluded from power within society because of their species. Finally, the chapter concludes with a section analysing the other instance of bi-speciesism in the text, that of Fleur Delacour and her Veela ancestry. In keeping with Brah's articulation of racisms, the text treats Fleur's bi-speciesism much differently than that of the half-giants and, thus, her interactions with Hagrid perpetuate Hagrid's lower status.

Although *Harry Potter* depicts a fictional fantasy world, the ideologies and attitudes towards race are akin to real-world racism. Therefore, the race theories of Ahmed and Dyer are used as a lens to examine the texts' ideologies and attitudes. This chapter focusses almost exclusively on issues of race and species, and turns to an Althusserian analysis in combination with intersectionality in Chapter Three.

Half-giants best exemplify the text's racist treatment of non-human characters. They are relegated to a liminal space in the magical community. Half-giants can only use wands if passing as wizards because wands function as a signifier of *human* magic. Wands are said to focus natural magic, making both humans' and non-humans' magic stronger. House-elves lie further away from human-wizard on the racial spectrum, and, while they have access to magic, they cannot use wands. House-elves are essentially slaves and are "presented as happy, simple souls who merely wish to serve their families to the best of their ability"

(Mendlesohn 179). This chapter demonstrates how characters' alcohol use supports my argument about the historically specific inherent racist undertones of the novels.

### **Victorian Contexts**

*Harry Potter*'s treatment of giants and half-giants eerily echoes late-Victorian self-serving depictions of Indigenous peoples lacking self-control. "[The] Indians of North America know not moderation in the matter of imbibing strong drinks," writes Stuart Cumberland in *The Queen's Highway*, a travelogue published in London in 1887; "[they] are of the opinion that if they drink at all they must drink until the bottle is empty, in order to show their appreciation of its contents" (75). Settler colonialists use passages like these to Other the Indigenous people of North America. In an 1887 discussion of Canadian Métis people, who by 1887 are called "half-caste," Cumberland describes how the Métis he interacted with "renounce[d] their mother's folk and only claim kindred with their father's race" and are "white at heart" (23). In the eyes of Cumberland's "half-caste" informer, "The red man, no matter how pure-blooded he may be, is but a poor creature in their eyes; for to be quite red is to shiver in rags in the forest or on a barren reservation" while in contrast, "to have a dash of white blood in one's veins is to live in the warmth of the cities, to wear serviceable cast-off European clothes, and above all, to know how to mix drinks, and what spirits make the best mixture" (23; 24). The Métis people described by Cumberland renounce Indigeneity because of the very real and material conditions of oppression forced on Indigenous people by the colonizing society. Travel narratives like Cumberland's, in which white colonizers cull and frame Indigenous experience, would have influenced the attitudes of British people in regards to how they perceived those living in British colonies.

Cumberland ignores Indigenous cultural diversity and groups all Indigenous peoples into one homogenous group. Cumberland's descriptions would have made it seem to those home in England that Indigenous people were non-British in their lack of moderation, lack of self-control, and squalid living conditions. However, the fact that the British were wholly responsible for these conditions was not lost on Cumberland, who writes:

The red man owes this bad habit solely to the white man, whose first lesson in civilisation was to make the ignorant savage beastly drunk. Later civilisation has done much towards eradicating these evil habits by sentencing these unfortunate 'drunks' to various terms of imprisonment; whilst the wretched native fails to understand why a later civilisation punishes him for a vice which an earlier one taught him, and in fact encouraged him to pursue. (76)

Despite the colonizer introducing mass-produced alcohol to Indigenous peoples, it is the Indigenous peoples who are blamed for drunkenness, and for behaving in a non-English manner in regards to self-control and self-denial, further leading to their status as Other within the British Empire.

As discussed in the introduction, in the 1870s the British prided themselves on imbibing in moderation, and so needed to frame Indigenous people, regardless of their actual habits, as foils. Self-control and self-denial were viewed as proper British abilities; therefore Cumberland's depictions of Indigenous peoples lacking self-control would have given English readers the opportunity to be self-congratulatory, no matter what their drinking habits.

The late-nineteenth century medical community viewed alcohol as a potentially dangerous substance. This attitude was seen in both North America and Britain. T. D.

Crothers, the secretary of The American Association for the Study and Cure of Inebriety, wrote in 1893 that “Alcohol has its place in the arts and sciences, but as a medicine it is classed among the poisons, and its internal use is always more or less dangerous, and should be prescribed with great caution” (v). The medical community saw alcohol as potentially dangerous, despite the popularity of drinking. This danger created a disconnect between medical literature and popular opinion. Crothers also wrote that “1. Inebriety is a disease. 2. It is curable as other diseases are” (v). In the nineteenth-century hospitals developed physical treatments for inebriety, which included “drug therapies, aversion therapy, hydrotherapy, and electrical stimulation” (Crowley and White 11). Playing off of the medicalization of inebriety treatments, the home-medical industry developed cures for sale in catalogues: “a patent-medicine industry that aggressively promoted alcohol-, opium-, and cocaine-laced products . . . began to offer its own bottled addiction cures during the second half of the nineteenth century” (12). Despite the development and commercialization of these home cures, even in the nineteenth century the medical community did not view these methods as effective:

All methods hitherto employed for the treatment of inebriety that have not recognized the disordered physical condition caused by alcohol, opium, or other narcotics, have proved inadequate in its cure; hence the establishment of HOSPITALS for the special treatment of inebriety, in which such conditions are recognized, becomes a positive need of the age. (American Association v)

In the power struggle between hospital-based doctors and those who commercialized home remedies, hospital-based medicine won out: the treatment for inebriety led to the establishment of specific hospitals. Furthermore, as The American Association for the Study

and Cure of Inebriety quoted above suggests, home care and home cures were ineffective, because their discursive framing failed to acknowledge inebriety as a physical disease.

Nineteenth-century England's legal statutes and most Britons believed that drunkenness was not properly British (Cozzi 147). Drunkenness was illegal; nevertheless, people were often intoxicated in the late nineteenth-century, especially in years of prosperity such as 1876 and 1899 (Jennings, "Policing" 63). As Jennings writes, "The editor of the judicial statistics for 1899 put it succinctly: 'A year of great prosperity, 1899 was also a year of great drunkenness'" ("Policing" 63). The blame for drunkenness was placed upon the English publicans, who were not legally permitted to serve alcohol to a drunken person; however, there was no statutory definition of drunkenness in English law until the 1902 Licensing Act (Jennings, "Policing" 66). Therefore, barmaids and publicans used their own definitions of drunkenness, including the poem recounted by Sir Wilfred Lawson, a member of parliament who sat in the House of Commons from 1859-1906: "Not drunk is he, who from the floor / Can rise again and ask for more: / But drunk is he who prostrate lies, / Without the power to speak or rise" (124). In Lawson's account, a barmaid gave a version of this poem when questioned in court as an expert witness on drunkenness (124). This attitude of attributing blame to servers was not only supported by the law, but also by in public opinion. The Liberal periodical the *Pall Mall Gazette* ran an article on 26 October 1875 stating, "The real culprits are the publicans who sell the mysterious drink, and who, in strict justice, should be heavily fined for the drunkenness of each customer" (n.pag). In the 1870s the legal discourse suggested customers had no control over their alcohol consumption, but that it was the responsibility of those serving the alcohol to prevent drunkenness.

Despite the legal expectation that pub-goers had no self-control, the English prided themselves on their ability to deny themselves too much indulgence, and without the ability to practise self-denial the English would fall “under control of the Other, the English way of life [would] be destroyed” (Cozzi 148). Laws against drunkenness existed to control not the middle-class (and white) English, but those who in their non-Englishness were unable to practise self-denial, and would then over indulge. According to addiction scholars, English laws against drunkenness were, therefore, inherently racially motivated. Zieger goes so far as to say that by the 1890s “the addict” was viewed as a “racially marked social parasite typically appear[ing] as a colonial figure feeding off of the white metropole” (26). English laws against drinking appeared to protect the British Empire from the racial-Other who enters British society.

British society Othered heavy drinkers through marked speech in popular media. The satirical magazine *Punch* published a poem on 16 May 1885, titled “A Moderate Drinker” which included the lines “An’ what can I shay fairer? / Whenever pass the bowl’sh the word, / I’m never known a shrinker; / Avoid excess— ‘cause that’s absurd” and “A drop of schpirits, wine, or beer” among others that contain a written accent (238). The marked speech of the “moderate” drinker suggests that his moderation is perhaps actually excessive. Given the satirical nature of the magazine, it is likely that *Punch* is satirizing the over-imbiber who protests that he or she is not drunk.

Late-Victorian society’s view of drinking was one that valourized the white British male before all other subject positions. Lower-class people’s drinking was much less respectable, and especially so if they belonged to a different race than the unmarked position



of white male. Drinking by those who do not inhabit the white-male subject positions is the focus of this chapter.

### **Passing, Privilege, and Internalized Racism**

Within the *Harry Potter* novels, giants are one such group that does not inhabit the middle-class white male wizard subject position in the magical community. Wizards occupy the same position in the magical community as white middle-class men held in late-Victorian Britain. Not only do giants, and half-giants, fall below human-wizards on the racial hierarchy of the magical community, but the text's depictions of half-giants' alcohol use also perpetuates these subject positions.

Human-wizards are prejudiced towards giants. Furthermore, they force giants to live in isolation from other species. Human-wizards account for their prejudice by asserting that giants are dangerous. One of the texts' first mentions of giants is when Ron first introduces the subject of giants by telling Harry that they are "just vicious . . . they just like killing, everyone knows that" (*GoF* 374). Within the magical community, human-wizards do not allow giants to participate in society. Indeed, wizards have killed all the giants in the British Isles. Giants now only survive in small groups, which Rowling calls tribes, in the mountains of Europe. Interestingly, as Anatol argues, "Rowling does not, however, render these tribes culturally and politically distinct units; instead, they are all represented as unique only against the backdrop of the wizarding world" which echoes treatments of Indigenous people of North America, New Zealand, and Australia (114). Giants' exclusion from wizarding society leads to an exclusion and constructs boundaries and prejudices that prevent giants from participating in society. Hagrid laments:

eighty left, an' there was loads once, musta bin a hundred diff'rent tribes from all over the world. Bu' they've bin dyin' out fer ages. Wizards killed a few, o' course, bu' mostly they killed each other, an' now they're dyin' out faster than ever. They're not made ter live bunched up together like tha'. Dumbledore says it's our fault, it was the wizards who forced 'em to go an' made em live a good long way from us an' they had no choice bu' ter stick together fer their own protection. (*OotP* 377)

In the earliest books, giants do not speak for themselves, but have their experience framed by wizards, a framing that Hagrid repeats in the passage above. Wizards depict giants as lacking self-control and having a vicious tendency to kill each other. Their population is dwindling, the wizards argue, not because of being hunted by wizards, but because, according to Hagrid, “They can’ help themselves, they half kill each other every few weeks” (*OotP* 379). Giants are not merely stereotypically violent but their forced isolation into one group causes conflicts amongst a species not used to living in large groups. In these two examples, interestingly, Hagrid does not align himself with the giants. He calls giants “they” and includes himself in the category of wizard as “us” (377; 379). Hagrid considers himself a wizard, despite his mother being a giant and his father a human-wizard. His attitude mirrors the attitude seen in Cumberland’s description of nineteenth-century “half-caste” North American Indigenous people. Hagrid renounces his mother’s giant-ness, and aligns himself with wizards like his father. As Ahmed argues, passing can constitute identity (130). Hagrid’s renouncing his giant-ness constitutes his self-identification as a wizard and depicts the internalization of the need to pass as wizard.

To participate in wizarding society, the half-giants Rubeus Hagrid and Madame Olympe Maxime are forced to pretend to be human and not reveal their status as half-giant.

Ahmed states that “passing as white . . . guarantees a form of social assimilation,” and the same can be said for passing as a wizard (127). It is not possible for giants to participate in wizarding society, and so the only option for half-giants wishing to participate in wizarding society is to act as a human-wizard. When pressed, Madame Maxime shouts, “I ‘ave nevair been more insulted in my life! ‘Alf-giant? Moi? I ‘ave – I ‘ave big bones! (*GoF* 373). For Madame Maxime and Hagrid the act of passing allows them to carry wands and have full access to wizarding magic.

The half-giants clearly recognise the limitations that wizards would place on half-giants if half-giants were exposed as bi-species creatures. Ahmed notes that passing “is a movement through and across” boundaries (128). This movement through boundaries creates a need to hide a self in order to be assimilated into the dominant powerful group, in this case, wizards. Passing as wizard allows Madame Maxime to hold a position as headmistress of the French wizarding school Beauxbatons and separates her from human-wizard prejudice.

When passing as a member of the dominant group from a position of dominance (for example the white subject passing as white, or wizard subject passing as wizard) there is no risk of “not belonging” or “being seen” (Ahmed 128). The half-giants in *Harry Potter*, however, must take on those risks as non-dominant subjects passing in the dominant role. Therefore, Hagrid and Madame Maxime must constantly worry about being “outed.” Unlike Madame Maxime, Hagrid is “outed” as a half-giant in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, an act which even catches the series’ archetypal racist Draco Malfoy off guard: “Half-giant . . . and there was me thinking he’d just swallowed a bottle of Skele-Gro when he was young . . . none of the mummies and daddies are going to like this at all . . . they’ll be worried he’ll eat their kids, ha, ha” (382; ellipses in orig.). The revelation that Hagrid is half-giant is

unexpected because of how effective the half-giants have been at passing as human. This leads to shock for the entire magical community as Hagrid shows the boundaries of exclusion defining human-wizard are permeable. Partially this shock occurs because wizards have attained what Richard Dyer calls “the position of being without properties, unmarked, universal, just human” (38). This unmarked position, used by Dyer to describe whiteness, is applicable to wizards within *Harry Potter* because wizards hold the magical community’s dominant subject position. It is only the racialized Other that is marked as Other: even the term *Other* speaks to this marked positionality. The magical community marks Hagrid and Maxime as different only once they are outed. Before this revelation they are merely wizards of unusual size.

While most of the characters, and the narration, suggest that Hagrid should be included in magical society despite being part giant, the racist depiction of his drinking, similar to Victorian’s racialization of drinking, suggests that the series will not allow him to continue passing as wizard. The series treats giants similarly to the way Indigenous peoples around the globe were treated by the British Empire. While giants in *Harry Potter* had originally lived across Britain, and the world, wizards have forced all giants out of their ancestral homelands into a single remote area in Europe (*OotP* 377). This echoes colonial tendencies to force various peoples off of their traditional land and onto reservations.

Hagrid, furthermore, is seemingly incapable of moderation. In a return to the Victorian contexts above, Hagrid can be said to use his drinking as an attempt at joining the culture of the wizarding world. This is similar to way that Indigenous people were encouraged to drink by colonizing forces, before their apparent lack of moderation separated them further from proper Britishness. Elaine Ostry argues that Hagrid is “cast as humorous

and inferior” with an appearance that “suggest[s] a lack of self-control” (95). Hagrid’s lack of self-control extends to his alcohol use, about which Ostry bluntly notes: “Hagrid drinks” (96). His drinking displays his lack of self-control and, therefore, Ostry argues the text self-evidently suggests Hagrid “seem[s] to deserve [his] lower status” (96). Hagrid is often intoxicated through the series. At Harry’s first welcome feast to Hogwarts in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*, the narration describes all the staff at the head table by whom they are interacting with, except Hagrid, who “was drinking deeply from his goblet” (94). Hagrid is immediately defined by his drinking, and although it is not explicit he is drinking alcohol, his behaviour through the rest of the series would suggest that his goblet is not filled with pumpkin juice.

Hagrid’s drinking makes him a liability to the protagonists. For example, while drinking at the local pub, he reveals to Voldemort how to evade Fluffy, a massive three-headed dog guarding the philosopher’s stone, while drinking at the local pub. When pressed for events from the evening Hagrid replies: “I can’ remember too well, ‘cause he kept buyin’ me drinks” (193.) This is an impressive feat, given that Hagrid’s usual order at the pub, *The Three Broomsticks*, is “Four pints of mulled mead” (*PoA* 150). No one is surprised that Hagrid reveals secrets while drunk. His proclivity for being intoxicated leads Harry to say “it must’ve been easy once [Voldemort] got Hagrid drunk” (*PS* 194). In a parallel situation from the seventh book, where Hagrid is again suspected (albeit incorrectly) of revealing secrets, Harry does not even give Hagrid the benefit of the doubt. Harry thinks to himself about how, “Hagrid, whom he loved, whom he trusted, who had once been tricked into giving Voldemort crucial information in exchange for a dragon’s egg...” before deciding that ““if somebody made a mistake . . . and let something slip, I know they didn’t mean to do it. It’s not their

fault” (DH 71). Harry here absolves Hagrid of any wrongdoing, presuming that if Hagrid had let information slip it had been a drunken accident. Hagrid’s propensity for delivering information accidentally while drunk is a character flaw that he cannot control. Harry acknowledges this flaw in the first book by not blaming Hagrid for revealing information and then again in the seventh book by saying Hagrid would not intend to reveal the information. This pre-emptive forgiveness by Harry serves the purpose of cementing Harry’s moral superiority, a topic discussed in Chapter 4, but also serves another more insidious purpose of reinforcing the stereotypes surrounding Hagrid and half-giants. Hagrid’s lack of self-control and moderation contribute to the wizarding prejudice against giants, which mimics late-Victorian British attitudes that “the ability to balance indulgence with self-denial is one of the characteristics of the English” (Cozzi 147). This is in line with the Victorian contexts discussed above. As in nineteenth-century Britain, the wizarding world works to exclude that which is Other. Hagrid cannot practise self-denial and therefore departs from proper wizarding behaviour, which marks him as Othered within the text.

Both of the half-giants within the text have marked speech, which Others them further. In fact, all bi-species characters have marked speech. Madame Maxime’s accent is a marker that she is not English but rather French. For example, her outburst “what evidence is there of that” is rendered in the text as “what evidence is *zere* of *zat*?” (GoF 244; emphasis mine). Her French accent places her as not-English but does not affect the way the magical community perceives her skills as a witch. Many other characters have marked accents because they are non-native English speakers, including the Triwizard Tournament contestants Fleur Delacour and Viktor Krum. The novels are centered around the British magical community, and thereby place characters with marked speech as Others.

Hagrid's marked speech is not the result of speaking English as a second language but rather is a marker of his class. One of Hagrid's first lines to Harry is, "Yeh look a lot like yer dad, but yeh've got yer mum's eyes" (*PS* 38). Even without the context of alcohol, Hagrid's speech is reminiscent of the satirical nineteenth-century "moderate drinker" featured in *Punch*. While some, such as Mendlesohn note, Hagrid's accent places him socially lower than his colleagues at Hogwarts and the rest of the magical community (166), Hagrid's marked speech serves a purpose. It is linked not only to his bi-species status but also to his social class. While Hagrid's accent is reminiscent of some British dialects, he never mentions coming from one of those regions and has lived at Hogwarts for over fifty years. No other professors at Hogwarts have marked speech. Rowling includes Hagrid's marked speech only as a marker of his race and class. Having speech markers of the lower class frames Hagrid negatively when compared to the human-wizards he is surrounded by and implicitly compared with. Mendlesohn elaborates that Hagrid's accent "[demonstrates] with every word he speaks, that his lack of intelligence and self-control actually *fulfill* the stereotypes associated with his "ethnicity", thus permitting Harry and his friends to demonstrate their 'tolerance' and to show that Harry is a 'good chap'" (166). Mendlesohn believes it unlikely that Hagrid's accent would remain unchanged, retaining such obvious class markers after decades at Hogwarts, were it not for his "ethnicity" (166). Mendlesohn's argument suggests that Hagrid's speech and lack of self-control contribute to his lower status in relation to human-wizards, although I argue it is more a function of his lower class and racial Othering. Her argument is particularly interesting, however, in the way it frames Harry's tolerance of Hagrid. Hagrid's acceptance into Harry's group of friends and confidantes is an example of

the series' diversity and serves to propagate a message of acceptance. Nevertheless the acceptance is condescending towards Hagrid and continues the racist overtones of the series.

### **Endorsing Gendered Jealousy in a Bi-Species Context**

Half-giants are not the only instance of bi-speciesism within the novels. One of the species described in the series are the Veela, who serve as mascots for the Bulgarian national Quidditch team, described as “the most beautiful women Harry had ever seen . . . except that they weren’t – they couldn’t be – human” (*GoF* 93). The Veela have a hypnotic effect on human men that causes men to lust after them. Later, Fleur Delacour is revealed to be part-Veela, with one Veela grandmother among otherwise human grandparents (270). In the series’ first mention of Fleur, Ron is adamant in his belief that she is a Veela, to which Hermione replies, “Of course she isn’t!” and “I don’t see anyone else gaping at her like an idiot!” (*GoF* 222). Hermione is unwilling to accept that Fleur could be Veela, and she is jealous of how Ron reacts to Fleur’s presence. Fleur retains some of the Veela effect on men. The narration expands on Hermione’s assertion that Fleur affects no one but Ron: “But she wasn’t entirely right about that. As the girl crossed the Hall, many boys’ heads turned, and some of them seemed to have become temporarily speechless, just like Ron. ‘I’m telling you, that’s not a normal girl!’ said Ron” (222). Hermione refuses to accept the possibility that Fleur is not human, and Harry seemingly is indifferent to Fleur, thus leaving Fleur’s bi-speciesism unresolved until later in the fourth book.

When Fleur is outed to Harry, and therefore the reader, as part-Veela, the scenario is very different than Hagrid’s public shaming and humiliation upon being outed. Fleur is the one to reveal her Veela ancestry when her wand is examined in preparation for the Triwizard



Tournament and found to contain the hair of a Veela. Fleur explains that the hair is “One of my grandmuzzer’s” (*GoF* 270). Her revelation is met with little fanfare: Harry makes a mental note to tell Ron that Fleur is part-Veela, and the wandmaker comments that Veela hair makes for temperamental wands, but that her wand is “in fine working order” (271). Ron does not react to the news. Ginny, however, “stopped smiling,” and Hermione’s reaction is not described (348). Ginny’s reaction is particularly telling as the narrative advances since Hermione, Ginny, and Mrs. Weasley meet Fleur with hostility in the sixth and seventh books. Interestingly, this is the first that Harry learns that bi-speciesism exists; Hagrid is not outed until later in the book.

It is suspect that the only negative attention Fleur receives is from other heterosexual female characters. Brah argues that “ethnicities are always gendered [since] they construct sexual difference in specific ways” (516). Challenging racial difference does not inherently challenge gender inequalities, and indeed many cultural values work to “underscore women’s subordination” (516). *Harry Potter*’s female characters often work to undermine the patriarchal structures present in the magical community, however the text’s portrayal of female characters often reinforces the patriarchal structures of the real world. Female characters are often “giggly, emotional, [and] gossipy” which leads to stereotyping and continuation of patriarchal structures (Heilman and Donaldson 150). Throughout the books, female characters compete for the attention of men, leading to infighting, which undermines the agency of female characters. Fleur functions throughout the series as an object of desire for men and an object of envy for women. However, by marrying her fiancé Bill Weasley, Fleur loses her agency. Fleur transitions from being fiercely independent Triwizard Tournament competitor in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* to domestic homemaker by

*Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*. In doing so, Fleur follows the same trajectory as Lily Potter and Molly Weasley, giving up her earlier ambitions to become a mother and wife. The same fate meets almost all of the women in *Harry Potter*, including Ginny, Hermione, and Nymphadora Tonks. Women, while useful as helpers to Harry's quest, are in the end relegated to the domestic sphere no matter their individual skills as a witch. This common goal of domesticity promotes hostility amongst women as they compete for the affections of the men in the series.

The revelation of Fleur's part-Veela status has no effect on her ability as a witch or in society. Hermione, Ginny, and Mrs. Weasley are all hostile towards Fleur, which could be attributed to Fleur's patronising attitude toward Ginny and Hermione, combined with the attention Fleur receives from Ron. It is more likely, however, that the human-witches are hostile to Fleur in an effort to maintain their position in the magical community. Ginny takes to calling Fleur "a cow" and more commonly "phlegm" and Hermione comments that Fleur is not intelligent (*HBP* 91-2). When Harry comments, "Fleur's not stupid," Ginny and Hermione verbally attack him (92). Rowling does not make clear whether Ginny and Hermione's response to Fleur is a response to her bi-speciesism or to her effect on men, although I would argue Ginny and Hermione work to keep their dominant positions as human-witches. Hermione responds in a similar way to Ron's first girlfriend, Lavender Brown, during *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince* and Hermione even goes so far as to completely ignore Ron for long stretches. Still, Hermione does not take out her jealousy and anger on Lavender, but rather on Ron, pointing to the construction of women's competition over men in the series. In Fleur's case, Hermione, while seemingly angry at Ron, settles for hostility towards Fleur, blaming Fleur for her species-based attractiveness.

Bi-speciesism is not a guarantee of solidarity. Fleur adopts a very condescending attitude toward Hagrid in the final volume, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, after someone in the Order of the Phoenix has passed a crucial plan to Voldemort (70). Fleur continues to distrust Hagrid, and forces Harry to attend her wedding in disguise, because although she trusts her wedding guests to not be Death Eaters, “we cannot guarantee zat zey will not let something slip after zey ‘ave ‘ad champagne.’ From this, Harry gathered she still suspected Hagrid” (DH 80). Fleur points to Hagrid’s lack of self-control and propensity for drinking as a reason to exclude him from attending the wedding. Brah writes that “Social phenomena such as racism seek to fix and naturalise ‘difference’ and create impervious boundaries between groups” (515). Fleur is prejudiced against him because of his lack of self-control, a trait linked by wizards to his giant heritage. Her own experience with alcohol is much different than Hagrid’s. Fleur is only depicted drinking once, in solidarity with other characters after Mad-Eye Moody’s death.

Fleur’s bi-speciesism gives her advantages in the magical community. Her position allows her to benefit from the structures of the magical community. To gain her position, however, Fleur must denigrate other non-human characters. Not only does Fleur push other non-humans to lower positions, her infringement on the human-wizard subject position forces other female characters to attack Fleur in order to maintain their own positions of privilege.

### **Internalized racism, Internalized Slavery, and Non-Conformity**

While Hagrid, and half-giants, are marked as a class lower than human-wizards in the hierarchies of the magical community, the characters who occupy the lowest class are the

house-elves. The house-elves' alcohol use perpetuates late-Victorian racist attitudes of contempt for the Other. Westman differentiates the house-elves from other characters as "not only a different species within the wizarding world, but, unlike wizards of mixed blood, goblins, or other species of magical creatures, [they] are born into a servant class" (326). However, I would argue the house-elves are not servants but rather slaves because of their lack of freedom, lack of agency, and lack of pay. Rowling hardly problematizes the house-elf enslavement. Even Harry Potter, the moral centre of the novels, inherits a house-elf, named Kreacher. Harry owning a house-elf shows suggests that house-elf ownership is an integral part of the magical world. Kreacher reveals: "The house-elf's highest law is his master's bidding" (*DH* 161). If house-elves disobey orders, they are innately forced to punish themselves through a variety of tactics including banging their heads on the floor (*DH* 162), shutting their ears in an oven door (*CoS* 16), and ironing their hands (*CoS* 132). Nevertheless, the text portrays house-elves as cheerful about their servitude and view freedom with suspicion and as something unnatural (*Gof* 328). Historical depictions of slavery are reflected in the text's depiction of house-elves. The house-elves are slaves with little agency: "self-liberation ... is explicitly denied" and "the house-elves do not wish to be freed" (Mendlesohn 178). This is an attitude that white Americans attributed to enslaved Africans in the United States (Ostry 96). Indeed, in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, Ron exclaims, "We've been working like house-elves here!" (197), a statement that Ostry notes "mirrors the British saying 'to work like a black'" (96). House-elves are degraded even by sympathetic characters, especially Ron, who takes the attitude that house-elves are happy and should be left alone, an attitude that seems to be shared by most wizards. Even when freed, Dobby is little more than an "object of humour" rather "than a model of what a free elf can

accomplish” (Horne 81). Dobby is the only house-elf who works against the stereotypes of the happily enslaved house-elf; nevertheless, his portrayal reinforces the infantilization of the house-elves and characterization as, what Mendlesohn calls, the “happy ducky” because of his jolly attitude and frequent mischief in the early volumes (179).

Not all of the house-elves are keen to be freed. Dobby is happy when freed, in stark contrast to Winky, who becomes inconsolably miserable when freed and sent to work in the Hogwarts’ kitchens. To console herself, Winky turns to alcohol, and like Hagrid, when it comes to drinking she lacks moderation and self-control. In fact, Winky’s alcohol use provides the most flagrant example of alcoholism in the books: Winky’s addiction is so severe she cannot perform her duties as a house-elf in the kitchens, something which would normally serve as central to her identity as a house-elf.

Dumbledore employs Winky at Hogwarts after she is freed by her master; however, house-elves do not desire employment and Winky wishes to return to her servitude. Dobby reveals to Harry that Winky drinks at least six bottles of butterbeer a day, which although not strong for a wizard, “’tis strong for a house-elf” (*GoF* 465). Even a nineteenth-century barmaid would have considered Winky drunk as she is left “Without the power to speak or rise,” the colloquial definition of drunkenness (qtd. in Jennings 66). Sympathy for Winky does not seem to extend beyond Dobby and Hermione, and the other house-elves assert that Winky has no right to be unhappy (467). Winky’s drinking causes her to pass out which leads to a troubling response from the house-elves:

Half-a-dozen house-elves came hurrying forward, looking disgusted. One of them picked up the bottle, the others covered Winky with a large checkered tablecloth and tucked the ends in neatly, hiding her from view. ‘We is sorry you had to see that, sirs

and miss!’ squeaked a nearby elf, shaking his head and looking very ashamed. ‘We is hoping you will not judge us all by Winky, sirs and miss!’” (466)

Winky attempts to deal with her miserable-freedom by drinking and Dobby is the only other house-elf who is sympathetic to her substance abuse. The house-elf society already excludes Dobby because he is a free-elf, and the other house-elves exclude Winky because they do not emphasise with her separation from her master and refusal to work. Nineteenth-century medical discourse would have classified Winky’s alcoholism as “emotional” inebriety: a condition that afflicted “that class who are always on the borders of hysteria, with feeble and unstable will. Wayward, selfish, fitful, uncertain, out of harmony with every relation of life; all the time suffering from a constitutional unrest, and emotional struggles to attain the impossible” (American Association 28). In this nineteenth-century context, Winky’s relationship with alcohol stems from her attempts to cope with freedom and the separation from her master. She is unable to be in harmony with any aspect of enslaved house-elf society and always hoping for a reunion with the master who turned her out. Winky is so entrenched in the system that consistently places her in a subordinate subject position that she cannot imagine working to enhance her position. The other elves are “disgusted” and “ashamed” of her behaviour, and attempt to hide her rather than offer help. Winky’s substance abuse leads to her house-elf society marginalizing her, and she becomes even further marginalized from the wizarding society from which she is already excluded from because of speciesism.

In the nineteenth century alcohol abuse, or inebriety, was becoming an important subject of study in the medical system, which set up inebriate asylums to treat members of society who succumbed to alcohol addiction. Winky’s treatment for alcohol abuse is limited

to what Dobby can offer, but he confides to Harry that “when Winky has been very drunk; he has hidden her in the Room of Requirement and he has found antidotes to Butterbeer there, and a nice elf-sized bed to settle her on while she sleeps it off” (*OotP* 343). Dobby’s treatment of Winky’s alcohol use with antidotes raises questions of how the wizarding world deals with alcohol, especially if it has developed antidotes for butterbeer intoxication. The series’ only other mentions of antidotes relate to poisons and often fall within the realm of medical magic. The treatment of butterbeer as a poison, then, is consistent with nineteenth-century medical attitudes towards alcohol and inebriety.

While the bottled home cures available for mail-order purchase in the nineteenth century were not, as hospital-based doctors argued, effective at treating addiction, Rowling never reveals whether Winky overcomes her addiction. Presumably her treatment would not be successful because of her propensity to drown her sorrows in alcohol and her not showing any indication of wishing to overcome her addiction. The magical community places house-elves below wizards in the racial hierarchy, but Winky’s severe lack of self-control creates a further demarcation of difference between house-elves and wizards that pushes the house-elf subject further from the boundaries of familiarity. This creation of boundaries and demarcation of space allows the exclusion of the other to maintain the borders of the familiar (Ahmed 3).

## **Summation**

The species-diverse magical community of the *Harry Potter* series perpetuates Victorian racist traditions through the depiction of alcohol use. The books paint the human-wizard as the “unmarked” position; characters who are not human-wizards are intrinsically

Othered. Half-giants, such as Hagrid, and house-elves, such as Winky, are most emblematic of being Othered by the racist society. Hagrid is continually framed as drinking alcohol without self-control and moderation, which mirrors nineteenth-century travelogues' depictions of Indigenous peoples' drinking. The narrative of English self-denial and moderation allowed British readers to distance themselves from the colonized Other in much the same way that the human-wizards, such as Harry Potter, distance themselves from Hagrid while still maintaining their moral correctness. House-elves serve as slaves for wizards, a status that they are born into. Winky is doubly affected by alcohol, as it affects not only her status within the wider wizarding society, but also within house-elf society. The portrayal of drinking alcohol by these two species perpetuates the Victorian-era racist undertones in the series.



### Chapter 3: Instituting and Instilling Class Domination

*Harry Potter* does not only engage with issues of racism and speciesism, but also takes on the issue of class. Throughout the series, characters who are already oppressed due to their race, such as the house-elves and half-giants discussed in Chapter 2, are also oppressed because of their class. Class and race are often inextricably linked in *Harry Potter* as they were in late-Victorian Britain. In the case of house-elves, they are born into subjugation with no access to class mobility because they are tied to their species. Althusser argues that through the process of interpellation as subjects, people function in ways which support the existing power structures. Subjects are unaware of this process of interpellation and act as if their support of the ruling ideology is of their own free will. This process of interpellation and ideology occurs throughout a subject's life. In short, according to Althusser, everyone is born into a subject position. Althusser writes that school, or the educational Ideological State Apparatus, becomes the dominant ISA during the twentieth century, where the school instructs students with "a certain amount of 'know-how' wrapped in the ruling ideology" (155). The school instills the ruling ideology in students, which is even more crucial when dealing with a boarding-school, since children are removed from familial ideological pressures. In the magical world, almost all British witches and wizards are taught at Hogwarts. For the students at Hogwarts, their family is replaced with their fellow students, and all adult influence comes from the teachers or more rarely via owl-post from parents.

This chapter discusses how Hogwarts functions as the primary ISA in *Harry Potter* and often works independently of the Ministry of Magic. Until the fifth volume, the Ministry of Magic is almost entirely absent from Hogwarts, meaning that the rules of socialization are

completely decided by the school and entirely taught at the school. This chapter explores how the influence of Hogwarts, as the educational ISA, works to socialize students, and how Hogwarts socialises its students' drinking.

As we will see in this chapter, since Hogwarts functions as both public and private space for teachers and students, the teachers influence the students in both private and public realms of life. Even when functioning within the private sphere, the teachers still represent the educational ISA and produce student-subjects through interpellation. Through this chapter, I show how the drinking of two teachers, Horace Slughorn and Sybil Trelawney, continues a perpetuation of gendered late-Victorian traditions regarding class and alcohol use. Slughorn's use of alcohol within the public and private spheres of Hogwarts is seen as acceptable because it is in-line with what it means to be respectably British. Trelawney's alcohol use, in contrast, denotes a lack of self-control and moderation. Through examination of these two characters I show how the educational ISA's socializing function promotes a gendered view of alcohol use.

This chapter uses intersectional analysis to extend Chapter Two's discussion of house-elves as slaves by exploring their double oppression by classism and speciesism. House-elves are the lowest class, and lowest species, within those respective hierarchies. When examining the intersection of class and species it is important to remember, in Brah's words, that "processes of racialization of gender, class or sexuality" are historically specific; racism arises from a "particular set of economic, political and cultural circumstances [that are] reproduced through specific mechanisms" (508). While Brah's argument is about the formation of different racisms in Britain, it can be extended to Rowling's fictional Magical world as well. This chapter applies a late-Victorian context to the positionality of racisms in

*Harry Potter*, in relation to social class and gender. Despite the novels being set in the late twentieth century, *Harry Potter* perpetuates late-Victorian social hierarchies. Secondly, the chapter discusses house-elves' social and species-specific position in the magical community. Thirdly, the chapter focusses on the gendered portrayal of Hogwarts professors' alcohol use.

### **Victorian Contexts**

Nineteenth-century Britain was a country troubled by social and class-based inequality. Early nineteenth-century British people faced a large social problem that worked to categorize who was included within the category of "people," in this case people with the right to vote and thereby shape the political landscape (Himelfarb 301). In 1838, "The People's Charter" was created, demanding rights for all "people" in Britain. The charter, however, excluded women (Himelfarb 302). Despite this glaring exclusion, the Chartists included paupers in an effort to enfranchise paupers who had been excluded from the 1832 Reform Act that revamped the electoral system. While "The People's Charter" did not bring about actual change in the 1830s, it began a movement for paupers' rights. The term pauper here refers to those who would be eligible for relief under the English Poor Laws (Himelfarb 302). In the early-1800s this relief would have come from being forced into workhouses, which often had terrible conditions. The 1830s' attempt at enfranchising the unemployed poor would continue until the 1918 Reform Act finally gave the same voting rights to impoverished people. Through the latter half of the nineteenth-century, however, many organizations formed "friendly societies" that would provide the poor with money in the event of injury or illness, rather than subjecting them to workhouses. Enfranchisement and

relief were intimately bound: in many cases, the poor chose not to visit these friendly societies, and indeed accepting help from a friendly society disqualified an impoverished man from voting until the 1885 Medical Relief Disqualification Act. Nonetheless, those in power believed that these societies were the best things for the working poor as it absolved them and the state from having to take responsibility for the conditions that caused and perpetuated poverty.

The radical press was no friendlier to the unemployed poor. On January 1, 1870 *The Examiner*, a weekly paper known at times throughout its history to be home to radical writers, published an editorial on “The Sentiment of Pauperism” voicing the opinion of paupers that friendly societies were not useful to them. While the article gives voice to the unemployed poor, the anonymous author of the article goes on to chastise paupers: “He enjoys himself in the meantime, frequents his favourite public-house, or encourages his wife in domestic carelessness and indolence, and lets the future look to itself” (n. pag.). The author goes on to describe the independent nature of the unemployed poor as “degraded sentiment” which must be combated (n. pag.). The sentiment of the article, that society must rid itself of pauperism, is well intentioned, but by ignoring the voice of the unemployed poor and the causes of poverty, the article perpetuates the problem. Those proposing solutions for the systematic pauperism of the late nineteenth century did not work with the poor for a solution, but rather decided what was best for the poor without proper consultation – or upon consultation, derision of the answers given by the unemployed poor.

Alcohol use likewise had classist undertones that favoured the upper class and denigrated the poor. Jennings argues that public drinking was an important part of nineteenth-century culture where “the ability to treat one’s friends to a drink in the pub

demonstrated a popularly understood facet of respectability, the small cash surplus which made it possible” (74). Jennings makes this argument in an extension of Ellen Ross’ argument that “Pub visits and public drunkenness entered importantly into popular thinking about neighborhood divisions. Another London man labeled ‘respectable’ those who stayed home Saturday nights, ‘rough’ the pubgoers” (43). In this sense, the ability to drink in public and display wealth are important social distinctions; however, public drunkenness is seen negatively. The classist distinctions in how people consume alcohol can be seen as “much of Britain’s experience with alcohol in the eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and early twentieth-centuries focussed on its regulation, as alcohol control became emblematic of a progressive, well-ordered society, one that controlled the growing working-class” (Hames 66). Part of this control over the working class can be seen in the nineteenth-century custom of partially paying servants in beer. A letter to the Editor of *The Times* from “A Butler” on 26 September 1881 demanded that servants be paid fully in money because “Servants suffer more than any other class from the habits and use of strong drink” (4). The Church of England Temperance Society formed a servant’s branch specifically to put an end to the “evil consequences of the custom” of “regulation beer” (Haslam 8). Wilhelmina F. Haslam, the secretary of the servant’s branch of The Church of England Temperance Society, wrote a reply to A Butler’s letter, discussing how the Society was working to “point out [to servants] the beneficial results” of ending regulation beer (8). Through the exchange between A Butler and Haslam, however, neither mentions if servants would prefer payment in beer or in money.

While many popular discourses presented the theory that the working class suffered more from inebriety, medical discourses in the late-Victorian and early-Edwardian eras presented inebriety as an issue that affected those from all walks of life. However, statistics

skewed heavily towards the lower classes being more affected. Frances Zanetti wrote in 1903 of upper-class inebriate women, “for though a pauper’s death might be certified as due to alcoholism, yet in the case of a member of a respectable family few medical men would be willing to add to the sorrow of the bereaved relatives by stigmatizing the deceased with so terrible a verdict” (49). Zanetti acknowledges that it is likely untrue that upper-class women were not victims of inebriety, and in 1878 *The Quarterly Journal of Inebriety* produced similar findings: “it is evident that inebriety exists to a considerable extent among all classes of women in this country; also that it is less prominent than in men, but more precipitate and rapid in its progress” due to women’s “particularly susceptible nervous organization” (247). The late nineteenth-century medical community viewed inebriety as a disease that affected men and women differently. A Doctor Haddon, of Manchester England, wrote in 1878 that “Happily it is still regarded as a great disgrace for women to be intemperate” (qtd. in “Clinical Notes”). The disgraced nature of female drinking stems from a dichotomy of alcohol use in England: luxury drinking and misery drinking (Sullivan 63). Luxury drinking is drinking with a purpose of maintaining a good mood, and misery drinking is drinking with the purpose of “removing a sense of ill-being” (63). W. C. Sullivan, Deputy Medical Officer at Her Majesty’s Prison, Pentonville, wrote in 1903 that “Female inebriety depends mainly on misery drinking; there is relatively little luxury drinking amongst women. Custom and public sentiment are opposed to convivial drinking, or, at least, to convivial excess amongst them. They drink, as Miss Zanetti has pointed out, from worry, overwork and so forth” (63). Although Sullivan’s article is published in 1903, he is still referencing the late-Victorian attitudes surrounding women drinking. Public sentiment does not allow for so-called luxury drinking amongst women this form of drinking, and the only socially acceptable form of

drinking, remains the domain of men. Female inebriates are therefore viewed not only by society, but also by the medical community, as morally disgraced. Statistical misrepresentations of female inebriety told a false story of working-class alcoholism that further stigmatized the poor, and especially poor women.

The Victorian attitudes towards paupers and poverty can be seen in *Harry Potter*. Wizards view house-elves as belonging on the lowest rung of the hierarchy. Any attempts at freedom for house-elves are met with derision. Hermione's attempt at improving house-elf welfare is unsuccessful and she does not consult any house-elves, similar to late-Victorian attempts to improve the life of servants. Nineteenth-century discourses often portray the poor as particularly susceptible to inebriety and misery drinking. In *Harry Potter*, this classist sexist discourse is shown in the examination of Hogwarts' professors. Professors are not the only group in the magical community bound up in classist ideology. House-elves are the more marginalized group and maintain the lowest subject position in the magical community.

### **Systematic and Legal Elimination of Choice and Consent**

The witch and wizard subject positions include the expectation of social mobility, while the house-elf subject position does not. Even non-magical humans are occasionally given the ability to cross social boundaries and enter the magical world, in addition to muggle-born witches and wizards are able to attend Hogwarts despite being born outside of the magical community. The house-elves are uniquely born into their situation, as Westman notes, "Their race determining their class, the house-elves illustrate how one material difference (race) can naturalize another (class) within a society that marks difference and accords power though material signs" (326). Westman's argument points to a larger issue

within the Magical society: the social standing of non-human characters is automatically lower than human-wizards. The ideological underpinnings of the magical community place house-elves lowest in this social hierarchy, with no option of class mobility because of their marked racialized/specisised status. The system that oppresses house-elves within the Magical world is derived from the nineteenth-century and from Rowling's fictional history. Rowling writes in *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, that the Magical society adopted laws in 1811 declaring "beings" as "any creature that has sufficient intelligence to understand the laws of the magical community and to bear part of the responsibility in shaping those laws" (n. pag.). While house-elves are not mentioned in *Fantastic Beasts* it can be assumed that they would presumably be "beings" within the wizarding world, and therefore are domestic instead of *fantastic*. When considering the position of house-elves on a racial and social hierarchy, however, they are always in a lower position than human-wizards, part of what Hermione deems "rotten and unjust systems" (*GoF* 112). The systematic exclusion of house-elves is tied not only to the way human-wizards treat the house-elves, but also in the ways that house-elves are interpellated.

The continued exclusion of the house-elves can be linked to their depiction as happy and content with their servitude. The stereotypical representation of enslaved Africans of nineteenth-century literature was depicted similarly, "uniformly contented and therefore loyal, and therefore proof positive that slavery was a benign institution" (MacKethan 328). The magical world's acceptance of house-elves as indentured to wizards is culturally significant; the only character that ever truly attempts to discuss elf-rights is Hermione, and no adults seem willing to enter into conversation with her about S.P.E.W. (Horne 87). Wizarding society accepts house-elves as slaves and treat elvish-servitude as some sort of



favour to the house-elves. Hagrid tells Hermione: “It’s in their nature ter look after humans, that’s what they like, see? Yeh’d be makin’ ‘em unhappy ter take away their work, an’ insultin’ ‘em if yeh tried ter pay ‘em” before calling Dobby a “weirdo” for enjoying freedom (*GoF* 233). Hagrid is not the only sympathetic character to share this attitude, as Ron and George Weasley also propagate it. Wizards assume that house-elves are cheerful and dismiss Hermione’s claims that “we are all colluding in the oppression of a hundred slaves!” (*GoF* 209), and most students at Hogwarts view Hermione’s opinions on house-elves “as a joke” (210). Indeed, many of the students seem unaware that house-elves serve at Hogwarts and are nonplussed when they learn of the house-elves at Hogwarts. The attitudes towards house-elves in general show the severe institutional prejudice built into the wizarding world and prove exemplary of the positional nature of systems of oppression.

Hogwarts, functioning as the dominant ISA in the magical community, works to promote the enslavement of house-elves by creating subject positions that leave little doubt to humans or house-elves as to where the house-elves belong in social hierarchy. Anatol notes that the house-elves function under a form of false-consciousness where the “dominant ideology hails the elves into internalizing a position of servitude despite the often miserable working conditions and verbal and physical abuse” (137). Even Dumbledore, perhaps the most sympathetic character to house-elf rights after Hermione, allows the systematic oppression of house-elves to continue as Hogwarts is home to hundreds of house-elves performing slave labour. While Dumbledore is a benevolent master, he is nonetheless still perpetuating the system. He is, however, the only one willing to pay Dobby to work when Dobby is freed. Anatol argues that “the elves must choose to be free and Dumbledore will not force freedom upon them” (139). Unlike Hermione’s efforts with her S.P.E.W., Anatol

argues that Dumbledore is giving the house-elves agency by allowing them to choose to be free. However, Dumbledore never gives his house-elves the option of freedom. Dobby is granted pay because he is already freed from his previous master, and travels the country looking for pay. The Hogwarts house-elves are granted no such option. Anatol's claim then, that Dumbledore allows the house-elves to choose if they wish to be free, is not factual as Dumbledore never offers freedom as a real choice. Hermione's efforts with S.P.E.W., however, also work to undermine house-elf agency. Hermione does not consult house-elves and tells house-elves the solution for their problems.

Many of Hermione's actions echo the way that western and Eurocentric feminisms reinforce colonial legacies. Chandra Mohanty, a women's and gender studies sociologist, argues that western and Eurocentric feminisms reinforce colonial attitudes that place the stereotype of the "oppressed third-world women" in a subordinate category by invoking "paternalistic attitudes towards women in the third-world" (80). Like the western feminists Mohanty discusses, Hermione chooses to speak for the house-elves without consulting with them. She adopts a paternalistic attitude towards the house-elves she is trying to save. House-elves are given no chance to provide input on their own freedom. Hermione's problematic attempt at house-elf sovereignty does not lead to house-elves being freed nor does it enact any structural changes in the Magical Community. S.P.E.W. reinforces the colonial attitudes of the human-wizards.

Highlighting the colonial attitudes of human-wizards towards house-elves is the fact that Dumbledore is not the only sympathetic wizard to own house-elves. Harry also is the master to a house-elf, Kreacher. He inherits Kreacher from his godfather, Sirius Black. House-elves are property to be passed down generation to generation, and Kreacher is forced

to obey Harry. Dumbledore notes to Harry that “Kreacher is showing a certain reluctance to pass into your ownership” while Kreacher shouts “Kreacher won’t, Kreacher won’t, Kreacher won’t! . . . Kreacher belongs to Miss Bellatrix, oh, yes, Kreacher belongs to the Blacks, Kreacher wants his new mistress, Kreacher won’t go to the Potter brat, Kreacher won’t, won’t, won’t” (*HBP* 54). Nevertheless, despite Kreacher’s objections, he passes into Harry’s ownership and must obey all the orders Harry gives him. Kreacher has no way to assert his own voice in this situation, other than protesting, but when Harry orders him to “shut up,” Kreacher is silenced (54). House-elves are considered to be the lowest class, enslaved to serve the magical community, and even sympathetic characters such as Harry and Dumbledore perpetuate this belief.

### **Learning Respectable Drinking Through Class and Gender**

The teachers at Hogwarts perform multiple roles within Hogwarts’ function as an educational ISA. They serve primarily as educators, the face of the ISA that students encounter. It is via the teachers that the ISA works to influence the students. This relationship is complicated by the fact that Hogwarts is a boarding school. The public and private spheres are permeable and inexact. One of Harry’s first interactions with alcohol is during Harry’s first Christmas at Hogwarts, as Hagrid and Professor McGonagall drink wine together at the staff table: “Harry watched Hagrid getting redder and redder in the face as he called for more wine, finally kissing Professor McGonagall on the cheek, who, to Harry’s amazement, giggled and blushed, her top hat lop-sided” (*PS* 150). While drinking during the holidays is not exceptional in and of itself, it is the conflation of public and private spaces that warrants analysis, since for teachers at Hogwarts, the school is both work and home. When read

through a Victorianist lens, there is a curious class-slippage in the teachers' drinking habits. Members of the Victorian working class were unable to imbibe at home the same way members of the upper class were. Members of working class were forced to public houses, or pubs, which served not only as the place of alcohol consumption, but as the centre of social life for people of a particular class and gender: working class men (Hames 64).

Two teachers who most exemplify the contrast between public drinking and public drunkenness are Professors Slughorn and Trelawney. The attitudes surrounding luxury drinking in the nineteenth century refer almost exclusively to men. It was acceptable for men to display their wealth and societal status by drinking and offering drinks to their friends and acquaintances. Women who suffer from alcoholism or drink often are socially seen as morally wrong. Through the analysis of Slughorn and Trelawney I show that this social tradition is perpetuated through *Harry Potter*.

Slughorn routinely hosts dinner parties for a select group of students known as the "slug club." Not only is alcohol served, but Slughorn heavily imbibes himself. At the first party Harry attends, "Slughorn appeared at Professor Trelawney's other side, his face very red, his velvet hat askew, a glass of mead in one hand and an enormous mince pie in the other" (*HBP* 298). His red face and askew hat are reminiscent of Professor McGonagall's blush and lop-sided top hat from the first novel, a continuation of the tropes of drunkenness within the novels and a nod towards luxury drinking. Slughorn's intoxication is at once exemplary of his privileged ability to host parties that bridge the public and private. While the party is hosted in his rooms at Hogwarts, it still exists within the public sphere of the school, where Slughorn stands as a representative of the educational ISA. His actions serve as an example for his students because "children at school also learn the 'rules' of good

behaviour [and] rules of morality, civic and professional conscience, which actually means rules of respect for the socio-technical division of labour and ultimately the rules of the order established by class domination” (Althusser 132). Slughorn’s exclusive parties teach students not only about drinking and its social acceptability, but also about student privilege. By only inviting certain students, Slughorn creates a privileged system within the public sphere of Hogwarts. Students unconsciously learn from Slughorn the rules of class systems.

Slughorn’s alcohol use follows the rules of respectable British drinking and especially Sullivan’s concept of luxury drinking. His privileged social status and ability to provide alcohol lend respectability to his imbibing. Despite this privileged position, his alcohol use is still troubling in the way that it is intertwined with the educational ISA. Later in the sixth book, Harry and Ron visit Slughorn’s office because Ron has accidentally ingested a love-potion and needs Slughorn’s assistance in the creation of an antidote. This visit occurs before breakfast. Ron is quickly cured of the love-potion and Slughorn decides to offer the two sixteen-year-old boys a drink:

‘Pick-me-up, that’s what he needs,’ Slughorn continued, now bustling over to a table loaded with drinks. ‘I’ve got Butterbeer, I’ve got wine, I’ve got one last bottle of this oak-matured mead ... hmm... meant to give that to Dumbledore for Christmas ... ah well ...’ he shrugged ‘... he can’t miss what he’s never had! Why don’t we open it now and celebrate Mr Weasley’s birthday? Nothing like a fine spirit to chase away the pangs of disappointed love ...’ He chortled again and Harry joined in. (*HBP* 371)

Slughorn’s quick turn to alcohol may be appropriate given that it is Ron’s birthday, but as the scene takes place before breakfast, it points to a different sort of issue. The need to turn to alcohol first thing in the morning suggests that Slughorn’s relationship with alcohol is

affected by his ability to “balance indulgence with self-denial” as is expected of the British (Cozzi 147). Slughorn is unable to deny himself the opportunity to open the bottle of mead he has been saving for Dumbledore. He is well known for his lack of self-control, so well known that Hermione quips, “Anyone who knew Slughorn would have known there was a good chance he’d keep something that tasty for himself” (*HBP* 376). Despite his lack of self-control, as a man and a human-wizard, Slughorn is able to partake in his libations whenever he chooses, and he is not punished for it, either by the narrator or by the plot, despite the fact that Ron is poisoned by the bottle of mead and nearly dies. Slughorn’s solution to the poisoning is a reassertion of his privileged position, as he later tells Harry before they open a bottle of wine that he “Had a house-elf taste every bottle after what happened to your poor friend Rupert” (454). Slughorn retains his domination over house-elves and perpetuates their subjugation by having them test for poison. In addition to continually marginalizing the house-elves, Slughorn also continues his privilege by misremembering Ron’s name. Slughorn is able to surround himself with those he deems worthy: those students who are well-connected or talented. Unfortunately for Ron, Ron is excluded from Slughorn’s parties, because Slughorn does not see him as well connected or talented. Slughorn’s ability to pass judgment in this manner helps to reinforce the ideological power structures of the magical world.

Slughorn’s privileged place in the magical community is also illustrated when we examine his colleague, Professor Trelawney. Trelawney is also depicted throughout the text as drinking alcohol, but other characters do not view her drinking as respectable. Every time she appears in the final three volumes, Trelawney is intoxicated. Her odd behaviour in the first four volumes makes her seem eccentric. Through *Order of the Phoenix*, it becomes quite

apparent that she is often intoxicated, as “Several times [Harry] passed her in the corridors – in itself a very unusual occurrence as she generally remained in her tower room – muttering wildly to herself, wringing her hands and shooting terrified glances over her shoulder, and all the while giving off a powerful smell of cooking sherry” (*OoTp* 486). Not only is she often intoxicated, but also she does not consume the proper British drinks of ale or gin (Cozzi 147). Instead, she is subjected to drinking a form of alcohol not even intended for direct consumption. Cooking sherry is produced for cooking, and yet it is associated only with Trelawney who is never shown to be cooking. Her choice of drink is uniquely gendered as well, because cooking is part of the feminized domestic sphere. Harry sees her multiple times drinking cooking sherry, including when “Professor Trelawney was standing in the middle of the Entrance Hall with her wand in one hand and an empty sherry bottle in the other, looking utterly mad” (*OotP* 523), and later when “Harry could smell cooking sherry again” (*HBP* 297). The characterization of Trelawney as mad serves to reinforce my argument that, while the magical community views alcoholism amongst men as acceptable, it is morally corrupt for women to fall victim to inebriety. Professor McGonagall serves as a foil to Trelawney here as McGonagall is able to drink in the series without falling victim to inebriety. McGonagall’s drinking can be seen as luxury drinking, as she is enjoying herself at a Christmas feast (*PS* 150). Trelawney, in contrast, falls victim to excessive misery drinking and inebriety. Her drinking is not acceptable according to the dynamics of the magical community where she loses privilege and power, both of which are positions Slughorn retains through his alcohol use. Like Slughorn, Hagrid, and Winky, Trelawney is unable to exhibit self-control and moderation around alcohol and finds herself at one point “too tipsy to recognize Harry” (*HBP* 297) and later must deal with “nasty accusations” from unnamed

sources that force her to attempt to throw away her amassed empty sherry bottles (*HBP* 505). Trelawney, like Winky, faces a backlash from the Hogwarts community because of her alcohol use, while others, particularly Hagrid and Slughorn do not.

### **Summation**

The positioning of Hogwarts as the dominant state apparatus within the British magical community means that the school influences students more than any other institution. The ideology reinforced by Hogwarts promotes a racialised class system that places house-elves on the lowest level of society. House-elves are enslaved without class mobility, as the magical community's speciesised ideology prevents almost all of them from escaping their subject position. The ideology of the school is also reinforced and complicated by the conflation of public and private spheres within Hogwarts. Teachers lack privacy at Hogwarts and act in many ways as if the public sphere of the school is their private sphere. This leads to student interactions with teachers in public locations that are more appropriate, according to the moral universe of *Harry Potter*, for the private sphere. Drinking by professors indicates both ideological and social lessons, that occur outside the direct realm of instruction. The make-up of Hogwarts dictates that professors are always representatives of the educational ISA, and also serve to reinforce the dominant ideology. Slughorn and Trelawney are two examples of professors who inform students' understanding of drinking's gendered construction. The gendered portrayal of how alcohol use and inebriety function means that Slughorn retains privileged social positions and the book portrays Trelawney as intemperate and mad.



## Chapter 4: Justifying Heroic Malevolence

The late-Victorian traditions of alcohol use perpetuated in *Harry Potter* hinge not only on the books' portrayal of oppressed characters, but also on the portrayal of privileged characters. The moral universe of *Harry Potter* is based on a hierarchy that consistently places Harry and other protagonists above other characters, regardless of their action. The novels depict Harry's, Dumbledore's, and the Weasleys' alcohol use favourably, and Voldemort's near-identical alcohol use negatively. The paradoxical double standard reveals a moral framework that underpins the use of alcohol, and the texts' moral privileging of certain characters. First, this chapter outlines the magical community's moral hierarchy and the way it privileges certain magical humans. Second, this chapter explores privileged characters' relationships with alcohol use. In addition to Harry giving others alcohol for information, Rowling describes Harry's own drinking as some of his most positive experiences in the seven books. Harry and his friends do not view Butterbeer as an alcoholic drink, which leads to a further degradation of Winky and her Butterbeer-fuelled alcoholism. Since Harry is the moral centre of the series, his attitudes inform the attitudes of the reader. The moral hierarchy of the magical world allows for human-wizards such as Harry and Dumbledore to use alcohol with no negative repercussions because characters' privilege shapes the meaning of their near-identical alcohol use.

### Victorian Contexts

The trope of using alcohol to gain information is not unique to *Harry Potter*, but was certainly familiar to people living in England during the nineteenth-century, and the use of alcohol to gain information was, in some situations, morally correct. For example, the

Conservative weekly newspaper *Trewman's Exeter Flying Post* published a story, "Our Mysterious Visitor" on 8 June 1870, in which a mysterious visitor to a pub will not speak. The solution is alcohol. The narrator writes, "A glass of grog opened his mouth and he related with great tact a few of his adventures" (6). Alcohol serves as the catalyst for information exchange between people, and is used as such without comment.

Drunkenness was a moral issue in the late-Victorian period. Leslie Stephen wrote in his 1882 *The Science of Ethics* that, "When everybody drank, drunkenness was more consistent with a sense of honour than it now is" (284). Late-Victorian society's view of alcohol shifted from endorsing frequent use to endorsing moderation. Drunkenness provided "proof of weakness of character" (283-4). Stephen argued that people were "afraid of being damned for drunkenness" and that "drunkards will be damned because they [the people] think drunkenness hateful" (459). While Stephen condemned drinking, he described the common attitude towards "the person who drinks fair and takes his wine like a man" as a person "admired, partly because his prowess is taken as a proof of vigour, and partly because he is 'sociable' in the lower sense of the word, and is therefore assumed to be sociable in the higher sense" (194). The late-Victorians viewed alcohol as a problem when it led to drunkenness but a useful barometer of one's social and moral worth if they drank in moderation.

### **Policing the Boundaries of a Questionable Moral Universe**

As discussed in previous chapters, the series frames the alcohol use of Hagrid, Winky, Slughorn, and Trelawney as a problem through juxtaposition with privileged characters' alcohol use. The magical community is obsessed with policing its boundaries, for

example the boundary that demarcates house-elves as slaves. In her discussion of strangers within neighbourhoods, Ahmed writes, “It is the enforcement of the boundaries between those who are already recognised as out of place (even other fellow residents) that allows those boundaries to be established” (26). Within the magical community, marginalized groups, such as house-elves and half-giants, are fellow residents of the magical community. Nonetheless wizarding laws systematically place them outside the boundaries of wizard and human. Witches and wizards become privileged above other residents of the magical community. Privilege and oppression are interconnected, since one may not exist without the other.

One of the ways privileged wizards use alcohol is to provide other characters with alcohol for personal gain. Both Harry and Dumbledore use alcohol to pry information from others with no negative repercussions. In fact Harry is even rewarded for intoxicating others. However, the same dynamic occurs when Voldemort gives Hagrid alcohol to get information out of him. Rather than praising Voldemort for such Dumbledore-like behaviour, Harry condemns Voldemort for taking advantage of Hagrid’s character flaws.

The text’s moral hierarchy gives human-wizards a privileged standing in the magical community that is not unlike white privilege, in that the privilege “often [seems] so natural to their owners as to require no second thought” (Roediger 31). The moral hierarchy within *Harry Potter* extends moral authority to those characters with privilege, especially Harry. Mendlesohn writes that “Fairness and justice may be bent” when it comes to Harry because “the role of his companions is intrinsic to creating moral authority around the person of Harry Potter” (165). Harry’s privilege absolves him of the text’s censure even when he does things that the text censures other less privileged characters for. Phillip Nel argues that

“Rowling’s novel emphasizes that the Dark Lord’s choices make him immoral, just as Harry’s choices make him moral” (282).

This differentiation is true for the majority of the series and is one of the major factors in creating the moral hierarchy, which consistently privileges Harry, but as I show below, when Harry and Voldemort make the same choice Harry maintains his moral authority. Dumbledore describes Voldemort’s choices as “a grave error” because “Voldemort singled [Harry] out as the person who would be most dangerous to him – and in doing so, he *made* [Harry] the person who would be most dangerous to him!” meaning that “Voldemort himself created his own worst enemy, just as tyrants everywhere do!” (*HBP* 476). Voldemort chooses Harry as his main adversary and this choice frames Voldemort as immoral; Harry is chosen to be Voldemort’s opposite, and therefore morally superior. Nel’s dichotomy of choice, however, does not apply to intoxicating others for information. Both Harry and Voldemort intoxicate others, and as I show in the next section, it is not their choices, but instead their subject positions within the moral hierarchy that shape their morality.

### **Learning to Secure Privilege by Ignoring Consent**

When Rowling’s characters, especially Harry, Dumbledore, and Voldemort, need to gain information from inconveniently silent characters, they turn to alcohol. Harry uses alcohol to pry information from Slughorn who, as discussed in Chapter 3, has a well-known propensity for drinking. However, before Harry uses alcohol to gain information from Slughorn, he has seen the tactic used twice before. In the first book, Voldemort gives Hagrid alcohol at the pub to glean information about the security of the Philosopher’s Stone. More troubling, perhaps, is in *Half Blood Prince* when Dumbledore takes Harry into his own

memory. Harry watches Dumbledore ply Mrs. Cole, the muggle matron of an orphanage, with gin and “pressing his advantage” to have her reveal information (248). Harry witnesses this event, which occurs only a few months before he intoxicates Slughorn, which shows that Harry has learned this is acceptable.

Dumbledore initiates Harry, and by extension the reader, into the practice of intoxicating others in a way that reinforces the texts’ gendered hierarchy. Dumbledore and Harry return to Dumbledore’s past memory via the Pensieve, a magical device used to store excess memories and view them again in perfect detail. While in the past they watch Dumbledore’s memory of visiting an orphanage to explain to the matron of the orphanage, Mrs. Cole, that a young Voldemort, known then as Tom Riddle, has been given a place at Hogwarts. Mrs. Cole meets with Dumbledore and asks questions, causing the narrator to comment, “There was no doubt that Mrs [sic] Cole was an inconveniently sharp woman” (*HBP* 248). The narration portraying Mrs. Cole as “inconveniently” sharp is inherently gendered because similar intelligence in a male character would not be framed an inconvenience. Her sharpness is inconvenient for Dumbledore, who is apparently in such a rush he cannot explain anything to Mrs. Cole and only wants to hear her stories about Tom Riddle. Dumbledore instead bewitches a piece of blank paper to “make everything clear” and conjures up a bottle of gin onto her desk, which she promptly offers to Dumbledore (248). Dumbledore provides Mrs. Cole with one of Cozzi’s proper British libations: gin (147). His use of British gin perpetuates the *Harry Potter* books’ compounding of “Old Englishness of wizardry” (Mendlesohn 166). The text’s harkening back to proper Britishness, again, presents Dumbledore’s interaction with alcohol as morally acceptable, although, according to the late-Victorian medical discourses discussed earlier, it is Mrs. Cole’s drinking that the text

views negatively because she is a woman. For example, Harry notes, sitting in focalised judgement, that, “Mrs [*sic*] Cole was no novice when it came to gin-drinking. Pouring both of them a generous measure, she drained her glass in one. Smacking her lips frankly, she smiled at Dumbledore for the first time, and he didn’t hesitate to press his advantage” (249).

Dumbledore uses a combination of magic and alcohol to get the information he wants from Mrs. Cole. When all is said and done, she drinks two-thirds of a bottle of gin and “Harry was impressed to see that she was quite steady,” although on her exit she is quite flushed and confuses Dumbledore’s name calling him “Mr [*sic*] Dumberton” and “Dunderbore” (250), indicating intoxication of such a “sharp woman.” These aspersions amount almost to victim blaming: if Mrs. Cole was not so sharp, Dumbledore would not have to intoxicate her in order to get her to act against her better judgement, but since she is non-magical and clearly accustomed to drinking, she comes out of the encounter looking morally weak, while Dumbledore appears blameless. Dumbledore’s use of alcohol allows him to get the information he needs without being morally reprimanded, either by the text or in the magical world while Mrs. Cole’s practised drinking marks her as morally inferior.

The purpose of Dumbledore’s visit is important as well: Dumbledore makes the journey on Hogwarts’ behalf, and thus he represents the educational State apparatus. The Magical Community cannot maintain a population without recruiting people with magical abilities from the muggle world. While Althusser argues that it is primarily the responsibility of the repressive State apparatus to ensure “the political conditions of the reproduction of relations of production which are in the last resort *relations of exploitation*” (150), here Dumbledore, who represents an ISA not a RSA, is performing the task. The Magical Community must retain the conditions surrounding its population through secrecy. Without

Hogwarts' magical education, witches and wizards would have no access to jobs within the community; therefore, the educational State apparatus supplies the magical community's labour force. In order to do this, Dumbledore must use tools of the RSA to accomplish his task, and in this case uses alcohol as an instrument of the RSA. Dumbledore is required to keep the magical world secret from Mrs. Cole, who as a muggle, cannot know of it.

However, in order to gain access to some magical children, representatives of Hogwarts must interact with muggles.

Within the magical hierarchies, muggles are oppressed and exploited. The continuation of magical secrecy hinges on magical exploitation of muggles (for example through memory-erasing charms) or, as Dumbledore does, with alcohol. The educational ISA is in this instance exerting a certain amount of repression and violence against muggles.

Althusser clarifies, "the Ideological State Apparatuses function massively and predominantly by *ideology*, but they also function secondarily by repression" and that "every State Apparatus, whether Repressive or Ideological, 'functions' both by violence and by ideology" (145). Dumbledore, and other magical folks, do not use violence overtly against muggles, that is to say they do not attack muggles, but rather the educational State apparatus exerts its ideology through violence over muggles, without the muggles' knowledge, in order to secure the reproduction of magical ideology to the privileged witches and wizards.

Dumbledore's magical production of alcohol to gain information from Mrs. Cole shows forethought. In the magical world, food is one of the five Principal Exceptions to Gamp's Law of Elemental Transfiguration, which according to Hermione, means "It's impossible to make good food out of nothing! You can Summon it if you know where it is, you can transform it, you can increase the quantity if you've got some" (DH 241). If Gamp's

Law applies to alcoholic drinks, as well as food, Dumbledore would have had to have gin with him to conjure a bottle of gin for Mrs. Cole; he could not have created it on a whim, which means that Dumbledore must have planned to intoxicate Mrs. Cole, showing even more premeditation than Voldemort (who in intoxicating Hagrid did so in a pub) (*PS* 193).

Dumbledore's tactics have an impact on his student, Harry, who is learning the rules of behaviour in the magical society from his headmaster, who in turn represents the educational ISA. Althusser writes that parents "open up for [children] the path to the freedom, morality and responsibility of adults by their own example, by knowledge, literature and their 'liberating' values" (157). Harry, as an orphan, looks to Dumbledore for parental guidance. Dumbledore's use of alcohol as a tool for gaining information gives Harry permission to do the same, and indeed Dumbledore drives Harry to gain information from others against their will.

Dumbledore charges Harry with retrieving a memory from Slughorn, which leads Harry to use alcohol as a tool. Dumbledore previously attempted to get the memory from Slughorn, but Slughorn magically altered the memory, which shows Slughorn's desire to keep the memory secret. Dumbledore believes Harry to be the only one who can influence Slughorn enough to retrieve the true memory, which again points to Harry's privileged status. The narrator frames Slughorn's wish to maintain the secret hidden in the memory as selfish, due to the fact it will impact Harry. In order to retrieve the memory, Harry turns to the Felix Felicis potion, more commonly known as liquid luck, a potion that in the magical world "is a banned substance in organised competitions . . . sporting events, . . . , examinations or elections" (*HBP* 177). Harry takes this potion and ends up drinking wine



with Hagrid and Slughorn in Hagrid's hut. Harry takes advantage of this situation, forcing Slughorn to divulge the memory without Slughorn's consent:

The Felix Felicis gave Harry a little nudge at this point and he noticed that the supply of drink that Slughorn had brought was running out fast. Harry had not yet managed to bring off the Refilling Charm without saying the incantation aloud, but the idea that he might not be able to do it tonight was laughable; indeed, Harry grinned to himself as, unnoticed by either Hagrid or Slughorn (now swapping tales of the illegal trade in dragon eggs), he pointed his wand under the table at the emptying bottles and they immediately began to refill. (455)

The potion gives Harry the courage to refill their drinks while they are not looking, and Harry is also safe knowing that Dumbledore has acted similarly to gain information. Harry continues to refill the wine until Hagrid falls asleep on the table, whereupon he presses his advantage on Slughorn, causing Slughorn to exclaim, "That's enough!" but Harry "knew that he was safe: Felix was telling him that Slughorn would remember nothing of this in the morning" (457). Harry provides Slughorn with enough alcohol that he will not recall their exchange in the morning, even though Slughorn has expressly asked Harry to stop and, by altering the memory, has made it clear that he does not consent to share it.

Despite the moral ambiguity associated with giving someone so much alcohol that they lose their memory and act against their express will when sober, Harry is rewarded for the outcome of his actions. When he hears what Harry has done, Dumbledore exclaims, "Harry this is spectacular news! Very well done indeed! I knew you could do it!" (462). The praise Harry receives for his actions reaffirm the moral correctness of his behaviours in the moral universe of the books, because every subject "freely accepts" and "must *act* according

to his ideas” and if “he does not do so, ‘that is wicked’” (Althusser 168). In other words, Harry acts as if his choices are his own, but in fact the ruling ideology drives him to perform in a certain way to avoid “wickedness.” Nonetheless, the narrative reinforces how the behaviour is only correct for characters with certain subject positions. Neither Harry nor Slughorn are perceived as morally wrong for trying to get or giving up information via intoxication, but in other similar situations, as we will see, one party is almost always seen as morally wrong.

When Voldemort gets Hagrid drunk in *The Philosopher’s Stone*, Voldemort uses the same tactic as Dumbledore and Harry, but the text frames the encounter as part of Voldemort’s moral depravity. Hagrid, like Slughorn, loses his memory of the evening, saying “I can’ remember too well, ‘cause he kept buyin’ me drinks” (193). Harry correctly guesses that Voldemort would go to Hagrid for information because, despite Hagrid’s loyalty to the school and Dumbledore, his propensity for alcohol would make him accidentally reveal information. Harry tells Ron and Hermione: “it must’ve been easy, once he’d got Hagrid drunk” (194). Despite the fact that Hagrid does in fact reveal information to Voldemort, Harry never sees Hagrid as morally wrong and Harry never questions Hagrid’s loyalty. Voldemort preys upon Hagrid and Hagrid’s innocence, which Mendlesohn argues leads to Hagrid being infantilized (166). This infantilization keeps Harry from engaging in victim blaming. Instead, he forgives Hagrid’s transgressions by assuming they are part of Hagrid’s character, and it is deemed Voldemort who is morally wrong for targeting Hagrid. When Harry recalls the event in the seventh book, he thinks that Hagrid “had once been tricked into giving Voldemort crucial information” and says, “if somebody made a mistake . . . and let something slip, I know they didn’t mean it. It’s not their fault” (*DH* 71). Voldemort tricks

Hagrid into giving the information away. It is not Hagrid's fault; it is Voldemort who is characterised as immoral. Voldemort's trickery is similar to Harry and Dumbledore using alcohol to gain information, but the text still frames Harry and Dumbledore as morally correct and Voldemort as wrong.

Harry is not the only child at Hogwarts who learns to use alcohol to get information from others. Harry, Ron, and Hermione also use alcohol to their advantage when interviewing Winky, without, thanks to their subject positions, any moral qualms. They hope to gain information on Winky's former master Bartemius Crouch, and when Harry realizes she has been drinking he is "struck by a sudden inspiration" before beginning to question Winky (466). Harry seizes on this opportunity to question Winky while she is intoxicated. While they do not provide Winky with alcohol, they seize the opportunity and use her intoxication to their advantage. Neither Ron or Hermione object to Harry questioning Winky, although Hermione does become "exasperated" and angry at the way the other house-elves treat Winky causing Ron to shout at Hermione: "You couldn't keep your mouth shut, could you, Hermione? . . . They won't want us visiting them now! We could've tried to get more stuff out of Winky about Crouch!" (467). Hermione considers her opinion of elf rights to be more important than the opinion of the elves themselves, and Ron is concerned with interrogating Winky, not the fact that Winky is severely intoxicated. The text frames Harry's interrogation as morally correct, despite his exploitative techniques, because exerting his power over Winky continues the position of the privileged wizard over the lower-class elves. The subject positions sit so naturally for Harry, the wizard, and the house-elves that no-one stops to question their positions, except Hermione. Indeed, the refusal of the elves to listen to Hermione's opinions about freedom speaks to the entrenchment of the ideologies functioning

to frame house-elves as lower than witches and wizards. The house-elves cannot even imagine wanting freedom. Harry's interrogation supports the existing ideology and is therefore the novels suggest Harry's actions as morally correct.

### **The Pleasure of Privileged Drinking**

Harry's personal use of alcohol is important because, as the narration is usually focalized through Harry, it is his perspective on the use of alcohol that guides the readers' interpretation. According to Dinah Birch, "a focalized narrative constrains its perspective within the limited awareness available to a particular witness, to whom the thoughts of other characters remain opaque" (n.pag.). This limits the reader's possible knowledge to what Harry knows. Nonetheless, "such a focalizing observer is not necessarily the narrator of the story" (n.pag.). Harry is not the narrator, but the reader often experiences the plot through Harry's perspective.

Drinking butterbeer is not uniformly positive; instead, it maps onto the text's speciesist and sexist hierarchies. When Harry first samples butterbeer, he describes it as "the most delicious thing he'd ever tasted and seemed to heat every bit of him from the inside" (*PoA* 149). Harry's first taste of Ogden's Old Firewhisky is likewise a positive event: "The Firewhisky seared Harry's throat: it seemed to burn feeling back into him, dispelling the numbness and sense of unreality, firing him with something that was like courage" (*DH* 70). Even before Harry has tried Firewhisky, other students at Hogwarts discuss Firewhisky as a desirable drink, including Ron who upon entering the Hog's Head pub, "[looks] over the bar with enthusiasm" before saying, "We could order anything we liked in here. I bet that bloke would sell us anything, he wouldn't care. I've always wanted to try Firewhisky" (*OotP* 301).

Later, Harry's other friends Seamus Finnegan and Dean Thomas ask Harry, "d'you want to chip in a couple of Galleons? Harold Dingle reckons he could sell us some Firewhisky" (*OotP* 649). The casual mentions of Firewhisky, and the desirability of the drink point to the culture surrounding alcohol. In *Order of the Phoenix* Harry, Ron, Seamus, and Dean are all fifteen years old, and therefore underage. In the magical community one comes of age at seventeen (*HBP* 56). The text frames their desire to try Firewhisky positively and Harry's reactions to butterbeer and Firewhisky show that it is desirable and a positive experience.

However, Winky drinking butterbeer has a massive negative impact on her life. The negative effect of butterbeer works in direct contradiction to Harry's butterbeer experience. The novel makes fun of Winky's alcoholism, degrading her in the process. When Harry learns that Winky is drinking butterbeer, he scoffs "Well, it's not strong, that stuff" (*GoF* 466). Harry does not stop to consider that his experience with butterbeer is different than Winky's experience. Confirming Roediger's assertion that people with privilege cannot see their own privilege, Harry assumes that because butterbeer does not affect his privileged status as a human-wizard, it should be the same for house-elves. The text and Harry do not seriously consider Winky's alcoholism, as Harry considers butterbeer a positive interaction and cannot imagine an addiction to butterbeer from his place of privilege, despite witnessing her struggles first-hand.

The books often do not show alcohol use as a serious issue, as exemplified by intoxicated apparition, which is akin to drinking and driving. Apparition is magical teleportation. It can be quite dangerous, requires a license from The Department of Magical Transportation, and is only legal for adults (*GoF* 63). Complications include "[leaving] half of themselves behind" (63). Nonetheless, witches and wizards often apparate while

intoxicated, with no moral or physical repercussions. After the announcement of Remus Lupin's son being born, Lupin has several goblets of wine before apparating away (*DH* 416). The next time Lupin is seen, there are no negative effects, and no one objects to his apparating while intoxicated. This is despite the fact that only a short time before Lupin's intoxicated apparition Ron is "Splinched" while apparating:

Harry watched, horrified, as [Hermione] tore open Ron's shirt. He had always thought of Splinching as something comical, but this . . . his insides crawled unpleasantly as Hermione laid bare Ron's upper arm, where a great chunk of flesh was missing, scooped cleanly away as though by a knife. (*DH* 221)

Ron is severely injured and unable to apparate again for quite some time. His lack of concentration while apparating has led to him leaving behind a significant portion of himself. A Ministry of Magic apparition instructor says Splinching "occurs when the mind is insufficiently *determined*. You must concentrate continually upon your *destination*, and move, without haste, but with *deliberation*" (*HBP* 361). It is likely that several goblets of wine would hinder one's ability to maintain determined concentration on a destination. While I have included all examples of Ministry of Magic apparition regulations from the texts here it is likely that the ability to use alcohol before apparition suggests the Ministry of Magic, while regulating the legal apparation age, does not regulate intoxicated apparition.

## **Summation**

The moral hierarchy of *Harry Potter* serves as a framework in which injustice and oppression must be compared. Oppression requires a privileged group to carry out oppressive tactics. Within the context of alcohol use in the Magical Community the plot and narration

make clear that using alcohol to intoxicate other characters is morally acceptable as long as those characters providing the alcohol occupy privileged positions. The State apparatus guides the moral correctness of these actions as well. If the characters providing alcohol work to propagate the means of production and hold up the ruling ideology then the rules of society will frame them as correct. Not only does the ruling ideology affect the moral view, but also the ideology is passed from the educational State apparatus to subjects who continue to behave according to the rules of society. It is for this reason that Harry continues Dumbledore's tactic of using alcohol to gain information. Unlike Voldemort, Harry and Dumbledore work to continue the ruling ideology and are therefore rewarded for their behaviour. Voldemort, while a subject produced by the system, works to disrupt the means of production, and so is not working to continue the ruling ideology.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

*Harry Potter*'s public image is that it is a diverse, inclusive, and progressive series. However, as I have argued, Rowling's depictions of alcohol work to perpetuate late-Victorian racist, classist, and sexist traditions. The text frames human-wizards as the unmarked subject position, which causes all other positions to be Othered. Half-giants and house-elves are the most affected by the books' portrayal. Drinking among non-human characters reinforces ideological subject positions within the magical community that create a speciesised class system. The late-Victorian ideals of proper-Britishness, encompassing self-denial and moderation, allow *Harry Potter* to frame Hagrid and Winky's alcohol use as morally wrong. The ideology most affects house-elves and Hagrid, who lack class-mobility because of their speciesised status and subject position.

The educational system, of which Hogwarts is an example, is the most dominant ideological State apparatus in the magical world, and the location where students learn the magical world's behaviour rules. Professors represent the educational ISA, which is complicated by the blurring of public and private spheres at Hogwarts. Professors Slughorn and Trelawney act as representatives of the educational ISA and through their actions, implicitly instruct students on the gendered construction of alcohol use. The novels frame Slughorn's alcohol use as morally correct because of his privileged social position, while simultaneously framing Trelawney's alcohol use as morally lax.

The moral hierarchy in *Harry Potter* hinges on social hierarchy and privilege. Harry and Dumbledore inhabit privileged subject positions, allowing them to intoxicate others for information without moral repercussions. When Voldemort uses the same tactic, the



narration frames him as morally corrupt. The text allows for morally correct alcohol use, but only by characters who hold privileged positions and maintain the ruling ideology.

The analysis of alcohol use in *Harry Potter* and the Victorian ideologies that the analysis reveals could easily be extended to the eight existing *Harry Potter* films. The films continue to feature alcohol use, however, while many of the instances I have discussed feature prominently some are completely absent. For example, Winky does not appear in the films. It would be productive to ask whether Victorian traditions continue to be perpetuated in the films, or if the films depict a different ideological moral framework. The *Harry Potter* corpus continues to expand, as in late 2016 *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, a new film written by Rowling will be released. The film, unlike the *Harry Potter* books, is to be set in the United States in the 1920s. Analysing the new American magical community could create comparisons to American historical events, and a very different ideological approach to alcohol use (if alcohol is, indeed, featured in the film).

Rowling has also written a stage play *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, set to premiere in summer 2016. The play continues the story of Harry Potter, serving as a sequel to the current seven books. Harry, Ron, and Hermione will be adults with children. If the play features alcohol use, one could analyse how Harry's alcohol use changes as an adult. The play has attracted controversy by casting a Black actress as Hermione, outraging racist Potter fans. The racist outcry speaks to the unmarked position of whiteness. Rowling has responded to the criticism by tweeting: "Canon: brown eyes, frizzy hair and very clever. White skin was never specified. Rowling loves black Hermione" (Rowling @jk\_rowling). Although Rowling's tweet may not be factually accurate according to descriptions in the book, it points to the diversity *Harry Potter* is often said to promote. The current controversy surrounding

race in the *Harry Potter* play would allow for an analysis of racism in the play, and also among the *Harry Potter* fandom.

Studies of alcohol use and Victorian traditions could also be extended outside the world of *Harry Potter* and into other works of young-adult fantasy. *The Hunger Games* series by Suzanne Collins features alcohol use and alcoholic characters (especially the character of Haymitch Abernathy). Similar to *Harry Potter*, *The Mortal Instruments* and *The Infernal Devices* series by Cassandra Clare take place in a secondary-world that exists within the primary “real” world and only certain characters are allowed access. The two series exist in the same secondary world and *The Mortal Instruments* take place in modern day New York, while *The Infernal Devices* are set in Victorian London. The setting of Victorian London would allow for interesting analysis of alcohol use and Victorian traditions.

This study of alcohol use in *Harry Potter* sheds light on the longevity of Victorian racist, classist, and sexist traditions. House-elves and half-giants exemplify the late-Victorian notions of improper alcohol use by those who do not exist within the dominant subject positions, in this case that of human-wizard. Hogwarts teachers must also inhabit subject positions in order to maintain social order at the schools. Men’s inebriety is narratively framed as morally acceptable, while women’s inebriety disrupts normal social conventions. Harry serves as the moral centre of the magical community. The magical society allows him to remain moral despite Harry often acting the same way as Voldemort. The text frames Harry as moral and Voldemort as immoral in the way they interact with alcohol and supply alcohol to others in exchange for information. Through the *Harry Potter* novels, alcohol provides the area in which late-Victorian traditions of racism, sexism, and classism become noticeable. As global politics consider issues of racism, sexism, and classism, it is important

to question and further examine the ways these issues manifest in popular literature and reveal how these narratives are constructed. In particular, it is incredibly informative to study Victorian culture in order to understand the origins of our own complex, and often paradoxical, attitudes towards alcohol use, race, gender, and class. Often, we assume these are contemporary issues. However, locating the historical manifestations of these issues, can often reveal new information, new perspectives, and perhaps new possibilities for intervention that will allow us to navigate, negotiate, and even change these oppressive politics.

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