

The Ethics of Albus Dumbledore:

A Critical Discussion of Professor Dumbledore as a Moral Leader and Ideal in the Harry Potter Series.

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YNWA

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Abbreviations

<i>PS</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone</i>
<i>CS</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets</i>
<i>PoA</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban</i>
<i>GoF</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire</i>
<i>OotP</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix</i>
<i>HBP</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince</i>
<i>DH</i>	<i>Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows</i>

Chapter One: Introduction

This thesis is about the Harry Potter series or more particularly Albus Dumbledore, the Headmaster at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry and a prominent character in the series. Traditionally, Albus Dumbledore has been viewed as a saint-like character, but in the last installment of the series, *Deathly Hallows*, he is exposed. I believe that this was necessary because Albus Dumbledore was becoming a demigod. J.K Rowling exposes Dumbledore, but she does not destroy him. She is simply removing the pedestal many have put him upon, his reputation is not ruined it rather becomes more realistic. Albus Dumbledore is simply a flawed man, like the rest of us.

I found this very interesting, mainly because I have always thought of Dumbledore as a very confusing character. In addition, I never really understood why everyone talked so fondly of him. He instantly becomes Harry's father figure, although he never does anything to deserve it. Harry also immediately seems to admire him, simply because he is Headmaster of Hogwarts and because of his chocolate frog card. This emphasises the fact that Dumbledore is admired for his accomplishments and talents, rather than his ability as a leader and headmaster. Furthermore, I always found the way he encourages his students (especially Harry) to challenge the rules and as a result risk their lives, very irresponsible. It seems as though he has no idea of what is going on at his school, but at the same time, that he knows and simply does not seem to care. I state this because according to his own blatant and constant self-bragging, there is no way that anything could ever happen without his knowing about it. Despite all this, the consensus is that Albus Dumbledore is a fantastic person and no one seems to question anything that he does.

Moreover, as mentioned above, Rowling exposes Dumbledore and his past in *Deathly Hallows*. Suddenly, Dumbledore was not the person everyone thought he was. Once, he had conspired with the dark wizard, Gellert Grindelwald, to take the world "back" from the muggles and thus secure wizard domination. Certainly, Dumbledore abandoned these plans eventually and he never directly assisted Grindelwald in his campaign. Further, Dumbledore, through the rest of his life, fought for the rights of those considered to be less valuable than magicians. It seems that Dumbledore does try to live his life seeking forgiveness for the mistakes he once made, although whether he succeeds, can be debated. The main reason I claim that he never really succeeds, is his relationship with and treatment of Harry. That is also where my idea for this thesis came from. I want to investigate how and why Dumbledore

is regarded as the moral leader and also an ideal in the series. These questions are answered by going into the narrative and looking at his actions and relationships. Furthermore, in connection with Dumbledore as the moral leader and ideal, this thesis investigates, especially in chapter two, how his actions are grounded in the notion of the greater good. However, the notion of the greater good is recurrent in both chapters. My research question for this thesis has been: In what ways is Albus Dumbledore depicted as the moral leader and ideal in the series and to what extent is that a result of a fair assessment of his character?

Furthermore, the motivation behind this thesis is my own interest in the series, as well as its being one of the most popular book series ever. When certain contributions to literature become so immensely popular we have a responsibility to look more deeply into the reasons why and further examine our understanding of the series. This is because it is important to know and understand what kind of literature inspires children and young adults to read, and as a future teacher I believe that it is essential that students can ask their teacher and expect an answer not only regarding the old classics, but also about modern and popular literature.

I will focus mostly on the last three books of the series; *Order of the Phoenix*, *Half-Blood Prince* and *Deathly Hallows*, which I will refer to in the following in their abbreviated forms. The earlier books in the series will also be addressed whenever necessary.

This thesis is divided into three chapters; the first, the introductory chapter. In this chapter I will look briefly at the genre of children's literature to try to determine where the series can be placed, and also conduct a narrative analysis of the series based on the narrative communication model. Then, I will discuss how fantasy literature may be defined as a genre.

The second and third chapters will be the two chapters with analysis of the series itself. Albus Dumbledore's relationship with Harry Potter will be the main focus of the second chapter called "The Chosen One, the Dark Lord and their Professor". In this chapter Harry Potter's connection with Voldemort will also be investigated in terms of their obvious similarities. The second chapter is written and constructed around the idea of the greater good and/or the common good and how Dumbledore can be said to be involved in and exert his influence on these two notions.

Chapter three of the thesis is called; "The Secrets and Lies of Albus Dumbledore." For the third chapter I will mainly focus on *DH*, this is because I think that this book has a privileged place. I claim that because this is the book when it all changes; not only for the present and future, but also for our interpretation of the past. Furthermore, this chapter will enter into the narrative and examine the life of Albus Dumbledore, and see if his actions are

worthy of a moral leader of his magical universe. This chapter will mainly focus on the theme of death and by extension immortality vs mortality. It will do so by examining the two notions of Hallows and Horcruxes and the wish to become master of death, in connection to both Dumbledore and Harry. Lastly, the theme love of, which has been referred to several times in the thesis, will be dealt with more in depth.

In the conclusion I shall sum up my findings throughout the thesis and conclude whether or not my research question can be said to have been answered.

1.1 Children's Literature

“Before there could be any children's books, there had to be children” (Townsend 1990 in Rudd 2010). For many years children were not viewed as children, but rather as undeveloped adults. It was not until the Age of Enlightenment and the Romantic Period that the view of children changed. Children were seen as innocent and childhood as something desirable (Nikolajeva 50). This laid the foundation for literature written for children and it saw results by the Victorian time when this field started to gain popularity much because of the genius of Lewis Carroll and his “Alice” (Rudd 2010). Onwards, children's literature has grown in popularity and today it is perhaps one of the genres with the most diverse group of readers. Adults do not merely read it to their children anymore, they also read it for their own enjoyment. Furthermore, viewing children's literature as literature and in relation to theory, rather than for pedagogical reasons is a very new tradition. Maria Nikolajeva explains that this interest only started some 20 years ago and the main reason was that critics simply did not take children's literature seriously (4). This is difficult to believe when considering the enormous popularity some instances of children's literature have enjoyed in recent years. Children's literature is divided into different genres, exactly like other types of literature. Children's literature is often also divided into age appropriate categories, although these can perhaps be difficult to maintain and separate from each other. Children's literature even has its own association and quarterly journals.

Recent years have also seen the emergence of a new type of children's literature, young adult fiction, this perhaps partly because of the Harry Potter series. Rachel

Falconer argues that young adult fiction did not begin with J.K. Rowling, because several classics, like *Catcher in the Rye*, *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Lord of the Flies* written in the mid-twentieth century, can also be called young adult fiction (87). However, she says that the Harry Potter series may have worked as a catalyst for the popularity to explode, it was also a case of “social and economic conditions ripe for such a shift in perspective on children’s literature” (Falconer 87). She continues to explain what these conditions could be, and she is painting a precise picture of today’s western culture. Today, there is a focus on ageing, or rather not ageing, and beauty. It has become the ideal, something to strive for, and that is where the focus on adolescence comes from (Falconer 88). In a way we have returned to the views from the Romantic Period, or perhaps they have simply continued. Either way, there is a celebration of children being children, but they are also given more adult qualities. As in Harry Potter; even as a child, Harry is a hero to all people of the magical world. This is perhaps a result of the fact that the majority of children’s books and young adult fiction are still being written by adults, and the main characters can be role models for other children and teenagers. Furthermore, it is a celebration of children and young adults as independent beings with thinking and reflecting minds of their own.

The Harry Potter series is one of the most popular series worldwide, it is perhaps viewed as a children’s book, but the series is equally popular among adults. The last three books of the series; *OotP*, *HBP* and *DH*, are, I would argue, where the series moves from being children’s books into (young) adult fantasy literature. The reason for this is that as more installments are made, the books grow darker. The themes are more serious and more difficult for young children to grasp. The series starts out as a wondrous fairy-tale-like story, but the happy ending is accompanied by death and despair. Furthermore, because this series is so immensely popular and has such a diverse readership it is very important to analyse why. As Peter Hollindale claims, children and adults are influenced by what they read (20), furthermore he claims that “every story is potentially influential for all its readers” (Hollindale 20). Thus, both adults and children are influenced by what they read and therefore it is very important to understand what they are influenced by. It is very common to encourage readers to identify themselves with a character, especially young readers. It seems as though being able to identify with someone in the novel makes it easier to understand the novel.

Maria Nikolajeva claims that this is a completely misguided practice, and I quite agree. She discusses the term “identification fallacy” (188) to explain this curious practice and

continues to state that it actually can be harmful for the child to always seek identification. In *HBP*, Harry is becoming more familiar with the past of Voldemort and the fact that he was once Tom Riddle; a boy who, in many ways, is quite similar to our hero Harry. Maria Nikolajeva claims; “It requires extremely strong reader integrity to continue feeling the same loathing for the lonely and miserable youth (...)” (195). Thus, it can be potentially harmful for a child to feel sympathy and empathy for the young Voldemort, Tom Riddle. These feelings would be very confusing for a child, and it would perhaps be ashamed for having these emotions, and perhaps the child would think that it also was evil. Furthermore, this would not have caused a problem for an adult reader because an adult reader has more emotional maturity and understands that one can feel empathy for someone without agreeing or being similar to someone. This further underscores Peter Hollindale’s claims; both children and adults are influenced by what they read, however, the problem is that children are not only influenced but also encouraged to become part of the story, rather than just reading the story. This is along the lines of several literary theories, mainly; narrative theory and reception theory, perhaps also, to an extent reader-response theory. The idea of these theories, on a very general level, is to focus more on the text itself rather than the characters in it. This claim is also supported by Maria Nikolajeva who states, “(...) the importance of the readers’ ability to liberate themselves from the protagonists’ subjectivity in order to evaluate them properly” (188).

1.2 Theory and Method

Literary theory can be a very confusing field to navigate through, but I decided very early that narrative theory is something that I would like to focus on. Narrative theory seems to fit well with children’s literature. There are many children and young adults who read this series and therefore I wholeheartedly support Maria Nikolajeva and other literary theorists’ claim to remove ourselves from the traditional “identification fallacy” and aim for a more text-focused future. As a future teacher, I am convinced that it is very important to find a different way of inspiring kids to read and also further understand what they read. I do not believe that the first question answered should be on the matter of identification, I think that the text itself should be a door-opener and gate way into understanding the books they read. It is so important to teach our students how to be objective, rather than subjective, because that is where the true

potential of analysing and understanding literature lies.

Thus, narrative theory was a natural choice. Narrative theory is not only a theory; it is also an analytical tool. Further, it can perhaps best be explained as analysing the more formal aspects of the text, such as narrative modes, plot, structure and implied reader. My discussion of these formal aspects will be based on the communication model introduced by Jakob Lothe. Furthermore, I support a separation of the formal aspect of the text from the thematic, because narrative theory can be an aid in analysing the formal aspects. That is why I have chosen to have a part where I analyse the formal aspects of the series by using narrative theory as an analytical tool, and I have separated this from the analysis of the thematic aspects.

Narrative theory can be said to stem from Russian Formalism in the early twentieth century and has become more popular much thanks to French theorists. The work of Gérard Genette can be said to have exercised a major influence on the modern development of narrative theory. Jakob Lothe refers to Genette's "Discours du récit" and his three modes of narrative fiction, discourse, story and narration (6). "Discourse is what we read, the text to which we have direct access", "Story refers to the narrated events and conflicts in narrative fiction, (...) what we usually understand by a summary of the action" (6). Thus, discourse is the written text and the story is understood as plot. However, it is the last of the modes that is most interesting, namely the narration. "Narration refers to how a text is written and communicated. The process of writing, of which narration is a trace, carries with it a number of narrative devices and combinations, which all contribute to constituting discourse"(6). Thus, these devices which can be related to narrative theory, implied reader and implied author as well as first and third person narrator, all contribute in making the text.

The method best suited for this type of analysis is close reading, and that is also what I will do. I will use close reading as a method in terms of both the formal and thematic aspects. However, the part about formal aspects will, as mentioned, be supported by the analytical tool that is supplied by narrative theory. The two remaining chapters will be based on a close reading of the narrative in the books, especially the part relating to Albus Dumbledore.

Narrative theory and analysis are mainly about communication. Jakob Lothe introduces a model for communication in a narrative text and at the same time introduces some main concepts of narrative analysis (13). The first steps of the model are the implied author on one side and the implied reader on the other. "Unlike the narrator, the implied author can *tell* us nothing. (...) it instructs us silently, through the design of the whole, with

all the voices, by all means it has chosen to let us learn” (Chatman in Lothe 19). There are several examples of the implied author interfering in the series, for instance, when Harry is forced to deal with reality after the death of Dobby and after being obsessed with the Hallows for a long time. It is in a way the implied author who is “slapping” Harry awake while sending the message that strong emotions (obsession) can cloud even the best mind. The implied author becomes the norm or the value system in the story, and perhaps even the moral ideal. The implied reader, Lothe says, is on the border between what is narrative theory and reader-response and reception theory (19). Literary theorists like Wolfgang Iser, Stanley Fish and Michael deCerteau are prominent figures in these two theories. Reception theory is a part of the umbrella term of reader-response criticism. In general, reader-response and reception theory focus on the reader rather than the text or author, and normally the relationship between reader and text. Furthermore, these theories maintain that the reader creates the text and that the interaction between reader and text create meaning.

The next step in the model is the narrator, and this is at the center of the model. The narrator is a narrative instrument used by the author in order to present the story (Lothe 20). The narrator is part of the story, it is integrated in the narrative. The narrator is not the same as the author. J.K Rowling is not the narrator, she is the author. Furthermore, Lothe cites the theorist Mieke Bal, “The narrator is the most central concept in the analysis of narrative texts” (21). The narrative is, as the word implies, what is being told in the text and therefore it is certainly interesting to analyse how this is done. The narrator is traditionally divided into two different types or different perspectives, namely, first person and third person narrator. The first-person narrator is active within the plot. The first-person narrator is part of the plot and is therefore personified in the text through the usage of the pronoun “I”. However, first-person narrative is not interesting in terms of the Harry Potter series because that is not the perspective used. The narrative point of view in the series is mainly that of a third-person narrator. “The third person narrator is (...) outside or ‘above’ the plot, although he is also in the text (...) since he does not participate in the action, (...) [his] function is purely communicative” (Lothe 21). Third-person narrator can also be further divided into sub-types. Normally, there are third-person limited and third-person omniscient. An omniscient narrator, as the name implies, has unlimited knowledge about every character and everything happening in the story, which he, of course, does not participate in. Moreover, the third-person limited narrator is not all-knowing, but he narrates through a focal point, normally, through one or several characters in the story. This type of narrator has unlimited knowledge

about his focal point, but knows nothing other than what the focal point knows and cannot see anything unless the focal point sees it.

The Harry Potter series has Harry Potter, the protagonist, as its focal point. This means that the narrative is told through a third-person narrative from Harry's point of view, the majority of the narrative, at least. However, there are instances where the narrator goes from being limited to being omniscient. The series actually starts with an omniscient narrator. The first chapter of *PS* is in the omniscient view: "Mr. and Mrs. Dursley, of number four, Privet Drive, were proud to say that they were perfectly normal, thank you very much" (1). The chapter continues with different points of view. It might seem as though there are simply different third-person limited perspectives, but the fact that the narrator knows the emotions of Vernon Dudley, Albus Dumbledore and Minerva McGonagall, support that the omniscient view is being used. This omniscient view can also be found in the first chapter of *GoF*, the two first chapters of *HBP* and finally the first chapter of *DH*. The narrator shows what is happening away from Harry Potter, and only an omniscient narrator could do that. Lothe says that the omniscient narrator can also alternate between characters, because he knows everything about them (36). This is clearly shown through different chapters. In the first chapter of *HBP*, we are introduced to the emotions, confusion and story of the muggle Prime Minister. In *GoF* we learn about Voldemort's whereabouts and also that he is somehow alive again through the caretaker of the Riddle Mansion. In *DH* Snape and Yaxley take us into Malfoy Manor and the round table of Voldemort. In the latter chapter the narrator does not go inside her characters, she simply stands on the outside looking in and objectively explains what she sees. This does not make the narrator any less trustworthy, because it only underlines her unlimited knowledge about the story without even using any of the characters.

Moreover, there are some even more interesting aspects of the narrative voice in the series; this is because of Harry's scar. The scar functions as an information channel for Harry in the series, and Harry uses it to his best ability. However, the scar, as mentioned, invites interesting changes in terms of narrative also because Harry's scar enables the narrator to shift her view. In *OotP* when Ron's father, Mr. Weasley, is attacked Harry is becoming Nagini and by extension also Voldemort, therefore the view is shifting from Harry to Voldemort. The narrator is still third-person limited, but the focal point has shifted. "I was the snake (...) I saw it all from the snake's point of view [Harry says]" (414). Thus, it remains third-person limited, but the view and character changes. This happens several times in the series, for instance when Voldemort kills Snape in *DH*. The focus shifts once again from Harry to

Voldemort. The Pensive is also a way of broadening the narrator's view without leaving Harry as focal point. The pensive lets Harry see what he cannot possibly have seen, because it, normally, happened a long time ago. I would argue that the scar and pensive are clever narrative tools created in order to relieve the third person limited narrator, and also to help the story along. In this series, the third person limited narrator is at times, exactly that, too limited. And the plot moves much better when we also can keep tabs on what Voldemort is doing.

The question whether a narrator is reliable or not is typical of a narrative analysis. Lothe lists some signs to look for in order to recognise the narrator as either or:

1. The narrator has very limited knowledge or insight about the subject
2. The narrator is personally involved, to the extent of being too subjective
3. The narrator represents values which are not similar to what the discourse is presenting (46).

Further, this is a concept traditionally used in relation to a first-person narrator; however a third-person narrator can also be unreliable (46). In the *Harry Potter* series, the narrator is clearly reliable when considering these signs. There is one narrator throughout the series and it is always either third person omniscient or limited. Above, I introduced some narrative irregularities to show how the narrator tries at times to avoid the limitations of the third person limited point of view. However, in *GoF* we are introduced to a character named Rita Skeeter, she is a journalist, and by definition highly unreliable. Rita Skeeter has very limited knowledge or insight because she is more interested in gossip than the truth and good journalism. Thus, she represents values that are quite different from the rest of the discourse. The narrative in the series focuses on truth while Rita Skeeter is not concerned with that. Rita Skeeter, at times, becomes the second narrator in the series, because she is the only one who is allowed to report and tell a story, apart from the narrator. This can clearly be seen in *DH* where Rita Skeeter exposes Dumbledore. Rita Skeeter, or perhaps the implied author, is assisting the narrator. Harry Potter has no way of seeing anything or learning anything about Dumbledore's life and past, or his many secrets. Furthermore, the implied author can expose an unreliable author because, as mentioned earlier, the implied author is in a way the moral epicenter of the story. Therefore, Rita Skeeter is by the implied author condemned as an unreliable narrator, but at the same time her voice is used to expose Dumbledore. Dumbledore

as the moral leader of the series will be dealt with later in this thesis, however, the implied author is repositioning herself as the norm when Dumbledore is exposed and she is doing it with the help of unreliable narrator Rita Skeeter. Again, this is perhaps a narrative tool, a way for the implied author to use her voice without interfering with the narrator's position or in the text. It is the way the implied author must voice her opinion, silently and tentatively.

1.3 Fantasy Literature

Fantasy literature has a long tradition where the first instances can be found in the early 19th century, with Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, among others. As a result, critics became intent on trying to define what fantasy literature really is, and they started with the distinction between the fantastic and fantasy. Åsfrid Svendsen refers to several literary critics who try to define the two concepts (349). However, it seems that none of the suggested definitions work because they are either too narrow or too broad. That being said, I quite agree with W.R Irwin's suggestion as referred to by Svendsen. He makes a clear distinction between "the fantastic" and "fantasy". He says that the fantastic is not a genre; rather that it is something that can be found in all kinds of literature. And that the fantastic is a complete opposite to the real world (in Svendsen 349). Furthermore, he states that fantasy is a genre, and that it has specific traits (in Svendsen 349). These traits are that fantasy literature can convince its readers that something that clearly is not true, is fact. In other words, the reader of the Harry Potter series must believe that magic really is real. This is perhaps true for some parts of the readership, but most of it would find this ridiculous. This is where I find it difficult to continue to agree with Irwin's suggestion, but I do agree with the distinction that the fantastic is a literary element which can be found in different kinds of literature. Further, I regard fantasy literature as a genre and therefore it needs a broader definition.

As mentioned, the definition of fantasy literature has been sought after for a long time, and it seems that one definition is not sufficient. Furthermore, the major theorists in the field, like W.R Lewis, generally focused on the early instances of fantasy literature belonging to the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century (James and Mendlesohn 1). More recently, theorists have abandoned the idea of trying to define fantasy literature. Farah Mendlesohn is one theorist who has decided not to search for a new definition, but has rather accepted existing definitions by Brian Attenberry, who argues that Fantasy Literature is a "fuzzy set"

of texts that may or may not have a set of common tropes which can determine the degree of “fantasy” they entail (James and Mendlesohn 1). Mendlesohn also accepts the grammar of John Clute, who has constructed “a grammar of fantasy which draws together notions of structural and thematic movements in the text” (James and Mendlesohn 2). However, in addition, Farah Mendlesohn has implemented four modes of fantasy and how they enter the text, i.e how the world of the fantastic in the text interacts with the real world. These four modes are, the portal-quest, the immersive, the intrusive and the liminal (James and Mendlesohn 2). The magical world of Harry Potter can be said to either belong to the immersive or the intrusive, perhaps leaning more towards intrusive. The intrusive is when the fantastic breaks into the primary world, whereas the immersive is when the protagonist is part of the fantastic world (James and Mendlesohn 2). The magical world often breaks into the primary world by co-existing and therefore traveling from one “world” into the other. Harry Potter is part of the fantastic world because he is a wizard, more so than he is in the primary world. Catherine Butler argues that the series also is a portal fantasy because “in being taken to (...) Hogwarts (...) Harry is effectively transported to another world” (233). This might be true for the early books in the series, but, as Butler points out, this changes during the series (233). In DH, they are primarily not residing at Hogwarts or anywhere in the magical world, they are travelling through the primary world. In this book the intrusive mode is very evident. The muggle world is more than ever seeing the effects of having the magical world breaking into theirs with rampant murders and inexplicable events. The series might have started out as a portal fantasy, but ends up as an intrusive fantasy.

Traditionally, Fantasy Literature has been divided into two concepts: “high fantasy” and “low fantasy”. Svensen says that high fantasy is characterised by the plot occurring in a secondary world, not our everyday world (344-345). Further, this world is in a state of consistent order because of supernatural and magical powers. The characters are often noble, apart from the protagonist who is often average, both in skill and talent. Svensen also mentions that there is often a strong polarisation between good and evil in fantasy (344-345). “Low fantasy” takes place in our world, our everyday reality. There is also a consistency of order, but order exists because of natural laws, rather than supernatural ones. If something exceptional happens there are no rational explanations for it, and they would react with surprise, shock or laughter (Svensen 347). With these two concepts in mind it is very clear that the Harry Potter series safely can be labeled as “high fantasy”. The polarization between good and evil is very strong in the Harry Potter series; thematically and morally, the division

and sorting of people, but also character-wise; Harry and Voldemort. Furthermore, Harry is, as Professor Snape likes to point out, average. He does not excel particularly in anything, and when he does it is not because of skill or talent; it is because of will and drive. However, Harry does excel in quidditch, this seems to be an exception to the “rule”. The wizarding world is a secondary world, but it manages to reside inside of everyday reality. In London there are several gateways from the muggle world into the wizarding world; the alleyway behind Leaky Cauldron is the entrance to Diagon Alley and the platform 9 ¾ is the gateway to catch the Hogwarts Express, to name a few. However, these places can be viewed as portals, as in portal fantasy, because this is where the characters are transported into the magical world. Moreover, something that can be easily stated is that Fantasy Literature, regardless of critics agreeing on definitions or not, is becoming more and more popular.

Popularity aside, Fantasy Literature is perhaps not afforded a privileged place in literary research, and this is perhaps because it is relatively new, and perhaps some do not take it seriously. I may be very bold when stating this, however, usable and good secondary material for this thesis did not come by the barrel. Nevertheless, as already stated, Fantasy Literature is becoming increasingly more popular. It started with the godfathers J.R.R Tolkien and C.S Lewis’; *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Chronicles Narnia*, continued with Jordan’s *Wheel of Time* and Rowling’s *Harry Potter* and more recently Stephenie Meyer’s *Twilight*, Collins’ *The Hunger Games* and Garcia and Stohl’s *Beautiful Creatures*. Fantasy Literature has received a very powerful ally, namely, the film industry. Since Hollywood started producing spectacular film adaptations of fantasy novels, the whole genre has become more mainstream. It has gone from being a genre with a somewhat narrow audience to being accepted worldwide. The reasons for this can be diverse, but I would argue that this has to do with the fact that Fantasy Literature is in many ways a development of fairy tales. Thematically, many fantasy novels are similar. Previously I referred to Svensen who stated that “high fantasy” often had a strong polarization between good and evil and that is true for most fantasy novels, however, there are other themes that seem to reoccur, like; quest, adventure, fighting, love, growing up and friendship.

2 Chapter Two: The Boy who lived, the Dark Lord and their Professor

This chapter is mainly about the relationship between Albus Dumbledore and Harry Potter. The first part is called “The Prophecy” and is about Dumbledore’s ambiguous attitude to the truth and information sharing. It is also about the tension between fate and free will in the series and how this affects the choices of both Harry and Dumbledore, as well as Voldemort. This tension is visible in several parts of the chapter. The next part is called “The Evil Boys?” and is about the similarities between Harry and Voldemort. The part “The Road to the Forbidden Forest” is about the long road Harry must travel before the culmination in the forest. Lastly, the part called “The Greater Good vs the Common Good” is the part where the two terms are defined and the chapter tries to sum up the former parts to decide whether or not Dumbledore is working for the greater good.

2.1 The Prophecy

Albus Dumbledore has been an important figure in Harry’s life since he started at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. In the first three books they have a somewhat normal student/headmaster relationship, at least to the extent that these two can have a normal relationship. Harry is the chosen one, but he does not know it, yet. Dumbledore lets Harry be a normal student and does not tell him much about his past, or rather he does not explain things thoroughly. Instead Harry learns about his past through far less sophisticated channels. Hagrid tells him what really happened to his parents, and reveals that he is in fact a wizard, and finally Hagrid tells him about Voldemort. Harry only receives a fraction of the information that he would need sooner than expected. In *HBP* we learn that Dumbledore himself was responsible for visiting and explaining things to Tom Riddle at the orphanage. At that time, Dumbledore decided that he must take a special interest in Tom and monitor him at Hogwarts because he had certain suspicions about him. Dumbledore was not headmaster at the time when visiting the orphanage, he was only a teacher. Therefore, it might not be customary for the headmaster to pay new students a visit. However, Harry Potter is not an ordinary student of Hogwarts. It would have been better for Harry to receive this essential

information directly from the source, than from Hagrid. Dumbledore could have prepared Harry far more satisfactory than Hagrid ever could. This means that Dumbledore is laying the foundation for what Willson-Metzger calls, information concealment (293-304). Harry Potter does not know anything about the fact that he is a wizard, and it seems that it is not important to tell him anything about it either.

Trouble found Harry much sooner than anticipated; he fought Voldemort in his first year at Hogwarts. The second year, he fought Voldemort yet again. In his third year at Hogwarts, he found Sirius. And before his fourth year at Hogwarts was completed, Harry was captured and saw Voldemort return. For a boy at the mere age of 14, he had experienced more than most do in a life time. He had conquered death and delayed the return of Voldemort, but he still did not know the real reason why Voldemort wanted to kill him or the reason why he had to fight him. Dumbledore had not told him the whole truth. Harry knew enough to understand that Voldemort was evil and that he must not regain power, and he also knew that Voldemort had killed his parents. This was perhaps sufficient information for Harry, because his actions are motivated by simple truths. Harry is good and Voldemort is evil; Good must destroy evil. Evil killed his parents; good must revenge this evil. Harry accepted these simple truths, and he only once questioned Dumbledore about it. In *PS* Harry asked Dumbledore about it, and Dumbledore eluded giving an answer. In *CoS* Harry and Dumbledore talked about Harry's scar, and Dumbledore did explain the main essence about the scar; that it was left there when Voldemort tried to kill him as a boy and that Harry inherited some of Voldemort's abilities, and that the connection is the reason why Harry sometimes feels what Voldemort feels. Yet, Dumbledore eludes the whole truth yet again, he never explains why Voldemort tried to kill him as a boy. In *GoF* this dire information should have been given to Harry because Voldemort has returned, but instead Dumbledore elects to withhold it once more and sends him back into isolation at Privet Drive. Finally, in *OotP* Dumbledore is forced to tell him about the prophecy, and gives him the information, five years too late.

The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord approaches ... born to those who have thrice defied him, born as the seventh month dies ... and the Dark Lord will mark him as his equal, but he will have power the Dark Lord knows not ... and either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives ... the one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord will be born as the seventh month dies ... (*OotP* 739).

The truth is given to Harry at last, and only because Dumbledore has realised that the truth cannot be kept from Harry any longer. Voldemort tried to kill Harry because of a prophecy

made, and because he only heard half of it, courtesy of one Severus Snape. Dumbledore waited five long years before sharing this with Harry, and he had more than one opportunity to tell him, he just decided not to. Further, the justification for not telling Harry is, at best, somewhat insufficient.

I cared about you too much, said Dumbledore simply. I cared more for your happiness than your knowing the truth.(...) My only defence is this: I have watched you struggling under more burdens than any student who has ever passed through this school and I could not bring myself to add another – the greatest one of all (*OotP* 740).

Love is seemingly Dumbledore's explanation. (Love as a theme, and also in relation to this will be discussed in chapter three.) Dumbledore also says that he did not want to put yet another burden on him, however, what Dumbledore seems to forget is that Harry is also probably one of the emotionally strongest students who have ever ventured inside Hogwarts. He found inhuman strength as an eleven year old boy and fought Voldemort, he grew up without parents and suffered at the hands of his own relatives. Adversity has not made Harry Potter a weak person; it is precisely the complete opposite. Therefore, Dumbledore's defence is weak and it is not believable, and presumably Dumbledore knows it as well.

Moreover, as mentioned, Dumbledore uses love as explanation. He states that he cared too much about Harry to tell him. Love, or rather loving is not the first word that comes to mind when considering their relationship. Beth Admiral and Regan Lance Reitsma claim that "Dumbledore doesn't raise or educate orphan Harry" (119). They continue to say that "(...) one of Dumbledore's most striking features is his absence" (119). This is absolutely true. As mentioned, Dumbledore does not visit Harry when it is time for him to start at Hogwarts, Dumbledore continues to send him back to Privet Drive every summer, he is sent into isolation, without any contact from the headmaster that Harry thinks fondly of, and Harry does not even know the importance of it because Dumbledore has not told him. Dumbledore does not support Harry when Voldemort has returned; he lets Harry cope with that enormous responsibility on his own, and in *OotP* Dumbledore withdraws himself completely from Harry.

I believed it could not be long before Voldemort attempted to force his way into your mind, (...) I was sure that if he realised that our relationship was – or had ever been – closer than that of headmaster and pupil, he would seize his chance to use you as a means to spy on me (*OotP* 729). | So you see, I have been trying, in distancing myself from you, to protect you, Harry. An old man's mistake...(OotP 730).

Love is the reason why he has been absent. However, as we have seen, Dumbledore has always been absent. It is simply not enough to use love as an excuse, certainly not when Dumbledore's idea of loving Harry is so, in a way, destructive. This notion of wanting to protect him, or trying to keep him happy and not let him suffer more than he already has, becomes extremely ironic. Because if that is what Dumbledore has wanted and been trying to do, he has failed entirely. Harry has suffered more after entering the wizarding world and Dumbledore has not managed to protect him from Voldemort or other dangers. Thus, Dumbledore's love for Harry has not protected him or shielded him from anything; it has only kept him from the truth. "This is not to say that Dumbledore wishes to cause Harry pain, or that he is eager for a pre-teen to engage in mortal battle with the most evil wizard of all time. Dumbledore is clearly fond of Harry and has formed a protective attachment to him" (Willson-Metzger 295). Certainly, it would be wrong and even ignorant to claim that Dumbledore was not fond of Harry, because he is. Further, Dumbledore genuinely believes that he has helped Harry and shielded him, or rather he believed that when he withheld information. Thus, so far I agree with Willson-Metzger, however, I believe that Dumbledore had another motive. All the time while Harry has been kept in the dark, he has not been alone. Dumbledore has watched him and let Harry test his own strengths, as he often did. This may also have been a very smart and calculated decision, because if Dumbledore would have told him right away, as a little child, perhaps Harry would have run the opposite way. If Dumbledore had told him to and forced Harry into a certain role, the role of chosen one and not let Harry seemingly choose it by himself. There is no certainty that Harry would have selected to fight Voldemort and choose the right instead of the easy. It was in Dumbledore's best interest not to tell Harry, not until he was ready.

Fate and free will are important themes in the series, and especially in terms of the prophecy. The two seem to intertwine, but also stand in opposition. Charlotte M. Fouque introduces the notion of determinism, "Every event has a cause" (74) is the basic definition she says. However, there are several different opinions on how to define determinism because there are those that are more radical than others. Further, Julia Pond refers to Nietzsche's contradictory (contradictory because he seems to disagree with himself on whether or not free will is possible) definition that "free will is attainable within the limits of personal fate" (196). Thus, it seems that both, fate and free will, are possible, but again this is, as Nietzsche states, contradictory. That is exactly what can be said for the two terms in the *Harry Potter* series as well. Fouque argues that the first sign of deterministic view in the series is the Sorting Hat

“which is essentially an instrument of fate” because it is “effectively sealing their destinies” (74). More convincing is it then when Harry is able to choose for himself where to be sorted, and as, Julia Pond points out, if this is because Harry is special or if everyone is able to do the same, is never answered (189). This is an example of the ambiguity, or tension as Pond calls it, between fate and free will in the series and it continues throughout.

Harry is only seemingly afforded the decision to choose what is right. The prophecy binds Voldemort and Harry together, and once he found out about it, the choice had already been made for him. Dumbledore knows this; he knows that Harry would never have forsaken his duties once he learned about them. Dumbledore encourages Harry to choose from free will, but really, because of the prophecy, it is fate. It might seem that Dumbledore has waited for the right time to tell Harry the truth, the time when Harry would be ready to make the right decision. But also when Harry has learned enough about good and evil and has been imprinted with Dumbledore’s idea of good morals and the notion of doing the right thing. When Dumbledore finally presents Harry with his fate, he is sure that Harry will embrace that fate, and that is essential.

The question of fate or free will becomes even more important in the last books of the series. In *HBP* Harry learns of the Horcruxes that Voldemort has created to ensure his immortality, therefore, because of the prophecy, hunting Horcruxes is also part of his destiny. In *HBP* Dumbledore shows Harry different memories that enlighten Voldemort’s past, what he did before becoming Lord Voldemort, and how he learned about horcruxes. Dumbledore gives Harry a task, his first task; a test. Harry is sent out to collect the full and real memory of Professor Slughorn from the Professor himself. Harry eventually succeeds. If Harry is successful in collecting this memory, he knows what has to be done in the search for more Horcruxes. Furthermore, this last memory effectively confirms the quest Harry must take; it seals the quest to his fate. Harry is allowed to accompany Dumbledore to find and hopefully destroy a Horcrux, which is a huge surprise to Harry, he was sure that Dumbledore would say no. Harry has not yet fully understood that this is in fact his quest, not Dumbledore’s. Dumbledore is merely introducing it to Harry, without ever saying that it would become Harry’s responsibility.

(...) can I come with you and help get rid of it?” [Harry asks] “Yes, I think so” [Dumbledore responds] “Harry felt his heart lift. It was very good not to hear words of caution and protection for once. The headmasters and headmistresses around the walls seemed less impressed by Dumbledore’s decision; Harry saw a few of them shaking their heads (...) (*OotP* 474).

The other adults surrounding them do not approve of Dumbledore's decision. This is perhaps not very odd. Dumbledore has agreed to take Harry along with him on a journey which can be both dangerous and ability-wise far above Harry's skills. However, what the previous leaders of the school and Harry do not know is that this journey is as essential as Harry collecting the memory from Slughorn. This is essential for what is to come, because Dumbledore knows that he is going to die, very soon, and therefore Harry must continue the quest alone. It is therefore imperative that Dumbledore provides Harry with as much information as he possibly can. This is also the reason why Dumbledore has suddenly decided that he will give Harry private lessons. In these lessons Harry learn more about Voldemort than he ever had. Dumbledore's actions are always perfectly timed. He waited to give Harry the prophecy until Voldemort had returned and become a more "real" treat and something concrete to defeat, not a shadow or a memory. Dumbledore is more than ever very insistent on Harry to understand, and understand correctly.

Dumbledore again proclaims that Harry has a choice, that the prophecy does not decide his fate. "(...) you are free to choose your way, quite free to turn your back on the prophecy!" (*HBP* 479). Harry might be free to choose, but at the same time he is not because Voldemort has already made his choice. Voldemort believes the prophecy and will always hunt Harry, therefore it is wrong to state that he has a free choice. It might be correct to say that Harry has a choice, but it is most certainly not free; it is bound by the prophecy and because Voldemort believed it. There was never a question of Harry not embracing his fate, not because of what the prophecy says, but because of what Voldemort did to fulfill it. He killed Harry's parents, and tried to kill him. Regardless of prophecies or Horcruxes Harry's fate is to finish Voldemort, for his parents, for Sirius and Cedric Diggory.

But he understood at last what Dumbledore had been trying to tell him. It was, he thought, the difference between being dragged into the arena to face a battle to the death and walking into the arena with your head held high. Some people, perhaps, would say that there was little to choose between the two, but Dumbledore knew – and so do I, thought Harry, with a rush of fierce pride, and so did my parents – that there was all the difference in the world (*HBP* 479).

This extends the tension between fate and free will, and perhaps it also, in a way, confirms what Nietzsche claimed, that free will is possible within limits, within your personal fate. Harry has a choice, but not really. The difference, it seems, lies in the willingness and the acceptance of your personal fate. When Harry accepts he also makes a free choice and chooses to follow his fate.

2.2 The Evil Boys?

In *DH* Harry begins his long journey, but not in solitude because Ron and Hermione come with him. They must find and destroy Horcruxes, this proves to be as expected a dangerous and difficult task, but instead Harry finds something quite different; namely, the Hallows: the cloak, the wand and the stone. He gives up hunting for Horcruxes, and escapes into his own mind for solitude and the obsession with them. (this will be discussed in greater detail in chapter three.) Harry separates himself from Hermione and Ron, now purposely, previously he has only done this perhaps unknowingly. In *OotP* Harry also seeks solitude, because he is experiencing a change in himself, a change he does not understand. He feels lonely, and that nobody can understand him. He becomes very angry, and is filled with emotions that are not his own. Voldemort is entering his mind, or rather sharing his thoughts with Harry without him knowing it. Harry is becoming Voldemort or rather Tom Riddle. Voldemort also finds out about this connection, and he uses it to lure Harry to the Department of Magic on false pretenses. This similarity is more evident in *HBP* when Harry learns more about Tom Riddle's past and Harry draws on the similarities between them. "Hogwarts was where he [Tom Riddle] had been happiest; the first and only place he had felt at home. Harry felt slightly uncomfortable at these words, for this was exactly how he felt about Hogwarts, too" (*HBP* 404).

Harry is becoming painfully aware of their similarities. Holly Blackford states, "this discomfort suggests not only Harry's uneasiness at the psychic similarity between him and Tom, but also—more subtly—his anxiety that early conditioning, rather than free choice, might lead him into darkness as well" (162). Harry's anxiety is not unfounded because in the private lessons he has had with Dumbledore, he, Dumbledore, focused on Tom's early proclivity to evil: his treatment of other children at the orphanage, his tendency to hoarding and stealing trophies, and Dumbledore even brings up his relatives and Tom's mother. Dumbledore underlines Tom Riddle's past and background when explaining Voldemort's present. This, as Blackford states, becomes very ironic. That Dumbledore "reads Tom's path as the unfolding of a flawed nature" (163). Because according to Dumbledore, "it is our choices, Harry, that show what we really are, far more than our abilities" (*CoS* 333). This would mean that it is our choices that define us, not our nature, background or environment,

why then is Dumbledore blaming Riddle's nature as the reason for his evilness? Perhaps, Dumbledore is trying to deflect blame from himself. Dumbledore admits to Harry that he was worried about what Tom might become at their first meeting, although he, naturally, had no idea that he would become Lord Voldemort. Dumbledore saw traits in Tom Riddle that worried him, why, then, did not Dumbledore take more interest in Tom's education? Could he not have encouraged Tom to make the good choices, as he has done with Harry? Dumbledore may have learned something from his blunder with Tom Riddle, although it is entirely wrong to blame Dumbledore for the existence of Voldemort, however his special interest in Harry, ensuring his future and place in the world can be read as a means of correcting a wrong. He is not about to make the same mistake twice. Further, Harry holds a very special place in the wizarding world, and it is pivotal that Dumbledore take an interest in Harry, not only because he wants to.

Thus, throughout the series, Harry finds that his similarities to Tom Riddle are striking. They can both speak parseltongue, they are both orphans, they have the same core in their wand, neither of them has a real home besides Hogwarts, they both value objects and attach themselves to them and they are both good at manipulation. The death of Tom Riddle's mother seems to bring forth some sympathy in Harry. "She wouldn't even stay alive for her son? [Harry asks] Dumbledore raised his eyebrows. Could you possibly be feeling sorry for Lord Voldemort? No, said Harry quickly, but she had a choice didn't she, not like my mother—" (*HBP* 246). Harry continues to draw similarities between them, and perhaps the death of Merope, Tom's mother, really touched him. Harry has a very strong image of what a mother should be and do, because Lily sacrificed herself for her son. Furthermore, the other mother figure in his life, Molly Weasley, would have done exactly the same for her children, perhaps even to save Harry. Therefore, what Merope did and how she simply chose death instead of her son weakens or rather threatens his glorified mother image and results in him not being able to understand or accept her choice. Therefore, it seems as though Harry's reaction does not come from sympathy, but that it is rather a reaction to what Merope did, or did not do, as a mother.

Does this mean that Harry is evil? Or rather, that Harry could have good reason to become evil? He has the same background and environment as Tom Riddle, and according to Dumbledore that is what destined him to become evil. So why then, is not Harry evil? Again, the answer is love. Yes, Harry can love and therefore he could never become evil. Furthermore, Harry's tragic start in life is Voldemort's doing. Their similarities are created by

Voldemort himself. When Voldemort fulfilled the prophecy he did not merely mark Harry as his equal, but also as his twin and complete opposite. Tom Riddle's story is sad and horrible, but it is a result of poor circumstances, while Harry's sad and horrible story is a result of evil. Lykke. H. A Guanio-Uluru introduces an interesting idea in her Ph.D thesis, "Voldemort's own mother died giving birth to him – has this sacrifice protected Voldemort?" (304). As Guanio-Uluru rightly states, this question is not explored in the text, and the reason is perhaps that the two situations cannot be compared. Voldemort's mother did not sacrifice herself to give her son life, she simply gave up and died because of that. Merope could have loved Voldemort and tried everything to stay alive for him, but she had given up long before she gave him life. If anything, perhaps, Merope's death has only filled Voldemort with more hatred and made even more of a stranger to love. Perhaps, the implied author meant for these two situations to be in complete contrast to each other, only to separate Harry and Voldemort even more.

2.3 The Road to the Forbidden Forest

In *DH* Harry, Ron and Hermione set out on the quest to find and destroy Horcruxes, as Albus Dumbledore instructed them to do. The problem is, seeing as Dumbledore died an untimely death, they have no idea where to start. Dumbledore did not even inform Harry how to destroy them, but thanks to Hermione's wit, they find out everything they need to know about how to be rid of them. Dumbledore told Harry that it is likely that Voldemort has made his Horcruxes of valuable objects, specifically those objects that belonged to the four founders of Hogwarts. On this journey, Harry is sidetracked several times, he begins doubting his mission because he finds out truths about Albus Dumbledore, this will be dealt with later in this thesis. Furthermore, Harry is consumed by the thoughts of Hallows, rather than finding Horcruxes. His obsession with Hallows leads to a stand-still in their quest because Harry, the leader, is not equally engaged in the hunt anymore. This results in them not being able to do anything, finding neither Horcrux nor Hallows. Harry has gone into some sort of hiatus, in solitude, and stays there until they are captured and once more manage to escape. Chapter twenty-four in *DH*, "The Wandmaker", is an essential chapter in this novel. Dobby has just been killed by Bellatrix Lestrange, his last act was to save Harry and his friends from captivity. This event is what brings Harry back to life and reality. "Hallows ... Horcruxes ... Hallows ... Horcruxes

... yet he no longer burned with that weird, obsessive longing. Loss and fear had snuffed it out: he felt as though he had been slapped awake again” (*DH* 387). Moreover, Dobby’s death has not only given him fresh perspective, but also a greater understanding. Harry finally masters his own mind, something Dumbledore, through Snape, has been trying to teach him for two years.

His scar burned, but he was master of the pain: he felt it, yet was apart from it. He had learned control at last, learned to shut his mind to Voldemort. (...) Just as Voldemort had not been able to possess Harry while Harry was consumed with grief for Sirius, so his thoughts could not penetrate Harry now, while he mourned Dobby. Greif, it seemed, drove Voldemort out ... though Dumbledore, of course, would have said that it was love ... (*DH* 387).

Harry finally learns Occlumency and he is stronger with that knowledge. Love is always the answer, and Harry does not fully understand how powerful love is, he is constantly underestimating love and in a way everything Dumbledore has told him. The reason why Harry does not understand that love is an important weapon is because it lies in his nature, Harry loves and cares, therefore it does not seem like anything special. However, love is so much more. Love is trust, courage, strength and love is a virtue. In this chapter love helps Harry make the right decision, to choose Horcruxes over Hallows. This new understanding of trust makes him trust himself as well as Dumbledore, again. He finds the courage to listen to his heart instead of his mind. It helps him find new inner strength and master his own mind and also Voldemort’s. Harry accepted his fate in *OotP*, he understood more about his fate in *HBP*, but this was with the help and directions from Dumbledore. Now, in chapter twenty-four, he takes the final pivotal step, and most importantly, he does it alone. Harry made his decision to try to end Voldemort several years ago, but now he is fully convinced.

Furthermore, it might seem as though Harry has made a discovery, “Harry seems to have come to the realisation that doubt will not get him any further” (Guanio-Uluru 322). Doubting Dumbledore and doubting himself will not help him end Voldemort, and it will certainly not help him find more Horcruxes. This resolve is powerful, and he does not waver from it again, although he is tested. This happens when they are talking to Dumbledore’s brother Aberforth. Aberforth is naming all the doubts Harry has had during this difficult year, and he is keeping it to himself, although he knows that Aberforth also knows. This decision is final, even though Aberforth is confirming every doubt that has gone through his mind.

This is really an impossible quest for the three nearly under-age wizards. However, they manage to find Horcruxes as the novel develops. This quest brings them back once more

to Hogwarts, where one Horcrux resides. For this quest to function it is of the utmost importance that it is continued in secrecy. It is essential that Voldemort does not find out what the trio is trying to do. But, inevitably, Voldemort finds out before they have had the chance to destroy all the Horcruxes, not counting his snake, Nagini. When Voldemort finds out that they are hunting Horcruxes, he shares with Harry, through his mind, where the last hiding place is, it is at Hogwarts. There they meet all of their school friends, all fighting Snape and the Carrows, driven into isolation in the Room of Requirement. They are jubilant when Harry returns home, and they want to help him, but Harry is reluctant to agree to their offer; “You don’t have to do everything alone, Harry. [Hermione argues] (...) Dumbledore had warned him against telling anyone but Ron and Hermione about the Horcruxes. (...) Was he turning into Dumbledore, keeping his secrets clutched to his chest, afraid to trust?” (DH 469). With these thoughts Harry decides to let his friends help him. He separates himself from Dumbledore, and also Voldemort. Voldemort has never trusted anyone but himself, and neither has Dumbledore, at least to an extent. He has always kept most of his secrets to himself, sharing fragments with Harry, Snape and the Order. Harry is slowly becoming his own person, he is more independent. Harry trusts his own decisions rather than the directions that Dumbledore left him. Harry is now fighting Voldemort alone, without the help of Dumbledore because he is dead, and it takes a while until Harry realises this. Dumbledore cannot help him any longer; he must do what he thinks is best.

The battle for Hogwarts begins, the inhabitants at school are fighting and Snape flees. Harry, Ron and Hermione find the last Horcrux and destroy both the diadem and Hufflepuff’s cup, now only the snake, Nagini, remains. They go to find it, but instead they witness Voldemort killing Snape. At his dying breath, Snape hands Harry a memory. Snape’s memory reveals the full secret, and confirms Harry’s biggest fear and worry; “So the boy ... the boy must die? [Snape asks] And Voldemort himself must do it, Severus. That is essential [Dumbledore answers]” (DH 551).

We have protected him because it has been essential to teach him, to raise him, to let him try his strength, said Dumbledore (...) If I know him, he will have arranged matter so that when he does set out to meet his death it will, truly, mean the end of Voldemort. Snape looked horrified; you have kept him alive so that he can die at the right moment? (DH 551).

Holly Blackford notes, “(...) Harry worries that Dumbledore may have groomed Harry to die for the purpose of defeating the Dark Lord” (163). Harry is the last Horcrux, the final and greatest secret that Dumbledore has not shared with Harry. Harry must die in order for

Voldemort to die, “neither would live, neither could survive” (*DH* 554). Dumbledore has groomed Harry from their first meeting to die. He has raised Harry in the right manner so that he would be ready to make this sacrifice, and there is no doubt that Harry will do it.

“Dumbledore knew, as Voldemort knew, that Harry would not let anyone else die for him now that he had discovered it was in his power to stop it” (*DH* 555). Many times throughout the series Harry believes that he is finally given the truth, the whole truth. However, Dumbledore manages to keep the truth from him, even in death. Several times Harry has come to terms with what he believed to be reality, as it has been given, the prophecy, the seemingly free choice of fighting Voldemort, and, now, finally, death. This is Harry’s ultimate fate and it has all led up to this point, throwing life away and his keen instinct to survive to find a new kind of strength and courage. This process is most difficult for Harry, to choose to die, because it goes against everything he believes to be true. This final act of Harry Potter is the most unfathomable and impressive of all.

However, Harry does not die, he awakes in a limbo-like King’s Cross Station, and Dumbledore is there to welcome him. Harry learns why he survived when, indeed, Voldemort did kill him. Furthermore, the Dumbledore Harry meets in this mysterious place is different. He is smiling, good-humored and patient. He explains and he listens to Harry. Jonathan and Jerry L. Walls state “(...) we might say that in death we will fully become who we were in the process of becoming, and now we must live with our chosen selves forever” (253). Thus, Dumbledore has changed after death, or rather he has become the person he, in a way, wanted to be, and in death he is his true self. Jonathan and Jerry L. Walls continue to say “Dumbledore was imperfect, but showed remorse for his mistakes and was freed from their harmful effects” (253). He has shown remorse and received penance; he is finally at peace and has come to terms with his life and his actions. This mysterious place has the same function for Harry. He is now whole, his full self. His soul is no longer a safe harbor for Voldemort’s parasitic soul, Harry’s soul is now his own. Harry and Dumbledore must live with their “chosen selves forever”, Harry in returning to life and ending Voldemort and Dumbledore in death at peace. Furthermore, Harry does not only receive a complete soul, he also gains more wisdom. At limbo-King’s Cross Station Harry finds answers as though they were already there. He learns why Voldemort is doomed and destined to die, it is because he cannot understand or feel remorse. Voldemort is beyond help, he can never be at peace because he can never come to terms with or accept death as both Harry and Dumbledore have done.

2.4 The Common Good vs. the Greater Good

Dumbledore had in his teens a brief and unhealthy love affair with power. He meets Gellert Grindelwald when he is forced to stay at home with his younger siblings after their mother's death. Grindelwald was an evil person, and resented muggles for forcing wizards into hiding. He wanted to take control over the muggles for their own greater good so that he could be the leader of both the muggle world and the wizarding world. Albus Dumbledore was infatuated with this idea and wanted to help Grindelwald on his quest. Albus wanted to work for the greater good, something he later claims he no longer believes, but is this really true?

Michael W. Austin asks “what’s the difference between the greater good and the common good? This is a difficult question, as sometimes the phrases are used interchangeably” (264). Thus, the distinction is ambiguous. J.K Rowling focuses solely on the greater good in her series, making Grindelwald and Voldemort champions for the greater good, but also Dumbledore. Even Harry is contemplating this notion. “Sometimes you’ve *got* to think about more than your own safety! Sometimes you’ve *got* to think about the greater good! This is war!” (*DH* 458). However, this exclamation is perhaps forced and even false because it comes as a response to the negative attitude of Aberforth, and his condemnation of his brother (Dumbledore) in which Harry agrees perhaps too wholeheartedly. And as seen earlier, Harry realises that doubt cannot take him further. He is perhaps accepting Dumbledore’s actions, but also his own resolve. Therefore, this exclamation is a way of convincing himself that he did the right thing, as well as convincing the others. There is further evidence that Harry really does not believe in the “greater good” when he purposely lies to the goblin Griphook as to when he will get the sword of Gryffindor. He does not like to make this promise to Griphook, and he does not like tricking him, but he does it. Harry does it with apprehension, and is disgusted with himself over his actions. Thus, Harry Potter does not believe in the greater good, not completely at least.

Austin continues to try to make the distinction between the greater good and the common good, “the harm that is inflicted on innocent people is supposed to be justified because of the good of the majority” (264). This is the greater good, whereas the common good, Austin states “sacrifices are made for the good of *all*” (264). Furthermore, the

Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary offers an additional definition “If something is done for the common good it is done to help everyone” (246). Thus, one can clearly see how these can be used interchangeably, because the only difference is really between the majority of the people and everyone, i.e all the people in the world. Further, the definition of the greater good is the only one that says anything about harm, that is, to achieve something for the greater good, someone must suffer because of it. Cf. Grindelwald and Dumbledore want to take control over muggles for their own good, most likely, the muggles will suffer. They would likely have started a war, as Grindelwald also did. Now the world is once again immersed in a war and war is always for the greater good. In light of war, Guanio-Uluru says that Harry's former exclamation can be read differently, “it implies looking further than one's personal safety in order to stand up for important values” (91). Nonetheless, this does not mean that Harry believes in the greater good, it simply means that he understands that in war someone must suffer before the war ends, there are always victims.

As mentioned, Harry is in the midst of war. Both wizards and muggles are suffering from Voldemort's return, so it would definitely benefit everyone, if Voldemort was dead. Thus, the end of Voldemort would be for the common good. When Harry chooses to return from limbo-King's Cross Station, “there is a chance that he may be finished for good” (578) and Harry does this for the common good. There will, hopefully, be no more deaths because he will finish Voldemort. It can therefore be claimed that Harry is a champion for the common good. Harry also sacrifices himself for the common good, he is prepared to die for the sake of others, wizards and muggles.

This leaves the notion of greater good which, according to Austin, benefits the majority. This idea resembles those of consequentialism, “One who assesses the rightness or wrongness of actions in terms of value of their consequences” (McNaughton in Willson-Metzger 294). Guanio-Uluru refers to a somewhat easier explanation “the ends justify the means” (91). “For the greater good” was, as mentioned, the slogan made up by Dumbledore and later used by Grindelwald in his terrible campaign. Moreover, can it be claimed that Dumbledore had this ideology even though he said otherwise? Thus far, we have seen that Dumbledore is a master at information concealment, Albus Dumbledore withholds the prophecy from Harry and he claims that he does it out of love. He speaks of free will, morality and courage when it all really has been up to fate. He introduces Harry to the Horcruxes and how to possibly end Voldemort by making him a mere mortal again. He gives Harry a way of fighting Voldemort without, until the right time, participating in the war. And

then, finally, Dumbledore sacrifices Harry for the greater good. The ends justify the means because Voldemort dies, it serves the majority. Everything Albus Dumbledore does is for the greater good. “What did I care if numbers of nameless and faceless people and creatures were slaughtered in the near future, if in the here and now you were alive, well and happy? [Dumbledore says]” (*OotP* 739). Dumbledore does not care about how many that might or might not die, as long as, he claims, Harry is happy. It is key that Harry is happy, because if he was not, Dumbledore’s grooming might go terribly wrong.

One might argue that Dumbledore never really sacrifices Harry, because Harry survives and Dumbledore guessed the outcome, but Dumbledore is not entirely sure. Either way, Harry’s death in the forest is a result of Dumbledore’s grooming. Luckily, Harry does not die, and Dumbledore’s guess was good, but still Dumbledore has made sure that Harry is ready to allow Voldemort to kill him. Dumbledore is prepared for Harry to believe that he is going to die, and that is in itself a kind of sacrifice. Simply because Harry has to come to terms with the idea of dying, he must sacrifice a part of himself in order to go into the forest. The belief that you are going to die is in this case as terrible as actually dying. Dumbledore might use Harry as a tool, but according to Austin, Dumbledore also, in a way, sacrifices himself for the common good. Austin claims “Dumbledore is more concerned with defeating the Dark Lord and his allies than preserving his own life, because he believes that this is what will be best for all” (266). Did Dumbledore really sacrifice himself for the common good? Dumbledore was dying regardless of what any Death Eater would have done, because of the curse left by Voldemort on his Horcrux-ring. Thus, death was inevitable for Dumbledore, and he chose his own death. Furthermore, Maria Nikolajeva goes further in her critique of Dumbledore claiming that “his glorious staged death is nothing other than an old frightened man’s escape from imminent and agonizing decay” (Nikolajeva 199). This means that Dumbledore did not, as Austin claims, sacrifice himself for the greater good. Dumbledore died a coward while doing what he has encouraged Harry not to do: choosing the easy way instead of the right way. Dumbledore’s death was for his own good.

The main difference between Dumbledore and Harry, because they do want exactly the same thing, is in the manner of achieving the result. They both want to end Voldemort, and certainly they are doing the world a favour. However, “The problem – and the difference – is that whereas Harry sacrifices *himself*, Dumbledore is prepared to sacrifice *another* ‘for the greater good’ “ (Guanio-Uluru 91).

3 Chapter three: The Secrets and Lies of Albus Dumbledore

This chapter is, as the title reveals, about Albus Dumbledore and his secrets. It is divided into three subtitles. Firstly, “The Half-Blood Prince” is about the character Severus Snape, his relationship to Harry Potter and Albus Dumbledore, his position in the wizarding world and in the series, and also his ambiguity. I have decided to open this chapter with a part about Severus Snape, although the chapter is about Dumbledore, because Severus Snape is Dumbledore’s greatest secret. Then follows a part I have called “Power”. This is about Albus Dumbledore and his troublesome relationship to power. The third part is called, “Hallows, not Horcruxes”. This is about the most important theme in the series, namely death or immortality vs mortality. This is based on the last installment in the series, *DH*. I will round off this chapter with a part I have simply named love. This is about the position love has in the series, and Albus Dumbledore as influencing the meaning of love in the series.

3.1 The Half-Blood Prince

The implied reader is preconditioned to dislike Professor Snape, because of the way he is presented. Firstly, he is described in a very unflattering way, focusing on his somewhat unfortunate appearance. “(...) greasy black hair, a hooked nose and sallow skin” (*PS* 94). This makes Snape sound as a stereotypical villain simply by appearance. Secondly, Percy Weasley is kind enough to immediately connect Snape with the Dark Arts, and also that he wants the Defense Against Dark Arts job although Dumbledore refuses to give it to him. Thirdly, when he starts teaching Potions to Harry, an unfounded dislike towards a boy he hardly knows becomes evident. Thus, during the first few chapters of *PS* we are convinced that Snape is a rotten egg. This does not change because he continues to treat Harry and his friends crudely, and because Harry is constantly blaming him for everything and anything evil happening at Hogwarts and he is proven wrong each time. Snape is Harry’s scapegoat, someone he can hate without really having a good reason to, someone he can blame when something bad happens, and perhaps also a substitute and a symbol of the evil of Voldemort. Voldemort is, in a way, an abstract threat, before he returns of course. Harry cannot spy, suspect or even

prove anything that Voldemort does, he can, however, spy, suspect and try to prove what Snape is doing. Snape is Voldemort at Hogwarts and this connection is easy to make because of his affiliation with Voldemort and Death Eaters. After Voldemort's return, Harry is no longer as focused on what Snape does, or rather he does not childishly blame Snape for everything anymore. Nevertheless, Harry's dislike and suspicion does not lessen towards Snape, but he has perhaps learned that Snape is not always at fault, rather that he is seldom to blame at all. Furthermore, Snape is something that he has in common with his mother and father as well as Sirius and Lupin. They all know or knew him, and what Harry knows about that is that his father and Snape disliked each other. Thus, by disliking Snape Harry can carry out his father legacy, so to speak. He can strengthen their bond, this is further underscored by Sirius who seems to be under the same impression.

Maria Nikolajeva notes that Snape is a very interesting character in terms of plot and narrative: "every action performed by Snape is a bifurcation point after which at least two possibilities for further development open" (196). She continues, "The implied reader is encouraged to interact with the text, shifting between anticipation and retrospect as new facts are added and revealed" (196). This means that everything Snape does is ambiguous. Harry is convinced that Snape is evil, however Snape's actions say something completely different. As the narrative moves, Snape's difficult past with James, Lupin and Sirius is introduced. This seems to evoke a form of sympathy for Snape, which also can result in further confusion in terms of his role in the narrative. Alicia Willson-Metzger claims that Dumbledore is a very ambiguous character, this will be discussed later, however, perhaps no character is more ambiguous than Severus Snape. There is no way of knowing who he really is, because he is mostly unkind but his actions do not always match that. An excellent example of his ambiguity is when he, in *PoA*, sees to it that Lupin receives a perfectly brewed Wolfsbane potion to prevent him from turning into a werewolf, but also exposes him to everyone as a werewolf. In fairness, it is done in a very sophisticated way so that the majority do not understand.

Furthermore, in *OotP* when Harry tells Snape in code that (Harry believes) Voldemort has captured Sirius, Snape pretends not to understand, but at the same time he alerts Sirius (and also encourages him to go help Harry, and perhaps indirectly causes Sirius's death, which of course enables Harry to dislike him even more) and tries to search for Harry in the Forbidden Forest. Severus Snape manages to be the good helper and the villain, at the same time. "Dumbledore trusts Snape, but keeps forgetting, or deliberately ignores, his old grudge

against Harry's father, [and by extension Lupin and Sirius] which every now and then surfaces in Snape's mind, affecting his actions" (Nikolajeva 197). This is shown by the two examples presented above. Snape knows that Sirius would never stay at home when he knew that Harry was in danger, and he also outs Lupin when he finally has found a place where he can belong.

Albus Dumbledore's greatest secret is Severus Snape. He is Dumbledore's undercover agent, and agrees to this when and if Voldemort ever was to return. It is also the one secret that is perhaps most important to keep safe. If Voldemort had found out Snape's life would be in grave danger, but it would also mean that Snape's cover would be lost. Snape is essential to Dumbledore's plan, especially when Dumbledore's life is coming to an end. He needs Snape alive, Snape becomes his physical body when he has lost his own, and it enables him to pull the strings, so to speak, even when he is dead. The relationship between Dumbledore and Snape which is revealed in *DH* is in fact a bit of a surprise. It was perhaps, throughout the series, implied that Dumbledore and Snape have some sort of relationship because Dumbledore trusted him and vouched for him. However, Snape seems to be under the impression that Dumbledore does not trust him, enough, "You trust him ... You do not trust me" [Snape says] (*DH* 549). Snape does not really have a reason to complain as much, because Dumbledore's master plan all depends on him, therefore, Dumbledore does trust Snape. Firstly, as mentioned in the previous chapter, Dumbledore depends on Snape to kill him. Secondly, he depends on Snape to keep an eye on Hogwarts and its students. Thirdly, he depends on Snape to give Harry the final pivotal information and by extension for him to stay alive. Dumbledore also trusts Snape in matters of the Dark Arts, when injured he seeks the help of Snape. Dumbledore trusts Snape as a tool, as a person who will execute the job he has set, but he does not trust him enough to tell him any secrets or the real motivation behind what he is asking him to do. Snape may not have been Dumbledore's closest confidant, but neither was Harry. Dumbledore's closest confidant is Dumbledore.

Snape becomes Dumbledore's undercover agent because of the prophecy and because Voldemort decided to act on it. Severus Snape was a Death Eater at this time and Voldemort, his Dark Lord chose to murder his greatest love. That is when he agreed to help Dumbledore by becoming an undercover agent and keeping Harry safe when and if Voldemort was to return, though reluctantly, at best. Snape does this because of his love for Harry's mother, Lily, and not because he cares that Harry is happy or has a good life. However, as mentioned in the previous chapter, Snape does react to Dumbledore's cold sacrifice of Harry. Willson-

Metzger notes “Ironically, Snape, hated by many, misunderstood by most, is seemingly the most concerned for Harry’s wellbeing” (299). Snape is the one who has saved Harry’s life numerous times, he is the one who agreed to live in danger and sacrifice himself for Lily’s son to survive. And he does this, as I stated, not because he loves and cares for Harry, but because he is honouring his promise and also his love for Lily. Therefore it becomes, as Willson-Metzger says, very ironic that the one person who most wishes for him to survive is the same person who has no regard for him at all and perhaps even hates him.

Moreover, Lily Potter is the best part of both Harry and Snape, it is the love for her that saves them. It is this love that enables them to become heroes instead of villains. However, as Catherine Jack Deavel and David Paul Deavel suggest, “Snape’s romantic love for Lily is tainted with selfishness at first, but his love deepens as he accepts the role Dumbledore proposes” (59). Love saves Snape, and that is why Dumbledore trusts him and that he will stay true to his word to protect Harry from harm. Catherine Jack Deavel and David Paul Deavel suggest that it is love that redeems Severus Snape (57), however I would question if one really can call it a redemption, it is Dumbledore who redeems(saves) Snape as much as it is love. It is Dumbledore who offers him a “second chance”, it is Dumbledore who explains what real love is versus simple selfish desire, “If you loved Lily Evans, if you truly loved her, then your way forward is clear. You know how and why she died. Make sure it was not in vain. Help me protect Lily’s son” (*DH* 544). Furthermore, it is Dumbledore who accepts his first step towards “redemption” when he decides to believe Snape’s remorse and promise. It is also Dumbledore who introduces Snape anew to the community. Dumbledore is vouching for his apparent transformation, that is, from Death Eater to fighting them. Thus, the love Snape has for Lily Potter saves him from pure evil, but it is Dumbledore who, as the almighty, makes it happen.

Furthermore, Snape does not undergo any personal transformation, so this cannot be described as redemption. Snape does not change and he does not become a more likeable character or less unpleasant. He has one redeeming quality and even that one is at best somewhat unbelievable, he *unwillingly* accepts and preforms Dumbledore’s proposal to keep Harry safe. As mentioned several times, Harry and Snape do have several things in common such as their past, love of Lily Potter, and also their relationship with Dumbledore. They are both tools to him, a means to Voldemort’s end. They are both equally important in the war against Voldemort and the dark arts, Harry as the glorified hero, the hero the community wants and Snape as the assistant, perhaps a tragic hero. However, Snape’s life is tragic and he

is a hero but it might not be correct to claim that he is a tragic hero. “A Tragic hero is brought down from height and power, either by fate or by his own fault” (Nikolajeva 201). Thus, in accordance with this definition Snape cannot be called a tragic hero because he was never on top, nor was he brought down. Maria Nikolajeva states that Severus Snape is a hero, the traditional hero found in children’s literature, as Harry also is. “The hero starts at the lowest point in his status and gradually works up towards the top, winning the princess and the kingdom” (Nikolajeva 201). As pointed out in the previous chapter Harry and Snape have a similar background. He was at the bottom most of his adolescent life seeing as he is from a broken family and he becomes a Death Eater after his education is finished. His rehabilitation begins at Hogwarts, and by loving Lily Potter, where he works his way to the top, first as Defense Against Dark Arts teacher and lastly as Headmaster of Hogwarts and winning the kingdom. Snape cannot win the princess, because she is already dead, and he is in a way brought down when Voldemort kills him. However, his death is what enables him to become a hero, or rather truth is out. I would argue that Snape reaches his ultimate top when he is finally accepted and acknowledged by Harry and the community. “he [Snape] was probably the bravest man I[Harry] ever knew”(DH 607).

Nonetheless, Snape’s fate was more unfortunate than Harry’s because he did not survive. He has a perfectly fitting death killed by the ultimate evil, Voldemort’s snake by command. As mentioned in the previous chapter, one can argue that Dumbledore never really sacrifices Harry because he never dies. Snape dies, he is killed. Snape is Dumbledore’s greatest secret but he is also his greatest sacrifice for the greater good. Snape is not sacrificed when he dies, he is sacrificed years prior when Dumbledore forces him to become an undercover agent. At that moment Snape becomes yet another piece in the greater good puzzle. Perhaps it is wrong to claim that Dumbledore forced Snape to become his undercover agent, because Snape did agree to it. However, in reality, Snape had no other choice than to agree. Dumbledore used his greatest weapon, love, against Snape. Dumbledore took advantage of the only thing he could, and presented him with a second chance, an opportunity to work for the greater good. Moreover, Dumbledore (mis)calculated before his death. He wanted his wand to go to Snape and that its power would end with him. Luckily for Harry, this did not happen, not for Snape. Dumbledore admits, “I have been sure that he [Voldemort] would try [to go after the wand]” (DH 577). Thus, Voldemort would have killed Snape no matter what, in order to gain the power of the wand. Dumbledore shows once more that he does not care about the life of others, he only cares about what good can come out of that life.

“By Dumbledore’s design, Snape becomes another sufferer for the greater good” (Nikolajeva 200).

3.2 Power

Dumbledore’s authority is challenged more than once during this series, but it is in *OotP* that it is seriously tested. The Minister of Magic, Cornelius Fudge has reached a new level of paranoia in this book. Fudge has always been worried that Dumbledore would challenge his job as minister, although Dumbledore has never wanted his job. Fudge’s worries are founded in his insecurities, because he knows that the wizarding community would rather have had Dumbledore as Minister of Magic. Why Dumbledore did not take the post has always been a mystery, but the mystery is resolved in *DH*, “I had learned that I was not to be trusted with power” (575). Dumbledore did not dare to take the post of Minister of Magic because he fears power. Power is Dumbledore’s biggest weakness, according to Dumbledore himself.

In contrast, Snape seems to think that Dumbledore’s greatest weakness is “that he has to believe the best in people” (*HBP* 36). This claim is further supported by Peter Ciaccio who says that “Albus Dumbledore tends to see the good in everyone” (44). This is clearly shown through him being able to give people second chances, or giving them the benefit of the doubt. He gives Snape a second chance, and although he seems to regard Dumbledore’s weakness as a flaw, I am not entirely sure that he means it. Snape must be thankful for the chance he is given, and therefore I believe that Snape in a way also admires Dumbledore for this ability because he perhaps wishes that more people had this conviction. Likewise, Dumbledore has given second chances to other characters in the series, for instance, Hagrid, Lupin and Sirius, to name a few. The reason for this is perhaps that Dumbledore himself has been given a second chance and he perhaps feels obligated to return the courtesy. Snape may count this as a weakness, but this is actually strength in Dumbledore’s personality. It is a very attractive quality because he is never naïve about it. This is also one of the qualities that is highly appreciated by the community and in effect one of the reasons why he is counted as a moral leader.

Therefore, because of the temptation of power and his conviction that he could not handle it, Dumbledore settled in at Hogwarts as a teacher, then later as the headmaster. However, Dumbledore may not have a position that entails power equal to a ministerial post,

but, still, Dumbledore has enormous power and influence. Furthermore, he is the leader of the Order of the Phoenix, the organised anti-Voldemort movement and he is member of the Wizengamot. Therefore, paradoxically, as it might seem, Dumbledore, who fears power more than anything, actually is one of the most powerful wizards ever. It was he who was sent to defeat Grindelwald, it is he who must lead the war against Voldemort. It is Dumbledore who is in charge of the education of most young witches and wizards, and he who controls one of the most traditional institutions in the wizarding world. Thus, Dumbledore may have feared power, but he has certainly been given it and taken it.

“(…) almost all adults with which Harry comes into contact appeal to Dumbledore as their leader and head. Even Voldemort measures himself primarily against Dumbledore” (Guanio-Uluru 332). As mentioned, he is the leader of the Order, and he is the headmaster of Hogwarts and this does certainly mean that he has power. However, as Guanio-Uluru points out, it also means that he is the leader and head. The members of the Order are certainly highly capable wizards and witches, but Dumbledore is still their natural leader. At Hogwarts he is several times congratulated as “the greatest headmaster Hogwarts ever had” (*PS* 48) and “You were the best – [teacher]” (*DH* 575), which is, from a pedagogical view, a parody. (I will not go further into that discussion in this thesis.) Dumbledore is the leader of much better teachers and they must report to him, e.g MacGonagall who is a very authoritative woman and enjoys and also deserves the outmost respect from students and colleagues, must report to him as her a leader. As Guanio-Uluru points out even Voldemort considers Dumbledore as the one to beat, the one he takes pride in defeating, cf. Mexican-stand-off between Voldemort and Harry in *DH*. This makes Dumbledore the ultimate authority figure in the series, no one even comes close and one would be a fool to try.

Moreover, Dumbledore is not only the organisational leader, he is also the moral leader. He decides the difference between good and evil, and he is leading by example, or so it seems. Dumbledore is a false moral leader because he has not been truthful about his past. Dumbledore is perhaps correct in making the distinctions between good and evil, nevertheless, he is not believable when exposed. However, what Dumbledore does not understand, and perhaps what the implied author is trying to say, is that it is not necessarily his actions that condemn him, but the fact that he is not truthful. If he had been honest about his past, he would perhaps be celebrated for his bravery. In other words, the reason why it is so very wrong to count Dumbledore as a moral leader is because he is constantly doing the complete opposite of what he preaches.

This gives the impression that Dumbledore is a person who picks and chooses when it comes to power, or in other words, what and who it will benefit. Moreover, when Dumbledore refused to take the ministerial post, he effectively refused an active place in politics, but that does not mean that he stays away completely. Hogwarts is a safe haven for Dumbledore, a place where he has power but remains in control of himself, "I was safer at Hogwarts" (*DH* 575). He chooses a place where he is safe, but also a place where he still has influence and a place he cannot be forgotten. He is very much involved with the ministry, even though he does not work there. No one would question Dumbledore's right to be at the ministry. Even though Dumbledore refused the ministerial post this does not mean that he could have taken an unimportant job, like his brother Aberforth. Dumbledore is still ambitious and self-centered, therefore Hogwarts is perfect. The perfect place to monitor what happened at the Ministry without being minister.

As mentioned, in *OotP* Dumbledore's authority at Hogwarts is challenged by Fudge when he places Dolores Umbridge in a teaching position at Hogwarts. Fudge sees to it that she gains more control as the school year advances and at the same time Dumbledore's power is diminishing. Moreover, as Umbridge gains more control, the students at Hogwarts suffer. Medieval punishment techniques are used, they are not allowed to use magic and she dissolves all types of after-school social activities. While Umbridge is allowed to terrorise Hogwarts, Dumbledore does nothing. "How can Dumbledore let this happen? Hermione cried suddenly" (*OotP* 227). Perhaps Hermione is overestimating Dumbledore's ability to do anything about the situation, however, in previous books the impression made is that Dumbledore can in fact do anything he wants, because he is Dumbledore. He is able to keep the school open a very long time despite the murders that are taking place in *CoS*. Furthermore, he manages to twice save Harry from expulsion, the last time he does it is in *OotP*.

Therefore, the notion of him not being powerful enough to stop Fudge, or at least do something to shield his students from the horrors of Umbridge, is not entirely believable. It is not believable that Dumbledore suddenly became powerless. Dumbledore has chosen not to try to exercise his power against Umbridge and Fudge, he does nothing to stop their control of Hogwarts until Umbridge tries to banish Professor Trelawney from the castle. Then, finally, Dumbledore exercises his authority and power because he cannot afford to let Professor Trelawney leave the castle. She made the prophecy about Harry and Voldemort, therefore it would be far too risky to send her away. Once again Dumbledore picks his battles, and he

picks the ones that are benefitting him and those he can win, and those that benefit the greater good. Furthermore, Dumbledore can achieve more being at Hogwarts, even in his current position with Umbridge and Fudge in control. It would not be beneficial for anyone if Dumbledore should lose his position as headmaster, regardless of Umbridge being in control or not, because that would mean that Dumbledore would not be at Hogwarts at all, he would have to leave. Staying, and not challenging Umbridge is a way of ensuring his place at Hogwarts, for a time, and also to monitor them. However, Dumbledore is forced to leave eventually, or rather manages to escape/outsmart those who try to arrest him. Thus, Dumbledore does not leave Hogwarts until he must.

OotP is the book where he is most absent, absent from Harry and the school. His absence can be assumed to be because of Voldemort's return. Dumbledore is trying to convince the rest of the wizarding community about his return, but the ministry is blocking him. They will not believe that Voldemort has returned, and try to divest Dumbledore of the respect and influence he has by ridiculing him and Harry. However, both Harry and Dumbledore stand their ground and they keep true to their claim. But, as mentioned, Dumbledore is absent in this book, he withdraws himself from Harry. Dumbledore had good reasons for doing so, he was afraid that if Voldemort found out that the two were close, Voldemort would use Harry to get to Dumbledore. On the other hand, he lets Harry stand alone in the fight against all the people who do not believe that Voldemort has returned. Once again, it seems as though Dumbledore, somewhat arrogantly assumes that the wizarding community will believe them simply because he says so, or perhaps he did not expect them not to believe them. Either way, Harry becomes an outcast at school and the community is ridiculing him, and at the same time Harry is withdrawing himself from it all. Harry, certainly, did not expect the community not to believe him. This process helps Harry grow stronger, and he does find courage to speak to the community about what really happened, so that they hopefully will believe him. And it does work, but this is his doing not Dumbledore's. Dumbledore does not give Harry advice, support or comfort him during this time. For a person who claims to have so much love for someone and wants to protect them from further harm, Dumbledore, once again, has a very mysterious way of showing it.

3.3 Hallows, not Horcruxes

Albus Dumbledore is an important character in the series. He is a character that is enormously admired for his mind and his heart. He is the epitome of goodness and kindness. He is fighting for muggles and muggle-borns, as well as treating and understanding house elves better than any wizard. Albus Dumbledore is definitely one of the good ones. However, after his death in *HBP* Rowling does something interesting in the following book, *DH*. Rowling is brutally wrecking Dumbledore's pedestal, and he is suddenly a mere mortal with flaws, like the rest of us. This was necessary because Dumbledore is definitely not as admirable as some might argue. I have always found Dumbledore difficult to completely understand, he was always a confusing character. Furthermore, I have never found Dumbledore as impressive or admirable as the majority might claim. Alicia Willson-Metzger argues that "he [Dumbledore] is also one of the most morally ambiguous characters in the series" (293). She continues to point out that information concealment, as mentioned in chapter two, is in fact Dumbledore's most distinctive personality trait. He never lies, he simply chooses to withhold information, from everyone about everything. In other words, Albus Dumbledore is always lecturing about the importance of trust, but he does not, as mentioned, trust anyone but himself. The most severe blow to Dumbledore's legacy is the revelation of his flirtation with dark wizard Grindelwald, power and death.

Death is a very prominent theme in the series, perhaps one of the most important, especially at the series' conclusion. J.K Rowling stated in an interview with Reuters.com that, "Death obsesses me" (Reuters.com) when asked why it is such a prominent theme in her series. Furthermore, death is what haunts this series from the start. Harry has lost both his parents. They are dead because Voldemort fears death, and Harry is alive because Voldemort fears death. He begins at Hogwarts at eleven years old, and he is, at once, forced to face and fight death in order to keep the Philosopher's stone from Voldemort. The Philosopher's stone is a clear foreshadowing of what will later happen in the series. The Philosopher's Stone does for Nicholas Flamel, what Horcruxes do for Voldemort and also what the Hallows do for Dumbledore, they can all cheat death. The Resurrection Stone is a clear contrast to the Philosopher's Stone, and they both underscore how important death is in this series because they are both a way of not dying. However, the Philosopher's Stone is destroyed, and Nicholas Flamel will eventually die. Consequently, as Guanio-Uluru points out, "he [Flamel] sacrifices himself 'for the greater good' " (243). Therefore, Nicholas Flamel is the first character in the series who tries to prolong life and cheat death, and he does succeed for a while. The implied author makes an example of Nicholas Flamel, those who actively try to

cheat death will never succeed and perhaps that immortality is not something to desire.

The following year, in *CoS*, Harry faces and defeats the first Horcrux. In *PoA*, Harry meets the horrors of the Dementors, and survives their attacks. Finally, in *GoF*, death is once more, directly, present in the series. Voldemort returns and kills Cedrick Diggory. At the end of the fourth book the series changes, it changes to have elements of death in it, to becoming dark with death as its main focus. Death is visible in the series in many different ways through fighting death, being murdered, overcoming and mastering death, and immortality, but also acceptance. In the last three novels in the series *OotP*, *HBP* and *DH*, Harry loses someone dear to him. Furthermore, they are all his father figures Sirius, Albus and Remus. Death, as a paramount theme, reaches a climax in *DH* when Harry is introduced to Dumbledore's past, the Hallows he so intently wanted, the hunt for Voldemort's Horcruxes and finally realising that he, Harry, is one of them.

The Hallows and the Horcuxes are in a way compared and contrasted to each other in the series. They are in reality a means to the same end, but the method is very different. They both secure the holder, in theory, immortality. The Hallows are glorified and more acceptable compared to the Horcruxes. The Hallows are more innocent, they are described through a children's tale, they are objects which have a special magic embedded in them, and they must be sought and found in an almost fairy tale-like manner. Horcuxes are horrible because of the manner in which they are made. The ultimate sin, to take someone's life, must be committed in order to make a Horcrux. There is nothing innocent about the Horcruxes, they are as terrible as Voldemort. However, as mentioned, they are in effect the same thing. They both make you "master of death". The Hallows also become more innocent because Harry himself becomes obsessed with them. It is not possible to completely condemn Dumbledore because Harry, the good hero, also wants them. Moreover, as Mr. Lovegood argues, "there is nothing Dark about the Hallows – at least not in that crude sense" (*DH* 329). The objects themselves are certainly not dark or evil and the wish to be "master of death" is nothing peculiar, or rather, not wanting to die. However, the history of the Hallows, especially the wand, is drenched in blood and murder because the wizards who have owned them are evil or dark. The Hallows become evil or dark when they are mingled with the ambition, the ambition of lesser men, of invincibility and world domination, or in other words power. The Hallows are not evil, men are.

Dumbledore claims to have given up on the Hallows, "I had long since given up my dream of uniting the Hallows, but I could not resist" (*DH* 573). He could not resist asking to

examine it when James Potter showed him his cloak. Dumbledore finally had two Hallows all to himself. Furthermore, when he found the Resurrection Stone he once more could not resist temptation. The Hallow was no longer a Hallow, because Voldemort has turned it into one of his Horcruxes. Dumbledore is fully aware of this fact, but still he tries to use the Stone. Dumbledore shows once more that he has not learnt anything, he is still weak and “unworthy to unite the Deathly Hallows” (*DH 576*).

Dumbledore’s motivation for wanting to become master of death is very different from Grindelwald. Gellert Grindelwald is an evil dictator, and he proves himself as one very early in his wizard education. He wanted the Hallows to become invincible, he wanted world domination and he wanted to force the muggles into submission so wizards could claim their rightful place on top. Albus Dumbledore on the other hand had never been a dictator in the making. Albus Dumbledore was simply a brilliant boy who wanted glory. He wanted to be loved for his skills, Albus Dumbledore was superficial and did not have the morals he claims to support later in life. However, these traits can easily change, wanting glory to wanting the wrong kind of glory, if not really that far apart. Furthermore, Dumbledore resented the life he was forced to live when his mother died, so Grindelwald’s plans must have been a welcome distraction. Dumbledore is consumed by the thought of the Hallows, of becoming immortal and invincible. These objects are Dumbledore’s downfall, in every way possible. That brief affair with power and immortality shapes Dumbledore’s future because it shapes the Dumbledore known to society. It is why he never accepts the ministerial post and it is why he actually never reaches his full potential. Dumbledore is right to make this decision, because he cannot be trusted with power, he shows this several times through the series. Furthermore, Dumbledore’s family story is a sad one. Because of the Hallows he wrecks the relationship he could have had with his brother and his sister. The Hallows ironically take from him, when they are supposed to give to him and make him master of death. They take his sister, they destroy the relationship he could have had with his brother, they take his only friend, they take his professional future. Furthermore, his weakness becomes his fate because the Hallows eventually kill him.

“Master of death, Harry, master of death! Was I better, ultimately, than Voldemort?” (*DH 571*) Dumbledore ponders this possibility, and Harry is very quick to dismiss it. However, this is a question worth pondering, and perhaps Harry dismisses it too quickly. As already discussed, Hallows and Horcruxes are compared several times in the last book. Harry compares them again, but now as an explanation and a justification. Furthermore, it is also an

excuse. Harry excuses Dumbledore, perhaps because he knows the obsession too well, perhaps also because even the idea of Dumbledore or Harry himself resembling Voldemort even slightly is impossible. Furthermore, Dumbledore does bring up an interesting notion. Dumbledore is using the greater good as an excuse, that it will be in the end, beneficial for all wizards. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Voldemort does not work for the greater good, but he does work for what *he* believes to be the greater good. Thus, the idea behind the motivation is similar. Voldemort wants to kill all Muggles, and he wants wizard domination. That is basically the same as what Dumbledore and Grindelwald wanted. Furthermore, their followers would claim that they were working for the greater good, including Voldemort's Death Eaters. Certainly, in terms of pure evil, Dumbledore and Voldemort cannot be compared, but that is not what Dumbledore ponders. It is the motivation and obsession to defeat death. The Hallows are perhaps a more acceptable choice than Horcruxes, but this does not change the fact that Dumbledore and Voldemort wanted exactly the same thing, and Dumbledore wanted it for the whole of his life. As mentioned, Harry dismisses Dumbledore's statement, however, he is wrong to do so. The reason is simple, Dumbledore was no better than Voldemort. He too wanted to defeat death. Furthermore, as mentioned, Dumbledore never wavers from his conviction that working for the greater good is a valid motivation and justification. However, as Maria Nikolajeva points out, this is what also marks him as Voldemort's equal. "Dumbledore is almost on par with Voldemort, if not worse, as hiding behind a mask of the good is morally less justifiable than open evil" (200). Dumbledore was no better than Voldemort, a want-to-be master of death who works for the greater good, and does not seem to understand how horrible that is. What saves Dumbledore is the fact that he does not keep the Hallows for himself, and the fact that he, in a way, chooses death. This is what separates him from Voldemort, remorse for his previous actions.

Harry also becomes consumed with these objects, which are interfering with the choice he must make in *DH*. Harry must choose between following through Dumbledore's plan set before his death or he must chase after the Hallows to ensure his own survival. Moreover, Harry is troubled over the fact that Dumbledore did not give him much of a plan, he did not make his hunt easier and perhaps he even overestimated Harry. After the revelation of Dumbledore's past Harry is even more doubtful towards the plan. Harry seems perhaps to take his revelation more personal than anyone else, and that is mainly because this confirms what Harry has suspected all along. Dumbledore has never been completely honest with him and he feels this now more than ever. "Look at what he asked from me, Hermione! Risk your

life, Harry! (...) Never the whole truth! Never! He shared a damn sight more of what he was really thinking with Gellert Grindelwald than he ever shared with me” (*DH* 295). And the reason is perhaps as Hermione expresses, that Harry is angry because Dumbledore did not tell him any of this himself. Harry does quite agree with this assertion, and that is shown through a reaction to Hermione’s statement. Further, it is completely understandable that Harry feels this. I would argue that this makes Harry even more inclined to become obsessed with the Hallows. The hunt, or rather the plan had not gone smoothly, it caused Ron to leave and they could not find any Horcruxes nor destroy the one they had found. The Hallows offer Harry a way out of his fate, a way to survive and not die at Voldemort’s hand, an alternative plan. The Hallows are also a way of defying Dumbledore, doing what he is not supposed to.

In the previous chapter I refer to the narrative passage where Harry decides to let go of the Hallows in favour of Dumbledore’s original plan. This is mainly a consequence of Dobby’s death, but his resolve is hard to understand, or rather how he gets there. “The reader is led to understand *that* Harry understands, but the narration fails to convey exactly *how* the understanding comes about (...)” (Guanio-Uluru 324). The only logical explanation for Harry’s resolve must be that he sees more clearly because of grief. (this will be further investigated in the next section) He is “slapped awake” by another dying for him and also remembering Dumbledore’s death. Harry is reminded of the true plan that is destroying Voldemort, not because of what Dumbledore said or not, but for his parents and all others to fall victim of Voldemort’s cruelty.

Harry succeeds where both Dumbledore and Grindelwald fail. Harry manages to unite the Hallows, although, he never actively searched for any of them. Harry is the true master of death, because he does not fear it. “Death is inevitable, but our attitude to it matters because it determines how we will face it” (Guanio-Uluru 329). This attitude is the reason Harry can become “Master of Death” and why Dumbledore cannot. Harry embraces death, he knows that there are worse things than dying. As mentioned, death is an important theme in this series. In addition, many deaths occur in the series, especially of people who are close to Harry. The many deaths Harry has experienced throughout the series, actually help him become master of death. His mother, Lily, died to protect him and that is exactly what Harry does for the people currently inhabiting Hogwarts. He dies to protect them. The death of his parents, as well as Sirius and Lupin help his sacrifice and enables him to let Voldemort kill him. The death of Dobby helps Harry understand and choose. It makes him able to become master of death. The death of Hedwig forces him to understand how alone he is and how

difficult it will really be. Finally, the death of Dumbledore is what makes Harry able to criticise Dumbledore and to separate himself from him. It is what transforms Harry's view of his headmaster, to dare to hate him and question him. It is what teaches him acceptance and understanding, accepting death and understanding the reason for it. Furthermore, also, accepting the flawed man Albus Dumbledore and understand his motivation to work for the greater good.

3.4 Love

A very important theme in the series, which I have so far only touched upon, but not gone into depth about, is love. Love is the answer to all of the most difficult questions in the series, and it is Dumbledore's favorite explanation. Love can mean so many different things to a lot of people, so to try to define it can be very difficult. However, a universal definition, something most people could agree on is that love is kind, unselfish and compassionate. Love is something very pure, and not necessarily romantic. The grand love of the series is never romantic, although that is also given its rightful place.

The love that defines the whole series is parental love, or protective love as Karin E. Westman calls it (193). Lily Potter dies to save her son, she makes the ultimate sacrifice. This act of love ensures Harry's victory over Voldemort (Quirrell) in *PS*. "to have been loved so deeply, even though the person who loved us is gone, will give us some protection forever" (*PS* 216). In the first annual end-of-the-year-speech given by Dumbledore, he gives the all-important information that will be underscored several times throughout the series: "If there is one thing that Voldemort cannot understand, it is love" (*PS* 216). The love Lily Potter demonstrates for her son is truly unselfish, and she becomes the norm which everyone tries to honour.

Furthermore, love is the reason why Voldemort could not stand to be in contact with Harry's soul when he tried to possess him in *OotP*. Harry was so devastated by the death of his Godfather Sirius Black, so the sorrow drove Voldemort away. Love is the reason that Harry, in *DH*, is finally able to make the right decision. He is given a major reality check when Dobby dies to save them from Malfoy Manor. Love saves Harry from his obsession with the Hallows, and ultimately himself and his desires. In addition, love is what enables Harry to shut his mind to Voldemort, to learn occlumency, when grief-stricken by the loss of Dobby. "Grief it seemed drove Voldemort out ... though Dumbledore, of course, would have

said it was love” (*DH* 387). What Harry does not understand is that grief and love is the same thing. Grief comes from love, one cannot feel sorrow or grief if one does not love, cf. Voldemort not feeling anything when killing Snape although he claims to regret it (*DH* 527). Love is also, as mentioned, Dumbledore’s favorite explanation and excuse. It is ultimately the difference between good and evil, because according to Dumbledore Voldemort is evil because he cannot love. Dumbledore claims several times that Harry’s wellbeing and survival is crucial to him, it is his main focus. As already discussed in the second chapter in this thesis, Dumbledore claims to have loved Harry too much and cared too much. He uses his love as an excuse for not telling Harry about the prophecy earlier as I have discussed in the former chapter, but “Dumbledore seems to regard his feelings towards Harry as a moral shortcoming” (Guanio-Uluru 87).

Guanio-Uluru refers to Martha Nussbaum’s three stages of love and says that the second stage is where Dumbledore can be found, “the apparent conflict between the partiality and obligations that go with personal love relationships on the one hand and the universalizing requirements of morality on the other”(86). This means that Dumbledore is stuck in the middle, the heart wants one thing and the head wants another. He has personal love for Harry, but at the same time he has moral obligations to tell him about the prophecy. In a way, the moment he told Harry about the prophecy and he was definitely right in doing so, he chose his obligations over love, and consequently chose the greater good. Dumbledore’s love for Harry has in effect no power, it could never have helped Harry in any way nor could it have helped the greater good. If Dumbledore would have listened to his heart rather than his mind, he would not have sacrificed Harry, and that is why Dumbledore seems to view his love for Harry as a moral shortcoming, because it would have clouded his always logical judgment. But at the same time it is important not to overestimate Dumbledore’s ability to love, because he has never been the loving kind of person.

Certainly, Dumbledore loved his family, but he did not love them unconditionally or rather without limitations. This is because Dumbledore is a very selfish person, and he is no stranger to complimenting himself. When their mother died he was not concerned about his younger siblings, he was annoyed that he had to take care of them. Aberforth is the only person who really knows Dumbledore for who he really is, and he is not impressed. “Funny thing, how many of the people my brother cared about very much, ended up in a worse state than if he’d left ’em well alone” (*DH* 454). Aberforth is referring to their sister Ariana, who became the first victim of the greater good, and she should have been the last. Aberforth has a

point, Harry is sacrificed and so is Snape. Furthermore, Alicia Willson-Metzger points out that Aberforth also is a victim of his brother's work for the greater good, because "he must grieve for the mentally ill sister who only tried to help and paid with her life" (Willson-Metzger 300). Aberforth is the one who really feels the consequences for the death of the Dumbledore family, because Dumbledore goes on to greater things and fills his life with glory while Aberforth is hidden away in his bar, very much alone.

"Thus, there is an implicit questioning of Dumbledore's ability to love others as equals. He seems rather to regard love as the manipulation of others for the sake of their 'greater good'" (Guanio-Uluru 298). This is Dumbledore depicted very accurately. Certainly, Dumbledore cared for Harry, Aberforth, Ariana and probably also Snape, but as Guanio-Uluru points out, he never loves them as equals. He values them, but only to the extent that they are valuable to him.

So far, I have dealt with the protective love that is evident in the series, but there is another kind of love in the series and Karin E. Westman calls it obsessive love (193-199). She states that love seems to change in the series, or rather that a new perspective is shown with *GoF*. She refers to the obsessive love the fake Professor Moody, Barty Crouch Jr. shows for Voldemort, a love Bellatrix LeStrange definitely shares with him (196). In *HBP* love potions are the new hip thing and they are not treated with the respect they should. Love potions do not create love, they only mimic it and therefore they can be extremely dangerous. This is something Ron experiences first hand, how obsessive this fake kind of love really is, and also the effects it can have. Merope tricks Voldemort's father with a love potion and the result is deadly, not only for Merope and Tom Riddle Sr. but also for the world.

"In this context, then, comes the relationship between Dumbledore and Grindelwald, described as a perfect match of intelligent and spirit" (Westman 196). Their relationship was based on obsessive love, at least for Dumbledore. For two months he neglected his family and schemed to take over the world with Grindelwald, and the idea of the greater good was born. This is evidence of how dangerous obsessive love can be. "(...) the danger of infatuation is a failure to recognize responsibility to others and evidence that one has lost one's "moral center" and, consequently, become blind to others' needs" (Westman 196-197). This also happens with Harry, the Hallows are objects with which he gets extremely infatuated, he does not care about Ron and Hermione and he forgets his true purpose. Further, as mentioned earlier, the implied author is several times demonstrating that strong emotions can cloud the best of minds, however, both Harry and Dumbledore are lost in obsessive thoughts and, later,

saved by love. Therefore, it might seem that strong emotions, love, can also wake you up. Moreover, the message from the implied author is that obsessive love is so powerful and dangerous that only the loss of someone dear to you can save you. “Maybe Rowling[perhaps the implied author] even wants to make such a strong statement as to say that desire is always predisposed to bring tragedy along, because people desire wrong things for themselves” (Piipoo 79).

4 Conclusion

My idea with this thesis was to investigate the character of Albus Dumbledore, and find out whether or not he is worthy of the status he is given in the series. My research question comes from my conviction that everything Dumbledore does, is for the greater good. Therefore it was natural to extend that to question his character, his morals and his position in the books. My result is straightforward: Albus Dumbledore should not, or rather does not deserve to be counted as the moral leader and ideal in this series.

In the first chapter in this thesis I tried to discuss what genre the *Harry Potter* series can be said to belong to. As has been stated, the series is at first a children's book, and therefor part of children's literature, partly because of the fact that Harry himself is a child. However, as Harry grows older, so does the genre. This series is a bildungsroman, or rather seven of them, thus it is natural that the genre develops from children's literature into young adult fiction, perhaps even adult fiction. The series has a good claim to be called fantasy literature, because it seems to be in agreement to several of the conditions and definitions that we associate with fantasy literature.

I chose narrative theory for this thesis because I felt that it is the most natural choice when doing a close reading of a book or series. In addition, as mentioned earlier, I sincerely support Maria Nikolajeva's claim to separate ourselves from the tradition of identification through characters. Certainly, narrative theory is the way of doing it because one moves the focus from character identification to the narrative. By experience, students often respond well when given a "check list" over "what-to-do" in an assignment, and the communication model gives the students exactly that. Furthermore, the formal aspects often prove to be the most difficult for students to analyse and by using narrative theory this problem can be solved. Moreover, it is important to teach children and teenagers to be objective when reading and also understanding books. Consequently, narrative theory is the solution and the way to help children to avoid the "identification fallacy."

In the two following chapters I begin my close reading. As mentioned, *DH*, changed my view of the entire series, but I chose to begin with *OotP* because this is where I feel the effects of Dumbledore's actions become visible. "The Prophecy" largely analyses the relationship between Harry and Dumbledore and how this is affected by Dumbledore's tendency towards secret keeping, and his way of caring for Harry. The chapter continues with comparing and contrasting the two opposites, Harry and Voldemort, and showing their many

similarities but also what sets them apart. Fate and free will are important themes in the series and are discussed several places in this chapter. I feel that these themes tie the different sections together, because it is a recurrent theme in the first three parts and thus it gives the whole chapter coherence. The first chapter culminates in the last section, “The Common Good vs the Greater Good” where the basis for my research question is problematised and where it more or less is decided that Albus Dumbledore does work for the greater good, and that it is not an admirable for a supposed moral leader. I claim this because the majority of Dumbledore’s actions concerning Harry have been with a hidden agenda, and finally because Dumbledore is willing to sacrifice Harry for the greater good and this is also what Dumbledore does.

The last chapter is mainly about the character Albus Dumbledore. It opens with a section about Severus Snape, to further underscore Dumbledore’s conviction of the greater good. On the whole, Dumbledore first uses Snape as a tool, a means to an end, for the greater good. Secondly, he sacrifices Snape for the greater good and he also dies. Dumbledore did not intend Snape to survive, he only wanted him to complete his job. The next section is about Dumbledore’s power, which he evidently did not want. I argue that Dumbledore’s confession about fearing power is extremely ironic because he has so much of it. He is the moral leader as well as the leader in war. He is the greatest, he is the one who both good and evil people compare themselves with. Further, I argue that he has, but also takes, this power for the greater good, so that he can secure his position and also argue that he is the only right person for the job. Dumbledore does not want this power, but he is forced to take it. The implied author is implying that Dumbledore is a hypocrite, he is doing what he believes to be wrong in order to serve the majority’s best interest. Next, the section about Horcruxes and Hallows is mainly about the major theme of death, which is very important in *DH*, and also how the notion of death seeps into almost everything in the series. This is where Dumbledore’s past really is looked into, and also where the notion of the greater good comes from. This notion really comes from Dumbledore himself, because he made the slogan. The section investigates the obsession both Dumbledore and Harry experience in terms of wanting the Hallows.

The last section is about love, but, in a way, it sums up or rather ties together all the times love has been discussed throughout this thesis. In short, love has been mentioned in relation with other themes and events in the thesis and therefore I wanted to use this section to sum up but also explain what role love has in the series. It is portrayed in two different ways, as protective or parental love and obsessive love, and I organise the love found in the previous sections into

these two categories of love.

Albus Dumbledore is definitely counted as the moral leader and ideal in the series, however, as has been discussed, he does not deserve this. It can with certainty be stated that Albus Dumbledore has questionable morals or perhaps that he chooses to adjust his morals in order to do what is necessary, which by default means that he is doing something for the greater good. Moreover, I do not think that Dumbledore found any pleasure in doing what he did. He did not *want* to sacrifice Harry or Snape, however, his conviction is more important and the greater good is a perfect justification. In addition, I do not believe that Dumbledore thinks that doing something for the greater good is something negative because in this case, it is in fact the right thing to do. Dumbledore does not regret *what* he did, he probably simply regrets *how* he had to do it. Albus Dumbledore still works for the greater good, but there is a difference. Albus Dumbledore, the teenager, wants to start a war for the greater good, whereas Albus Dumbledore, the old man, wants to end a war for the greater good.

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