



# Heroism in the Harry Potter Series (Ashgate Studies in Childhood, 1700 to the Present)

*Katrin Berndt*

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Taking up the various conceptions of heroism that are conjured in the Harry Potter series, this collection examines the ways fictional heroism in the twenty-first century challenges the idealized forms of a somewhat simplistic masculinity associated with genres like the epic, romance and classic adventure story. The collection's three sections address broad issues related to genre, Harry Potter's development as the central heroic character and the question of who qualifies as a hero in the Harry Potter series. Among the topics are Harry Potter as both epic and postmodern hero, the series as a modern-day example of psychomachia, the series' indebtedness to the Gothic tradition, Harry's development in the first six film adaptations, Harry Potter and the idea of the English gentleman, Hermione Granger's explicitly female version of heroism, adult role models in Harry Potter, and the complex depictions of heroism exhibited by the series' minor characters. Together, the essays suggest that the Harry Potter novels rely on established generic, moral and popular codes to develop new and genuine ways of expressing what a globalized world has applauded as ethically exemplary models of heroism based on responsibility, courage, humility and kindness.

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