

5-10-2015

# The Lack of Snug Spaces and Loss of Innocence in The Sorcerer's Stone and The Golden Compass

Nicole D'Arcangelis

*The College at Brockport*, ndarc2@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/honors>



Part of the [Children's and Young Adult Literature Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

D'Arcangelis, Nicole, "The Lack of Snug Spaces and Loss of Innocence in The Sorcerer's Stone and The Golden Compass" (2015).  
*Senior Honors Theses*. Paper 96.

This Honors Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Master's Theses and Honors Projects at Digital Commons @Brockport. It has been accepted for inclusion in Senior Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @Brockport. For more information, please contact [kmyers@brockport.edu](mailto:kmyers@brockport.edu).

The Lack of Snug Spaces and Loss of Innocence in  
*The Sorcerer's Stone* and *The Golden Compass*

A Senior Honors Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for Graduation in the Honors College

By  
Nicole D'Arcangelis  
English Literature Major

The College at Brockport  
May 10, 2015

Thesis Director: Dr. Kristen Proehl, Assistant Professor, Department of English

*Educational use of this paper is permitted for the purpose of providing future students a model example of an Honors senior thesis project.*

Abstract:

Jerry Griswold claims in his text on children's literature *Feeling Like a Kid* that young protagonists seek to occupy snug spaces. In order to describe snugness Griswold explains that the space should possess a litany of characteristics including enclosed, tight, small, simple, well-designed, remote, safe, guarded, self-sufficient, owned, and hidden. But tight does not always mean snug—sometimes it means claustrophobic. This essay examines young protagonists' interactions with spaces in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* and *The Golden Compass* and groups the spaces for analysis according to the manner in which the protagonist occupies them (assigned, chosen, natural, invited, and forbidden) so as to demonstrate that the manner in which a space is occupied can influence its characterization as snug. Particular spaces in the novels are analyzed in relation to Griswold's attributes of snugness in order to argue that a lack of snug space threatens and ultimately corrupts the innocence of a young protagonist. Further, a discussion of the transitional spaces which Harry and Lyra must pass through in order to enter other instances of space provides a distinction between the innate innocence of the children and its steady corruption as they fail to experience snug space over the course of their novels. The particular spaces chosen for this project are the cupboard under the stairs, the Wizarding World, Gryffindor House, Hagrid's hut, the Mirror of Erised, Lyra's Jordan, Bolvangar, the daemon space, the gyptians' boat, and the retiring room. The transitional spaces through which Harry and Lyra move are the barrier at Platform 9 ¾ and the hole in the sky created by Lord Asriel at the end of *The Golden Compass*.

## I. Introduction

Since the start of its publication in the 1990s J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series has received ample attention from critics and scholars. Scholarship about this series has revolved around the philosophy of the phenomenon, the romantic heroism of the titular character, morality, politics, magic, and more. Likewise, Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy garnered attention from theologians and philosophers who delved into concepts of existentialism, religion and lack thereof, and parallel worlds while perusing the pages of *The Golden Compass* and its sequels. In my research though I have found few scholars who elected to look closely at the very spaces in which the young characters of these novels reside. Further, while both of these series feature child protagonists on the cusp of adolescence, and academic sources can be found which mention puberty or coming-of-age in the texts, I have found no discussion of the maturation of the characters in relation to their experiences in occupying particular spaces, or any suggestion that such a relationship exists.

Jerry Griswold, scholar and author, presents the idea in his text *Feeling Like a Kid* that literature for children often features a feeling of snugness in which the protagonist finds a sanctuary to envelop himself. This sense of snugness can be found in particular spaces to which Griswold assigns a variety of attributes including "enclosed," "tight," "small," "simple," "well-designed," "remote," "safe," "guarded," "self-sufficient," "owned," and "hidden" (Griswold 9-14). In the novels *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by J.K. Rowling and *The Golden Compass* by Philip Pullman, the young protagonists Harry Potter and Lyra Belacqua experience and manipulate numerous and complex instances of space, but each space encountered fails to provide or only provides a select few of the attributes that Griswold calls "snug." As a result, Harry and Lyra do not have a singular sanctuary or snug space and it is for this reason that each

of them experiences a rapid loss of childhood innocence.

The spaces in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* and *The Golden Compass* are encountered by their occupants in a variety of instances and can therefore be categorized. By observing the manner in which the character interacts with a given space, I have labeled them as assigned, chosen, invited, forbidden, and natural spaces. These states directly influence the characters' interaction with and their opportunities to enter and exit those spaces. For example, assigned space is much less appealing than chosen, invited space is a refuge, forbidden spaces invoke both danger and wonder, and natural spaces, while comfortable, are vulnerable to unnatural forces and actions. In both of these texts, characters must transition between spaces through a variety of means and encounter obstacles or boundaries that are erected among different spaces. These transitions and the spaces themselves have direct influences upon the characters that experience them. This essay analyzes particular spaces in the aforementioned novels in relation to Griswold's attributes of snugness in order to argue that a lack of snug space threatens and ultimately corrupts the innocence of a young protagonist.

## II. Assigned Space

Both Harry and Lyra are raised as orphans and are placed in homes outside of the traditional family model. As a result, the reader of these texts first encounters the protagonists as they reside within assigned space. Harry Potter's assigned space is the cupboard under the stairs in the Dursley home at number 4 Privet Drive, Little Whinging, Surrey. This space is so closely associated with Harry that it is the overly specific address penned on his first Hogwarts letter. While small and confined, this space is not a snug space as other young children would have it. There are several characteristics about Harry's cupboard that prevent it from conforming to

Griswold's concept of comfortably snug. This is because, although it is a space that does reflect approximately half of Griswold's attributes, the nature of the cupboard is that it was assigned to Harry, not chosen by him. Therefore, all of the features which might have made it snug instead make it claustrophobic. Harry's cupboard is indeed enclosed, tight, small, simple, owned, and hidden, but when it comes to being well-designed, remote, safe, guarded, and self-sufficient, there are lines that are blurred. The cupboard is located under the stairs, a position which is out of the way and hidden in an 'out of sight, out of mind' sort of way, but it is certainly not remote. Being located under a staircase that must be traversed by the rest of the Dursley family means that Harry lives underfoot, continuously and literally being walked over by his relatives as they roam about the rest of the house. Harry may be hidden away, but the location of the cupboard is not at all remote. The initial introduction to Harry's cupboard happens early on in *The Sorcerer's Stone*: "He found a pair [of socks] under his bed and, after pulling a spider off one of them, put them on. Harry was used to spiders, because the cupboard under the stairs was full of them, and that was where he slept" (SS 19). It can be easily assumed that a spider-filled cupboard is less than well-designed. It is also clear that there is no food or bathroom in the cupboard, so it is not self-sufficient. Regarding safe and guarded though, these features of the cupboard can vary, depending on the circumstances in which Harry is experiencing the cupboard.

Harry considers the cupboard to be his, referring to it as "my cupboard," (SS 37) and when he is locked away inside of it he is safe from the ire of his relatives. Ironically though, it was his awful relatives that were the ones to stuff him in there as punishment in the first place. This Stockholm-like relationship with the cupboard under the stairs can be explained by a concept of place-attachment. This is "an emotional bond formed by an individual to a physical location due to meaning given to that location through processes of person-environment

interactions” (Casakin and Kreitler, 80). Although Harry is sent to his cupboard for punishment, it is not first introduced to the reader as a place of punishment. Rather, the cupboard is “where he slept” (SS 19). Harry’s person-environment interaction with his cupboard is that it is foremost the location in which he sleeps. It is “in the course of this interaction [that] anonymous spaces turn into places endowed with meaning which serve as objects of attachment” (Casakin and Kreitler, 81). Harry frequently dreams in his sleep: about flying motorcycles, the night his parents died, and “of some unknown relation coming to take him away” (SS 30). Because Harry finds escape from his life at the Dursleys through his dreams, it is fitting that the place in which he sleeps becomes an object of attachment.

That being said, the cupboard is not a snug space, regardless of the connection that Harry feels to it. This is because the space was assigned to him, an argument which can be supported by the fact that before his Hogwarts letter arrives, Harry would “have given anything to be [in Dudley’s second bedroom]” (SS 38). That is, given the choice over his cupboard, Harry desired a bigger space to call his own. But when Uncle Vernon and Aunt Petunia assign Harry to the bedroom out of fear induced by the letter’s arrival, the bedroom is no longer desirable. Harry would “rather be back in his cupboard with that letter than up here without it” (SS 38). Later in the text, when Harry has learned about his magical ability, he cannot believe that it is real and mentally resigns himself to a life back in the cupboard:

‘It was a dream,’ he told himself firmly. ‘I dreamed a giant called Hagrid came to tell me I was going to a school for wizards. When I open my eyes I’ll be at home in my cupboard.’ There was suddenly a loud tapping noise. *And there’s Aunt Petunia knocking on the door*, Harry thought, his heart sinking. But he still didn’t open his eyes. It had been such a good dream. (SS 61)

Harry's experience at the Dursley residence is a deciding factor in his decision to attend Hogwarts. At the Dursley's he has a space that is his but through no choice of his own. The fact that he was unable to read his Hogwarts letter until he had left his cupboard and Privet Drive entirely demonstrates that Harry was imprisoned rather than snug while living with the Dursleys. Because his cupboard locked from the outside, he had no ability to regulate his own interaction with the space and could not leave it of his own free will. This lack of free will in relation to assigned space is what makes it unappealing and stifling to both the character inhabiting the space and the reader witnessing it. J.K. Rowling establishes Harry's childhood in this cupboard because for the duration of the text he will be seeking the snug space and healthier instances of place-attachment that were never found with the Dursleys. As a result, though early childhood should be a time of growth and exploration, Harry is eager to leave this time period behind. By being forced into the cupboard, the Dursley's attempt to stamp out his magic only muffled the innocence of his childhood.

Like Harry Potter and scores of other romantic heroes, Philip Pullman's Lyra Belacqua is an orphan that grows up in a secluded space. Also, like Harry's cupboard Lyra's Oxford does not provide the necessary snug space that a young protagonist desires. Pullman's depiction of Oxford is fictional in that he has warped the landscape in order to include new places such as Jordan College, but overall the text reflects much of the city as it truly is or was: "[Oxford] is not a divided city in the same way that Berlin used to be, with a wall right down the middle. No, it is [...] involuted but still retaining an inner and an outer, a labyrinth in which one is never really sure whether one is on the inside or the outside of any given wall" (Vassilopoulou 270-71). In this way, Oxford demonstrates a few but certainly not all of Griswold's qualities. It is enclosed, in a sense, because of its walls, it is self-sufficient in that the city contains all that is necessary to



sustain its population, and since Pullman refers to it as “Lyra’s Oxford,” it is owned. However nothing about a well-known city with a complex system of walls and colleges is small, tight, simple, hidden, or remote. It cannot be called well-designed because “It had never been planned; it had grown piecemeal, with past and present over-lapping at every spot, and the final effect was one of jumbled and squalid grandeur. Some part was always about to fall down...” (The Golden Compass 30). Lastly, the city is not at all safe because it has been infiltrated by the Gobblers, who have been kidnapping children across the country. The steps taken to guard the city are few and ultimately ineffective. In this novel, like the city itself, there are layers within layers of spaces. Jordan College is Lyra’s assigned space, to which she was sent by her Uncle, Lord Asriel: “‘Your place is here,’ said her uncle finally. ‘But why? Why is my place here? Why can’t I come to the North with you?’ ‘You’re not coming, child. [...] Don’t argue anymore or I shall be angry” (GC 26). Being that this is an assigned space, like Harry’s cupboard, it is one that the protagonist would rather leave than remain within. Although Jordan College is the particular space to which Lyra is confined, it is located within a greater assigned space, which is the city of Oxford itself, much like how Harry’s cupboard is within the larger Dursley residence (to which he was also assigned, by Albus Dumbledore). Jordan College is not snug and does not provide the comforts that a snug space could provide. As a result, Lyra is eager to push its limits and explore. This can best be seen in the manner in which Lyra tends to play at the extreme ends of the College, such as the roof and walls, and, when informed about it by her uncle, underground.

Limited to the grounds of Jordan College and the immediate surrounding area of the city, such as Jericho, Lyra seeks adventure on roofs and in the canal and meadow- that is, open places where she is not walled in, though her movements are still policed and observed by the dons and scholars of the college, as well as the porters that monitor the comings and goings of people in

and out of College. Lyra's adventurous nature speaks of how much of an outsider she is trapped within Oxford. It is stated in the text that "In many ways Lyra was a barbarian. What she liked best was clambering over the College roofs with Roger, the kitchen boy who was her particular friend, to spit plum stones on the heads of passing scholars..." (GC 31). The ambiguity of the term "barbarian" is applicable here because while this childish behavior can in one sense be simply considered "Rude, wild," compared to the other inhabitants of Jordan College Lyra is "a foreigner" (OED).

Lyra [is] both an insider as a ward of Jordan College and an outsider as a female child. [...] Lyra performs the freedoms that this liminal position affords. Scaling, sneaking, intruding, and exploring in the bowels and at the extremities of the city, Lyra's play takes her through structures composed of tradition and rules as much as they are of mortar and stone. (Cecire 9, 10)

For this reason, Lyra's experience being raised in Oxford and in Jordan College is unsettling because she "passed her childhood, like a half-wild cat" (GC 33). Having been compared to a feral, straying animal, it is easy to conclude that Lyra did not grow up in a snug space. Further, the word choice of this description is significant: Lyra did not experience a childhood, but rather "passed" it, defiantly and dangerously. It can be seen then how Jordan College's failure to provide a snug space for Lyra resulted in a loss of what should have been the innocence of childhood.

### III. Chosen Space

Moving outside of the assigned space in which they were raised, Harry and Lyra seek to enter new and exciting spaces. Subconsciously perhaps, each character is looking to encounter a

space that can satisfy the childhood yearning for snugness that was not found in the cupboard or in Oxford. With each new space that they encounter, different opportunities and experiences arise. For example, Hagrid's retrieval of Harry from the Hut on the Rock marked his introduction to the Wizarding World. Previously unaware of the existence of magic, the significance of his scar, or his own past, Harry suddenly enters a realm of new possibilities and understandings. More importantly, for the first time he is given a choice regarding something in his own life. Up until this point in the text, Harry has been under the thumb of his relatives, subject to their actions and desires where he was involved. As demonstrated in the following excerpts from the text, Harry does not experience simple instances of expressing wants and preferences in his childhood and his input, rarely given, is ignored:

‘You could just leave me here,’ Harry put in hopefully (he'd be able to watch what he wanted on television for a change and maybe even have a go on Dudley's computer). [...] but they weren't listening. (SS 23)

The Dursleys bought Dudley and Piers large chocolate ice creams at the entrance and then, because the smiling lady in the van had asked Harry what he wanted before they could hurry him away, they bought him a cheap lemon ice pop. (SS 26)

Harry could see three letters addressed in green ink. ‘I want--’ he began, but Uncle Vernon was tearing the letters into pieces before his eyes. (39)

Harry's lack of choice is arguably characteristic of his time spent in the Muggle World. After all, he was born into the Wizarding World and only placed in the Muggle World. When Harry does finally learn about magic and Hogwarts, his uncle again attempts to remove his option, but for once the outcome is different. “‘If [Harry] wants ter go, a great Muggle like you won't stop him,’ growled Hagrid” (SS 58). Not only is Harry for once allowed to make his own decision by

attending Hogwarts rather than Stonewall High, but this choice to enter the Wizarding World marks the moment when Harry gains a level of independence and autonomy that extends to later encounters in the text, such as on the Hogwarts Express:

He had never had any money for candy with the Dursleys, and now that he had pockets rattling with gold and silver he was ready to buy as many Mars Bars as he could carry.

[...] Not wanting to miss anything, he got some of everything and paid the woman eleven silver Sickles and seven bronze Knuts. (SS 101)

By executing a decision over what to purchase with his own money, this scene demonstrates how the Wizarding World is a space that not only has Harry chosen to enter, but one in which he can continue to make choices for himself. Though he is still quite a child (making frivolous choices such as buying candy with a pocket full of money) the responsibility and autonomy of decision-making is suggestive of Harry's increasing maturity as he leaves his childhood behind. This is because Harry is still failing to occupy a snug space.

Though more comfortable than a cupboard, the Wizarding World does not qualify as a snug space. While it offers comforts such as decision-making that Harry has never been allowed before, it complicates the criteria of Griswold's attributes. The space is too sprawling and all-encompassing to be considered tight, small, or simple, regardless of the fact that measures have been taken to keep it well-designed, remote, guarded, self-sufficient, and hidden. The Wizarding World is enclosed, protected by enchantments and secret entranceways, and is kept separate from the Muggle World. However, just like the real world, it cannot be guaranteed as safe. Although the Wizarding World is a space that Harry enters and exists of his own will, it is not a place to which Harry can go to escape evil or corruption the way a snug space should be. Being dropped off by his relatives at Kings Cross Station with no concept of how to reach the correct platform

hints at the apprehension and lack of security that the Wizarding World will offer to Harry.

Therefore, even entering Harry's chosen space requires risk-taking and leaves him vulnerable.

It is the act of making potentially hazardous choices that speaks of the lack of snugness in a chosen space. After Harry elects to enter the Wizarding World some of the crossroads that he comes to are less than ideal, and Harry finds himself making numerous dangerous decisions. In fact, when Harry and Ron decide to rescue Hermione from a troll trapped in a bathroom, it seems as though the only choice afforded to Harry is a self-sacrificing one: "It was the last thing they wanted to do, but what choice did they have?" (SS 175). Harry is not snug in the Wizarding World as a whole because of the risks that he takes while living in it. This lack of security for a young protagonist is what causes them to seek a snug space to begin with. The lack of such a space is quickly forcing Harry out of his childhood and into the role of an adult.

Lyra's experience with chosen space is similarly risky and self-sacrificing. Having left Oxford behind on a mission to rescue kidnapped children and learn more about Dust, Lyra finds herself dragged to the headquarters of the nefarious operation that has children kidnapped and spliced from their daemons. This space, called Bolvangar, is interesting because although Lyra is brought there, it is because of the manner in which she experiences it that I have labeled it as a chosen space. Bolvangar is significant in *The Golden Compass* because it is the place located in the far north where the principle cruelty of the text takes place. In Bolvangar

'They have put up buildings of metal and concrete, and some underground chambers. [...] There is an air of hatred and fear over the place and for miles around. Witches can see these things where other humans can't. Animals keep away too. No birds fly there; lemmings and foxes have fled. Hence the name Bolvangar: the fields of evil. They don't call it that. They call it 'the station.' But to everyone else it is Bolvangar.' (GC 164)

The facility at Bolvangar is enclosed, well-designed, remote, guarded, self-sufficient, and hidden. It is not tight, small, owned, or simple, though. Rather it is a large compound where complex research and experimentation is being conducted. Further, none of the safety or hidden nature is for the benefit of Lyra or any other young characters in the text. Instead, the secrecy and seclusion is necessary for the adult members of the General Oblation Board to conduct their harmful experiments, called “intercision” upon the children. Therefore, to children the space is certainly not snug but rather a necessary containment, like a holding pen for cattle awaiting slaughter. Despite the danger of Bolvangar, it is not a forbidden space; there is nothing that prevents the protagonist from entering, though there are efforts to stall her exit. To most of the children that reside there, Bolvangar was assigned, whereas to Lyra it was chosen. This is because the children were systematically kidnapped and then placed into Bolvangar whereas Lyra, upon learning of the place, heads toward it. When she is eventually kidnapped, she has knowledge of the place and its dangers, so when she is brought to the entrance she chooses to enter it under the alias Lizzie Brooks.

An instance of a different child being abducted to be brought to Bolvangar is found in the text when Tony Makarios is assaulted by Mrs. Coulter and her golden monkey daemon:

The monkey lifts her up, and gazes closely at her before standing and swinging back to his human, taking the sparrow daemon with him. The lady bends her scented head to whisper. And then Tony turns. He can't help it. 'Ratter!' he says, half in alarm, his mouth full. (GC 38).

In this scene Tony is victimized because he is doomed by his immediate but strictly sensory response to his daemon being snatched. Differently, when Lyra is brought to Bolvangar she has had time to think about the circumstances and what might happen to her. This difference is

crucial. As explained in *The Psychology of Self-Esteem*,

In the brain of a normal human being, sensations (primary sensory inputs) are automatically integrated into perceptions. [...] This is *not* true of the conceptual level of consciousness. Here, the regulation is not automatic, not 'wired in' to the system.

Conceptual awareness, as the *controlling goal* of a man's mental activity, is necessary to his proper survival, *but is not implanted by nature*. Man has to provide it. (Branden 40)

That is, while the body experiences an automatic or involuntary response to sensation, it takes purposeful effort to attain and employ conceptual awareness, or to experience a stimulus and select a response. An individual must actively choose to exercise the capacity of conceptual functioning. It is for this reason that I consider Lyra entering Bolvangar as a chosen act rather than assigned, because although she was brought there, she reacted to the circumstances with purposeful thought and action, as opposed to Tony Makarios, who reacted solely on sensation. Volition changes the manner in which a character interacts with a space. Whereas the other kidnapped children can only speculate about why they are in Bolvangar, Lyra already knows. *Lizzie* is used as a façade through which Lyra, pretending to be dull and ignorant, absorbs more information:

'What is this place?'

'It's called the Experimental Station.'

That wasn't an answer, and whereas Lyra would have pointed that out and asked for more information, she didn't think Lizzie Brooks would; so she assented dumbly in the dressing and said no more. (GC 211).

In this manner, Lyra is able to learn a great deal about the actions of Mrs. Coulter and the other adults at Bolvangar, all while plotting not only her own exit but the escape of as many of the

children and their daemons as possible. Lyra is able to manipulate Bolvangar and can explore it as thoroughly as she explored Jordan College and Oxford, but this space is even less snug.

Throughout her entire time in this location Lyra is in danger of being found out and becoming a victim of intercision herself. Despite the bit of control that Lyra retains by using a pseudonym at Bolvangar, she is consistently vulnerable in this space. Like Harry's rescue of Hermione from the troll, Lyra's sense of responsibility is beyond her years. Further in their respective rescue missions both Harry and Lyra are working against the cruel actions of adults in their lives. From their interactions with chosen space and the decisions that they make, it can be seen how by this point in the texts, Harry and Lyra have already left much of their childhood innocence behind.

#### IV. Natural Space

One would think that the natural spaces that the protagonists inhabit are the spaces that should be the snuggest, as an appeal to the earliest and most natural space inhabited by any character: the womb. Griswold suggests that this is actually the ultimate sensation of snugness sought by a young protagonist: "that wonderful combination of the reassuringly familiar and personal assertiveness: a womb of one's own" (Griswold 15). However, this is not the case. Although natural spaces in these novels are comfortable, they are a source of contention for both characters, and the instability of the natural space is a primary plot device in both *Harry Potter* and *The Golden Compass*. Harry notably considers Hogwarts to be his home. Within the castle gates are his peers, teachers, and role models. It is also within Hogwarts that Harry finds and occupies his natural space. Gryffindor House and the boys' dormitory in particular is a place in which Harry is safe and warm. The common room is described as "a cozy, round room full of squashy armchairs," and Harry's dormitory is comprised of "five four-posters hung with deep



red, velvet curtains. Their trunks had already been brought up” (SS 130). This space is guarded by a password that Harry has knowledge of; it is a selective place and he is one of the few that has access to it. It is self-sufficient in that his belongings were waiting for him when he arrived. Gryffindor House allows its occupants to be enclosed within the common room, their dormitories, and in their beds. The space is tight because it is contained in one of the spiral turrets of the castle. It is well-designed with cozy furniture and a warm fireplace, and remote in that the tower is quite removed from the heart of the castle in the Great Hall: “Percy led them through doorways hidden behind sliding panels and hanging tapestries. They climbed more staircases, yawning and dragging their feet, and Harry was just wondering how much farther they had to go...” (SS 129). Gryffindor is hidden behind the portrait of the fat lady and because she stands guard the students within are safe. However, although Harry is identified as a Gryffindor he must share the space with numerous other students. The space is not uniquely “his” or owned in the way that his cupboard was. This lack of ownership is one of only a few attributes that stand in the way of Gryffindor House from being called snug.

I categorize Gryffindor House as a natural space for Harry to inhabit due to the role of fate in Harry’s placement there. The sorting ritual for Harry was uniquely complex. According to J.K. Rowling, there are occasions when the Sorting Hat takes an inordinately long time to place students. These occasions, called “Hatstalls,” occur when the Hat takes “an exceptionally long time to deliberate” and may require moments of “silent wrangling” between the student and the Hat. (Rowling, *Pottermore*). The Sorting Hat provides an interesting take on the argument of free will vs fate and more importantly helps to define Gryffindor House as a natural space for Harry to occupy rather than assigned or chosen as others might argue it. Due to the nature of what fate is colloquially accepted to be, I consider a space provided by fate to be natural rather than

assigned because assigned spaces are those ordered as such by a physical force, such as Harry's Uncle Vernon. The Sorting Hat, though by some could be considered such a force, is better described as a vehicle through which fate, a nonphysical thing, is carried out:

The hat identifies student personalities, potentials, and temperaments, sorting them into the community that best fits their strengths. [...] The hat does not offer students a choice in whom they want to become, with whom they want to spend their time, or in how they perceive themselves. The Sorting Hat makes these decisions for them. (Pond 187-88)

There are other instances of fate in this text that remove Harry's ability to choose; for example the fact that wizards do not choose their own wands. When Harry meets the wandmaker Ollivander, he is told "Well, I say your father favored it—it's really the wand that chooses the wizard, of course" (SS 82). Ollivander later states "And of course, you will never get such good results with another wizard's wand" (SS 84). If this same logic of fate applies to the Sorting Hat's decision then it can be implied that, while any house *might* work, there is a place that is more proper for each student, and while some cases may require extra deliberation, in the end the hat will tell each student "where [they] ought to be" (SS 117). This is because a particular house may come closer to fulfilling the role of a snug space than another, simply because it is the most natural space for the student in question. Perhaps this is why houses tend to run in families—the Malfoys in Slytherin and the Weasleys in Gryffindor, for example.

However, Harry's sorting was not so simple. If each of the Hogwarts students was strictly predestined for a particular house, Rowling's concept of "Hatstalls" would be null. Rather, the sorting hat, a self-proclaimed "Thinking Cap!" (SS 118) does indeed need to think through the process of analyzing the students' individual characters and sorting them accordingly. As a result, Harry's request for "*Not Slytherin*" holds a lot of weight. Unfortunately, he never requests

“*Gryffindor, Please*” either, and so it cannot be accurately said that Harry chose his placement. Rather, “He took off the hat and walked shakily toward the Gryffindor table. He was so relieved to have been chosen and not put in Slytherin, he hardly noticed that he was getting the loudest cheer yet” (121). Just like his wand, Gryffindor seems to have chosen Harry. It is accurate to say then that the hat narrowed down Harry’s fated options, and with his rejection of Slytherin, he naturally belonged in Gryffindor.

Despite his natural status as a Gryffindor, Harry faces difficulties as a result of this identity (and these increase in severity as the series continues). As a Gryffindor, Harry finds himself at odds against Slytherins and their head of house, Severus Snape. This rivalry is one that permeates the rest of the series, molding Harry’s interactions with students and strengthening instances of prejudice in his thoughts and actions. Further, The Sorting Hat’s insight that “Slytherin will help [him] on the way to greatness,” in light of his dislike for Draco Malfoy, and the knowledge that Lord Voldemort, a Slytherin, murdered his parents, gives Harry a great sense of discontent. In this manner, although living in Gryffindor is often a source of comfort for Harry, house rivalries and Harry’s fear that he could just as easily have been a Slytherin overshadows the positive. That is, natural spaces tend to be unstable. This is particularly relevant to the idea of Hogwarts houses because the students are sorted at such a young age. Later in the series, Dumbledore ruminates, “You know, sometimes I think we sort too soon” (The Deathly Hallows 680). This suggests that, as children grow and their identity develops, their natural inclinations and therefore their house placement may change. Although Harry was placed in Gryffindor, his status as a hatstall implies that the match is not entirely perfect. A threat of Slytherinness and a question of identity looms over Harry, which corrupts what could have been a comfortable placement.

In the same way, what should be a comfortable experience for Lyra Belacqua is instead the thing that stands to divide good and evil, innocence and corruption in *The Golden Compass*. The primary experimentation that is being conducted at Bolvangar is called intercision, the process by which a pre-pubescent child is severed from their daemon. In the world constructed by Pullman, each human has a daemon, a creature that is an external representation of a person's inner self. Representative of the same sort of childhood fluidity in nature and identity that hatstalls speak of is the fact that a prepubescent child has a daemon that shapeshifts. A daemon only adopts a constant form when its human counterpart has reached maturity. In the relationship of Lyra and her daemon, the reader views another space that Lyra occupies consistently throughout the text: the restricted space that exists between a person and their daemon. The space is constructed as natural in this world and is probably the closest thing to a snug *feeling* that exists within the text, because a daemon is inherently comforting to its person and vice-versa. And not only is it comforting, but also loving:

As a child with an absent, neglectful mother and a father who is almost as bad, Lyra has the type of childhood that in normal circumstances would be described as severely deprived. Although the tutors at Jordan College take an absent-minded interest in her, there is no one who clearly loves her and whom she can love in return—except, of course, for her daemon. (Tucker 141)

Despite the emotional security of the bond, the space that exists between Lyra and her daemon is not a snug one and cannot be, according to Griswold's requirements. The space is limited, so it could be considered small or tight, and because it is so personal, it is also owned. It is also the connection that Lyra is fighting to guard throughout the text. Unfortunately, since splicing daemons from children is the cruel act that is taking place at Bolvangar, the space is vulnerable.

It is not simple or safe, and being that it is not a physical place it cannot be remote, hidden, self-sufficient, or enclosed. Natural spaces, while comfortable, are susceptible to unnatural forces and actions. In addition, comfortable things (including physical limitations and emotional relationships) stand to be tested, as can be seen when Lyra and her Daemon Pantalaimon must be separated for a short moment:

He was going to pull. She felt angry and miserable. His badger claws dug into the earth and he walked forward. It was such a strange tormenting feeling when your daemon was pulling at the link between you; part physical pain deep in the chest, part intense sadness and love. And she knew it was the same for him. Everyone tested it when they were growing up: seeing how far they could pull apart, coming back with intense relief. [...]

She knew she would rather die than let them be parted again; it would send her mad with grief and terror. (GC 171)

When Lyra sees a victim of intercision, she notices that the boy “was clutching a piece of fish to him as Lyra was clutching Pantalaimon, with her left hand, hard, against her heart; but that was all he had, a piece of dried fish; because he had no daemon at all. The Gobblers had cut it away” (GC 187). This boy is considered so grotesque and ghost-like by the town where he has found refuge that no one can approach him, so disturbed by the concept of a person separated from their daemon. Pantalaimon yearns to comfort the boy, but won't, because he does not belong to him. It is called “the great taboo” (GC 189) that daemons and people cannot belong to anyone but each other. To interfere with the precious space between a person and their daemon by literally severing it is a sort of rape. It is a gross violation of something extremely personal. “They'll never be one again. They're sundered forever. This is the most wicked thing I have ever seen” (GC 229). Lyra's exposure to this corrupted natural space strengthens a need to

preserve her own bond with Pantalaimon.

Lyra never exits the space that exists between herself and her daemon the way that severed children are forced to, though she is keenly aware of the horror of the separation. Like her desire to push the boundaries of Oxford and Jordan College, she does “pull” against the bond, but differently, because it is a painful, not freeing experience. Early on in the text, she even unknowingly experienced the ramifications of interfering with the human-daemon bond, an act that scholar Maude Hines twice calls “unnatural”: “Lyra first encounters the unnatural separations of humans from their daemons when she finds coins etched with representations of daemons in skulls of Scholars interred in the catacombs beneath Jordan College” (Hines 39). Within the catacombs, Lyra switches around the daemon coins despite the unease of her companions. That night, she experiences a nightmare in which she is haunted by the scholars whose graves she disrupted. “Convinced she has performed something unnatural, she rushes down the next day, restoring ‘the daemon-coins to their rightful places, and whisper[ing] *Sorry! Sorry!*’ to the skulls” (Hines, 39). To violate the bond, even after death, is an evil act. Lyra’s participation in the bond is consistent and unlike any other encounter with a space that she can encounter. Like Harry’s placement in Gryffindor, to be close to Pantalaimon is to be home. Unfortunately, the forces that threaten this connection prevent the space between Lyra and her daemon from being considered her snug space.

## V. Invited Space

Invited spaces such as the homes of friends, and forbidden spaces that characters have been warned away from stand as opposites in the study of these texts. In both *The Sorcerer’s Stone* and *The Golden Compass*, invited spaces fulfil the most out of all of Griswold’s snug

attributes and as a result are the closest to being what a young protagonist seeks in a snug space. One of the two aspects of an invited space that prevents it from being snug is the very nature of what it means to be invited into a space: it is already owned by someone else. The invited person may only occupy the space for a short time and can never truly bond with the space in the way that they might desire to. This can be seen when Harry is invited to visit Hagrid's Hut. Hagrid, Harry's first friend and the character responsible for introducing him to the Wizarding World, lives at Hogwarts as the Keeper of Keys and Grounds. His hut, to which Harry is invited at the end of his first week of classes, is located "on the edge of the forbidden forest" (SS 140) and so is remote without being hidden. It is described as having "only one room inside. Hams and pheasants were hanging from the ceiling, a copper kettle was boiling on the open fire, and in the corner stood a massive bed with a patchwork quilt over it." After opening the door for Harry and Ron, Hagrid says "Make yourselves at home" (140). He provides the boys with tea, rock cakes, and conversation.

This space is the first in the text that Harry is invited into. The hut is guarded by Fang, an "enormous black boarhound," and despite the fact that he is apparently "not as fierce as he looked" (140) he is still an obstacle that must be held out of the way before Hagrid's guests can enter the hut. Harry finds a safe space in the hut, where he can confide about his dislike for other Hogwarts employees such as Argus Filch and Severus Snape. The single room creates an enclosed space that like the Gryffindor common room is warmed by a fire. Provisions of food and drink, despite the poor quality of Hagrid's cakes, make the space one that is welcoming and sustainable. Homey or personal touches like the patchwork quilt mean that the space is well-designed. While everything is oversized in the hut to compensate for Hagrid's bulk, to a character of small stature such as Harry the space actually becomes more intimately enclosed as

he is swallowed up by an armchair, for example. Further, according to the CalmClinic, “[children] punished by being placed in a closet seem more at risk [of being claustrophobic].” Such a stark contrast to the cramped space of his cupboard is likely inherently appealing to Harry.

In addition, despite his burly appearance Hagrid is a rather feminine figure in the text; he crochets, hides the broken pieces of his wand in a pink umbrella, takes Harry shopping for his school supplies, and refers to himself as “mommy” when, nest-like, his hut becomes the warm and safe space where he hatches a baby dragon (SS 235). I believe this gender-bending to be a significant quality of the invited space. Pre-pubescent children in literature tend to be regarded as genderless, having not yet conformed to the expected behaviors or experiences of a particular gender. As a result, by finding the most comfort in a space that is owned by an atypically gendered character such as Hagrid, it can be seen as a manner in which Harry attempts to remain in the genderless state of childhood innocence. Further, the maternal nature of Hagrid’s character emphasizes the loss of Harry’s parents. By embodying both the maternal and paternal figure, Hagrid’s Hut serves to provide the sort of household that Harry could have grown up in. By its nature though, an invited space is one that Harry cannot remain in. He has to leave the space eventually, reminiscent of the fact that his period of childhood innocence is being left behind. This invited space is crucial to developing Harry’s interaction with spaces because it is one that he can enter and exit for pleasure rather than necessity. Unlike his dormitory, Harry does not live at Hagrid’s but instead receives invitations to become a visitor of the space. As a result, he does not require anything from it and the relation that he has with the space is a good one. Unfortunately, it is not permanent. This is the downside to invited space. Because it does not belong to the protagonist, it is not owned, and therefore cannot be the snug refuge that he seeks.



Children growing up into adolescence and adulthood face societal pressures that in some cases prevent them from behaving and expressing themselves as they truly are or would like to be. An ideal childhood would be free of such constraints, and the snug space in particular should provide an arena for uninhibited expression. While Harry and Lyra themselves are not portrayed atypically or particularly androgynously, “the embodiment of genderlessness is usually exclusive to persons perceived as prepubescent, [which] in turn shows how childhood is held up as a desirable but temporary release from the undeniable structures of gendered oppression” (Duane 171-2). A parallel between the characters’ prepubescence and the temporariness of an invited space can be found in the moments when Harry and Lyra interact with the owners of the spaces into which they are invited. That is, both Hagrid and Ma Costa are inherently comforting and reliable figures, as well as notably genderbent.

Unlike some other orphaned literary protagonists, Lyra’s parents live, but are either non-present or malevolent figures, depending on the circumstances in the text. Further, while both characters are introduced early on in the text, neither is revealed to be Lyra’s parent until much later. Lyra’s ‘uncle’ Lord Asriel and her mother Marisa Coulter are two powerful figures in the events of the novel, and their primary goal rather than parenting is to obtain more power. As a result, Lyra is instead parented by various surrogates throughout *The Golden Compass*: “Left without conventional protectors, and caught willy-nilly in the larger struggle among powers that have no respect for life and certainly no regard for children, Lyra must find alternative providers of nurture” (Rutledge 124). In her earliest years, while being raised in Jordan College, Lyra experiences visits from the nomadic gyptians, “who lived in canal boats, came and went with the spring and autumn fairs” (GC 32). It is with the gyptians that the first instance of a strong and positive female model for Lyra is introduced, because up until this point she has only been

disciplined and parented by Lord Asriel and the other men of Jordan College. This female Egyptian is Ma Costa:

It was a mighty voice, a woman's voice, but a woman with lungs of brass and leather. Lyra looked around for her at once because this was Ma Costa, who had clouted Lyra dizzy on two occasions but given her hot gingerbread on three, and whose family was noted for the grandeur and sumptuousness of their boat. They were princes among Egyptians, and Lyra admired Ma Costa greatly, but she intended to be wary of her for some time yet... (GC 48)

This matriarch of a family of "princes" is a unique surrogate to Lyra because she is a presence that is seen both in Oxford and later on in the text when Lyra has left the city and is in the midst of her adventure. It is her son, Tony Costa that invites Lyra to stay with them after rescuing her from an attack by men with nets:

She saw a stout powerful woman with grey hair, sitting at a table with a paper. Lyra recognized her as Billy's mother.

'Who's this?' The woman said. 'That's never Lyra?' [...]

'Come here, Child,' said Ma Costa.

Lyra obeyed, half happy, half apprehensive, for Ma Costa had hands like bludgeons [...]

But the boat mother set her hands on either side of Lyra's face, and her daemon, a hawk, bent gently to lick Pantalaimon's wildcat head. Then Ma Costa folded her great arms around Lyra and pressed her to her breast. (GC 92-93)

This description demonstrates how Ma Costa, like Hagrid, embodies both genders. She represents maternity by providing Lyra with warm milk and other comforts, but the description of her voice and hands in particular exudes the traditional masculinity of strength, discipline, and

leadership. As a result, an invited space once again provides the sort of household that the young protagonist could traditionally have been raised in. During Lyra's stay with the gyptians

there was real work to do, and Ma Costa made sure she did it. She cleaned and swept, she peeled potatoes and made tea, she greased the propeller shaft bearings, she kept the weed trap clear over the propeller, she washed dishes, she opened lock gates, she tied the boat up and mooring posts, and within a couple of days she was as much at home with this new life as if she'd been born gyptian. (GC 98)

This commitment to domestic work is also the first instance of Lyra portrayed in such a role. Until this point in the text, she has only played the role of a dirty, boyish child. Under Ma Costa's influence Lyra expresses behaviors more traditionally assigned to a girl her age. Despite assimilating to life under Ma Costa's roof, this space remains only invited. Lyra does not truly belong there, as she learns when Ma Costa tells her that she is "a fire person" while the gyptians are "water people all through" (GC 100). And while this space is comforting and a home unlike Lyra has ever had before because there is a mother watching her for once, the gyptian boat is not snug. It is certainly small, tight, and enclosed, and it is guarded by the gyptians. It is well-designed, a safe-haven, and remote as it is off the beaten path on land. Like Harry, Lyra is given sustenance and care in the self-sufficient home, and she embraces the simplicity of a life of chores and being mothered. But because of its travels along prominent waterways the gyptian boat is not hidden. Nor is the boat owned by Lyra, despite the level of comfort that she derives from staying in it. As with Hagrid's hut, invited spaces though pleasurable are only temporary and Lyra must eventually leave the maternal comfort of the gyptian boat in order to go to the north with John Faa and his men. This fact further supports the quotation stated previously that genderlessness is a temporary reprieve from gendered oppression, because when leaving the

security provided by Ma Costa, Lyra must fight to be recognized as a worthwhile member of John Faa's quest, not only because of her age, but because of her gender. By having to leave the invited space, especially to embark on an all-male adventure, Lyra's loss of childhood innocence and lack of snugness is made all the more prominent.

## VI. Forbidden Space

Opposite the invited spaces which fulfill all but two of the eleven snug attributes are the forbidden spaces within the texts. These are spaces which Harry and Lyra are incredibly curious about but ultimately only find harm in pursuing, contributing to the tell-tale proverb that curiosity killed the cat. The Mirror of Erised is one of the most complex instances of space that Harry encounters in *The Sorcerer's Stone*. Primarily this is because the mirror is not exactly an actual space but rather an illusion of space that could exist. I have categorized this space as forbidden for two reasons: first, that Harry is incapable of reaching this space despite his desire to do so, and second because Albus Dumbledore expressly tells Harry "not to go looking for it again" (SS 214). According to Dumbledore's interaction with Harry regarding the mirror, "Men have wasted away before it, entranced by what they have seen, or been driven mad, not knowing if what it shows is real or even possible" (SS 213). This is insight to the influence that a lack of a snug space can have upon a character.

The Mirror offers only two of Griswold's snug qualities because since the space does not exist, most of the attributes are inapplicable to it. It is enclosed, in that the world that Harry sees exists only within the mirror, and it is well-designed as a truly magnificent magical artifact, as well as the object of what Dumbledore admits is "one of [his] more brilliant ideas" (SS 300). As the least snug space, the mirror emphasizes Harry's desire to have, but inability to enter, a space

in which all of Griswold's attributes are provided. The lack of a snug space leaves a character unanchored, with only coping mechanisms that are applied to the circumstances and spaces that they do encounter. "The motif of the world 'behind the looking-glass' has been used in literature and visual arts to depict counter-worlds, parallel worlds, or alternative spatial dimensions. Mirror-worlds epitomize the 'reversed world' (and thus especially fantasized worlds)" (Schmitt and Schmitz-Emans 15). To Harry growing up in the Muggle World, Hogwarts was enough of a fantasy world. Already occupying the first fantastical space, he then encounters in the mirror another fantasy—one in which his parents are alive and with him. This second fantasy, projected by the mirror, is entirely impossible. There is no other world that exists beyond the mirror; it is not a barrier that Harry can pass through in order to reach what he wants. The taunting image in the mirror of Harry standing with his family is then construed as truly pathetic. Schmitt states that "horror and pleasure are close to each other – as flipsides of the same reading-experience. Labyrinths, mirrors, mirrorlabyrinths, and mirror-labyrinth-books provide for spaces of ambiguous and controversial emotions" (Schmitt and Schmitz-Emans 17) which explains not only why Harry is happy as well as sad to see his family, but also why even as Harry returns enraptured to the mirror, night after night, it imposes negative effects upon him:

Harry couldn't eat. He had seen his parents and would be seeing them again tonight. He had almost forgotten about Flamel. It didn't seem important anymore. Who cared what the three-headed dog was guarding? What did it matter if Snape stole it, really? 'Are you alright?' Said Ron. 'You look odd.' (SS 210)

A threat of the disintegration of friendships also seems to come out of Harry's interaction with the mirror. He and Ron push each other to fight for a position in front of it. Harry not only loses his appetite but becomes listless, much to the concern of his friend:

'Want to play chess, Harry?' said Ron.

'No.'

'Why don't we go down and visit Hagrid?'

'No... you go...'

'I know what you're thinking about, Harry, that mirror. Don't go back tonight.'

'Why not?'

'I dunno, I've just got a bad feeling about it... ' (SS 212)

Harry's desire to enter a space that he cannot inhabit, and ruminating over the mere idea of a forbidden space in favor of entering an invited space, such as Hagrid's hut, is what leads Dumbledore to tell Harry "It does not do to dwell on dreams and forget to live" (214). Harry's near-fall to the seduction of the Mirror of Erised speaks of the vulnerability of children and mankind in general, supporting the idea that the lack of a snug space as an anchor or sanctuary for a young protagonist contributes to their loss of childhood innocence.

Lyra also suffers the consequences of wanting entry to a forbidden space. Differently from Harry, she is able to actually enter it. This space is called The Retiring Room and is located within Jordan College itself. Her interaction with the forbidden space is the initial push that leads her to embark on the dangerous adventures that take place in the remainder of the text, and in particular it is where the novel begins. It is interesting that, having been assigned to the college and with a desire to explore beyond it, Lyra also becomes curious about a place located even deeper within the college. But it is because a forbidden space is inherently desirable that led Lyra inward instead of outward on the day that she explored the Retiring room: "She had lived most of her life in the College, but had never seen the Retiring Room before: only Scholars and their guests were allowed in there, and never females. Even the maidservants didn't clean in here.

That was the Butler's job alone" (GC 4). This space is not forbidden because it is impossible to access, but rather because traditionally it is only accessible to a restricted group of people.

Philip Pullman created Jordan College with his own alma mater in mind: "Jordan College occupies the same physical space in Lyra's Oxford as Exeter College occupies in real life. Exeter was where I was an undergraduate many years ago, and I did not see why I should not make my college the grandest of all" (Telegraph). Another source explains that "Jordan College is the leading research institution in the field of experimental theology which, loosely defined, means: quantum physics. But oddly enough, much of the science of *The Golden Compass* is from the late 1800s rather than from the late 1900s or early twenty-first century" (Gresh). If Jordan College reflects the Exeter College of the late 1800s then, this plot takes place roughly around a time when the University was only just allowing women to take some examinations. Certainly however these women would not have been present at an all-male institution such as Exeter. Rather, colleges such as Lady Margaret Hall and Somerville College were established to cater strictly to women in the late 1800s, but they were not admitted as full members of the university, nor were they given degrees. It was not until the late 1900s that traditionally all-male colleges opened their doors to female students for the first time. Exeter in particular, not until 1979. However, it was during a period of University reforms in the mid-1800s and the Royal Commission of 1877 that specifically gave Dons and other members of the Colleges permission to marry and house their wives and families in college with them, as previously all of the educators and fellows of the University were unmarried men, often studying theology (Chance). Lyra may not have been the only child living in an Oxford College, but she would certainly have been a rare and very new concept after centuries of strict tradition.

Despite the allowance of women within college, scholarship would still have been

reserved only for the men, which is why the Retiring Room, a place for the fellows to relax and converse following a meal, would have been strictly off-limits. By entering the forbidden space in the Retiring Room, Lyra does not only cross gender and age barriers in place regarding education and tradition, she is also exposed to deception, death, treason, and other dark concepts that she might have remained ignorant of had she conformed to the forbidden nature of the Retiring Room. Instead, by witnessing an attempt to poison her uncle, viewing research and evidence about the North that included a severed head and other disturbing images, and posing herself in a man's world, Lyra's innocence as a child protagonist is immediately corrupted.

The Retiring Room is not guarded except for by rules that govern entry to it, so as a frequent rule-breaker Lyra was able to access it with no trouble. It is owned by the College and its scholars but as a female child Lyra does not have a claim to it. It is not hidden or remote as it is located at the heart of the College, is not self-sufficient because it is attended to by wait-staff that must enter from outside of it, it is not safe because it is where the Master of the College planned to poison Lord Asriel and it is where Lyra gets in trouble. All in all, like the Mirror of Erised the forbidden Retiring Room possesses only two snug qualities: enclosed and well-designed. There is little to nothing that supports the idea of this forbidden space as snug and therefore it actually does more harm to Lyra than offer any sort of comfort. Instead, because of the knowledge that Lyra gains in the Retiring Room her desire to break free of the assigned limits of Jordan College and Oxford is increased, as can be seen in her demands to her uncle:

‘What’s Dust?’ she said, struggling to stand up after having been cramped for so long.

‘Nothing to do with you’

‘It *is* to do with me. [...] Can I see the man’s head?’

‘Don’t be disgusting. [...] Do as you’re told and go to bed.’



‘But where are *you* going?’

‘Back to the North. I’m leaving in ten minutes.’

‘Can I come?’ (GC 25)

Like Dumbledore’s warning to Harry to avoid the Mirror of Erised, it seems as though elder characters in *The Golden Compass* also sought to prevent Lyra’s exposure to the forbidden space that she found in The Retiring Room. The Master of the College informs the Librarian in a private conversation that he wished for the opportunity to explain these complex matters to Lyra “in a simple way” so that “she would have been safe for a little longer” (GC 29 and 28). In both texts then, older characters desired to shelter the young protagonists from the difficulties that are associated with exposure to these forbidden spaces. The older characters in the texts are aware of the innocence of the children and seek to protect it. However, their failure to shield the young protagonists from the dangers of forbidden space, or the failure to provide a snug space instead make the children vulnerable to the loss of that innocence.

## VII. Transitional Space

In addition to the spaces that the characters occupy for any duration of time, there are categories of space that I have called transitional, as the characters pass through them in order to travel between more substantial examples of space. These transitional spaces are significant to the characters in the texts because it is the interaction with transitional space that prepares or shapes the characters for what they will be when they do occupy other spaces. In order to arrive at Hogwarts, Harry takes a journey along the Hogwarts Express. He passes through the barrier between platforms 9 and 10 at Kings Cross station and transitions between the Muggle and Wizarding Worlds. To access the platform, Harry has to make a deliberate effort to pass through

the barrier. He is cautioned by Mrs. Weasley that he might be nervous, and is provided with advice needed in order to accomplish the task: "All you have to do is walk straight at the barrier between platforms nine and ten. Don't stop and don't be scared you'll crash into it, that's very important. Best do it at a bit of a run if you're nervous" (93). With the encouraging support of the Weasley family he transitions easily.

It is not known why not stopping and being scared is such an important factor, but it supports the idea that intent and desire to enter a space is significant. If a person did not wholeheartedly wish to reach the platform, assumedly they would run into difficulties by stopping or being afraid. In this way, Harry is given an opportunity that he never had with his cupboard: the decision to want to enter a space without fear or hesitation. This is one of the first and most important acts of volition that Harry makes as a member of the Wizarding World.

As Harry transports himself beyond the boundaries of the real world, between tracks 9 and 10, one can viscerally feel his body brace against the shock, his mind unbelieving, as he breaks through what appears to be a solid barrier, as the imagination may seem to do with real life problems. The school and its various accoutrements epitomize the imagination of childhood and the real concerns of children. (Natov 318)

By providing Harry with the coping strategy to run (of his own volition) toward a space rather than shy away from it, Mrs. Weasley offers a source of empowerment by which Harry shapes his character and journey out of childhood. Therefore, spaces of transition are important because they provide the character with experiences that are employed when they dwell in other more permanent spaces. Transitioning physically between spaces also reflects the transitions that a child encounters as they grow up. By attending Hogwarts at age eleven, on the cusp of puberty, Harry enters an entirely new world. This is a trope common to children's fantasy literature,

wherein characters

enter new places that up until now have been an invisible part of a parallel, underground culture. These new places are much more than mere settings: they both metaphorically enact the strangeness and incomprehensibility of the protagonists' every day worlds, and allow the children to gain mastery of the new one. The strangeness is incorporated into the familiar, and through this mechanism the child protagonist comes of age.

(Feingold 130)

Although a transitional space like Platform 9<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> does not adhere to Griswold's characteristics of a snug space, Harry's ultimate coming of age in *The Sorcerer's Stone* can be seen by observing the difference in the manner in which he travels into and then back out of the barrier at the beginning and end of the story. First having had to conquer the barrier alone, he returns accompanied by friends: "He, Ron, and Hermione passed through the gateway together" (SS 308). Harry transitions back into the place that he grew up with friends at his side and merges into the Muggle World "carrying an owl in a cage in a station full of ordinary people" (SS 308-309). This is a demonstration of the change that has occurred within Harry as his innocence is stripped away throughout the text. Although the more traditional model of growth would be one in which a child must leave behind childish friendships to embark on his own, Harry's life is actually the opposite. Having grown up isolated, the corrosion of his childhood innocence takes place throughout the text until Harry comes out on the other side, now extraordinary among the ordinary, having chosen his own friends and family to continue learning and adventuring with.

By the conclusion of her text, Lyra has also been made aware of another world that runs parallel to the one she grew up in. Like Harry's knowledge of magic she learns about the concept of some sort of ability or substance called Dust that is still very much a mystery to her. In order

to continue exploring this otherness, and out of an extreme distrust for the people she should have been able to trust, Lyra feels no other option but to leave her world and enter a new one. This scene is extraordinarily similar to Harry's decision to transition through the barrier at Platform 9<sup>3/4</sup>. Harry, having spent his whole life being told that "magic" was a foul word and growing up with a family that considered themselves to be "perfectly normal, thank you very much" (SS 1) took the first opportunity that he had to delve into a world that is steeped in magic and essentially anything but normal. Also like Harry, who was abandoned at the train station to find his way on his own, Lyra is duped and left behind by her own father, leaving her in a sort of limbo where she will eventually make her way toward a portal to a different world. It is at this moment that Lyra has a conversation with Pantalaimon:

'We've heard them all talk about Dust, and they're so afraid of it, and you know what? We *believed* them, even though we could see that what they were doing was wicked and evil and wrong... we thought Dust must be bad too, because they were grown up and they said so. But what if it isn't? What if it's--'

She said breathlessly, 'Yeah! What if it's really *good*...'

She looked at him and saw his green wildcat eyes ablaze with her own excitement. She felt dizzy, as if the whole world were turning beneath her. If Dust were a *good* thing... If it were to be sought and welcomed and cherished...

'We could look for it too, Pan!' she said. (GC 350)

The decision to search for Dust, despite the danger, is a necessary action for Lyra to take.

According to Ruth Feingold, "children's texts tend to focus on the development of the self: frequently following the contours of the *Bildungsroman*, they represent the metaphorical passage of their young protagonists through a process of growth and acculturation. This metaphorical

passage, in turn, is often reinforced by a parallel movement through space" (Feingold, 129). It is this kind of *Bildungsroman* that contributes to the loss of childhood innocence in Lyra. It is Lyra's actions in her movement through or between spaces that is a manifestation of her growth and the change that she has experienced over the course of the text so far. This idea is emphasized by the fact that the dead body of Lyra's longtime childhood friend is the last thing that Lyra holds before she transitions through the hole in the sky:

Roger's body lay still in her arms. She let him down gently. [...]

She turned away. Behind them lay pain and death and fear; ahead of them lay doubt, and danger, and fathomless mysteries. But they weren't alone. So Lyra and her daemon turned away from the world they were born in, and looked toward the sun, and walked into the sky. (GC 351)

With Roger's death Lyra's childhood is officially ended. She hasn't yet reached maturity, as Pantalaimon is still a daemon that can change shape, but her childhood innocence is certainly gone. Teetering between child and adolescent or even adult, the bravery exuded by the choice to walk toward that which is unknown is a self-sacrificing, vulnerable theme that exists throughout this text and speaks of the lack of security that the young protagonist has. Like the barrier at Platform 9 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> this transitional space cannot be characterized as snug because it is only a means through which the character moves between other spaces. Instead, Lyra's exit through a hole in the sky is the moment in which there is a drastic shift in Lyra's character. By concluding the text with such a scene, the subsequent novel will have to feature a Lyra that is quite different from the one that was introduced at the beginning of *The Golden Compass*. In the same way, *The Sorcerer's Stone* sequels begin with a wizard much different than the boy from the cupboard.

## VIII. Conclusion

*The Sorcerer's Stone* and *The Golden Compass* are similar texts in that the young protagonists embody the qualities of the classic romantic hero, leaving behind unfulfilling upbringings in a quest for knowledge, adventure, and identity. In studying the instances of space that these characters encounter, I was able to find even further similarities between the two by developing a greater understanding of the importance of space in the texts. In both novels the character enters and exits a variety of spaces and directly derives a particular understanding or experience. Having been sequestered away in the spaces to which they were assigned, Harry and Lyra branch out over the course of respective their novels, choosing to enter or being invited to new spaces that, while providing new knowledge and experiences, still fail to fulfil a deeper desire for something that Jerry Griswold claims to be inherently childish—a snug space. Possessing the courage to experience a forbidden space not only shapes the characters by revealing desires and curiosities to themselves, but also exposes the underlying plot and drive of the texts to the reader. Further, the characters come to learn that even natural spaces that offer a degree of comfort and security can fall victim to wicked and foreign forces. This experience of vulnerability and insecurity contributes to Harry and Lyra's expedited journey into adolescence. Lastly, the characters' movement through transitional spaces offer demonstrations of character development and transformation that set the stage for further spatial encounters. In this way, Harry and Lyra, unable to settle into a space that can be truly categorized as 'snug,' and armed with the skills and prior experience needed to face the unknown, are forced out of the period of childhood innocence and lay the framework for two series that rocked the genre of fantasy fiction.

## Works Cited

- "Barbarian, n. and adj." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, December 2014. Web.
- Branden, Nathaniel. *The Psychology of Self-esteem: A Revolutionary Approach to Self-understanding That Launched a New Era in Modern Psychology*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001. Print.
- Casakin, HP and Kreitler, S. "Place Attachment as a Function of Meaning Assignment." *Open Environmental Sciences*. Vol 2. Pages 80-87. 2008.
- Cecire, Maria Sachiko. Field, Hannah. Finn, Kavita Mudan. Roy, Malini. *Space and Place in Children's Literature, 1789 to the Present*. Ashgate Publishing Ltd. 2015. Google eBook.
- Chance, Eleanor, Christina Colvin, Janet Cooper, C J Day, T G Hassall, Mary Jessup and Nesta Selwyn. "Modern Oxford." *A History of the County of Oxford: vol 4. The City of Oxford*. Ed. Alan Crossley and C R Elrington. London: Victoria County History, 1979. 181-259. *British History Online*. <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/oxon/vol4/pp181-259>>
- "Claustrophobia and Anxiety: Causes and Solution." *Calm Clinic*. Ed. Rachel Ramos and Ryan Rivera. <<http://www.calmclinic.com/anxiety/symptoms/claustrophobia>>.
- Duane, Anna Mae. *Children's Table: Childhood Studies and the Humanities*. Athens, GA, USA: University of Georgia Press, 2013. ProQuest ebrary. Web.
- Feingold, Ruth. "Mapping the Interior: Place, Self, and Nation in the Dreamhunter Duet." *Space and Place in Children's Literature, 1789 to the Present*. By Maria Sachiko Cecire, Hannah Field, Kavita Mudan Finn, and Malini Roy. Ashgate Publishing Ltd. 2015. Google eBook.

Gresh, Lois H. *Exploring Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials*. New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2007. Print.

Griswold, Jerome. *Feeling like a Kid: Childhood and Children's Literature*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2006. Print.

Hines, Maude. "Second Nature: Daemons and Ideology in *The Golden Compass*." *His Dark Materials Illuminated: Critical Essays on Philip Pullman's Trilogy*. By Millicent Lenz. Detroit: Wayne State UP, 2005. Print.

Natov, Roni. "Harry Potter and the Extraordinariness of the Ordinary." *The Ivory Tower and Harry Potter: Perspectives on a Literary Phenomenon*. By Lana A. Whited. Columbia: U of Missouri, 2002. 125-39. Print.

Pond, Julia. "A Story of the Exceptional: Fate and Free Will in the Harry Potter Series." *Children's Literature* 38 (2010): 181-206. *Project MUSE*. Web.

Pullman, Philip. "Dreaming of Spires." *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media Ltd., 27 July 2002. Web <<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2002/jul/27/booksforchildrenandteenagers.philippullman>>.

Pullman, Philip. *The Golden Compass*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996. Print.

Rowling, J. K., and Mary GrandPré. *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. New York, NY: Arthur A. Levine, 2007. Print.

Rowling, J. K., and Mary GrandPré. *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. New York: A.A. Levine, 1998. Print.



Rowling, J. K. "New From JK Rowling: Hatstall." *Pottermore: A Unique Online Harry Potter Experience from J.K. Rowling*. Pottermore Publishing, <<http://www.pottermore.com/en-us/book1/chapter7/moment2/hatstall>>.

Rutledge, Amelia A. "Reconfiguring Nurture in Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*. Summer 33.2 (1998): 119-34. Project MUSE. Web.

Schmitt, Mark, and Monika Schmitz-Emans, trans. "Mirror and Labyrinth." *Spaces of Desire-Spaces of Transition: Space and Emotions in Modern Literature*. Ed. Gertrud Lehnert and Stephanie Siewert. Peter Lang AG, 2011. 15-27. ProQuest eBook.

Tucker, Nicholas. *Darkness Visible: Inside the World of Philip Pullman*. London: Wizard, 2003. Print.

Vassilopoulou, Panayiota. Ganeri, Jonardon. "The Geography of Shadows: Souls and Cities in P. Pullman's *His Dark Materials*." *Philosophy and Literature* 35.2 (2011): 269-281. *Project MUSE*.