



A Wizard of Their Age: Critical Essays from the Harry Potter Generation

By Cecilia Konchar Farr

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A collection of student essays that captures the passionate engagement their generation brings to the Harry Potter phenomenon.

A Wizard of Their Age began when the students in Cecilia Konchar Farr's "Six Degrees of Harry Potter" course at St. Catherine University kept finding errors in the available scholarship. These students had been reading Harry Potter for their entire literate lives, and they demanded more attention to the details they found significant. "We can do better than this," they said.

Konchar Farr, two undergraduate teaching assistants, and five student editors decided to test that hypothesis. After issuing a call for contributions, they selected fifteen thoughtful academic essays by students from across the country. These essays examine the Harry Potter books from a variety of perspectives, including literary, historical, cultural, gender, mythological, psychological, theological, and genetic—there is even a nursing care plan for Tom Riddle. Interspersed among the essays are brief vignettes entitled "My Harry Potter Story," where students write about their personal encounters with the novels.

Although a quick Internet search yields a dazzling number of books about Harry Potter, few are as deeply invested or insightful as *A Wizard of Their Age*. Written and edited by—and for—members of the Harry Potter generation, these essays demonstrate this generation's passionate engagement with the Harry Potter phenomenon and provide numerous critical insights into the individual novels and the series as a whole.

"This compilation of essays provides an excellent introduction to a range of themes and deliberations that often occupy dedicated Potterphiles, from genetics and mathematics to history, politics, and psychology. These multifaceted reflections both complement previous publications and offer unique contributions to the Potterverse knowledge base." — Danielle Gagne, Alfred University

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Editorial Review

Review

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"A Wizard of Their Age" is a considerable read. Doing full justice to topics already well established in the Potter literary landscape, the book offers additional insights that are sometimes weighty and sometimes charmingly glib. With the myriad volumes of sharp and insightful scholarship concerning Harry Potter already written, one might wonder at first glance whether a book authored by undergraduates could possibly shine. The answer is a resounding yes the authors within "A Wizard of Their Age" showcase a devotion to and intimacy with the Harry Potter canon that results in a genuine, thought-provoking, and ultimately refreshing work. "Children's Literature Association Quarterly"

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About the Author

Cecilia Konchar Farr is Professor of English and Women's Studies at St. Catherine University. She is the author of *Reading Oprah: How Oprah's Book Club Changed the Way America Reads* and the coeditor (with Jaime Harker) of *The Oprah Affect: Critical Essays on Oprah's Book Club*, both published by SUNY Press.

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