# Harry potter and culture industry

Literature, British Literature

GAYATRI HAMAND HARRY POTTER and Culture Industry Harry Potter — this name is familiar with all the age groups in the world today and the reason behind it is well known to all of us. The Harry Potter book series written by a single mother J. K. Rowling, who wouldn't have imagined in her wildest dreams that a story she thought of while travelling in a train, would gain so much popularity. So much so that her character and her name would become a household name across the globe! J. K. Rowling Harry Potter books came into the market in 1998. The first part called Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone gained a lot of popularity with the kids and slowly with the adults too. Due to its huge success it was converted into a motion picture as well and so the first movie when on to release in the year 2001. Subsequently the other parts (books) were out in the market and the movies started releasing as well. Of course it was after the stupendous success of the initial books that J. K. Rowling was encouraged to write on the further parts. So what is it in Harry Potter that attracts so much attention? Or what is it that makes people want to read a 600-700 pages long book again and again. This isn't just a single book we are talking about, but every book in the series is read all over again by people repeatedly.  These books tell us the story of an orphan, Harry who lives with his aunt Petunia and uncle Vernon, and not to forget his huge sized cousin Dudely with a nut sized brain. He leads a miserable life until the he turns 11, when he realizes that he is actually a wizard. He is admitted to the Horgwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. So follows his journey of magical experiences. Very unique but impressionable characters are introduced in the book in Rowling's own style. The books detailing his experiences at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and

Wizardry have bred passion, obsession, creativity, and a new or renewed interest in reading throughout the world. JK Rowling has created an elaborate cast of characters and an environment for them to inhabit that appeals to adults and children alike. The fantasy aspect of the wizarding world expands the imagination, and transports the mind to new and exciting places; introducing magic opens new realms of possibilities within the plots. Anything could happen. Her intricate stories contain strands of the believable and unbelievable, altering the predictability that readers commonly encounter and endure in fiction. Harry Potter Movie Poster These factors contributed to the " Harry Potter Phenomena" which actually swept across the world as soon as the movie series became huge hits! Young children started identifying with Harry's shy but brave character. The terrifying Lord Voldemort and how he is after Harry's life, after having murdered his parents when Harry was a baby. The innocence of school life along with the mixture of magic, hit children's minds like the Magic Bullet Theory, wherein, the information seen by audiences hits their minds like bullets and penetrates within. At the same time, the themes driving the stories resonate with classic literature, offering mature readers tales that wear like a comfortable pair of shoes, while introducing younger readers to concepts they will encounter throughout their lives. The main theme of the series is the subject of many theories, including, but not limited to: good versus evil, prejudice, love, death, sacrifice, friendship and loyalty. In actuality, all of these elements contribute to the timeless nature of the stories. As and when the books started getting really famous with a specific target audience, the first big leap that was taken to expand the entire Harry Potter concept were the

movies. When the movies were made they went on to click with the younger as well as the older audiences. One part after the other, the movies became darker slowly loosing the initial happy and bright appearance. They now started seeming more " real" and " practical". There was a feel of " there is more to Harry Potter" than what you expect. The covers of all books started having two versions, one which was bright and the other dark and mysterious so that the books would appeal to adults as well. Slowly there was Harry Potter everywhere! There was Culture Industry starting to take place because of the entire Harry Potter concept. By Culture Industry we mean that suddenly a particular thing which is extremely popular is produced in front of us in many different ways. It is " claimed" by the respective producers that their product is unique and adds more to a particular franchise. This concept focuses on media and marketing. Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno define the Culture Industry through its focus on the media and mass marketing. This industry is unique in that it does not reflect economic processes and essentially becomes homogenous; thus, variation is meaningless.  The Culture Industry is characterized by three specific ideas: Monopoly, Mass Production, and Technology. So there is lesser control over production of certain products and lesser control in the market. Hence when a certain product is newly launched in the market, people rush to purchase it and explore that particular product. So what happens when the novelty of that product wears off? Simple, another product is launched in the market and promoted on its " unique" properties. But the actual catch here is that every product is almost similar to one another, but it is sold as being different from the previous one. Hence people

are urged to buy them. This also gives them another product in place of the previous one. This is termed as " Pseudo Singularity" rightly meaning false singularity. This is how the culture industry also called as Mass Industry works. When Culture Industry meets something like Harry Potter, what is created is a huge successful mass industry which becomes immensely lucrative and popular. Also when the subject is like Harry, who mainly appeals to people due to his emotional appeal, his belief in friendship, love and braveness. These are the factors on which various products apart from movies like merchandise are publicized to people. There are Harry Potter theme based amusement parks, the costumes, competitions to test your HP knowledge, digital games and websites like Pottermore where you actually live Harry's life. You are sorted into different houses just like in the book and you face different adventures like Harry. There are things taken from the book which will entertain and amuse people. Like the broom used to play the game Quidditch again an imaginary concept of a game like football but you are actually flying on broomsticks. Harry Potter wands, cards, hats, glasses and the famous scar which Harry have all became commodities and we are expected to purchase them. The main objective here is to make people feel like Harry himself. Examples of various Harry Potter Merchandise So even if J. K. Rowling has completed her set of books, producers still want to reap the profits from this subject. Hence, even after she officially completed her books, due to tremendous response and popular demand she wrote another book where people know what happens after Harry defeats Lord Voldemort and finishes his studies from Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. So much is the popularity of Harry Potter. Not only Harry, but other main

characters like Hermoine and Ron (Harry's best friends), Professor Dumbledore, Hagrid, Sirius Black etc have gained a connect with the audiences. There is a feeling generated that " my best friend to needs to be like Ron" or " I wish I could study magic". This feeling of longingness is usurped but the producers to contribute more to the culture industry! These feelings are then used by the people to generate more and more profits, hence trips to the castle where Harry Potter was shot are arranged. Though a particular location is not used continuously in the movies, they keep changing, but so much is the craze that people travel all the way to Scotland just to see where their Hero spent this school days. All in all a different culture itself is created and we don't realize it. Such is the nature culture industry and it prevails n today's world to a much greater extent. The main feeling of Love always triumphs over the evil makes Harry Potter what it is. I would like to end my putting in a famous citation in the book- It is our choices that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities.   ~J. K. Rowling,  Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, 1999, spoken by the character Albus Dumbledore This is one of the most famous quotes from the series and rightly, it is our choices that make us who we are. People chose to love Harry Potter even though the entire concept being imaginary because it has appealed to their hearts. It is this emotional factor which makes us give in to the ' market and producers' but in the end, they are our choices, aren't they? Bibliography: voices. yahoo. com, Harry Potter Books and Movies, quotegarden. com, Images from: celebrateexpress. com Acknowledgements: I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Meera for letting us have the freedom to chose our own topic and connecting it with our Culture

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