My senior thesis examines the style of J. K. Rowling’s Harry Potter series and attempts to explain why the books are so popular. Some critics suggest Rowling’s books are popular because they provide an easy escape rather than because they exemplify good writing. However, my paper testifies that the reason for the books’ popularity has to do with Rowling’s ability to write in multiple layers and to combine various genres successfully. These characteristics of her writing work together to attract readers of all ages and of various reading interests.

My paper also suggests that Rowling’s Harry Potter series should be studied in the college classroom. It has been tried and proven successful. The books should not simply be relegated to the category of popular fiction; the series deserves serious literary study. The popularity of the books may be what has brought them to the attention of critics and readers, but that fact should not discredit them in the literary world where they should be recognized for the great literature they are.