

Identity, Rhetoric and Behavior: The Contradictory Communities of Wizard Rock

by

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„CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

The concept of a musical community displaying conflicting behaviors and rhetoric is not uncommon. In all human communities, there is a gap between rhetoric and behavior; this is even more true in communities that feature highly idealistic rhetoric.

In this ethnography, using primary evidence from published interviews, interactive on-line “insider” blogs, websites, and other fora, my own collected media, and published critical and academic analysis, I will argue that there is a clear disparity between idealistic rhetoric, actions, and perceptions in the previously unexamined Harry Potter wizard rock community. This disparity is evident through constructions of community and participation, social and political activism, attitudes regarding gender and sexuality, and individual and shared identities as they exist within the wizard rock community.

Having been a personal participant in other areas of the larger Harry Potter Fandom for the last decade, my exposure to and interest in the wizard rock community came naturally. I was not enthusiastic about the genre at first, and actually considered it to be void of technically skilled musicians and any musical value whatsoever. Fortunately, I was incorrect in this assumption. Through my interactions with wizard rock community members, I soon came to realize that there was significance and validity to this book-based music which displayed a set of aesthetic priorities to which

I had been previously unexposed. Although the musical scene formed when I was still in high school, I was in graduate school before I attended my first wizard rock show. The community's surface inclusivity inspired me to form my own wizard rock band. This later granted me convenient access to situations I would not have otherwise experienced because of their occasional, obscured, exclusive nature. Access to these situations, such as after-parties, sound-checks, and the wizard rock multi-band event booking and planning process allowed me to see the disparity between community rhetoric and behavior more clearly.¹ My personal experience and time spent existing within the wizard rock community, and the Harry Potter fan community as a whole, has given me unique perspective and insight into the relationship between the rhetoric and behavior.

This research will provide insights into the under-examined wizard rock sub-community, and also into participatory music communities. It will address music as a tool for the construction of Identity, Gender, and Community. It will also attend to musical semiotics, intertextuality, and music as a signifier of aesthetic and philosophical priorities. This research will discuss the appropriated values that are inherent in a fandom-based musical community. Wizard rock is largely a virtual, web-based, and non-proximate community with unique methods for the invention of a kind of "ritual" space. Since the primary method of interaction for the community is through use of the internet and social networking facilities such as Facebook,

¹ I would like to make a point from the beginning that this document and my research are not intended to harm or cause any damage to any of my informants, or any members of the wizard rock community as individuals.

MySpace, and Twitter, a community space is often imagined. I will also use the music itself to articulate the difference between the expressed ethos and values of the wizard rock community versus the community's actions.

This thesis does assume a basic level of familiarity with the concept and premise of the Harry Potter series, as this document is not about the literature itself, but a portion of the fan culture surrounding it.

Literature Review

As there is little to no published academic research on the wizard rock phenomenon, the bulk of my research is based on primary source material, especially “insider” documents ranging from social networking status updates to journalism and blogs to published accounts. The author Erin Pyne has contributed several books about wizard rock and the wizard rock community. These, however, are often collections of quotations, interviews, or chronology, and offer little academically interpretive material. It is for this reason that I have chosen not to discuss Pyne's writing in this literature review. Her work will, however, be cited throughout this document. A similar, more detailed resource is by fandom author Melissa Anelli, who has been a chief staff member of The Leaky Cauldron website (one of the most reliable Harry Potter news and community sites on the internet) and a personal acquaintance of the author J.K. Rowling. Anelli published *Harry, A History*, a memoir-style recollection of her experience in the community up until around the time of the release of the final

Harry Potter book in 2007.² Although wizard rock is only one of many fandom-specific subjects included in Anelli's text, it is given one complete chapter and mentioned occasionally throughout the prose detailing Anelli's involvement with wizard rock musicians. Her idealized perspective, which exemplifies the rhetoric used to portray the wizard rock community's image and her authoritative status within that community, is consistently evident. This idealized perspective is Anelli's personal account of her experiences in the community. Many of her readers and other community members have a contrary experience. A lot of the wizard rock material in Anelli's book is centered on her friendship with Paul DeGeorge, senior member of the sometimes-disputed first "wrock" band Harry and the Potters. Anelli toured with Harry and the Potters in 2007 prior to the release of the final Harry Potter book and when Wizard Rock was at its first popularity peak; consequently her perspective remains invaluable.

What is not present in Anelli's book is any kind of unbiased or critical analysis. While she occasionally alludes to both positive and negative aspects of her experience, it is for the most part a fan's recollection, which is why I have chosen to treat it more as a memoir than a critical history. It is, however, the most acclaimed book within the community by a fandom author, has been purchased and read by a majority of wizard rock participants, and is very reflective of their own experiences and points of view.

² Melissa Anelli. *Harry, a History: The True Story of a Boy Wizard, His Fans, and Life Inside the Harry Potter Phenomenon*. (New York: Pocket Books, 2008).

In this same mold are also two video sources, one produced by insider participants and another by an independent documentary filmmaker. The first, Megan and Mallory Schuyler's *The Wizard Rockumentary*, was released around the same time as Anelli's book, and captures the wizard rock community prior to the release of the final Harry Potter book installment in 2007.³ At this same peak in popularity, the Schuylers not only provide concert footage with audience interaction, but a multitude of interviews with some of the better-known community musicians reluctantly referred to by insiders as the "Top Tier." Their topics include body image, musical aesthetic priorities, and the community's "do-it-yourself" mentality. The "Rockumentary" (as it is affectionately called) is an acceptable resource for one entering the community or interested in avocational involvement, and appears to be intended as a fanbase-to-fanbase entity. The focus, like Anelli's book, is on the positive, emotionally-involving side of the community with little to no unfavorable perspective and critique. While this viewpoint is typical for this kind of source, it presents a problem for researchers because of this absence of critical perspective. The "Rockumentary," while representing all "Tiers," it doesn't allude to the smaller bands' struggle for recognition and only mentions the vast number of existing bands in passing. This could be a product of the period in wizard rock's history in which The "Rockumentary" was made, but as the film is still a significant source for many wizard rock participants, it is missing some crucial information. What the film's audience sees is the rhetoric that is carefully crafted by the leaders of the community.

³ Megan and Mallory Shuyler, *The Wizard Rockumentary: A Movie About Rocking and Rowling*. (Spokane: GryffinClaw Productions LLC, 2008).

Josh Koury's 2007 film *We Are Wizards* was released before the "Rockumentary" and Anelli's book.⁴ The film does not focus specifically on wizard rock, but incorporates it as a part of a greater fandom community. This film primarily centers around participants along the East Coast of the United States, instead of trying to make generalizations on a national scale. The perspectives put forth in Koury's film are very different from those by the Shuylers or Anelli. It appears as though the filmmakers are outsiders to the community seeking to show other outsiders all of the components of the smaller sub-community. The film is distributed on Hulu.com, which means that it is accessible and free of cost to anyone who would like to see it, whereas the "Rockumentary" must be purchased from the Schuylers directly or watched illegally, and Anelli's book from most booksellers worldwide.⁵ While a few lesser-known personalities from the community are present in Koury's film, it is still fairly biased toward the icons of wizard rock. This bias is most likely reflective of the date and period in wizard rock's history, as it is seen in all three sources, and suggests that access to these smaller bands is harder to gain. The information contained within Koury's film also reveals ways in which the Wizard Rock movement is viewed by outsiders (for example, the extreme religious right). Although those perspectives include the Harry Potter fan community as a whole, they apply to the smaller Wizard Rock movement by default.

⁴ Joshua Koury, *We are Wizards*. (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Underground Films, 2007).

⁵ "We Are Wizards", *Hulu.com*, November 14, 2008 <http://www.hulu.com/watch/62149/we-are-wizards> (Accessed June 12, 2009).

Because there is so little formal research existing and published on the wizard rock phenomenon, I have made use of extensive discussion with two of my colleagues who are currently attempting to fill similar research voids on the topic. Jennifer Terrell and Lauren Cook are both Harry Potter Fandom insiders currently doing academic work with the wizard rock community. Terrell is a doctoral student of Informatics at Indiana University at Bloomington, and Cook is a Journalism and Sociology major at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, Scotland. Their work contains key statistical and sociological information about the community and insider perceptions. While their work contains no musical information and instead focuses on community member interaction and involvement from a non-musical perspective, Cook and Terrell's long-term involvement with the community and their attention to both positive and negative facets provides an interdisciplinary perspective for my own research.

In addition to insider documents and community specific literature, I have had to look to other subject areas for parallel trends. These documents can be sorted into three categories: Music and Fandom, Intertextuality and Semiology, and Comparable Community Dynamics.

There are three articles regarding fandom that were most significant to this study. The first of these is from 2009 and by Marsha Orgeron, and discusses fandom in the age of the movie magazine.⁶ Orgeron moves through various different means of fandom community participation in the early part of the 20th Century. While the time period of focus is before the conception of the Harry Potter or wizard rock

⁶ Melissa Orgeron, "'You are Invited to Participate.' Interactive Fandom in the Age of the Movie Magazine." *Journal of Film and Video* 61/3 (Fall 2009): 3-23.

communities and has nothing noticeably relating to music, there are still some similarities concerning fan interaction. Orgeron addresses fan writing, the perception of celebrity, and the desire to participate. All three of these ideas are present in the wizard rock community.

The second of these articles is Elana Shefrin's 2004 "*Lord of the Rings, Star Wars, and Participatory Fandom: Mapping New Congruencies between the Internet and Media Entertainment Culture.*"⁷ While this article also does not have much to do with music, Shefrin does make observations that are relevant to my own research. One of these points is the connection between the entertainment media and the Internet. The other is the type of Fandoms Shefrin chose to focus on: participatory fantasy and science fiction communities. The article was written after the birth of the initial wizard rock genre and community and represents many ideas that are still very present, such as the difference between the franchise and fan community output, the importance of online participation to the community, and the effect the Internet has on "off-line" community interaction.

The third and last of the most significant articles discussing music and fandom that I chose to include is Peter deVries' "Listen to the Fans," published by the Music Education National Conference in 2004.⁸ While this article is primarily directed to using popular music fandom to the teacher's advantage in a classroom, I still found many of deVries' insights directly relevant to the study of wizard rock. Enthusiasm,

⁷ Elana Shefrin, "Lord of the Rings, Star Wars, and Participatory Fandom: Mapping New Congruencies between the Internet and Media Entertainment Culture." *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 21/3 (Sept. 2004): 261-281.

⁸ Peter deVries, "Listen to the Fans." *Music Educators Journal* 91/2 (Nov. 2004): 25-28.

compulsion, and individually-perceived musical value are all evident when researching the relationship of music and fandom.

In his 2009 article “Strategic Intertextuality in Three of John Lennon’s Late Beatles Songs,”⁹ Mark Spicer addresses the ways in which musical meaning can be created beyond the text and through musical reference and quotation. He also examines the ways in which these achieved meanings realize a secondary purpose and social commentary. While the article does not address wizard rock specifically, these same kinds of musical and textual ideas are present throughout the genre and are actively responsible for helping to create community rhetoric and opinion. Much of the expressed ethos from within the wizard rock community is spawned or supported by the music itself, and many of Spicer’s observations are directly relevant to my own research. I chose Spicer over other researchers in intertextuality because I found the style and technical aspects of his writing, such as articulating his points clearly and accessibly, to be most valuable.

Parallel musical communities are also important to this study, considering the lack of formal published research written directly on the subject of wizard rock. There are two works that I found most useful. The first of these is Henry Glassie’s *Passing the Time in Ballymenone*.¹⁰ I originally encountered this book through a seminar during my undergraduate studies, and it was one of the first I chose to include when beginning this research. Although there are some significant differences between the

⁹ Mark Spicer, “Strategic Intertextuality in Three of John Lennon’s Late Beatles Songs,” in *A Music-Theoretical Matrix: Essays in Honor of Allen Forte Part 1 Gamut 2/1* (2009): 347-375.

¹⁰ Henry Glassie, *Passing the Time in Ballymenone: Culture and History of an Ulster Community*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995).

“Ballymenone” community and that of wizard rock, many are still applicable. Glassie’s use of geography and space to help explain community interactions was particularly relevant. These two factors are intriguing when at live, physical wizard rock interactions as well as in the online community. Both the physical interactions and locations of musicians and audience members at performances and the larger geographical location of the concerts are indicative of community priorities. This includes the repetition of shows in the same visited cities during wizard rock tour seasons because prominent community members or an exceptionally large number of fans reside there. This also includes the separation of the performer from the audience in a standard performance venue style. Both communities are comparatively small; wizard rock in relation to the scope of the entire Harry Potter Fandom, and Ballymenone in relation to the greater Irish traditional music community. The person-centered approaches Glassie takes, both in *Passing the Time in Ballymenone* and its companion *The Stars of Ballymenone*, are not unlike the approaches of previous Harry Potter fandom researchers. Thus, while both communities may seem completely different at the surface, there are useful parallels between Glassie’s book and my own research.

The final book I am choosing to discuss here is also focused upon a parallel community. Lauraine Leblanc’s *Pretty in Punk: Girl’s Gender Resistance in a Boy’s Subculture* provides a critical and academic account of the role of the ‘Riot Grrl’ and

other females in the punk and independent music scene of the 1990's.¹¹ She focuses upon the rejection of societal standards for beauty, as well as these women creating their identities within their male-dominated community. While the bulk of the wizard rock community is female, the majority of popular performers are male, and female “wrock” musicians appear to share a similar struggle for validity. During this struggle, female performers who wish to help their bands become more popular usually have to resort to non-musical characteristics. These kinds of methods, as well as the subject of contrary female body image are all addressed in Leblanc's book and directly relevant to wizard rock research.

Methodology

This study is primarily phenomenological. In her book *Theory for Ethnomusicology*, Ruth M. Stone defines phenomenology as “research framework that focuses on studying human experience with attention to the details of the subjective interpretations.”¹² While there are ways to effectively determine whether contradictions between rhetoric and behavior are being made within the wizard rock community, the effects of those contradictions on the members of the community are also significant. It cannot be known whether or not community members are experiencing the contradictions unless their subjective interpretations are held to

¹¹ Leblanc, Lauraine. *Pretty in Punk: Girl's Gender Resistance in a Boy's Subculture*. (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1999).

¹² Ruth Stone, *Theory for Ethnomusicology* (New Jersey: Pearson Educational Inc., 2008), 165-167.

value. This study uses the responses of community members in interviews and questionnaires, as well as online and public fora, to acquire physical data.

Stone continues that “there are multiple realities or realms of experience.”¹³ This is also an important component of my research. Wizard rock community members are having separate experiences, which is the reason for many of the contradictions between rhetoric and behavior. There are some shared experiences, but the disconnect between the musician and the fan experience, or even the experience of those who are members of the “Top Tier” bands and those who are not, causes differences in perception.

This kind of phenomenological research does make certain research tasks, like analysis from multiple sources, difficult. Making generalizations can become a fallacy, and the data itself is not necessarily “concrete.” In this study, I will be making some generalizations, but will be taking into account the data and findings of other research from other fields and disciplines to make sure that these generalizations are consistent with previous studies. The data in this document was collected from: 1) pre-fieldwork research, specifically in literature published by community members; 2) fieldwork at wizard rock performances throughout Texas, Oklahoma, California, and Missouri in 2009, which allowed me to collect observational data, such as group behavior and attendance trends; 3) interviews and questionnaires, which allowed me to ask for specific responses and assign numerical and scientific values; 4) participant observation and interaction; 5) photographic study and the use of photographed

¹³ Ibid.

situations as evidence of rhetoric and behavior; 6) community-approved online settings, as the internet is recognized as the primary gathering place for the widely dispersed community; and 7) musical and textual analysis.

My analytical method involved: 1) keyword frequency analysis of interview material versus song texts; 2) iconographic analysis of static images; 3) demographic analysis from online fora, such as publically available band websites or social networking profiles, with emphasis on gender, age, and location; 4) comparison of interview material among participants; 5) statistical analysis of questionnaires, paying particular attention to keyword frequency and the perceived disparity between the answers of musicians and listeners, and musicians of different “tiers;” 6) performance attendance trends, both physical and online; and 7) analysis of the number of social networking “fans” bands and community participants have to demonstrate community hierarchy and personal importance. This data is presented in graphic media including charts, tables, graphs, and photographic material in addition to prose. It will demonstrate a contrast between what the wizard rock community expresses formally as their values and what actually takes place.

My academic experience with the wizard rock community is one that I am not likely to forget. I struggled for quite some time to find the balance between being able to write what needed to be written and still protect the individuals within a community in which I am an active participant. I chose intentionally to exclude situations and events that would cause personal or emotional damage to any community member at their disclosure. To protect the private personalities of my informants, I chose only to

focus on public information, including information that I collected. What resulted are the above pages: this thesis that has only barely scratched the surface of the vast wealth of the wizard rock community.

Fieldwork

My fieldwork was conducted from May 2009 until January of 2010. When dealing with this mostly non-proximate community, I was limited to the number of events available for physical, proximate field study. I was allowed to film and take photographs at most of the events, but not all.

My first attended event was in Granbury, Texas on May 16, 2009 at a small recording studio and art gallery called Studio 216. The performing bands Kwikspell, Statutory Snape, Secondhand Magic Supplies, and Thomas and Finnigan (lacking one member due to unexpected injury and borrowing Adam, the lead performer and songwriter of the band The Mudbloods) were local, and raising money for the local library.¹⁴

Once the summer tour schedules began, I was given the opportunity to follow some of the touring wizard rock groups. I met up with the “Glass Ceiling Tour,” featuring The Moaning Myrtles, The Whomping Willows, and Justin Finch-Fletchley and the Sugar Quills at the Midwest City Library in Oklahoma, where two separate tours had converged in the same city on the same date. They were joined by the bands

¹⁴ Local, in the case of wizard rock and for the purposes of this thesis, usually means in-state. Some states have more local bands than others, and local wizard rock shows are often less populated than wizard rock tour shows.

Gred and Forge and The Remus Lupins. Over the next two days, “Glass Ceiling” performed twice in Fort Worth, Texas, at the East Regional Branch and Summerglenn Branch of the library respectively. They were joined again by Adam of The Mudbloods as their special guest on both days, and the band Catchlove joined The Whomping Willows for one song (a Harry and the Potters cover) on the second day.

A few weeks later, a tour by the name of “PCLupinWillow” made its way around the United States, named for each performing participant: PotterCast (one of the primary Harry Potter discussion-based podcasts of choice by community members). The Remus Lupins, and The Whomping Willows. I followed “PCLupinWillow” from a library show at the Collier Branch in Houston, Texas to a bookstore called Book People in Austin, Texas where they were joined again by Adam of The Mudbloods, holding an audience of spectators from teens to published authors.¹⁵ Their next stop was Dallas, Texas, where they performed at a popular music venue called The Prophet Bar, once again joined by Adam. I ended my time with “PCLupinWillow” after their next tour event at the Hardesty Branch Library in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

It would be another few weeks before the next event: the Harry Potter Educational Fanon, Inc. symposium “Azkatraz,” held in San Francisco, California. “Azkatraz,” a name formed from the combination of the prison Alcatraz with Rowling’s fictional wizard prison Azkaban, hosted not only formal wizard rock presentations (my own included), but an array of performances. The first of these was

¹⁵ I am naming Adam specifically because the full Mudbloods band consists of three members.

called “Wrock Around the Rock,” and was a four hour concert cruise around Alcatraz Island and the San Francisco Bay. The bands featured were The House of Black, Fred Lives, The Whomping Willows, Ministry of Magic, and The Remus Lupins. The event was emceed by actor Chris Rankin, who plays Percy Weasley in the Harry Potter films. Also at Azkatraz were small acoustic concerts in the aptly named “Common Room.” I attended an intimate performance by the California-based band The Buttermellows there, as well as a claustrophobic acoustic show featuring Ministry of Magic, The Whomping Willows, Lauren of The Moaning Myrtles, and The Remus Lupins. The “Wrock Around the Rock” bands also performed their sets on land at a local art gallery and performance venue called The Minna Gallery.

After Azkatraz, it was months before there was another wizard rock event within my reach. October 17, 2009, The Whomping Willows and Justin Finch-Fletchley played a show at the Downtown Library in Oklahoma City. Then, November 6-9, 2009, 500 wizard rock fans descended upon the YMCA Trout Lodge in Potosi, Missouri. There was an all-day “open mic” area that bands who wished to could sign up for in advance and play a 30 minute set. There was also a mainstage area, where the more established bands would play at night. Two of the bands I had been working with, Kwikspell and The Buttermellows, played at the “open mic” area, affectionately known to attendees as the Whompum Willow. Many of the mainstage bands were ones I had been working with as well, including The Moaning Myrtles, Justin Finch-Fletchley, Catchlove, The Whomping Willows, The Remus Lupins, and The Mudbloods. There were many more bands who played, and who I met throughout

the year, but circumstances did not permit their inclusion as part of this particular fieldwork experience.

The final fieldwork event was on January 2, 2010 in Dallas, Texas at The Prophet Bar. It was an eleven-band extravaganza featuring Just Lily, How Airplanes Fly, Kwikspell, Statutory Snape, Into the Pensieve, Hollow Godric, Thomas and Finnigan, Secondhand Magic Supplies, Dreary Inferi, The Owl Post, and my own band. Despite advertising, plugs from established wizard rock musicians, and well-conceived fliers, “Wrockin’ in the New Year” saw more musicians than it did audience.

At each of these events, I took video and photographs as I was allowed and able. Formal and informal interviews were also conducted as bands, and occasionally fans, were available, and data was also collected regarding indoor geography and concert attendance and demographics.

Interviews and Questionnaires

Interviews for this thesis were conducted in formal and informal settings, primarily with the musicians, but also occasionally with the fans if they were interested in participating. Some questions were standardized, but many were subject to what the informants wanted to share about their experience. Interviews took place in person, through e-mail, and through Internet calling services such as Skype. One complication that arose within the interviews was the disclosure of only “stock

answers” by musicians.¹⁶ This eliminated a lot of factual substance from some interview responses, and resulted in the necessity for anonymous questionnaires.

Questionnaires were distributed via the Internet to reach as many wizard rock fans as possible. The questionnaire was built using a paid account on Formstack.com and was shared with the wizard rock community via various online media such as Twitter, Facebook, and MySpace, but primarily through TheWizrocklopedia.com. The Wizrocklopedia is a favorite resource for many wizard rock fans.

I received exactly 125 questionnaire responses. The questionnaire itself is included in Appendix A, and the data was used to help draw conclusions about the community and community perception and interaction as a whole. This number of questionnaire participants is sufficiently representative of the wizard rock community, which is comparatively small to more mainstream musical communities. Wrockstock, the most reputable only-wizard-rock event in the community, only allows 500 attendees each year due to venue restrictions. Harry Potter conferences and conventions in the United States often host up to 2,500 people, only a fraction of which are in attendance for wizard rock. Several of these individuals are consistently present at wizard rock events. The wizard rock community, however, only boasts a small percentage of frequently-attending members. Since the community is predominantly based on non-proximate interactions, it is virtually impossible to get a realistic number of community members. Collected responses do not account for

¹⁶ Stock answers are responses to questions that have been rehearsed, present only a superficial portrait of the musician and their activities, would be given to a mass media journalist for non-academic documents or productions, or are intentional untruths intended to perpetuate the idealistic community rhetoric or present a perfected image of the musicians.

entirely passive community members. Each response indicated regular, active interest in one or more wizard rock band and at least one method of proximate or non-proximate community participation. Regardless of this complication, it is safe to assume that, based on the range of responses received and the length of time the questionnaire was available to community members (approximately six months), the 125 participants are representative of the active community as a whole.

CHAPTER II

CONSTRUCTIONS OF THE WIZARD ROCK COMMUNITY

“Fandom has never been a passive experience.” – Amy Tenbrink¹⁷

A Brief Introduction to the Wizard Rock Genre

Wizard rock is original music in a variety of popular styles based thematically on topics from the Harry Potter book series, either from the perspective of the literary characters or as a reflection by the songwriters on events throughout the series. Wizard rock songs can be humorous or serious, and deal with a variety of topics spanning both the books and the real world. There are over 750 wizard rock bands worldwide, consisting of both males and females of all ages and from all walks of life. By definition, wizard rock is a genre like any other popular music, only with the subject matter relating to Harry Potter in some way.

The chronological beginning of Wizard Rock was the year 2000, when the recently-dropped-from-their-label Indie-Punk band The Switchblade Kittens released a song called “Ode to Harry,” written from the perspective of Harry Potter’s primary (and final) love interest Ginny Weasley.¹⁸ The song eventually gained popularity among Harry fans on the Internet. The song was so well received among the early Harry Potter fan community and The Switchblade Kittens’ constituent fans that in

¹⁷ Erin Pyne, *A Fandom of Magical Proportions: An Unauthorized History of the Harry Potter Fandom Phenomenon* (Ann Arbor: Nimble Books LLC, 2007), v.

¹⁸ Schuyler, *The Wizard Rockumentary*, 2008.

2006, they recorded a thirteen-song full length album using the title and alter-ego “The Weird Sisters.”^{19 20}

Two years after “Ode to Harry,” brothers Paul and Joe DeGeorge of Massachusetts started the band Harry and the Potters. The idea began as a joke after a fan shouted to youngest brother Joe at a show with his non-wizard band “I love you Harry Potter!” The two DeGeorge brothers have an uncanny physical resemblance to Rowling’s character. Inspired heavily by They Might Be Giants, Nirvana and The Pixies, Harry and the Potters set the precedent for the “do-it-yourself spirit and Harry-centric creativity” that became the wizard rock genre.²¹ While I did not have the opportunity to interact with Harry and the Potters during the course of my fieldwork due to distance and scheduling, their influence is seen throughout the community and would be fallacious to exclude them from any study of the genre.

In 2004, the DeGeorge brothers met another group of musicians who were writing about Harry Potter. The Parselmouths, based in Seattle, were gaining publicity for their music by recording onto their answering machines and then passing out their phone numbers. A year later, the DeGeorges convinced other musician friends to experiment within the genre. Out of this, the two bands Draco and the Malfoys and The Whomping Willows were formed. In 2005, a Texas-based band called The Mudbloods also released their first CD, and The Moaning Myrtles formed in New Jersey.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ The Weird Sisters are a very famous fictional wizard band invented by Rowling and mentioned many times in the Harry Potter series.

²¹ Anelli, *Harry, A History*, 109.

The Remus Lupins also formed in 2005 as a joke. The band began as a solo project for singer and songwriter Alex Carpenter of California. Carpenter's wizard rock songs, written for his friends, were soon posted to MySpace, and he began promoting himself liberally, which is something that no wizard rock performer had done before. His actions sparked some controversy, as the agreement made between Harry and the Potters and Warner Bros. over copyright infringement was only verbal. The East Coast wizard rockers were concerned that since Carpenter was in Los Angeles, the probability of his band and less discrete means of band promotion endangered the entire genre. The original verbal agreement with Warner Bros. was that bands were only allowed to sell their own CDs online, and no other merchandise. They were allowed to sell t-shirts and other merchandise only at live performances, and even then only if they were not "caught" by a Warner Bros. representative.

Eventually the East Coast bands conceded and debate ceased. This decision is what allowed the community to blossom.²² Harry and the Potters, who originally had control and authority over the genre because they essentially founded it, and subsequent performers allowed them the control out of respect. With the end of the promotion debate and less fear about what might happen with Warner Bros., anyone who was interested in having a wizard rock band could start one and post their music online. This was not as much of a problem for Warner Bros., since most of these new bands did not play live shows or sell merchandise and only offered their music streaming free online. Many of the new bands created their music electronically or

²² Anelli, *Harry, A History*, 121-130.

lacked the technical skill or the desire to perform live. By 2007, the community had exploded, and became a significant and powerful force in the greater Harry Potter fan community.

A Brief Introduction to the Wizard Rock Community

The wizard rock community is a subset of the larger Harry Potter fan community as a whole. It is important to distinguish the Harry Potter Fandom from the smaller community because of wizard rock's unique set of social considerations that are the focus of this thesis. Within the wizard rock community, there are also sub-communities, factions, and cliques that shape and define the means of interaction, the jargon, and the parameters of the community façade.²³

These smaller groups within the larger wizard rock community can be divided into two basic (albeit overlapping) groups: the fans and the musicians. Fans of wizard rock come in every possible variety with every possible level of dedication. The musicians also cover a broad spectrum, especially when musical style and expertise are concerned, but can be divided into three additional groups: the "Top Tier" musicians, and the "Second Tier" musicians, and the "Third Tier" musicians. The criteria for separating these musicians is based on their production quality and their popularity.

²³ "Fandom," when capitalized, is used as a noun rather than a state-of-being. It is the name for the community, and the preferred name used by community insiders. It should be noted that The Fandom consists of the entire Harry Potter fan community as a whole, and each division of that (for example, Wizard Rock) should be considered a subset.

While there is a tremendous amount of overlap among these groups, and there are additional subsets to each, this basic division is one of the clearer ways to begin working with the intricacies of this particular complex community. Figure 2.1 provides a basic model for how these sub-groups are divided and how they overlap on a basic level. I will discuss each of these groups and ways in which they re-enforce or undermine each other or the expected community behaviors.

Within the context of the questionnaire, which was distributed both online and in person to 125 community members, each individual's definitions for "well-known" and "less-known" were relative and inconsistent. To many, there are "less-known" Top Tier bands, or "well-known" Third Tier bands. Establishing a consistent language and trying to find descriptors that would span the various planes of interpretation was fairly impractical. The tiered system is one that many community members are now using to describe the level of fame and recognition of bands, which is why I eventually learned it and chose to adopt it. Criteria for which band lives on which tier is based almost entirely on their community fame, not musical skill, production quality, or intended effort. The "Tier" system is set forth by some community members for themselves, and not based on concrete data, although my research supports their choices. Through analysis of my questionnaire data, for which I asked participants to list their favorite bands, I found that the bands that exist on the Top Tier of popularity are the same bands that community members consider to be there.

Top Tier bands draw most of the attention and experience the highest merchandise and record sales. Their recording quality is often close to professional,

and some of them choose to auto-tune their recordings.²⁴ A significant amount of bands in the Top Tier have been involved in the community since the beginning.

The Second Tier musicians do not enjoy the same level of commercial success as the Top Tier, but they have their own loyal, considerably smaller following. Usually Second Tier recordings are of good production quality and are presented in standard packaging.

The Third Tier musicians can be considered as “undiscovered.” Third Tier recording quality is often amateur. Musical skill for the Third Tier is also usually, but not always, amateur. The Third Tier is probably the most diverse of the three, if only because of quantity. It ranges from very well-produced, learned musicians who either haven’t yet marketed themselves to receive popularity or have chosen not to pursue Fandom fame, to musicians who have a raw production quality and little to no detectable musical training. It also encompasses, like the other two tiers, bands of countless different musical styles.

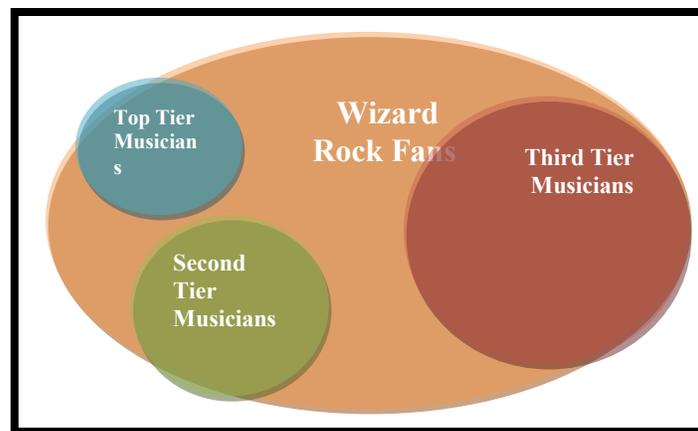


Figure 2.1 – The Wizard Rock Community

²⁴ Auto-tuning gives the performer the ability to correct slight pitch imperfections in their recordings. Wizard rock bands who can afford this technology use it to give their music a more professional sound.

The fans make up the balance of the Wizard Rock community. The level of participation in this category varies from person to person, and can span from an individual who has just listened to the music once and expresses a compliment to an individual who attends every event, owns every album, and does not listen to any other kind of music. Most of the fans participating in this study have a moderate involvement level. These fans will attend shows near to their homes and occasionally travel great distances to conventions or large festivals, but cannot or choose not to make the effort to attend all events. These fans are the primary consumers for the community. Many of them enjoy the music, but will rarely travel great distances or at great expense for live performances. They are usually willing to listen to all wizard rock bands, not just the Top Tier, but are often unaware of or disinterested in Second and Third Tier bands. Wizard rock fans also rarely question community rhetoric unless they have had a unique individual experience to the contrary. They are enthusiastic listeners and performance attendees. Individuals who consider themselves fans will save money for, eagerly await albums and live performances from the Top Tier bands, but will often hesitate to support the bands on the other tiers.

Hence the level of familiarity with a Second or Third Tier band must be higher than familiarity with a Top Tier band in order to achieve the same level of enthusiasm. In other words, without the fame that comes with achieving Top Tier status, a wizard rock musician must market themselves more heavily since the average wizard rock fan would not have the level of familiarity with their music needed to purchase or support them without reassurance. According to questionnaire data, wizard rock fans rarely

indicated a preference for purchasing music based on level of fame (Table 2.2), but also indicated a general lack of awareness of many Second and Third Tier bands.

**Table 2.2 – Wizard Rock Purchasing Habits
Questionnaire Q2.8 – “When I purchase Wizard Rock, I purchase...”**

<i>Purchasing Preference</i>	<i>Number of Fans</i>	<i>Percentage of Fans</i>
...music by my favorite bands	110	88%
...music based on friend suggestions	63	50.4%
...music found while browsing	97	77.6%
...music by well-known bands	121	96.8%
...music by less-known bands	104	83.2%
...music by bands with fewer than 500 fans on Myspace	76	60.8%
...music I heard on a podcast	42	33.6%
...Other		
...music by performers I meet	7	5.6%
...music I saw in a video	3	2.4%
...music by bands I have seen live	24	19.2%
...music by bands I heard on a compilation album	4	3.2%
Did Not Answer	2	1.6%

Some Top-Tier wizard rock musicians protest the tiered organizational system openly in online fora, whether directly or mockingly.²⁵ For example, on a relatively new and controversial blog called *The Wrock Snob*, where the tier system is frequently used, Matt Maggiasco of The Whomping Willows and Brian Ross of Draco and the Malfoys commented to each other:

*“Whompy: Brian is a tool!
Brian Malfoy: Get off my tier.”*

²⁵ Anonymous. “Extended Thoughts: Women in Wrock, Part 1 – In Defense Of Men.” *The Wrock Snob*. (19 May 2010) <http://wrocksnob.wordpress.com/2010/05/19/extended-thoughts-women-in-wrock-part-1-in-defense-of-men/#more-50> (Accessed 31 May 2010.)

Both Maggiacomo and Ross were mocking the tier system. This is one of many pieces of evidence of the differences in community experience across tiers and the refusal of the tier system. Both Ross and Maggiacomo are original participants in the wizard rock scene, and have a vastly different experience in the community than newcomers or low-tier bands. However, both Ross and Maggiacomo are supportive of the lower-tiered bands as they are able to be. With so many wizard rock bands in the community, it is tremendously difficult to be supportive for all of them. Even with the best intentions, it is nearly impossible for any individual person to be completely aware of all community activity. Many wizard rock resource websites have more than one collaborator, and depend heavily on communication directly from musicians. This is an example of the wizard rock community's idealistic rhetoric creating a disconnect with behavior by default.

Furthermore, both Maggiacomo and Ross have a community perception based on their experience. As originating, Top-Tier musicians, there should not be a reason why they would not be able to behave, at least publically, according to the rhetoric.

An interesting characteristic of the wizard rock community is that not all musicians are considered fans of the music. In fact, more than a few musicians have expressed in confidence that they do not listen to the music and do not find listening to it sonically satisfying. It is the process of writing music and performing music in the community that they find satisfying. This is why, referring to Figure 2.1, there are small portions of each musician group that lay outside the larger fan group.

Community Events and the Construction of Group Identity

Group events within the wizard rock community are many and varied. While the community exists primarily in virtual media, there are frequent occasions for community members to interact physically and proximately. The significance of these events depends on location, time of year, number of bands performing, level of fame of the bands performing, and event length, among other things, and is based on attendance. Community events can be as intimate as a small house party or as large as a convention or music festival.

Wizard rock events are usually open to the public and have free admission. These events, such as tour performances or local shows, make up the bulk of wizard rock performances. Some tour or local performances are ticketed and do have an admission fee, but that seems to depend on the venue requirements and cost of travel.

The local and travelling performances are what most casual listeners will attend. The admission costs are low or nonexistent, and the distance to travel is usually small, so it is convenient for those who enjoy the music or some of the community dynamics, or for those too young or unable to travel, to attend. Other events, such as wizard rock nights at the Harry Potter conventions, Wrockstock, or other large Fandom gatherings that host wizard rock, require a ticket purchase that can cost more than \$100. The net profits from ticket money for these kinds of events usually go to a charity. These events do see a casual audience, but also many of the more involved community members, who will save their money and make financial sacrifices all year just to be able to attend.

There are also virtual events. The wizard rock community has embraced the use of online video streaming services such as UStream.tv or Livestream.com, to give their efforts the opportunity to reach audiences previously unreachable due to cost, distance, or exclusivity. These virtual events are often hosted by podcast groups, or by the local Harry Potter fan

“meet-up” groups, and can be anything from an individual or two sitting in front of their webcam to a broadcast of a concert or other larger event for those unable to attend.

The 2009 Wrockstock festival in Potosi, Missouri was broadcast live over the internet, since only about 500 individuals were able to attend. Many tour concerts have been and continue to be streamed as internet connections are available at performance venues, and a few podcasts find it prudent to record while they are live for an audience because they value the participation of other community members.

These events help create a sense of community almost more than the music itself. Wizard rock is not a genre that prides itself in musical ability or skill. The genre formed around a community of people with similar interests and goals, and it essentially remains that way. At wizard rock events, people who previously may have only interacted in an online context are able to meet, often in the guise of costume or “wizard robes,” the name used for any manner of Harry Potter-themed attire. Not all attendees will dress for the occasion, but wizard rock events do provide yet another kind of venue for Harry Potter “cosplay.”²⁶ Cosplay plays a special role in the Harry Potter community and in wizard rock.

In my questionnaires, only about 10% of all participants identified themselves officially as cosplayers, but I would argue that most wizard rock fans and musicians have taken part in some form of cosplay at one point or another. Wizard rock was, after all, built on a form of cosplay, when Harry and the Potters put on their gray school uniforms and Hogwarts school neckties and started to call themselves “Harry” for an audience. It is not uncommon to look around a wizard rock event and see audience members wearing Hogwarts ties, school uniforms, Victorian attire intended as wizarding clothes, quidditch uniforms, or holding magic

²⁶ Cosplay, which means “costume play,” is the wearing of costumes to play a part, like roleplay or interactive theater, and exists in many fan communities.

wands.²⁷ Many of the musicians on all tiers will wear costumes, whether Oxford shirts, sweater vests, ties, and fedoras, black lace dresses, or abnormally large hats. Costume and cosplay are important components of any wizard rock event, even if it goes unspoken. It helps to set up the general atmosphere and assists the musicians or other participants with their respective characters.



Left to right: “VoldeMark” of Ministry of Magic wears white face paint and black attire to represent Rowling’s Lord Voldemort; Erin Pyne of The House of Black wears a gray and black frilled dress to represent herself as a witch; Alex Carpenter of The Remus Lupins wears his typical Oxford shirt, vest, tie, and fedora to create his character; Carl and Katy of Secondhand Magic Supplies wear school robes and yellow colors to distinguish themselves as part of Hufflepuff House.

Figure 2.3 – Wizard Rock Costuming

Costumes are not the only part of a wizard rock event that helps to create the atmosphere. Many event planners make the effort to provide some kind of Harry Potter paraphernalia, ranging from official Warner Bros. merchandise, to painted butcher-paper murals, as seen in the final image in Figure 2.3. Costumes, scenery, and an overall sense of escapism make wizard rock events unique to themselves, and create the kind of situations and

²⁷ Quidditch is the primary wizard sport according to the Harry Potter series. It is similar to soccer, but is played on broomsticks, has 4 balls, and 3 scoring hoops for each team.

space that is reminiscent of the source literature and the films which attracts community members.

Creating space in wizard rock is very important to the community. While the physical geography of most proximate events is that of a standard rock concert, with a performer on stage in front of an audience, part of the community rhetoric is that everyone is accessible. Without a regular, central location for all wizard rock fans to meet, the community space must be created wherever it can be. The costuming and scenery discussed above facilitates that, as does the consistency in performance set-up. It immediately references the source literature or films. These visual cues are readily familiar to community members, and they automatically give individuals a shared experience. The physical environment is familiar to community members, and thus allows them to concentrate on other aspects of participation.

Emotional space is also important to the group dynamic. One response that consistently came up in response to question 3-3 on the questionnaire “What do you like best about the wizard rock community?” was the friendliness, openness, and sense of community. In fact, over 70% of all questionnaire participants indicated that one or more of those three terms were their favorite aspects of the community. When I distributed the questionnaires, I did not include a list of possible factors, and still the majority of participants identified them. Friendliness, openness, and a sense of community are a large part of the community rhetoric, and an important component in fostering a musical movement that expressly does not emphasize musical skill. This will be an important consideration throughout the document.

Wizard rock fans and participants seek an environment through which they can escape their normal lives, find life-long friends, and explore their creativity through their interactions with each other. Thus, it is imperative that both physical and virtual situations be conducive to that.

Individual Identity

The ways to define individual identity within the wizard rock community are as varied as the individuals involved, but there are some characteristics that are consistent with most community members. The first step might be to look at how individuals choose to associate themselves with themes and characters from the Harry Potter series. There is a friendly dichotomy in the wizard rock community, as well as in the Harry Potter Fandom as a whole, that comes from these associations.

Wizard rock fans and musicians identify with the themes of the Harry Potter books. Below is an excerpt from *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* known as "The Sorting Hat's Song." In the literature, The Sorting Hat is exactly that – a hat, given human characteristics, placed on each incoming student's head to determine which school house they will belong to for the duration of their time at Hogwarts. The Sorting Hat is able to read each student's thoughts and their personalities in order to decide their placement. Each school house is given a certain set of characteristics based on those of the four school founders. These characteristics are used to determine the allegiance of all characters within the series with very few exceptions. Rowling does intentionally contradict these basic characteristics in her literature, however, to teach her readers open-mindedness and demonstrate the concept of not judging individuals based on their appearance or first impressions. The Sorting Hat's song is the clearest articulation of these characteristics found within the series, and is conveniently introduced in the first Harry Potter book.

*Oh, you may not think I'm pretty,
But don't judge on what you see,
I'll eat myself if you can find
A smarter hat than me.
You can keep your bowlers black,
Your top hats sleek and tall,
For I'm the Hogwarts Sorting Hat
And I can cap them all.
There's nothing hidden in your head
The Sorting Hat can't see,
So try me on and I will tell you
Where you ought to be.
You might belong in Gryffindor,
Where dwell the brave at heart,
Their daring nerve and chivalry
Set Gryffindors apart;*

*You might belong in Hufflepuff,
Where they are just and loyal,
Those patient Hufflepuffs are true
And unafraid of toil;
Or yet in wise old Ravenclaw,
If you've a ready mind,
Where those of wit and learning,
Will always find their kind;
Or perhaps in Slytherin
You'll make your real friends,
Those cunning folk use any means
To achieve their ends.
So put me on! Don't be afraid!
And don't get in a flap!
You're in safe hands (though I have none)
For I'm a thinking cap!²⁸*

Within the wizard rock community, members tend to associate themselves with these houses. In fact, one of the most common questions one will be asked when participating in the Harry Potter fan community is “What house are you in?” This is an activity that occurs in the other portions of the larger Harry Potter fan community as well. Each Harry Potter convention, conference, and festival has its own “sorting ceremony” where participants can discover or choose which house they belong to. It is an integral part of Harry Potter’s fictional experience, thus Harry fans choose to experience it themselves to the best of their ability.

In addition to these four houses, the community is split in half. One group associates with Harry Potter, his friends, and the Order of the Phoenix and

²⁸ J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, (London, Bloomsbury, 1997), 129-130.

Dumbledore's Army.²⁹ These characters are the heroes, and are intended to represent all things stereotypically fun and good.

In the literature, these groups are dedicated solely to fighting evil and defeating the Dark Lord Voldemort. The side associated with Harry usually claim to be Gryffindors, Hufflepuffs, or Ravenclaws. Those who identify themselves more closely with the side associated with the villains usually claim to be from the Slytherin house, and occasionally Ravenclaw or Hufflepuff. These individuals sympathize with the Death Eaters, and are followers of Voldemort, Harry's nemesis.

This dichotomy is not taken particularly seriously. People aligned with both sides coexist harmoniously, and this kind of conflict is usually only present in humorous or roleplay situations. Voldemort sympathizers in the community actually use the tremendous amount of inherent irony to their advantage. In other words, the community does not condone evil behavior by a real-life definition, even though individuals may choose to identify with Rowling's evil characters. The band Draco and the Malfoys call their music "evil wizard rock," yet their songs are so sarcastic that most community members actually understand their songs to have the opposite effect. Lyrics such as "My dad is rich and your dad is dead," "Hippogriffs Deserve to Die," and "Your family is poor," are intentionally crass and cruel, but are performed and recorded with an ironic tone, therefore having the opposite effect and becoming humorous. In order to understand the meaning behind any literature-based musical

²⁹ The Order of the Phoenix is a secret society formed by Harry Potter's elderly, homosexual school headmaster Albus Dumbledore. Dumbledore's Army is a group of Hogwarts students that operate very similarly to the Order of the Phoenix, and see their biggest roles in the final 3 books of the series.

signifiers or individual actions within the Harry Potter fan community, these concepts and methods for self-identification within must be articulated.

Along with this tendency to embrace Rowling's own dichotomies comes a tendency to role-play. Role-play is a very prevalent form of expression in the larger Harry Potter Fandom, so it should come as no surprise that it is apparent in the wizard rock community as well. When role-playing, individuals have the opportunity to become someone outside of their everyday selves. They can take on a role that is similar to their own personality or completely foreign and exotic and then interact with others who embrace similar identities. Community members can, in a sense, create an identity from scratch or take on that of a fictional character, and learn to express themselves in ways previously not possible. As mentioned before with the Draco and the Malfoys band, both performers are considerably normal members of society, but when they are on stage and costumed, they both adopt the personality of one of the Harry Potter villains and behave in a manner that they would not otherwise.

Again, wizard rock musicians who conform to this trend seem to gain popularity somewhat more easily than those who do not, though that statement is not true in every case. Harry and the Potters, The Moaning Myrtles, The Whomping Willows, Draco and the Malfoys, The Remus Lupins, and Gred and Forge are just a few of the Top Tier bands who embrace a literary persona and role-play on stage in some way.

Wizard rock is also an avenue for fan fiction. Fan fiction, which is not unique to the Harry Potter fan community but does play an important role, is yet another way

for individuals to express and explore their possibilities within the Fandom. Wizard rockers have a tendency to take what Rowling wrote, and then create their own situational stories or inside jokes with each other, ultimately turning wizard rock into a form of fan fiction. Many songs do not stick to “canon,” or, what is expressly written by J.K. Rowling herself. There are countless examples of this across the wizard rock discographies.

However, adopting the persona of a character can be a casual undertaking. In the case of Harry and the Potters, both of the DeGeorge brothers have explained that their involvement with the character of Harry Potter is about humor and investigation. Joe said plainly, “Writing songs about yourself is really funny,” while Paul said “It just made things really interesting, because you could work with characters instead of working from the outside.”³⁰

These three methods for self-identification within the wizard rock community are not used by every individual in every case, but are adopted or recognized by all interviewees and by most questionnaire participants in some way. Establishing a unique identity within the community is vital to determining one’s continued group involvement.

³⁰ Anelli, *Harry, A History*, 113.

Establishing Meaning Through Music

The use of recurrent musical tropes to evoke specific associations is common across many musics and time periods. This trend is no less clear in the wizard rock genre, which, in addition to its obvious subtexts, is saturated with meaning and symbolism created by the music itself. While some of this meaning comes directly from the source literature, some is also invented by the wizard rock musicians through their interactions with each other and a shared understanding within the community.

Much of the meaning within the wizard rock music itself comes from the specific set of associations it embraces. This musical meaning is evident through repeated musical themes in wizard rock songs, particularly in the music of The Remus Lupins and the relationship of their music to other wizard rock artists. It is also apparent through intertextuality and the shared set of signifiers based in the Harry Potter source literature. Having its roots directly in the Rowling books, wizard rock provides an excellent avenue through which to examine semiotics and identify meaning behind musical signifiers.

The Remus Lupins was originally a solo project formed by singer-songwriter Alex Carpenter in August of 2005 with a West Coast Pop-Alternative sound.³¹ In the Harry Potter stories, Remus Lupin is an extraordinarily kind, impoverished, middle-aged werewolf who works as a professor at Harry's school. During his time with Professor Lupin, Harry learns many interesting facts about his teacher. These include a

³¹ It is also important to understand that within Wizard rock, a solo-act can be considered a "band," and that many solo performers pluralize themselves to keep within the naming tradition of Harry and the Potters.

friendship with Harry's father, and a membership in the Order of the Phoenix.³² In the text, Lupin's character encourages readers to see past outward imperfections (i.e. his lycanthropy) in favor of deeper relationships and open-mindedness. He also represents loyalty, perseverance, and a mentor to the hero, as he remains by Harry's side until Lupin's death in the final battle of the final book.

Carpenter, who physically evokes the Lupin character by wearing a vest, fedora, and a Gryffindor house tie while performing with The Remus Lupins, was later joined in the band by bassist Tyler Nicholas and drummer Toby Karlin. The addition of musicians not only gave the band a new sound in general, but allowed for more musical versatility.

This versatility resulted in one of their more popular songs, found on their third full-length album *Nevermind the Furthermore* (2008). "Seven Potters" is an elaboration of an event that takes place in the final book of the Harry Potter saga. During the scene, several characters morph themselves to impersonate Harry Potter so they could split up, travel in different directions, and get the real Harry Potter to safety before the villains could get to him. There are many injuries to beloved characters, and two character deaths.³³ The song itself quickly rose to the top of the Wizard rock "charts" – finding a permanent place in weekly podcasts and internet radio or online streams, while still heavily relying upon the Wizard rock dependency on the worldwide web. A music video was produced, which also enjoyed similar popularity.

³² J.K. Rowling. *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. (London: Bloomsbury, 1999).

³³ J.K. Rowling. *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. (London: Bloomsbury, 2007).

“Seven Potters” is easily recognized by its introductory bass motif, an arpeggiated pattern which is accented by drums emphasizing the upbeat. See Figure 2.4, Example 1.

Figure 2.4 – Seven Potters Bass Line Motif

While the song is clearly in a duple meter, the beginning of the bass line is designed to emphasize patterns of three, giving it a syncopated feel. Each grouping of three is marked by a descending fourth. The four-measure theme is also divided in half, with the final two measures being a repetition transposed a minor third higher than the original statement. This particular bass pattern carries through each of the verses of the song, and is silent during the chorus and bridge. It also reoccurs in other pieces within the wizard rock repertory, and will be acknowledged again later in this discussion.

During these verses, as expected, the lyrics detail the main action in the story.³⁴ The song is written in first-person perspective, which not only immediately enables the listeners to identify themselves with the song, but also references the band’s

³⁴ To view transcribed lyrics to the songs discussed in this document, please refer to Appendix B.

character associations. Through these lyrics, listeners are also exposed to phrases and terminology used by Rowling herself that hold special significance within the wizard rock community.

The following table contains key lyrics from the song organized thematically into four columns. The bracketed letters refer to the verse markers in the transcription located in Appendix, with the first letter being the Appendix label and the second being the Verse label.

Book 2 Basilisk Reference	Book 7 "Seven Potters" Reference	Good vs. Evil Dichotomy	Book 7 Final Battle Reference
Gryffindor's [B-A]	Harry to Safety [B-D]	Death Eaters [B-B]	Weasley Twin [B-E]
Sword [B-A]	Dodge the Curses [B-B]	Gryffindor's [B-A]	Saint [B-E]
Snake [B-A]	Holey Man [B-E]	Snake [B-A]	Dodge the Curses [B-B]
	English Countryside [B-D]	Saint [B-E]	

Table 2.5 – Keywords in the Seven Potters Lyrics

The first column are words that were chosen as a reference an occasion in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* when Harry Potter defeated Lord Voldemort's basilisk by using a sword once owned by Godric Gryffindor, the founder of Gryffindor house. Gryffindor represents a pure good and extreme loyalty. The second column are some of the keywords chosen to directly reference the "Seven Potters" scene in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. Column three are words that would emphasize the dichotomy between good and evil, while the words in the fourth column serve a dual purpose. The first of these is the direct "Seven Potters" storyline reference to the ear of George Weasley being cut off. It symbolizes that every person

is affected by war, even when they are not intended to be. George's ear becomes a pun both in the Harry Potter book and Carpenter's lyrics. The choices of "saint" and "holey man" facilitate the double entendre used to both emphasize the choice of the word "saint" and the literal loss of an ear. The second purpose of the fourth column is to serve as a reference to the final battle of the Harry Potter saga, found later in the same book. The pun is enhanced by the descending fourth within the bass pattern, which can be construed as a plagal allusion by some listeners, joining the theme of the text with a musical sound found often in religious hymns and sacred music. During the final battle scene, the other Weasley twin, Fred, is killed in battle. Carpenter's decision to refer to George as "a Weasley Twin" reminds listeners of both events.

The overall themes of the keywords, which exist on top of the repeating Seven Potters Bass, are biased toward the story's heroes. This, in combination with the name of the performing band itself, essentially leads listeners to associate this particular bass pattern with the hero side agenda. This happens subconsciously, with the lyrics giving additional meaning to the music. As a result, the Seven Potters Bass becomes a signifier and can be applied to situations outlying the original song for the purposes of community unification, shared identity recognition, or simply musical popularity.

It is then evident that the Seven Potters Bass has been established as a "sign," and can be used to convey meaning elsewhere. Another California-based musician, Danny Dementor, borrowed the Seven Potters Bass and voiced it for synthesizer in the background of his 2009 song "I Wanna Be a Wizard." This song is in a pseudo-rap or R&B style reminiscent of popular recording artist T-Pain, having heavily auto-tuned

vocals and electronic instrumentals and very speech like rhythms and textures. This song is an affirmation for Harry Potter fans, exemplifying the identity crisis most people within the community face in their everyday lives. These individuals would rather be dressing in “wizard robes” and behave as they do at proximate community gatherings. The song has been widely distributed to a significant percentage of wizard rock listeners due to its inclusion in the Wizard rock EP of the Month Club in and the ability to stream it on-line.³⁵

Instead of using the his literature in his lyrics to enhance the meaning of his song as Carpenter did, Danny Dementor uses the music itself and its pre-existing connotations to enhance his own lyrics.³⁶ The appropriation of earlier, familiar musical themes as a sample or loop underlying new music is a process frequently used by rap (and other) musicians. The process can be found in countless songs in radio play. Danny Dementor uses the “Seven Potters” excerpt for his own piece probably for both its broad community appeal and signifying properties. This *bricolage*, which is defined as “the multiple quotation of elements taken from earlier styles or periods, classical or modern,” allows for the inherent intertextuality in wizard rock to establish musical meaning.³⁷

³⁵ Paul DeGeorge. “Wizard Rock EP of the Month Club.” (2007), <http://www.wizardrockclub.com/> (Accessed October 18, 2009).

³⁶ See Figure 2.4, Example 2

³⁷ Jean-François Lyotard. *The Postmodern Explained*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992): 76.

In this case, Dementor exhibits what Robert Hatten defines as *strategic intertextuality*, or, a direct and intentional reference to a specific pre-existing work.³⁸

The Seven Potters Bass motif is present within the first fifteen seconds of the “I Wanna Be a Wizard” recording, and is quoted directly with very little change. Dementor transposes the line from the original’s center around B to C#. The only rhythmic difference is the exclusion of the fourth note in the second and fourth measures, which appears to be a stylistic decision rather than an intentional change to the line itself. The line is further referenced as the harmonic outline (C#-A-E-G#) is present in the song even when the quote itself is not and serves as the principle organizational tool throughout.

While the lyric content of “I Wanna Be a Wizard” has very little in common with the lyric content of “Seven Potters,” there are still a few similarities. Dementor’s song, like Carpenter’s, is written from the first-person point of view. This allows the listener to become directly and immediately involved with the song. Danny Dementor borrows the positive and hopeful themes from “Seven Potters,” and compliments it with a stream of text prior to the beginning of the actual song, which includes the words “good,” “fine,” and “best,” and establishes the apparent importance of the song itself. In addition, the word “wizard” is used in almost every line of the main verses as Dementor ties the positivity associated with being a wizard to normal, every-day functions such as tying one’s shoes or dancing. Ultimately, he uses the Seven Potters Bass in combination with his own lyrics to enhance the meaning of “I Wanna Be a

³⁸ Robert Hatten. “The Place of Intertextuality in Music Studies,” *American Journal of Semiotics* 3/4 (1985): 69-82.

Wizard.” The Seven Potters Bass has become a musical marker and a sign to wizard rock listeners, and now carries with it the intentions of both Carpenter and Danny Dementor.

“Seven Potters” is not the only example of a Remus Lupins musical sign being used outside of the original song. Another reoccurring musical line is used over the course of the Remus Lupins’ entire discography, manifesting in one song once per album. What is particularly interesting in this instance is that the songs containing this sign elaborate, in order, on a chronological series of events in the Rowling text. It begins at a point in the Harry Potter saga where Harry chooses to end his focus in school and instead set out on a quest to finally just defeat Lord Voldemort. His friends refuse to allow him complete his journey alone, and travel with and assist him until the final battle near the end of the final book. The songs in this sequence are titled “Looking for Trouble,” “By Your Side,” “The End,” and “Graduation Day.”

“Looking for Trouble,” as the first of the sequence, is found on the band’s 2006 album *Spells From a Broken Wand*, and establishes the melodic theme that will recur through each subsequent song. Figure 2.6 contains short transcriptions of each of this theme. Example 1 is the excerpt of the original incarnation from “Looking for Trouble.”

Figure 2.6 – “Bah-Bah-Bah” Theme

The musical line transcribed in Example 1 is found in each repetition of the chorus of “Looking for Trouble,” where the background vocal line is “Bah, bah, bah” beneath Carpenter’s first-person perspective primary lyrics. The musical line is repetitive and subtly syncopated. Melodically, it descends stepwise for the first two-thirds of the phrase, when the pattern is interrupted and augmented for the final iteration. It is a technically simple line, making it feasible for listeners to sing along and become exceedingly familiar with it. By doing this, listeners internalize the melodic lines as well as the lyrics that accompany it. This familiarity is essential for establishing the line as a musical sign and continuing its significance in the subsequent songs in the series.

“Looking for Trouble” is frequently played in live performances by the band, has been released in multiple editions, and is well known by many fans. The “Bah, bah, bah” pattern is sung enthusiastically by audience members, while other bands performing in the show and friends of the band are invited up to the stage to sing along as well. Clearly, the musical idea is then associated with the lyrics that it

accompanies; both the “Bah, bah, bah” nonsensical lyrics and the lyrics sung by Carpenter are essentially a call to arms. These associations would be recognized in the minds of familiar listeners at even the hint of the “Bah, bah, bah” line.

The second song in the sequence is “By Your Side,” found on the album *I Was a Teenage Werewolf* released in 2007. In the story, this song illustrates the occasion when Harry’s companions remind him that they will assist him in his quest to defeat Voldemort. It is a song meant to represent a feeling of confidence in Harry Potter and a belief that he is the “chosen one” for the task.

In a casual interview, Carpenter explained the song as “the next sort of step in that journey, as Harry's friends assured him that they would never abandon him. The end of that song has group ‘Bah Bah’s’ - the group sort of echoing Harry's decision from ‘Looking for Trouble.’”³⁹ The “Bah, bah, bah” idea does appear at the end of the song, though it is musically changed.⁴⁰ The pattern is still mostly descending and mostly stepwise, though there is a downward leap of a fourth toward the beginning of the phrase followed by a contrapuntal upward step leading into the next descent. While the inclusion of a “Bah, bah, bah” section in this song is not functioning as a direct quote, Remus Lupins fans and listeners are familiar with the idea, and sing along accordingly in live performance contexts. This ties “By Your Side” concretely to “Looking for Trouble,” and alludes to its position in the sequence. Also, the first-person phrases “We’re by your side” found in the lyrics add confidence and camaraderie to the meaning of the “Bah, bah, bah” theme. When “By Your Side” was

³⁹ Carpenter, Alex. Interview by Kelli Rohlman. Electronic. 20 November 2009.

⁴⁰ See Figure 2.6, Example 2

added to the song series, these additional meanings were added to the “Bah, bah, bah” line.

Carpenter was expecting the Remus Lupins’ third album, *Nevermind the Furthermore* to be the last. That is part of the reasoning behind the theme and title of the third song in the sequence: “The End.” The song is the final noted track on the album, and is set at the final Battle of Hogwarts, a scene of incredible devastation in the literature. The overall mood of this piece seems dark and pessimistic on the surface, but upon closer inspection is also blindly hopeful. The song’s narrator (presumably the character Remus Lupin) constantly convinces himself to stay in the battle despite the obvious hardships to defend his cause. The “Bah, bah, bah” theme appears only twice in this song; both times employed beneath the primary texts as it was in “Looking for Trouble.” In the first instance, it occurs beneath a repeated “Stay alive until morning and I’ll find you,” which is presumably a cry from Lupin to his wife Nymphadora Tonks. The phrase is anonymous, however, and is easily relatable to any person from any listener. It is a powerful and moving lyrical addition which illustrates the obvious difficulty of not being killed or losing loved ones in a battle.

The “Bah, bah, bah” line is a direct quote from “Looking for Trouble,” though it is transposed up a half step from the original and layered into a thicker, less cheerful harmonic setting. (The transcription of the motif is seen in Figure 2.6, Example 3). This not only ties “The End” to “Looking for Trouble” and “By Your Side” musically, but also relates the texts and continues the story.

The Lupin character is killed in the song (and in the original source literature) shortly after the first “Bah, bah, bah” occurrence. The song then changes both melodically and metrically from a four to a seven or uneven three (2-2-3 subdivision) for several verses until the words “This is how it ends for good” are uttered, where the 4/4 meter returns. The “Bah, bah, bah” idea returns thereafter beneath the repeated text “Dumbledore’s Army Forever!” and a heavier electric guitar. This serves as a musical illustration of a scene from the Rowling text where the character Neville Longbottom, a friend of Harry’s and highly underestimated person for a majority of the series, demonstrates his unfailing bravery and loyalty by standing up to Lord Voldemort. While also thickly scored, in this case the music contains a violin ostinato cutting through the other parts, which is symbolic of the climax and finality expressed through the story and the lyrics. Through these musical means, the pride, loyalty, and perseverance that is associated with the “Bah, bah, bah” theme in this song permanently finds a home in the mental associations of listeners. The theme, at this point, signifies bravery, pride, loyalty, friendship, love, and perseverance.

I would argue that the final song of the sequence, “Graduation Day,” found on The Remus Lupins’ most recent album *The Rest is Silence*, released in 2009, has not yet had an opportunity to become as engrained in listener’s minds. However, Carpenter did intend for it to be included in the sequence, saying “I decided to continue the cycle, but modify it on *The Rest is Silence* in ‘Graduation Day’ - which is a song about both moving on and about nostalgia - but the same battle cry [or] mission

statement is transformed from ‘Bah Bah’ to ‘Sha La La.’ Things changing, but not being forgotten.”

The song does quote the same “Bah, bah, bah” sequence from “Looking for Trouble” and “The End,” except the thematic line is changed from a purely descending pattern to include an upward step at the end of the first iteration.⁴¹ This alludes to the new-found positivity of the lyrics. The motif occurs toward the end of the song, where Carpenter is singing “On Graduation Day” with a full women’s choir while the “Sha, la, la” (which has textually replaced “Bah, bah, bah”) is sung by male voices. The final time through “Sha, la, la” is a more direct quote of the original “Bah, bah, bah” pattern with the full descending line.⁴² It is likely that, as the songs that written before it, “Graduation Day” will enjoy its own fame in the wizard rock community. Carpenter is intentionally including it in his performance sets and promoting it to school-aged listeners to accomplish this. This will add the intent of victory, and as Carpenter mentioned, nostalgia teamed with progress to the semiotic lexicon.

While concept behind this thematic sequence throughout the Remus Lupins’ discography seems inarguable after musical study and interviews with the composer, many fans and listeners are not privy to or have not expressed knowledge of the significance. Carpenter, who studied English at the University of California at Los Angeles, mentioned:

⁴¹ Figure 2.6, Example 4

⁴² See Figure 2.6, Example 5

I am notorious for putting too much thought into things like this... I put a fair amount of thought into lyrics, and as an English major, I really enjoy the layers that authors include in their work; where something in a sentence means not only what the words mean, but when there are multiple facets to a thought. Most of the time, people don't get even the second layer of meaning in a song, let alone connect those second layers over the course of a discography.⁴³

However, without the knowledge of Carpenter's intentions or keen observations, listeners can still recognize the similarities in the songs, whether or not they connect their content. This is clear through observation of Remus Lupins audiences and participation at events across the United States. Prior to this research and the release of *The Rest is Silence*, I had already associated "Looking for Trouble" and "The End" due to their use of direct quotation, as many fans seem to have done. While Carpenter's creative efforts may go largely unnoted, I would argue that they are not as completely overlooked as they seem.

The musical signs introduced by The Remus Lupins have been continued in their own work as well as in the work of others. This alone should be a testament to their semiotic contributions. As one of the more popular wizard rock bands in the world, their music has the potential to carry within it a lexicon of meaning that "wrockers" in any country and any location can relate to and associate with relatively the same ideas.

The Remus Lupins' music has been repeatedly troped and referenced as *bricolage*, but they are not the only band in the wizard rock community whose music

⁴³ Carpenter, 2009.

is borrowed from. Draco and the Malfoys have also been troped. The melodic line from their song “Power of Love” from the 2007 *Party Like You’re Evil* album was initially borrowed by Big Whompy (The Whomping Willows’ hip-hop side project) as the primary accompaniment to his 2008 “Covah Yr Junk.” Both songs were then combined by Roger Davies, a wizard rocker from Massachusetts, for a song comically titled “The Power of Covahing Yr Junk.” While Davies’ version is more of a spliced cover song, wizard rock community members are very likely to recognize the familiar pattern that originated with “Power of Love.” This musical line now carries with it associations with all three songs. All three musicians make the “Power of Love” motif a signifier that would cause many community members to experience comedy and sarcasm, though they may not all immediately identify what it is about each song that causes the reaction.

Study of these intertextual relationships and the direct relationship between the music and the lyrics confirms that these musical ideas function within the wizard rock community to create secondary meaning. I anticipate that as wizard rock music continues to grow and evolve, other examples of such relationships will find a way into the primary repertoire.

Concepts of community within wizard rock are as complex as they are varied. Participation within the wizard rock community is achieved both through proximate and non-proximate means. While there are some festivals, local concerts, conventions, and other types of physical events for community members to attend, they are not very frequent and some cost a great deal of money due to travel and admission. Therefore,

wizard rockers depend heavily on the internet, participating in an array of virtual activities such as watching streaming video, listening to streaming music, or chatting via one of the many social networking websites or applications. Many participants within wizard rock choose to experience it through cosplay or role play. These individuals usually approach their involvement within the Harry Potter Fandom with an escapist attitude, separating the two “worlds” for themselves. In doing this, they identify themselves with either Rowling’s heroes or villains, the latter of which depends heavily upon wit and sarcasm.

Even the origin of the community itself is debated, and community members can not seem to agree upon whether wizard rock was founded by The Switchblade Kittens or Harry and the Potters. One compromise is to recognize that The Switchblade Kittens wrote the first wizard rock song, while Harry and the Potters are responsible for originating wizard rock as a genre and community. Although wizard rock musicians were cautious about copyright and intellectual property infringement early in wizard rock history, they now seem to be less concerned and several of them receive a substantial income. Musicians within the wizard rock community also borrow music, lyrics, and ideas from each other. These tropes carry with them sets of musical associations to each new context to which they are incorporated, enhancing their semiotic meaning. The wizard rock community and genre are intended to be participatory, whether by creating music, listening to music, or both. Unfortunately, the “pure” spirit of the community has been lost over time, and now the musicians

exist in a hierarchy based primarily on a combination of production quality, longevity of participation within the community, performance quality, and sex appeal.

CHAPTER III

"SOCIAL ACTIVISM

"...Harry Potter has actually been a very private phenomenon, the story of small groups of people acting in ways they shouldn't, doing things they usually wouldn't, and making the kind of history that, without Harry, they pretty much couldn't." – Melissa Anelli⁴⁴

In the opening scene of the 2008 documentary film *We are Wizards*, fundamentalist Christian writer and film maker Caryl Mastrisciana says that “the power of Harry Potter [is] something that's addictive, it draws them [children, readers] into darker powers and into something that ultimately will destroy society.”⁴⁵ Mastrisciana was referring to the alleged ability of the Harry Potter books, as well as the subculture, community, and fandom, to penetrate a generation and corrupt its minds, and threaten its morality. Mastrisciana went on to argue that the face of this evil was well-disguised; that it was well hidden behind colorful book jackets, mass marketing, popular appeal, and even the smiling faces of the Harry Potter fan community itself. I would argue that wizard rockers, wizard rock music, and the fans are public symbols of a movement dedicated to positive, constructive, and philanthropic values.

In this chapter, I will look specifically at ways in which community's stated beliefs about tolerance, generosity, equality, freedom, conservation, and love are represented in the music, by the musicians, and in effect how these outward expressions reciprocally influence members of the community. Conversely, I identify ways in which the community fails to live up to that same rhetoric.

⁴⁴ Anelli, *Harry, A History*, 19.

⁴⁵ Koury, *We Are Wizards*, 2007.

In a 2007 article for Salon.com titled “Potterpalooza,” journalist Rebecca Traister wrote: “Perhaps you really can fight evil by reading books.”⁴⁶ The phrase “fight evil, read books” was coined by Alex Carpenter of The Remus Lupins, and is a slogan for some fans. The observation made by Traister about the phrase quickly identifies one point of the wizard rock community rhetoric that reaches both members and outsiders. The statement is neutral enough that it can appeal to a broad spectrum of people who only need a respect for the printed word. Music has been used as a political and social tool, and has consequently also been viewed by some as a threat (as seems the case with Caryl Mastrisciana) for literally thousands of years.⁴⁷

In the case of wizard rock, the ‘activism’ isn’t always intentional. Some might argue that if this activist participation is not intentional, then it doesn’t technically qualify as activism. For the purposes of this document, any participatory behavior that perpetuates a defined agenda or cause is considered activism. When interviewing members of wizard rock bands in the summer of 2009, the answers to my question about the connotations of social, moral, or political statements were very similar. The consensus was, simply, that sometimes the commentary was intended and sometimes it was not. Many of the musicians seemed unaware the perceivable commentary and

⁴⁶ Rebecca Traister, “Potterpalooza” *Salon Books* (1 June 2007)

http://www.salon.com/books/feature/2007/06/01/phoenix_rising/ (accessed 21 March 2009).

⁴⁷ Certain instruments were demonized because of their affiliation with the lewd and inappropriateness of society. The music of Ludwig von Beethoven and Richard Wagner became associated with certain German military and political regimes. The Irish wrote ballads protesting English control and cruel caricature. Women in Bulgaria used their folk song as a coping mechanism for living in a cruel and oppressive Pre-Communist society. Protest songs were written during the conflict in Vietnam, and even recently, mainstream popular artists such as Eminem and Green Day have released albums saturated with political and social commentary.

controversy of their music. The Moaning Myrtles were insistent when interviewed about the lack of intended social or political commentary in their music. Their song “Transparent” from the album *What About Myrtle* contains feminist attitudes through lyrics such as “Harry taught me how to stick it to the man, even if that man’s a woman,” and “Because of wizard rock, Harry asked me out and I refused.” The song also suggests finding self-confidence through improved body image with the chorus lyrics “Because of wizard rock, I wear contact lenses and converse shoes.”

Adam Dubberly, singer and songwriter for the wizard rock band The Mudbloods, also did not believe he was writing any commentary into his music. However, the band’s most well-known lyrics are “I wish you peace and love and happiness in everything you do,” and some of their song titles include “The War” and “Freedom is Only a Hippogriff Away.” “The War” is a programmatic song taking listeners through the horrors of war and then rejoicing in the resulting freedom. While these songs are written on specific topics from the literature, their inclusion alone can be considered commentary. “Freedom is Only a Hippogriff Away” is a song about the escape of a wrongly-accused prison inmate, and “The War” could easily be transferred to real-world contexts.

This is not to say that these musicians are naïve or ignorant about their own music. Instead, the belief of these musicians in the absoluteness of their music can reflect their personal modesty and intentions rather than the awareness of the inherent subtexts that accompany the Harry Potter literature.



Found on the touring drum set for The Remus Lupins during 2009, this poster was used to encourage wizard rock fans to register and vote.

Figure 3.1 – Dumbledore Wants You!

Other bands are less discrete about the messages they wish to share with their listeners. One of the primary expressed goals of wizard rock in just about any forum is to promote literacy. Many of the shows played on summer wizard rock tours are booked in libraries, and many of the newer or less-known bands play a lot of their shows in libraries or to benefit and raise money for libraries, summer reading or literacy programs. The 2009 “Azkatraz” convention donated money to the Prisoners Literature Project, a charity which provides books to prison inmates. Since 2009, the “Accio Books” book drive campaign with the Harry Potter Alliance, discussed below, have sent over 55,000 books to organizations in the Mississippi Delta region and in Rwanda to promote youth and adult reading programs. Literacy is important to many wizard rock community members and their charitable work because it is so essential to their own involvement in the community.

Other social causes are also represented as several wizard rock bands work in accordance with the Harry Potter Alliance, which partners with other established charity organizations and serves as a way in which Harry Potter fans can become involved with various social justice issues across the globe. There was a 2007 album titled *Rocking Out Against Voldemedia* that was compiled to raise awareness about big media consolidation and censorship. Many bands participated in the compilation, including Top Tier bands such as The Remus Lupins, Harry and the Potters, Gred and Forge, and The Whomping Willows, and several more. Another compilation series that has become fairly popular within the community is *Wizards and Muggles Rock for Social Justice*, of which there are 2 volumes. The first volume contains the Harry Potter Alliance Rap performed by the organization's executive director, co-founder, and creator Andrew Slack, and both albums contain music from wizard bands, and non-wizard bands. It is arguable whether every song on each album perpetuates a message, but the album itself contains the message.

The Wizard Rock EP of the Month Club also benefited the Harry Potter Alliance.⁴⁸ This was a yearly subscription that wizard rock fans could obtain to receive 12 exclusive EPs from some of their favorite bands as well as some they may not have already recognized. The EP of the Month Club started in 2007 and was terminated in 2010. A yearly purchase of the "Calendar of Wrock," a wall calendar featuring pictures of many wizard rock bands from the Top and Second Tier is sold to raise

⁴⁸ EP stands for "extended play" and refers to a short record. EP's contain more than one song, but too few pieces to qualify as a full-length record, or LP. In the case of the Wizard Rock EP of the Month Club, musicians would contribute anywhere from a few songs to multiple compact discs full of music.

money for the Harry Potter Alliance as well. There are countless charity wizard rock albums and albums benefiting the Harry Potter Alliance or other charitable or activist organizations in some way. Several Second and Third Tier wizard rockers simply donate their merchandise profits or accept continuous donations.

Money is not the only gift wizard rock community members give to the world around them. Through the Harry Potter Alliance, as well as other organizations with which individual members may be involved, volunteerism is very well supported in the community. Wizard rock fans and musicians donate their time to events, staff responsibilities, and practically any kind of volunteer project imaginable in the name of Harry Potter. While the Harry Potter Alliance and the charitable and volunteerism are not unique to the wizard rock sector of the Harry Potter Fandom, wizard rock music, as mentioned above, is used as a tool for promoting both activities.

One of the most successful campaigns by the Harry Potter Alliance was the “Helping Haiti Heal” campaign, started after the tragic 2010 Haitian earthquake. A major incentive in fundraising for that campaign was raffle tickets for prizes donated by Harry Potter film cast members, wizard rock musicians, a signed copy of rare first edition Harry Potter books, and various artifacts from other fan communities. The raffle helped to raise over \$123,000 for the Partners in Health charity and chartered five planes named after Harry Potter characters, carrying more than 100,000 pounds of supplies to Haiti. While people who donated money had their own reasons or specific items they were hoping to win, there were wizard rock fans who donated hundreds of dollars each because they hoped to win a backstage pass to the 2010 Wrockstock

concerts, Adam Dubberly's retired guitar strap, original lyric sheets, Harry and the Potters' old tour keyboard, or other wizard rock memorabilia.

Wizard rock music itself is also reflective of a charitable spirit as well as socio-political agenda. One of the most recognizable songs for members of the Harry Potter Alliance and the wizard rock community is by Harry and the Potters, and is entitled "The Weapon." The song, which has characteristically simple lyrics, melody, and a lot of word repetition, has become an emblematic symbol of the wizard rock community's activist efforts.

Harry and the Potters are one of the most politically and socially involved bands, at least as far as their music is concerned. They have more songs with political or social agenda than most other wizard rock bands. "Voldemort Can't Stop the Rock" is a song against censorship, and mentions the activities of Tipper Gore and the Parents Music Resource Center.

The lyric states:

*"We won't let the Dark Lord ruin our party
Just like Tipper Gore tried with the PMRC.
Voldemort can't stop the rock!"*

Even song titles suggest social awareness. For example, "This Book is so Awesome" promotes literacy, "Don't Believe it" is a song in which the primary theme of the lyrics is "Don't believe everything that you read," and was also released on the *Rocking Out Against Voldemedia* album. "Cornelius Fudge Is an A*s" and "Stick it to Dolores" are songs that speak to Harry Potter fans about questioning government and speaking up for one's own rights. Many Harry and the Potters songs have very simple,

blunt lyrics that are very humorous or sarcastic in nature. Social activism in the music of Harry in the Potters is very prevalent, but is realized more through thematic material than in explicit lyrics. Within the wizard rock community, and the Harry Potter Fandom in general, the expression of these ideals is largely accepted, acknowledged, and supported.

When Wizard Rock is Not so Socially Active

Not all wizard rock is socially or politically-minded. In fact, not all wizard rock musicians or fans even express an interest in exterior causes. While one would be hard pressed to find a listener or musician who would not support a charity album or function if asked directly and with availability permitting, some believe that wizard rock does not exist to push an agenda.

In an interview with Lena Gabrielle of the wizard rock band The Butterbeer Experience, I was told “I like to write music because I like writing music and people like to listen to it.” She then continued:

“Wizard rock should be for itself, about Harry Potter. It shouldn’t be about anything else. It should be about bringing fans together of these books and not ‘Oh, we’re gonna save the world.’ That’s what I think.... I like what the HP Alliance is doing, and I like a lot of the fundraiser events and stuff, but I feel like doing a benefit concert is a lot different from being like ‘I’m going write this song for this specific cause’ because it’s totally not relevant in the Harry Potter world. Like, trying to transcend wizard rock into real world stuff – I think that’s completely ridiculous....I would never write a song with a specific cause in mind, I guess.”⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Lena Gabrielle. *Interview* by Kelli Rohlman. Skype. 20 May 2010.

This sentiment was shared by The Moaning Myrtles in their interview; keyboardist Nina Jankowicz said “We’re involved with the H.P.A., and we love them, and we’ll do what they tell us to do, but I don’t think that we’re using wizard rock for any other ends.” Adam Dubberly of The Mudbloods, who was also in the room during this interview, added that he had “never really used the band as a platform” for social or political activism, but that they had participated in events or contributed to their recordings as they were invited.⁵⁰

This perspective is in stark contrast to that of The Whomping Willows, The Remus Lupins, or even Harry and the Potters, each of which have many songs that transcend wizard rock to everyday life. In this specific case, Top Tier bands contradict each other to define the community rhetoric. And despite their difference in opinion, each of these musicians has identified that they do enjoy or agree with the charity involvement. The disagreement comes instead with the issue of disguising real-world political or social agenda within the contexts of the music. I would argue that the rhetoric is available for wizard rock to be a tool for activism. At least, this tendency to become philanthropically involved is what 76% of questionnaire participants identified as one of their favorite things about the community.

Individual involvement as an activist within the community is also an interesting behavior to observe. In some cases, wizard rock consumers are more interested in the musicians on the charity compilation albums than in supporting the cause. This is probably why most charity wizard rock compilation albums rely heavily

⁵⁰Lauren Fairweather, Nina Jankowicz, and Adam Dubberly, Interview by Kelli Rohlman, 10 June 2009.

on Top Tier bands. Albums without any Top Tier bands, or which utilize a majority of Second and occasionally Third Tier bands, tend to be less commercially successful unless the cause is extraordinarily mainstream.

Even bands which distribute their albums digitally and donate the entire cost of their music to charity have trouble selling if they are not on the Top Tier. The young musician from the Third Tier band Leth I. Fold, Janet Jaicinto of Maryland, exhibits good musical skill and an acceptable recording quality. She sells her music for a far lower price than any Top Tier band and donates all of the money to charity, yet she informed me that I was the first “stranger” to purchase it in the Spring of 2010.

For a community that markets itself as being so socially and politically-minded and charity-centered, it is actually fairly difficult for wizard rock to raise money for a cause. A reason for this is that the community’s public rhetoric, as it appears in newspapers, magazines, blogs, and other kinds of journalism is from the Top Tier bands. The community experience of the Top Tier bands is drastically different than that of the Second and Third Tier bands. Although it is a possibility, it does not appear as though Top Tier musicians intentionally deceive other community members or outsiders. It is possible that this contradiction between rhetoric and behavior is not simply a façade or a lie, but is actually a product of contrasting experience. While Second and Third tier bands struggle to achieve success (if they choose to), the Top Tier bands have the ability to put their names and their time into a project and actually see the benefits realized. To these bands, the community can be experienced as what it seems at the surface, but to the bands on the lower tiers, there is a perceived hypocrisy.

Social Activism is an integral part of wizard rock, stemming directly from the messages within the Rowling text. Wizard rock musicians and listeners have found several different ways to actively support a variety of causes. These causes can be individually pursued or supported through the Harry Potter Alliance, while anything from financial donations to committed volunteerism counts as participation. Wizard rock musicians use their music to fundraise for these causes and organizations, either through their merchandise and record sales or by performing in a benefit. Some wizard rock musicians adapt the agenda of their respective organizations to suit the Harry Potter story and their music, and incorporate it within their songs. Other musicians maintain that wizard rock is not intended for such purposes. In almost every reasonable case, however, wizard rock musicians and fans will participate and contribute to charitable causes when they are asked. Their ability to be effective as activists through their music is almost entirely dependent upon their popularity within the community. Musicians on the lower-tiers of the wizard rock hierarchy appear to have a much more difficult experience when trying to fundraise, while other musicians on the Top-Tier are able to sell enough merchandise to make a significant donation or contribution. The community rhetoric regarding social activism may have been well defined earlier in the history of wizard rock, but as musicians start to disagree, it is losing its clarity. However, charitable spirit, volunteerism, and awareness of significant social issues appear to be things that the majority of wizard rockers can agree upon, though approved contexts are still being debated.

CHAPTER IV

ISSUES OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY

“It’s a very collective thing, where age and sex and the other ways in which people are different hardly matter at all. It’s a shared, a common experience.” – Ian Telfer⁵¹

Wizard Rock and Gender Disparity

For a community comprised primarily of women and young girls, wizard rock and the Harry Potter Fandom can display very contradictory attitudes toward sexism and gender equality. This is in stark contrast to the themes of the books upon which the entire community is based.

About half of the bands I worked with for the purposes of this document are female-fronted or have female members. The Moaning Myrtles are entirely female, as are The Butterbeer Experience, The Buttermellows and Kwikspell. House of Black is fronted by a woman, and Statutory Snape and Secondhand Magic Supplies have regular female vocal contributions. Contained in a master-list of “wrock” bands housed on Wizrocklopedia.com are approximately 750 bands, about half of which are completely female. Outside of the wizard rock community and in other areas of the larger Fandom (such as fan-fiction and fan-art), females are the primary source of creative output. Much of the popular and frequently-read Harry Potter fan fiction is written by women. Much of the fan art and most popular fan art is also produced by

⁵¹ Britta Sweers. *Electric Folk: The Changing Face of English Traditional Music*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 238.

women.⁵² It would seem that perhaps Wizard Rock, another form of creative output made by fans, would exhibit a similar gender ratio. This is, however, not the case.

Although the vast majority of Wizard Rock community members are female, the superstar status that is given to women in other areas of the Fandom is most often given to the males. Of the current Top Tier bands, less than half are female-fronted or include a female in the band. This is a contrast to what Potter fans are used to experiencing. In a larger community where once females were the predominant creative force, a smaller sub-community has emerged for the males to assume that role.

Though it is subject to some debate among community members, based on a technicality of what qualifies as true wizard rock, the wizard rock scene began with women. While Harry and the Potters are credited as the first complete wizard rock band and are partly responsible for the genre of wizard rock, The Switchblade Kittens actually had the first wizard rock song. The mostly-female band's 2000 song "Ode To Harry" was written from the perspective of Ginny Weasley (one of the books' strongest female characters).

Women in mainstream wizard rock are surprisingly elusive. This is not because there are too few of them (their numbers within the community as a whole match and sometimes outnumber the males) but rather because they are *less visible*. Because the fanbase is predominantly female, the young men who front wizard rock bands garner particular attention.

⁵² Fan History.Com. "Harry Potter." http://www.fanhistory.com/wiki/Harry_Potter (2010).

In an article posted to the *WizRockloPedia.org* (the most widely recognized community website for wizard rock) in early 2009 titled “He Said/She Said – The (Non?)Existence of Sexism in Wizard Rock,” the writing staff provided a transcript of a debate between the two performers of The Whomping Willows (male) and the band Snidget (female). A reader commented:

“Someone in this Fandom once told me that she hates Wizard Rock, not because she can’t stand the music or the concept, but because it took Harry Potter Fandom from being a female dominated creative Fandom to being an outlet for the adoration of men. I was entirely too shocked to even argue back.”⁵³

This observation that wizard rock is more male-centric than other parts of the Harry Potter fan community has been made countless times, and indeed was made several more times as the comment-war on the article continued over the following weeks. If the article comments were any indication, the above quotation reflects the opinions of a large portion of wizard rock population. The demographic change can be, as described by the reader, an uncomfortable and unexpected adjustment.

Many wizard rock fans and musicians are unaware of (or, in some cases unconcerned with) the sexism they are apparently nurturing. The bands that tour regularly are usually male. The music that is requested most frequently during live broadcasts, podcasts, or internet streaming is usually performed by male bands. The bands interviewed most often by commercial periodicals and media outlets (like USA

⁵³ Freya Fridy, *He Said/She Said: The (Non?)Existence of Sexism in Wizard Rock* (2 September 2009) <http://wizrocklopedia.com/2009/09/02/he-saidshe-said-the-nonexistence-of-sexism-in-wizard-rock/> (Accessed 5 September 2009).

Today and MTV) are, in fact, male. The majority of the releases through the EP of the Month Club have been by male bands. The only wizard rock musicians who were able to undertake a full-time career up until late 2010 are also male: for example The Whomping Willows and the band Justin Finch Fletchley and the Sugar Quills. Even the most popular female bands have not, to this date, been able to sustain a career through wizard rock.

Questionnaire data indicated that 17% of wizard rock fans purchase and support wizard rock based on the gender of its performers, and that 11% of questionnaire participants prefer male performers to female performers. This gender preference, which does not necessarily equate sexism, is small, but it does exist. However, there are some females within the community who decline to attribute such disparities to sexism or discrimination. Lauren Fairweather of The Moaning Myrtles, for example, insists frequently in online discussion contexts that the lack of success for female performers within the genre is not due to sexism, but rather a lack of marketing skills, production quality, or musical ability.⁵⁴

It is important to note that in the questionnaire responses, a majority of questionnaire participant listed production and musical quality, one way or another, among the characteristics they consider when listening to wizard rock. Until now in this discussion, the ideas of quality, ability, and talent have been intentionally avoided because it is not an important characteristic of wizard rock according to the community rhetoric. The wizard rock community explicitly maintains that wizard rock

⁵⁴ Ibid.

music is intended for participation and inclusion regardless of technical skill. Yet, listeners have made it clear that technical skill is a decision making factor for them.

The community sub-group that helps to perpetuate these opinions and consumer trends within wizard rock is the “fangirls.” While the definition of this name varies from community to community, in wizard rock it indicates a young woman who is actively seeking close, personal, romantic relationships or sexual encounters with a band-member.⁵⁵ Frequently, calling oneself a fangirl is almost a badge of honor to some community members. Many young ladies make a point to share their stories about how they’ve been to a concert and how they “fangirled” one of the musicians. The act of “fangirling” can describe anything from excitedly requesting a photograph with one of the band members to engaging in illicit or sexual activities with a band member. This is by no means a new tendency for fans of popular musics, and fangirls are not entirely unlike “groupies.” The difference between a fangirl and a groupie can sometimes, but not always, be unclear. In the Harry Potter Fandom prior to the rise of wizard rock, this kind of attention was given only to the actors in the films had this kind of attention.

Even the female-fronted band House of Black incorporated a song about being a fangirl on their latest album, titled “Wizard Rock FanGirl.” This selection not only mentions “fangirlism,” but glorifies this state through the illustration of the narrator’s prerogative to party, consume alcohol, and sleep with an anonymous member of a

⁵⁵ This definition was distinguished by members of the wizard rock community casually identifying themselves as fangirls in their questionnaires and in conversation. It is also based on observation of their behavior.

wizard rock band. The desire for a sexual encounter does not necessarily equate with sexism in every case. The fangirl role is a debated and subject to individual interpretation. According to questionnaire responses, there are some wizard rock participants who believe that fangirls are necessary and empowering, while others maintain that they are insulting and even a little annoying to other listeners. The House of Black song has thus commented on one of the most controversial and complicated female roles within the wizard rock community.

This song also mentions the fanboy, who is less elusive than one might expect. A fanboy is like a fangirl but male, only the fanboy appears to be less defined by sexual exploits than his female counterpart. “Fanboy” is simply a title given to any male within the community that shows a particular interest in a specific band or individual. Community members joke about the rarity of fanboys, but with the larger percentage of male wizard rock community members than elsewhere in the Fandom, it is more likely that they are simply less direct about their situation than the fangirls.

Many wizard rock fans tend to be what can only be described as rabidly exceptionally excited to see male bands perform. The band that was listed as a favorite in 98% of questionnaires was the Ministry of Magic. This group consists of five males who were formerly in a professional recording group together. Their sound is a mixture of electronic and the 1990’s boyband. According to concert attendance, their fanbase is predominantly female, and behave much like screaming fans for a popular, non-wizard mainstream band. Based on the questionnaire data and concert attendance, it is arguable that the Ministry of Magic is the most popular band in wizard rock,

though community members advise against the ranking of bands as a matter of principle. If the Ministry of Magic group was female, or perhaps a collection of slightly less attractive males, it is possible that they might not have achieved the same level of recognition within the community.

Another explanation for the popularity of males within the genre might be simply that the founders of the community were primarily male. With the exception of the Switchblade Kittens, the first wizard rock bands were actually formed out of a group of men who were already friends from other social contexts. They now make up the majority of the Top Tier, and set the precedent for males dominating wizard rock music.

In any profitable economic situation, products are sold and marketed to meet a demand. When the demand from the predominantly female consumer base is for “hot guys who play wizard music,” then it is likely that the prevailing demographic of successful wizard rock groups will be male.

The female wizard rockers, however, are not simply going unnoticed. In a handful of cases, female groups have been able to achieve a nearly-equivalent popularity to their male counterparts. The Parselmouths have some of the better-selling wizard rock albums on iTunes and were featured in *The Wizard Rockumentary*.⁵⁶ The Moaning Myrtles, also featured in *The Wizard Rockumentary*, have toured extensively across the United States, sometimes headlining above their male tour companions.

⁵⁶ Shuyler, *The Wizard Rockumentary*, 2008.

On their most recent full-length album *What About Myrtle?*, The Moaning Myrtles include a song called “Transparent,” a play on the idea that the character Moaning Myrtle is a ghost who haunts a girls’ bathroom. As discussed in Chapter 3, the song was written so that in singing along, the listener would actually be self-affirming. The song is intended to promote self-confidence and is one of the more empowering songs for females attributed to a Top Tier wizard rock band. While I personally find this song to convey a mixed set of messages, representations of feminine strength in this song come from the lyrics “Harry asked me out and I refused.” Through this lyric, the performers demonstrate that the character Moaning Myrtle has moved beyond the crush on Harry Potter that had caused her to belittle herself somehow, toward having self-respect and realizing that she can exist happily without him.

As I mentioned above, the Moaning Myrtles are emphatic that they have not felt discrimination in the wizard rock community. Instead, both girls maintain that the reason female bands have a harder time making a name for themselves is because they lack the knowledge or talent necessary to market themselves effectively to an audience consisting mostly of the same-sex. In the wizard rock market, female musicians are less likely to be able to exploit sex appeal to sell their music, so other methods must be found. Still others maintain that such exploitation is a blatant contradiction of the community’s avowal of equality and social justice.

Gender discrimination is not something unique to wizard rock, and is found throughout many other musical communities. In her book *Pretty in Punk: Girl’s*

Gender Resistance in a Boy's Subculture, Lauraine Leblanc writes about a woman who: "felt troubled about the male-dominated gender dynamics in the punk subculture, a subculture that portrays itself as being egalitarian, and even feminist, but is actually far from being either."⁵⁷ Leblanc goes on to say "Girls in male-dominated youth subcultures such as punk continually confront ideologies of gender that remain largely invisible, perhaps even tacitly accepted, in many young women's everyday lives."⁵⁸ This is consistent with patterns in the wizard rock community. The community prides itself on its progressivism and ability to ignore traditional gender roles or rules of society, when in fact these rules are so deeply engrained in western culture that they recur in wizard rock as well. Yet they are not apparent without close examination, and many women still exhibit some kind of internalized subordination, whether they realize it or not.

In fact, the public face of Wizard Rock is of equality, and is centered around a group of fans seeking to celebrate the Harry Potter series through music. Yet, community roles are not entirely equal and many women and girls pander to an audience of their same-sex peers in order to achieve the same level of recognition as their male counterparts. It appears that sexism is inherent in wizard rock, whether intentional or unintentional. While outward expressions suggest that the community should be completely equal and all-inclusive. There is an underlying struggle for attention – particularly involving females trying to gain a fanbase for their bands in the

⁵⁷ Leblanc, *Pretty in Punk: Girl's Gender Resistance in a Boy's Subculture*, 6-8.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

only male-centered facet to the Harry Potter expressive Fandom. It is a debate that is likely to continue, and a problem that is likely to persist.

Wizard Rock and Attitudes Toward Sexuality

The wizard rock community's attitudes toward sexuality are much more consistent than their attitudes about gender. Generally speaking, wizard rock musicians and fans display uncommon tolerance of any kind of lifestyle or personal sexual preference they may encounter. This is also somewhat true when examining the larger Harry Potter fan community. Support for equal rights regardless of sexual preference seems to be most often concentrated around acceptance of homosexual males, perhaps due to the content of the Harry Potter literature itself. Within the Rowling text, readers are presented with characters who are subtly indicative of a homosexual lifestyle. These include the relationship of Harry Potter's headmaster Albus Dumbledore to his boyhood friend Gellert Grindelwald. Following the release of the final Harry Potter book, J.K. Rowling announced to the press that the Dumbledore character was indeed homosexual in a scandal that still continues to be debated several years later.

One wizard rock song that helped to define the community rhetoric and group attitude toward the news is the aptly-titled "Dumbledore is Gay (and That's Okay!)" by Justin Finch-Fletchley and the Sugar Quills. Justin's music is simple, and his stage presence is certainly enthusiastic, but it is the simplicity of his lyrics that tends to

attract his fans. Justin (the musician's real first name) repeats, plainly, "Dumbledore is gay, and that's okay;" the very simplicity of this expression of sexual tolerance is itself quite affecting.

Another song promoting tolerance can be found within the repertoire of the Top Tier. The Whomping Willow's song "In Which Draco and Harry Secretly Want to Make Out," or "Draco and Harry" for short, is an exploration of what might happen if the characters Harry Potter and his school nemesis Draco Malfoy were to experience sexual feelings for each other. The Draco and Harry pairing is popular among fan fiction writers and fan artists, as well, and the song was the first notable example within wizard rock of a Harry Potter "slash" relationship.⁵⁹ The song received such a positive response that during a Whomping Willows concert at the 2008 Harry Potter "Terminus" convention, Paul DeGeorge of Harry and the Potters came out on stage during the song and actually kissed Brian Ross of Draco and the Malfoys. Ross was one of the many collaborators performing with The Whomping Willows that night, to the delight of a screaming and enthusiastic audience. Both DeGeorge and Ross are heterosexual, but this single action set the tone for future community attitudes about homosexuality for wizard rock. Below is a screen capture from the video of that performance.

⁵⁹ The term "Slash" comes from fan fiction, and is used to indicate a (usually) homosexual male character pairing that is (usually) non-canon. Slash is called FemmeSlash when it refers to female pairings. The name comes from the writing in fan fiction descriptions where authors would write something like "Harry/Draco," with "slash" indicating the punctuation.



Paul DeGeorge and Brian Ross kiss onstage during a Whomping Willows performance at Terminus 2008.

Figure 4.1 – Draco and Harry

The Houston-based bands that I worked with over the course of this study are vocally supportive of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered rights in their music as well as their personal lives. They participate in and support Pride parades among other things. The female-fronted band Kwispell even has a song, titled “Ravenclaw Crush” in which the singer expresses a crush on Luna Lovegood, a prominent female character in the Harry Potter books.

The only opposition to issues of sexuality that I have encountered in the wizard rock community, deal with the controversial relationship between the characters Remus Lupin and Sirius Black. There is a loyal contingent of Harry Potter fans who believe that the two characters actually shared a homosexual relationship, despite it being unconfirmed by J.K. Rowling. Opposition to the pairing is also supported by the Remus Lupin having a family with a female character late in the series. Few wizard rock bands explore the Remus and Sirius relationship, and even fewer are praised for

it. The topic is wizard rock taboo, if there is such a thing, and many listeners and musicians are either vehemently opposed to it or hesitant to explore it. Wizard rock listeners usually express their dislike for the pairing because they either have their own heterosexual attraction to the character, or they will not believe it true until it is confirmed by Rowling.

The Top Tier band Tonks and the Aurors included a verse about the Remus and Sirius relationship in one of their songs to recognize the group of individuals who do appreciate that pairing. Other lower-tier bands such as The Buttermellows have written entire songs dedicated to the two males. A band called the HMS Wolfstar is even named after the fan group that supports the pairing.

However, despite the otherwise very strong support for homosexuality, the wizard rock community does not appear to support this particular character pairing. This could be due to the lack of proof that such a relationship would have existed, but there is no indication that Draco Malfoy and Harry Potter would be romantically involved, either, yet that song is widely supported. It remains unclear as to why the wizard rock prefers one relationship to the other. The inconsistency could be as simple to explain as the bands involved with the Draco and Harry song have achieved a higher level of fame than the bands that have supported the Remus and Sirius relationship. Although Tonks and the Aurors is a Top-Tier band, they have not achieved the same level of commercial success and community recognition as The Whomping Willows, Harry and the Potters, or Draco and the Malfoys.

Gender and Sexuality within wizard rock are very complicated subjects. While the community likes to believe that they are liberally-minded about gender and sexuality issues, they suffer from some of the same biases as the rest of society. The community leaders appear to be content with the achievements of both male and female performers, though some musicians who have not reached a satisfactory level of recognition count gender disparity among the causes. Both male and female performers demonstrate their tolerance of a variety of sexual preferences by recording songs or supporting other wizard rock musicians who record songs about homosexuality. The degree of effectiveness for these songs is dependent upon the performing band's popularity, as seen in the difference between the Draco and Harry relationship versus the Remus and Sirius relationship. Even still, lesbian relationships like Kwikspell's "Ravenclaw Crush" fail to achieve community-wide popularity. Although it is clear that the wizard rock community rhetoric suggests equality in regard to each of these things, that simply is not the case. It does not, however, appear as though the inconsistency between the rhetoric and the community behavior is intentional.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

“If you want real rock, you have to go to Hogwarts.” – Paul DeGeorge⁶⁰

The wizard rock community is a community of tremendous creative output. Following in the path of other Harry Potter fans and other fan communities before, wizard rockers are using their music and their community to create an entity that is more than just a musical genre or scene. Wizard rock is a community which utilizes music as a tool for expression of its ideals. This document has explored the rhetoric and behavior of conduct in the wizard rock community. The rhetoric in the wizard rock community is very idealistic, which causes the gap between rhetoric and behavior to be even more pointed. The case is not simply that wizard rock behavior is unusually deviant, but that their rhetoric is nearly impossible to realistically achieve. While most wizard rockers seem to have good intentions for the community, there is still some disparity between rhetoric and behavior. However, as Henry Glassie mentions,

“If people are stripped of the ability to manipulate truth, to make their own things and their own history, they may continue to act properly, but they lose the capacity to learn for themselves about their own rightness. They stagnate or surrender. If truth is located beyond the mind’s grasp, if it is something that exists but cannot be touched, then culture cannot be advanced or defended.”⁶¹

While there are instances in which the wizard rock community does not act as it says it does, the different experience among individuals can confuse individual

⁶⁰ Anelli, *Harry, A History*, 111.

⁶¹ Glassie, *Passing the Time in Ballymenone*, 652.

reality. After all, in its simplest form, truth is perception. Hence, the perception and experience of a fan is much different from that of a wizard rock musician. The experience of a Top Tier wizard rock musician is very different from that of a Third Tier musician. For each individual within the wizard rock community, there is an individual perception.

The community is grouped into smaller sections, yet is unified. Although there may be a divide between listeners and the three tiers of musical involvement, the community is still united by its love of the Harry Potter literature on which it was based.

Individual identities are an important part of community construction. Without the individual associations with J.K. Rowling's character descriptions, and the escapist impulse to role-play, wizard rock would not exist as it does.

Wizard rock music uses music as a symbol and signifier of aesthetic and philosophical priorities. As discussed in *The Remus Lupins and Danny Dementor* excerpts in Chapter 2, recurrent musical ideas can carry with them a set of literary associations from song to song. Wizard rock fans tend to enjoy these themes because they, like other Harry Potter fans, value literature on any level.

This love of literature is what helps fuel the political and social activity. The primary expressed goal of wizard rock is to promote literacy. Through the Harry Potter Alliance and other activist and charitable organizations, wizard rockers are intent on making a positive difference in the world. Members of the wizard rock community also consider themselves comparatively free of Western gender

expectations. They often look for alternative explanations for gender disparity before acknowledging it in small percentages. The wizard rock community also prides itself upon its level of tolerance for alternative lifestyles, and will go to extreme measures to make sure that those ideals are demonstrated as part of the community rhetoric. However, there are observable, documentable contrasts between the gender and sexuality rhetoric of the wizard rock community and the behavior. Some of community member behaviors are typical of rock music stereotypes, with individual musicians engaging in illicit, derogatory, or flippant sexual activities with other community members.⁶²

Conversely, the necessity for a tiered system to describe bands suggests stratification and hierarchy. This method of organization came from the discussions of wizard rock community members, and is still being debated for its effectiveness. The rhetoric of equality does not match the reality of tiers, though this kind of stratification is almost inevitable in a musical community that makes commercial efforts or asks community members to “rank” the bands. The *Wizrocklopedia.com*'s annual Wizard Rock People's Choice Awards does just that. While the awards are an honor to those who receive them, the voting system in place is flawed and an inaccurate reflection of the opinions of the most involved and seriously dedicated fans and musicians. To them, it is frustrating that the exceptionally casual wizard rock listeners vote for “the same bands every year.” However, community members who have had long-term or

⁶² Confidentiality precludes me from citing specific examples. This conclusion is drawn from interviews, questionnaires, and private conversations with community members who wished to have this information remain anonymous.

very involved participation are hesitant to rank any band. This is because of a shared community experience in which *MTV.com* ranked the “Top 10” wizard rock bands of 2007, and tried to establish a rivalry with the article title between two well-respected bands where none existed. Community members protested on the comment board, and felt as though the writer clearly did not understand or ignored the entire community dynamic.⁶³

Additionally, when asked to identify their 10 favorite wizard rock bands, one questionnaire participant wrote:

“I politely refuse to answer this question. We dislike rankings in the wrock Fandom. There are bands that I listen to more because they have more content, but we don’t have top lists, it’s just not how we operate. What makes wrock great is that anyone can do it and have fans.”

This participant was not the only one to express this, and almost 7% of questionnaire participants refused to answer that question. Another 68% of participants indicated that the list making was difficult, and many did not list all 10. Although there are bands that frequented a majority of lists, a total of 101 bands were named by the 125 questionnaire takers, representing all three tiers.

This document is a preliminary ethnography of a previously unexamined community. Future scholarly work could delve deeper into the complexities of the community. To academics and scholars, this research can be put to use in many ways.

⁶³ Vineyard, Jennifer. “Harry Potter-Inspired Wizard Bands That Rock,” In *MTV News’ Year-End Top 10s: Draco and the Malfoys may be bitter about being outranked by the Remus Lupins*. (4 December 2007) <http://www.mtv.com/news/articles/1575646/20071203/story.jhtml> (Accessed 7 January 2010)

Any academic study involving music as a tool for community, identity, and activism could perhaps find something of value in my research. Ethnomusicologists can use this study and others like it when working with urban topics or non-proximate or virtual communities. My research will be relevant to popular music or popular culture scholars who would be interested in a subgenre and sub-community that invites and encourages musical participation regardless of prior training or skill. Wizard rock also demonstrates and embraces the “do it yourself” quality of early punk rock. This study can also be valuable to scholars working on issues of gender and sexuality in music. While my research was primarily focused on analysis of text and community interaction, further intertextual study could prove valuable in determining and defining sonic representations of both gender within the music.

Finally, This research will be useful to any scholar who is researching the role of music in fan communities or as part of fandom. Most immediately, the “filk” communities of science fiction and fantasy works could be immediately relevant, though there are some distinct differences between “filk” and wizard rock, mostly centered around the compositional process.

Wizard rock is an immensely valuable and rich subgenre that certainly warrants continued and future study and analysis. While many would argue that too much academic involvement and self-consciousness could damage the community, careful participation, observation, and evaluation, will help preserve the integrity of the wizard rock community. Further attention to the wizard rock community can become as rewarding a topic of study to academia as any other “legitimized” genre.

To many wizard rock participants, the discussion of these contradictions is not of value. They would rather continue to participate in the community as they know it and enjoy the company of the people they have chosen to be around. However, for the documentation, preservation, and duration of the community, it is imperative that these topics be continually addressed. None of the contradictory behaviors in wizard rock are unique, and each of them can be found in musical communities around the world. What makes the wizard rock behaviors particularly interesting is the community's steadfastness to their rhetoric despite behavioral evidence against it.

The community founders and original members publically appear to attempt to uphold the elements of the community that they intended for it in the first place. However, the community has an undetermined amount of participants at varying degrees of interest, and the public actions of these individuals do not always agree with their private behaviors. With the peaked fan interest in the individual musicians, private and personal behaviors are also, by default, part of the community behavior. One such behavior involves the support of other wizard rock bands.

There are many wizard rock musicians who have expressed either in confidence or anonymously through my questionnaires that they do not actually listen to wizard rock music outside of their own musical careers. Their reasons vary, but generally include a dislike for the production quality or musical skills of other wizard rock musicians. The wizard rock community rhetoric stresses that participation and effort are more important than the musical product, but in recent years many listeners and musicians have avoided lower-tier musicians because they have less than

professional production quality on their recordings, or are slightly out of tune. While each individual is entitled to their listening preferences, it is hypocritical of a wizard rock musician operating in the wizard rock community where the rhetoric is so clear and accessible to expect an audience while refusing to be one. Although some community members believe that there is no division or band hierarchy, this is part of why the tier system is in place, and part of why so many community members feel that it is relevant.

The tier system is a direct reflection of the effectiveness of wizard rock bands within the community, as well. If a band operates on a lower tier, they are less likely to be able to gain publicity or raise money for any kind of charitable cause without the help of at least one Top-Tier musician. Many of the Second and Third-Tier musicians continually express their interest in activism, volunteerism, and donating time and music to fundraise, yet they are rarely asked to participate since they do not have enough community appeal. While there are several compilation projects that have attempted to include musicians from all tiers, it is still the Top-Tier musicians who are responsible for the mass appeal.

Likewise, the social issues that are presented most heavily to the wizard rock community are those introduced or supported by the Top-Tier bands. Songs promoting tolerance for alternative lifestyles and homosexuality are almost indirectly regulated by the Top-Tier. While lower-tier bands may perform songs dealing with the same basic topics, the manner in which those topics reach the community depend on the repertoire of the Top-Tier. In other words, the wizard rock community encourages

members to become involved with charitable projects and social awareness, but the effectiveness of those actions is limited to the popularity of the individual.

The wizard rock community, although endeared to community members, does exhibit conflicting behaviors and rhetoric. While this situation is not rare in musical communities elsewhere, the disparity can endanger the welfare of the community at large and will influence the perceptions of outsiders. However, despite these inconsistencies and community problems, the wizard rock community remains something special and unique to those involved. However, despite criticisms, a healthy community can accept critique, whereas a community that cannot would be considered codependent. The idealistic community rhetoric that all opinions may be expressed freely is contradicted by the response behaviors of community members. Historically, it seems that any opinion that agrees with the rhetoric is allowed to be expressed, while any opinion to the contrary is essentially stifled. Many wizard rock fans believe that voicing a critical opinion of the wizard rock community is destructive and unnecessary. Still, others are intentionally inflammatory and divergent, shared for the purpose of starting discussion among community members. As seen in the reader comments on many community web sites and blogs, there is a divide in the wizard rock community between those that believe such discussion is necessary for the longevity and health of the community, while others believe that the idealism that is expressed in the community rhetoric is what should be preserved.

I have confidence that the wizard rock community will flourish for years to come, until its participants are ready and able to release it peacefully if that time

should ever arrive. Academic interest in the wizard rock community is steadily growing, both as community members begin to pursue advanced studies and as the community is brought, thanks to each researcher, into scholarly light. As mentioned in my conclusions, there is much that can be learned by studying this special community of very hospitable, accessible, and kind individuals.

The research and writing of this document has significantly affected my own participation and interest in the wizard rock community. While I am now able to contribute to discussion on wizard rock community growth and development projects, such as WrockSnob, my personal experience in the community has become somewhat cynical and calculated. At the same time, my approach for promoting my own musical project and for interacting with other musicians has been changed almost entirely to coexist with the behaviors I have detailed in this document while I, too, voice the community rhetoric with default hypocrisy. I plan to continue both my academic work and personal involvement with the wizard rock community, particularly in regard to the relationship between rhetoric and behavior. I also hope to explore the experiential disparity between the tiers of musicians within the wizard rock community. I encourage other scholars to delve into the wizard rock community, and involve themselves with the wealth of scholarly topics it can provide.

“Having observed, the observer learns and has no choice but to become an advocate not of a particular culture, but of the human right to cultural constructions.” – Henry Glassie⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Glassie, *Passing the Time in Ballymenone*, 652.

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APPENDIX A
WIZARD ROCK COMMUNITY QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questionnaire is being used to collect data for a Masters Thesis in Musicology at Texas Tech University. You are not required to provide any uniquely identifying information. You may complete as much or as little of this questionnaire as you would like.

Location (City, State, Country, etc.):

Age:

Gender:

(1-1) How long have you been involved in the Harry Potter Fandom?

1-3 Years

4-6 Years

7 or more Years

(1-2) Do you listen to Harry Potter-themed Podcasts?:

Yes

No

(1-3) If you answered "yes," which podcasts do you listen to? Why?:

(1-4) Do you watch Harry Potter-themed YouTube programs?:

Yes

No

(1-5) If you answered "yes," which YouTube programs do you watch? Why?:

(1-6) What is your role in the Harry Potter fan community?:

Wizard Rock Musician

Fan Fiction Writer

Cosplayer

Fan Artist

Fandom Web

Employee

Podcaster

Fandom Researcher

Fandom Author

Fandom Event

Coordinator or Staff

Fan

Other

- (2-1) If you are a Harry Potter fan that DOES NOT listen to Wizard Rock, please explain why.:
- (2-2) How long have you been listening to Wizard Rock?:
Two years or Less
3-4 Years
5 Years or More
- (2-3) I generally prefer to listen to:
Male-fronted bands.
Female-fronted bands.
Bands with a "pop" sound.
Bands with a "rock" sound.
Bands with a "folk" sound.
Bands with a "metal" sound.
Bands who do "wremixes"
Acoustic bands.
Electric Bands.
Other:
- (2-4) What is your favorite Wizard Rock Band?:
- (2-5) Please list *your* top 10 favorite Wizard Rock Bands, and why you chose them. :
- (2-6) I purchase wizard rock music:
Rarely (5 or less times a year)
Occasionally (6-12 times a year)
Frequently (12 or more times a year)
- (2-7) Purchasing Wizard Rock Music I...
have purchased a wizard rock album directly from the artist
have purchased a wizard rock album in person
download free wizard rock online
have purchased wizard rock music on iTunes or other mp3 service
have purchased wizard rock online
- (2-8) When I purchase or download Wizard Rock, I...:
choose music by my favorite bands
choose music that my friends tell me about
choose music that I found while browsing
choose music that I heard on a podcast
choose music by well-known bands
choose music by less-known bands

- (2-9) Have you ever purchased or downloaded Wizard Rock music from a band with fewer than 500 fans on MySpace?:
Yes
No
- (2-10) Have you ever nominated bands for the WRPCAs (Wizard Rock People's Choice Awards)?:
Yes
No
- (2-11) If you answered "yes," have you ever nominated a band with fewer than 500 MySpace fans? (For an award other than "Best New Band" or "Best Kept Secret"):
Yes
No
- (2-12) Have you ever voted on the WRPCAs (Wizard Rock Peoples Choice Awards)?:
Yes
- (2-13) If you answered "yes," have you ever voted for a band with fewer than 500 fans on MySpace? (For an award other than "Best New Band" or "Best Kept Secret"):
Yes
- (2-14) How do you decide which Wizard Rock bands you listen to?:
- (2-15) Have you ever attended a live Wizard Rock event?:
Yes
No
- (2-16) If you answered "yes," what events or kinds of events have you attended?:
- (2-17) When Attending Wizard Rock Concerts (excluding conferences and festivals):
I will travel a great distance (more than 100 miles)
I will travel at great expense (more than \$100)
I will travel a large distance (more than 50 miles)
I will travel at large expense (more than \$50)
I will travel a small distance (less than 50 miles)
I will travel at little expense (less than \$50)
- (2-18) Have you ever attended a Wizard Rock concert for a band with fewer than 500 fans on MySpace?:
Yes
No

- (2-19) If you answered "no," why not?:
- (2-20) Are you willing to travel, according to the criteria you selected above, for a band with fewer than 500 fans on MySpace?:
Yes
No
- (2-21) If you answered "no," why not?:
- (3-1) In your own words, what is Wizard Rock?:
- (3-2) How did you first get involved with Wizard Rock?:
- (3-3) What do you like best about the Wizard Rock community?:
- (3-4) If you could change things about the Wizard Rock community, what would they be?:
- (3-5) Has anything negative ever happened to you in the Wizard Rock community?:
- (3-6) What is your favorite memory from the Wizard Rock community?:

For Wizard Rock Musicians

- (4-1) What has been positive about your experience as a Wizard Rock musician?:
- (4-2) What has been negative about your experience as a Wizard Rock musician?:
- (4-3) Describe your band in whatever way you would like:

APPENDIX B

SONG LYRICS

Seven Potters The Remus Lupins

[A] We cut through the sky
like Gryffindor's sword through a snake.
Riding high on our brooms,
for they can't keep pace.
Go! Go! Go! Go!

[B] Death Eaters just behind;
green light illuminates the sky.
It's all we can do
to dodge the curses flying by.
Go! Go! Go! Go!

[C] With seven Potters,
there's a million ways
we will make it home tonight.
Oh, tonight, we must fly.

[D] We're split apart
high above the English countryside.
We must get Harry to safety, now.
We must turn this war's tide.
Go! Go! Go! Go!

[E] An errant spell turns
A Weasley twin into a saint.
A holey man. If we can outrun our fate,
if we can..
Go! Go! Go! Go!

[C] With seven Potters,
there's a million ways
we will make it home tonight.
Oh, tonight, we must fly.

[F] So Hagrid falls. I'd rather tear my heart out
than leave him behind.
I spin 'round like a wand, and race back towards
these troubled times.
Mad Eye ain't coming home. Another casualty of
this legendary war.
Will someone please tell me what it is we are
fighting for?

[G] We're fighting for love!
Love! Love! Love! Love!

[C] With seven Potters,
there's a million ways
we will make it home tonight.
Oh, tonight, we shall fight.

I Wanna Be a Wizard

Danny Dementor

Yeah, this be Danny D.
Joining the fight for Literacy
Come with me.
We gon' f*** up the people who can't read

So I hope you're feelin good
I hope you're feelin fine
Cause this is the best damn song
Of Two-thousand- and -nine

I see you in that wizard club
Shakin' all your wizard stuff
Smokin' you some wizard bud
Makin' you some wizard love

I know that we're just pretending
But I hope this is never ending

I wanna be a wizard
Oh, oh, oh
I hope that you're not skizzard
Oh, oh, oh

You see me in my wizard room
Doin' what a wizard do.
Eatin' me some wizard food,
Lacin' up my wizard shoes.
Throwin out my other clothes
Only wearing wizard robes.
Even when I go to work
Never breaking character.

I wanna be a wizard
Oh, oh, oh
I hope that you're not skizzard
Oh, oh, oh

Yeah, that's right
I'm back, Danny D, 2009
Dramatically affecting literacy rates
across the United States and throughout the
world
Hit me Neville, hit me good

I drop the beat like a (Maximus*) spell
Hogwarts true calling let me hear you yell
I hope this is never ending
We bring the flavor like Bertie Botts
Unpredictable and magical
We can't be stopped
We break chandeliers, even Umbridge heard
(All your muggle friends*) singing,
I wanna be a Wizard

I wanna be a wizard
Oh, oh, oh
I hope that you're not skizzard
Oh, oh, oh
I wanna be a wizard
Oh, oh, oh (I hope this is never ending)
I hope that you're not skizzard
Oh, oh, oh (I hope this is never ending)
I wanna be a wizard
Oh, oh, oh (I hope this is never ending)
I hope that you're not skizzard
Oh, oh, oh
I hope this is never ending

Looking for Trouble

The Remus Lupins

[A] I don't care how much you write
I'm not going back to Privet Drive.
Spend the summer at the burrow
with my girl.

[B] We're going lookin' for trouble (Bah, bah, bah...)
We're gonna finish this, this time around. (Bah, bah, bah, oooh-oooh)
We're going lookin' for trouble (Bah, bah, bah...)
Gonna finish this once and for all. (Bah, bah, bah, oooh-oooh)

[C] Don't go expecting answers
I'm taking Hedwig with me.
And when they're ready,
Ron and Hermione.

[B] We're going lookin' for trouble (Bah, bah, bah...)
Gonna finish this once and for all. (Bah, bah, bah, oooh-oooh)
We're going lookin' for trouble (Bah, bah, bah...)
We gotta finish this, this time around. (Bah, bah, bah, oooh-oooh)

[D] And though before we had our reasons,
this time its personal.
You can pretend that you don't care,
But you know you cried.

[B] We're going lookin' for trouble (Bah, bah, bah...)
We're gonna finish this once and for all. (Bah, bah, bah, oooh-oooh)
We're going lookin' for trouble (Bah, bah, bah...)
(talking about you know who)
We gotta finish this, this time around. (Bah, bah, bah, oooh-oooh)

[E] Do you have any leads on where the horcruxes are?
'Cause I don't have a clue.
I don't know who R.A.B. is.
Do you? Do you?

[B] We're going lookin' for trouble (Bah, bah, bah...)
Gotta finish this, this time around. (Bah, bah, bah, oooh-oooh)
We're going lookin' for trouble (Bah, bah, bah...)
We're gotta finish this once and for all. (Bah, bah, bah, oooh-oooh)
We're going lookin' for trouble (Bah, bah, bah...)
We gotta finish this, this time around. (Bah, bah, bah, oooh-oooh)
We're going lookin' for trouble (Bah, bah, bah...)
We're gotta finish this once and for all. (Bah, bah, bah, oooh-oooh)

By Your Side
The Remus Lupins

It's time to rock that summer sun.
Harry Potter, you're the chosen one.
This love will brighten the dark.
No, they won't break us apart.
No, no, no.

You don't have to do this alone.
We are right there by your side.
You don't have to do this alone.
We are right there by your side.

Well Hogwarts School has trained you well.
Dumbledore fought until he fell.
We've had our time to turn back.
Whatever happens now we won't do that.
No, no, no.

You don't have to do this alone.
We are right there by your side.
You don't have to do this alone.
We are right there by your side.

We saved the Sorcerer's Stone
And uncovered the Chamber of Secrets, yeah.
We rescued the Prisoner of Azkaban.
We helped win t he Goblet of Fire
And joined the Order of the Phoenix.
So, we'll take the Half-blood Prince down,
I know we can, I know we can.

The wizard kids are all singin' now,
The muggle kids are all rockin' out.

Bah bah bah bah...

The wizard kids are all singin' now.

We're by your side!
We're by your side!
We're by your side!
We're by your side!

The End

The Remus Lupins

The battlements are ablaze
I scream loud but can't hear my own voice
The lyrics are torn from your pain
And he's singin' just to you, (in harmony and tune*)
This ends here tonight
And I would bet my life
That when these clouds part
The stars are in our hands
The notes will take a stand
Stay by my side don't let me go
Wanna hold you like a wand and keep you close
I can see the end of the tunnel now
The past is on fire, every note is flat
As I sprint across the ground and dare too look back
I see memories that curl like smoke
Curses tear between us
to four phoenixes there's work to do
I see you outlined in light

Stay alive until morning, and I'll find you.
(Bah, bah, bah...)
Stay alive until morning, and I'll find you.
Stay alive until morning, I swear I'll find you.
Stay alive until morning, and I'll find you.

And so Harry runs and I can barely (see*)
If I trust in love then I've gotta believe
I've put all I've got into one last spell
Another near miss with green light
Oh, it nearly connects
It's all I've got now, one last shield charm
And I've gotta protect.
Lily and James' final song
(Tears are clouding my vision*)
All that's left is hope
As we reach a crescendo
I sing (and so it goes*)
Green light and I say
Goodbye, Goodbye to you.

It's almost done, You're almost home
It's almost done, You're almost home

They say music can save the world
I say come on, let's (give it a shot*)
We together can save the world
Together we can't be stopped.

These last ten steps are all that's left
SO think of your mother and father
The days before were an overture
Let your bravery sustain you now
We're a part of you,
All that's left to do is the very end
This is how it ends
This is how it ends, For good.

Just because it's silent now
The space between the notes that really counts,
When love is open like a bloom
Inspiring you to pen your finest song,
It's always been a weapon
And the answer to the question on your list,
It's clear as day that love will win
Like a patronus on the darkest night, of the end.

Dumbledore's Army Forever!
(Bah, bah bah...)
Dumbledore's Army Forever!
Dumbledore's Army Forever!
Dumbledore's Army Forever!

(____*)
Each pace like a tango
They always knew
This song is written in their (bones*)
(____*) from high above
(____*) whispers love
It's all led up to this

Shouldn't have come here tonight Tom
I can defeat you without even my wand!
Cause I know what we're fighting for!
And I believe in Dumbledore!
And I'm not scared anymore!
So bring what you may
I will stand like my father!
Bring what you may
I will stand like my father!
Hit me with all you've got
I will stand like those before me!
Don't make a sound
Cause (____*) end of your story
This is how it ends
This is how it ends, For good.

Graduation Day The Remus Lupins

Tonight's the last night
To dance hard to the music of your youth
Under the moonlight
Let go of innocence and unobtrusive truth
Come on let's dance

I wrote on the last page of your senior yearbook -
Don't ever change
Thanks for that dance at prom
And for your help in transfiguration
I'm dippin' the quill cause
It's time to start a fresh new chapter
It's never over
Just as long as we've got each other

On Graduation Day
Wouldn't change a single instant
On Graduation Day
Seven years in two scant minutes
On Graduation Day
To best friends, best years of my life
On Graduation Day
Oh, Oh, Oh

We loosened our ties and
I let slip I was a teenage werewolf
What's coming will come,
We'll never forget where we came from
So dry your tears now,
And think about (the look of*) gold and red
We'll always have the summer,
The marauders map is running through my head

On Graduation Day
Wouldn't change a single instant
On Graduation Day
Seven years in two scant minutes
On Graduation Day
To best friends, best years of my life
On Graduation Day
Oh, Oh, Oh

Let's have one final hurrah
Fly in the face of every clock
And though it may seem foolish
I'm damn proud of all that we've done
I fear I don't say it enough

But all that I have is love
For all the trials we've bested,
the tribulations made us strong
Without my friends I'm not complete
To say adieu is bittersweet
And memory is priceless
I'm just a letter away
The last song draws to a close
I open up to let you know
That I will always be here
If you should ever need me
That I will always be here
On the steps of Hogwarts School

On Graduation Day
Wouldn't change a single instant
On Graduation Day
Seven years in two scant minutes
On Graduation Day
To best friends, best years of my life
On Graduation Day
Oh, Oh, Oh

(Choir)
On Graduation Day
Sha la la, Sha la la la...

On Graduation Day
Wouldn't change a single instant
On Graduation Day
Seven years in two scant minutes
On Graduation Day
To best friends, best years of my life
On Graduation Day
Oh, Oh, Oh
Oh, Oh, Oh
Oh, Oh, Oh!

The Weapon
Harry and the Potters

We may have lost Sirius Black
But we're not turning back
We will fight 'til we have won
And Voldemort is gone
And I'm gonna do whatever it takes
I don't care about whatever fate
That prophecy says
No, I'm not afraid
No, I'm not afraid

'Cause there's one thing that I've got
One thing that you've got inside you too
One thing that we've got
And the one thing we've got is enough
To save us all

Well we taught ourselves to fight
And now we know that neither can live while the other survives
And I know that that means me
But I'm glad we've got our army
And we're gonna
Take down the Dark Lord's crew
The Death Eaters will all be running from me and you
And you... (repeated)

And there's
One thing that I've got
One thing that you've got inside you too
One thing that we've got
And the one thing we've got is enough
To save us all

The weapon we have is love
(Love love love love love)

(Repeated)

Wrock Fangirl
The House of Black

I don't really know you
I saw your show yesterday
But you know my heart jumps
When you look at me that way

Let's drink another shot
You don't have to be coy
Let's find a quiet spot
Will you be my fan boy?

I listen to your music
Your voice is in my head
I hear you sing to me
As I lie awake in bed

I want to see you move
I just want to dance with you
Turn up the music, turn down the lights
I'm gonna dance with you all night

[Chorus] I'm a Wizard Rock fan girl
I'm your Wizard Rock fan girl
You may not know me,
but we're meant to be
I'm your fangirl.

It's not hard to imagine
It's easy to understand
I'll meet you after the show
Come on take my hand

I want to hear you sing to me
I want to feel you near
Lean in close, close your eyes
And I will whisper in your ear.

Your smile is intoxicating
Your eyes are so bright
Turn up the music, turn down the lights,
I'm gonna dance with you all night.

[Chorus]

Keep your arms around me
Go ahead and shut the door
Don't leave, stay with me
Just five minutes more

I don't know what it is about you
that drives me insane
Lift me up, spin me around
Kiss me like a hurricane

Transparent
The Moaning Myrtles

Harry taught me how
To stick it to the man
Even if the man's a woman
So I knew I had to start a band

I was sorted so long ago
That I forgot which House I was from
Until the Whomping Willow
Put me in the House of Awesome

[Chorus]
Because of wizard rock
I wear contact lenses and Converse shoes
Because of wizard rock
Harry asked me out and I refused
Because of wizard rock
Haunting bathrooms isn't such a bore
Because of wizard rock
I don't feel transparent anymore

We gossip with the Parselmouths
'cause we think they're awful pretty
And we don't mind having books thrown at us
When they're coming from the Ginnys

We didn't really know
Our Iowan geography,
if you know what I mean
Until we played a show
And got in trouble with the Ministry

[Chorus]

[Bridge]
We're getting muddy with the Mudbloods
Catching love with Catchlove
Drinking butterbeer with Lena
Getting friendly with Tom Riddle and Friends
We're howling with the Lupins
Nasty with the Malfoys
Playing pranks with Jarrod
Hitting Honeydukes with JFF

[Chorus]

Draco and Harry
The Whomping Willows

Draco Malfoy, what's your problem?
You're lookin kinda mopey and forlorn this morning.
Harry Potter, what's your deal?
Are you having trouble with the feelings that you feel?

Draco Malfoy, what's your issue?
Do you need a hug or maybe a tissue?
Harry Potter, give us a sign
You can't commit to Ginny so what do you have in mind?

Give me three guesses
Is it professor McGonnagal?
Is it Lavender Brown?
No,

[Chorus]
It's Draco and Harry sitting in a tree
S-N-O-G-G-I-N-G
It's Draco and Harry sitting in a tree
F-A-L-L-I-N-G
in love

Draco Malfoy, level with me
You used to be so enthralled with Pansy
Harry Potter, don't be shy
You've got no luck with women so perhaps you need a guy

There's nothing wrong with it
No, there's nothing wrong with it
You can move to Massachusetts
where it can be

[Chorus]

There's nothing wrong with it
There's nothing wrong with it
There's nothing wrong with it

[Chorus] (repeat)