

THE QUESTION OF FEMALE SEXUALITY IN J. K. ROWLING'S HARRY POTTER SERIES

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Abstract

The paper proposes to address the issue of female identity and sexuality in J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter series, a bildungsroman which deals with the exploits of a boy-wizard and his friends, in the magical world of London. The characters under scrutiny here will be the two most popular women in the series who contribute to Harry's development from a demure little boy struggling to cope with his new-found identity in the magical world, to the saviour of mankind—Hermione Granger, and Ginny Weasley. But it should not be surmised that they only play fiddles to Harry. They exist in their own right. The paper will try to trace the development of their identities, most often shaped by the sexual fantasies, longings, and 'lack', in the light of the psychoanalytic theories of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan.

In the realm of fantasy fiction, the real world overlaps and intervenes, the blissful façade of utopia crumbles into dust, and we find ourselves standing in the midst of a world which we are a part of, despite its apparent unfamiliarity. Isn't it quite strange that Alice fell into the rabbit-hole only to re-discover the vagaries of growing up; isn't it surprising that Tolkien's world portrays a feudal world of oppression and tyranny; and isn't it ironical the in their own construction of a perfect universe, J. K. Rowling and Ursula Leguin have pushed their own sex into the margin? The paper is an enquiry into the recesses of female sexuality, through its examination of the magical world of J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter and two of its most loved female characters from a psychoanalytical perspective, in the light of theories propounded by Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan.

In the essentially patriarchal world of J.K. Rowling, there are several women who play equally important roles as the men do. Elizabeth E. Heilman was thoroughly disappointed when while reading the first four books of the series she realized that *Harry Potter* books featured the females in secondary positions of power and authority and replicated some of the most familiar cultural stereotypes for both males and females. My endeavour here is to acknowledge the contribution made by the likes of Hermione Granger

and Ginny Weasley in the creation of the fantastical London of Rowling's fertile imagination. The objective of the paper is to understand their desires, wishes, longings, and how their identities are constructed in the course of the series. I fear, since I shall be using Freud's theories of Negative Oedipus Complex, Penis Envy, and Masculinity and Femininity, that this chapter may draw the ire of feminist critics, but I only wish to see if venerable Dr. Freud's notions are universally applicable.

In Hermione Granger's character, what is evident in the first glance is her extreme self-confidence, with a tendency to show that she knows everything. In order to analyze her character and trace the development of her identity— from a geek to the saviour of mankind— it is essential that I must start from the very beginning— from the first time Harry and Ron comes across her on Hogwarts Express, in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. She is described to have bushy brown hair and rather large front teeth. Harry also observes that she has a 'bossy' tone in her voice. She has read everything about Hogwarts, despite belonging to a muggle family, and has practiced successfully, unlike Ron, a number of preliminary spells. She tells Ron after the latter tries to change his pet rat's complexion, with no result at all, "Are you sure that's a real spell? Well, it's not very good, is it? I have tried a few simple spells just for practice and it's all worked for me" (*the Philosopher's Stone*, 79). I couldn't help but wonder how could she access the information on magic, as she is not from a family of witches and wizards: "Nobody in my family's magical at all, it was ever such a surprise when I got my letter, but I was ever so pleased, of course, I mean, it's the very best school of witchcraft there is, I've heard—I've learnt all our set books off by heart..." (*the Philosopher's Stone*, 79). She also claims to have read everything about Harry and Voldemort from the books she buys for background reading. From the very beginning, she shows intense curiosity and eagerness to learn and seems to nurse a desire to establish her own identity in the magical world. The desire is manifest in her musings over the house she is going to be placed in. She hopes it would be Gryffindor, as headmaster Albus Dumbledore was in it, and so were many other gifted witches and wizards. At Hogwarts, she is eager to prove her mettle, always ready to answer questions, asked, or unasked. From the initial reading of the *Harry Potter series*, it is hard to like a girl so imposing and interfering, as Harry points out. This is the very reason why she is disliked by most of her classmates when she begins her magical journey. Ron observes: "It's no wonder no one can stand her, she's a nightmare, honestly" (*the Philosopher's Stone*, 127).

I wonder if I'm being too far-fetched, but in my view, Hermione's entry into the wizarding world marks her entry into the 'Symbolic' order. Lacan's notion of the 'Mirror Stage', through which we enter the 'Symbolic', states that the mirror-image that the world gives back to us, is a distortion which leads to 'Misrecognition'. This 'Misrecognition' is the basis of what we see as our identity. It is this 'Misrecognition' which Hermione sees as the basis of her identity, a distorted image of a muggle-born witch who is sure to be looked down upon within the wizarding community. Like the 'Phallus', which, according to Lacan, is a signifier that signifies the patriarchal nature of the society, in the wizarding community, being 'Pure-blood' does the same. According to Lacan, we need the recognition of the others, or of the Other to experience our identity. Hermione reads several books outside her syllabus,

only to fit inside the world she enters. She becomes a subject by the perspectives, or views of others, or the ‘Grande-Autre’.

One question that has frequently propped into my mind is whether Hermione exhibits masculinity in her behaviour, or femininity. In *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, it is quite curious that neither Ron, nor Harry invites Hermione to the Yule Ball as a partner. They seem to be quite oblivious to her being a girl. When Ron fails to find a partner, he says, “Hermione, Neville’s right– you are a girl...” (349). Indeed, Hermione is seldom seen with female companions, and despite her penchant for rules, she is involved in the adventures physically daunting and dangerous. Sigmund Freud associates activity with masculinity and passivity with femininity. He also opines that actual men and women show a combination of masculinity and femininity in their behavioral traits. In the beginning, we come across a Hermione who is hardly a demure girl. She is described as being extremely ‘nosy’ and domineering in her behaviour. Though less active in the fields like sports, she displays an inexhaustible thirst for knowledge that will give her the power over her classmates, and the approval of the Grand Other, which incidentally changes from fellow students to Gryffindor, to the teachers, and finally, to the wizarding community.

Coming back to Freudian psychoanalysis, we see that she takes up a more passive role when she befriends Harry Potter and Ron Weasley. She obviously remains the best student of her batch, but we see her acquiring a more passive role in the initial adventures of the trio. Indeed, in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, she is missing from the climax and the other most exciting actions, like Harry and Ron’s visit to the common room of Slytherin in the guise of Crabbe and Goyle, in order to interrogate Draco Malfoy regarding the attacks on the muggle-born students. At that point of time, she remains confined inside an abandoned bathroom on account her transformation into a cat, after a faulty intake of the polyjuice potion. She is also absent from their adventure in the Forbidden Forest, and after that, during their visit to the lair of the Basilisk, being confined to the Hospital Wing after an attack on her by the Basilisk. It can hardly go unnoticed that when she had no friends, she was an overbearing and overconfident girl of eleven, but after forming a bonding with Harry and Ron, she transforms into a rather shy and demure individual. According to Freud’s notion of the ‘Penis Envy, a girl, when discovers that she is castrated, her ego, or narcissism is wounded. In Hermione’s case, the castration occurs via her encounter with the troll, in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*, when, despite her superior knowledge of spells and charms, she has to be rescued by two boys. Harry, for her, represents what she lacks, that is, power which is associated with maleness, in accordance with Freud’s idea of a girl’s dissatisfaction with the mother for the lack of penis, and desiring her father who is equipped with it. Similarly, she is drawn towards Ron, who epitomizes another form of power– the power of heritage, being a pure-blood.

Freud opined that the female Oedipus attitude, or Electra Complex, as according to Carl Gustav Jung, results in the development of a submissive and less confident personality in a woman. When Hermione befriends Harry and Ron, she comes to decipher the power of masculinity in an essentially patriarchal society. Freud believed that the wound to the narcissism of the female results in greater narcissism and she develops a self-centred attitude

which prompts her need to be loved, rather than to love. The self-centredness is evident when she is less distraught at Hagrid's suspension as a teacher, than she is elated at the appointment of Professor Grubbly-Plank. She tells Harry and Ron, who cannot really stand the new teacher as she has replaced Hagrid, "I- well, I'm not going to pretend it didn't make a nice change, having a proper Care of Magical Creatures lesson for once—" (*the Goblet of Fire*, 384). The same trait is also evident in her obsession to do well in exams and homework. Ron observes regarding her exam-oriented paranoia, when he makes assumptions regarding the shape of Hermione's boggart, in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*: "What would it have been for you? A piece of homework that only got nine out of ten" (106)?

Hermione's desire to be loved, rather than to love, is evident in her getting romantically involved with Victor Krum for a brief period of time. Her anguish at not being recognized for her femininity, or feminine charm, by the two boys closest to her instigates her to reciprocate to Krum's advances. In *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, when Ron says that she said that she was going with someone else only to get rid of Neville, she retorts, "Just because it's taken you three years to notice, Ron, doesn't mean no one else has spotted I'm a girl" (349)! Her involvement with Krum may also mean that she craves power by being close to an internationally famous Quidditch player; or maybe she equates Quidditch with machismo, as it is a male dominated game in the wizarding world. To cite another example of the same kind, when Parvati Patil comes to know that Hermione is going to Professor Slughorn's party with Cormac MacLaggen, she remarks, "Wow, you like your Quidditch players, don't you? First Krum, then MacLaggen" (*the Half-Blood Prince*, 293).

However, Freud's notion of 'Penis Envy' does not hold well throughout in Hermione's case. He observed that the superego, an individual's moral and social sense, has its basis in the fear of castration and therefore, males develop a more powerful superego than females. He observes that the fear or the anxiety of losing the penis shatters the Oedipus Complex for the boy, and thus, his superego is more strongly developed and he seeks his role models outside the family, rather than making his parents the centre of his desires. He also develops a sense of justice, a sense of righteousness which is absent in a female. This, however, as we see, is not applicable to Hermione's disposition, and she comes across as more righteous than Harry and Ron. Apart from her insistence on following rules, she has an awareness regarding the plight of the downtrodden classes of the wizarding community, like the house-elves and goblins. In fact, she is more aware than Ron and Harry, and disapproves of the wizarding community for treating them as inferiors. In her fourth year at Hogwarts, she tries to form a society for the betterment of the house-elves, called S.P.E.W, which stands for Society for the Promotion of Elfish Welfare. She fails to include Ron and Harry in it and secure their participations. Ron, especially, seems to be inclined to let the elves continue with their enslavement and gets angry with Hermione when she tries to reason with a pack of elves in the kitchen of Hogwarts, in order to convince them to ask for wages and allowances in return for their services. Ron's annoyance with Hermione is because of the fact that he won't be getting any extra food which the elves were previously too eager to give away, before they are displeased by Hermione. Also, in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, when Ron

suggests double-crossing Griphook, the goblin, she retorts, “This, is despicable. Ask for his help, then double-cross him? And you wonder why goblins don’t like wizards, Ron” (410)?

Sigmund Freud also noted that the same fear of castration propels the males to sublimate their sexual impulses and re-channel them from unattainable fantasies to socially acceptable ones, following the demands of the ‘Reality Principle’. The artistic and intellectual endeavours are therefore, more possible for boys, as compared to girls, for they, being already castrated, do not need to sublimate. He says, “Girls remain in it for an indeterminate length of time, they demolish it and, ever so, incompletely. In these circumstances the formation of the superego must suffer; it cannot attain the strength and independence which gives it its cultural significance” (*Lecture XXXIII, ‘Femininity’*, 119). In respect to the *Harry Potter* series, it is true that the truly gifted wizards are mostly men, like Voldemort, Dumbledore, Severus Snape, Harry, Sirius Black and James Potter, but it is undeniable that Hermione is an extremely intelligent and creative student, who not only has good grasp over various theories of magic, but is also truly gifted in applying them when the situations arise. Lupin acknowledges it when he finds out that it is Hermione who could only find out about him being a werewolf: “You’re the cleverest witch of your age I’ve ever met, Hermione” (*the Prisoner of Azkaban*, 253). Only the likes of Phineas Nigellus and Professor Snape seem to think on the Freudian lines– the former calls her ‘simple’, while the latter insinuates frequently that the only talent she has got, is to memorize text books, lacking creative faculty of the mind.

Throughout the course of the series, Hermione is seen to be attracted to a number of men, including Ron, Victor Krum, Cormac MacLaggen and Gilderoy Lockhart, her teacher. In *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, she appears to be completely infatuated with Gilderoy Lockhart, the Professor of Defence against the Dark Arts, and a renowned author of a number of books. Hermione is completely smitten by his charm and reads all his books in order to impress him. In fact, she appears to be more eager to impress him than she is with other teachers. No matter what others say of Lockhart– and indeed, he turns out to be a sham artist who has taken credits and accolades for the heroic exploits of the other magicians– she tries to defend him from any criticism, even when it is coming from the persons closest to her at Hogwarts, like Harry and Ron.

According to Freud, a girl shifts her sexual impulses to her father and tries to replace her mother in her father’s affection. Since the society prohibits the realization of such impulses, she, through the mechanism of ‘Displacement’, shifts the object of her desire from her father to men in general. In Lockhart’s case, Hermione views the other female students of Hogwarts as her rivals to Lockhart’s attention, who is, as a teacher, extremely well-placed to assume the role of a father substitute. In order to eliminate competition, she not only reads everything by him– even those books which are not prescribed in the syllabus– but also memorises the time-table, of which Ron sarcastically questions: “Why, have you outlined all Lockhart’s lessons in little hearts” (*the Chamber of Secrets*, 75)?

The way Rowling has presented Hermione in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, and her infatuation with Lockhart, is enough to make feminist critic scowl at the stereotypical representation of women– that women are irrational enough to judge someone

by his external appearance. The presentation of Hermione's infatuation with Lockhart somehow justifies Freud's notion that because of the lack of fear of castration, a woman's superego is not as strong as that of a man. It seems perfectly true, as far as the facts and incidents in the novels are concerned. The author is frequently accused of 'Sexism', as her Ron and Harry are individuals who see right through him for what he is. Even Hagrid, who is simply not half as intelligent as Hermione, and who never says ill of the teachers at Hogwarts, realizes that Lockhart's adventures are not real, appears more reasonable than Hermione.

In *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, she attends the Yule Ball with Victor Krum also because of the fact that he gives validity to her identity as a girl, unlike Ron and Harry. Initially, she doesn't even find Krum good looking and shows annoyance at girls chasing him all through the school. According to Sigmund Freud, a girl mimics the mother so that she can replace her in her father's affection. For Hermione, her rivals are those giggling girls who try to catch Krum's attention. The Hermione we have known so far has never been bothered about her physical appearance. In the novel, following an altercation with Draco, she is hit by a curse which makes her front teeth, already larger than usual, start growing at an alarming rate. When Madam Pomfrey tries to put them right, she lets her shrink them to a normal size. Not only that, she applies a hair-potion to straighten her bushy-brown hair. During her quarrel with Ron, she employs the mechanism of 'Intellectualization', or to be more precise, 'Rationalization' to conceal her desires for Krum, saying that she is just trying to promote international magical cooperation among the young witches and wizards of different nationalities: "This whole tournament's supposed to be about getting to know foreign wizards and making friends with them" (*the Goblet of Fire*, 368).

The next man in her life is Ronald Weasley with whom she has long been friends, and whom she later marries. In *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, she realizes that she desires Ron, and not just as a friend. In this novel, what stimulates her desire is Ron's brief affair with Lavender Brown. During a post-match celebration, she discovers Ron locked in a close embrace with Lavender, and kissing her passionately, something which goads her jealousy. She sets magical birds on Ron as a punishment for kissing Lavender. Despite her attempts to prove that she is not affected by Ron's relationship with Lavender Brown, she cannot really hide her anguish. She develops an animosity towards Lavender, which does not go unnoticed by the latter. When Harry tries explaining that Hermione visits Ron because they are friends, she says, "Friends, don't make me laugh, she didn't talk to him for weeks after he started going out with me" (*the Half-Blood Prince*, 384). Hermione even goes to the extent of inviting Cormac MacLaggen to Slughorn's party so that it can make Ron jealous and draw his attention back to her. She tells Harry, who accosts her for inviting MacLaggen, "I thought he'd annoy Ron most..." (*the Half-Blood Prince*, 297). She mocks Lavender's calling Ron 'Won-Won' and becomes extremely dry and sarcastic in her behaviour when they are around her.

Regarding J.K. Rowling's construction of roles, Heilman observes that males are presented as wiser, braver, stronger, and even endowed with more reason and funnier sense of humour. Yes, truly, no one can deny that Rowling's domain is primarily patriarchal, but I

cannot help but notice that Heilman rather generalizes the females in Harry Potter series, in her essay, *From Sexist to (sort-of) Feminist: Representations of Gender in the Harry Potter Series*, something which has immensely helped me to unravel the mysteries in the Harry Potter series. For instance, Heilman said women are more interested, like other women of her age, in lowly forms of magic, like Divination. She had in her mind, I am sure, girls like Parvati Patil and Lavender Brown who are fascinated by the subject, as well as Professor Sybill Trelawney, who teaches it. I wonder why she has overlooked the fact that Hermione walks out in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, after barely attending a few of her classes. It is Hermione who sees right through her hypocrisy in the very first lecture she attends, even more prominently than Harry and Ron. Heilman has evidently overlooked the fact that Hermione values Arithmancy, which is equivalent to mathematics in the non-magical world, over Divination, which means that she values reason over speculation. Rowling, here, cannot be accused of thinking on Freudian terms, who theorized about the stunted superegoic growth in females. Also, while noting that eminent wizards like Dumbledore, and budding wizards like Harry, are not interested in the subject and therefore, they are more reasonable, she seems to have forgotten that Minerva McGonagall, the Transfiguration teacher also has little patience with it.

One may, of course, see a racist angle in the presentation of the subject of Divination and feminist critics' objection to it. Crystal gazing, a crucial approach in Divination, has always been associated with the Orient, which, as a matter of fact, is considered feminine, as opposed to the reasons and enlightenment of the masculine West.

While accusing Rowling of sexism, Heilman takes a ridiculous line on seeing Rowling's women as 'token presence' in most of the sequences involving action and adventure. Yes, it is true that in some of the novels of the series, especially in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, Hermione is absent from the actions, owing to her being hospitalized several times in the novel, but without her help Harry and Ron could have hardly worked out the clue regarding the monster at Hogwarts. Heilman also observes that Hermione is often made to speak in a 'terrified voice', or a 'petrified whisper', implying that by making Harry and Ron loud and stupidly brave on some matters, especially those concerning physically arduous tasks, Rowling has upheld the ideals of masculinity, or patriarchy. If we are to believe in Lacan's conception that male dominance is a cultural construction, rather than a biological given, and that the Phallus is always symbolic, then Hermione will definitely be considered masculine in her conducts. She is the one who overcomes the fear of saying the name of Voldemort aloud, even more readily than Ron. If we are to believe that men and women combine in themselves both masculine and feminine traits, then Hermione is masculine, as she amalgamates emotion with reason, not unlike professor Dumbledore.

Another important woman in the series is Ginny Weasley, who, though not as pivotal as Hermione, has intrigued readers and critics alike. When we first meet her, in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, she is still too young to go to Hogwarts, but is an ardent fan of Harry Potter. Her intense longing to know Harry Potter is manifest in her exclamation soon after she is informed that the boy who asked for her mother's help was actually him: Oh, Mum, can I go on the train and see him, Mum, oh please..." (*the Philosopher's Stone*, 73). In

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, she appears to be quite lonely and friendless, and has no one to share her feelings with, until she comes across Riddle's diary. She pours her soul into it, and finds a companion with whom she can share her anguish, sorrows, and frustrations. She desires Harry Potter, who pays no attention to her, and also, she is bullied by her brothers. She runs away, sobbing hysterically, when Lockhart employs some dwarves to read a Valentine's message on her behalf, to Harry Potter:

His eyes are as green as freshly pickled toad,

His hair is as dark as a blackboard,

I wish he was mine, he's really divine,

The hero who conquered the dark lord. (*the Chamber of Secrets*, 178)

The occasion is seized by Draco to humiliate her. He says, "I don't think Potter liked your Valentine much" (*the Chamber of Secrets*, 178). She obviously believes her to be less than a match for the famous Harry Potter, and after the message being read aloud, and Draco's mockery, the conviction gets strengthened.

She almost vanishes from the succeeding two books, until *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. Apart from the fact that she fights the Death-Eaters with Harry, Ron, Hermione, Luna and Neville, we also come to know that she is in a relationship with Michel Corner. Later, she ditches him to be with Dean Thomas. In *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, she breaks up with Dean and becomes Harry's girlfriend. For a student of literature, such activities call forth Alexander Pope's lines on the vanities of the eighteenth century women, from *The Rape of the Lock*: "With varying vanities from every part/They shift the moving toyshops of their heart" (*The Rape of the Lock*, 99-100). She tells Harry that she has been acting on Hermione's advice, in order to get his attention: "I never really gave up on you. Not really. I always hoped...Hermione told me to get on with life, maybe go out with some other people, relax a bit around you, because I never used to be able to talk if you were in the room, remember? And she thought you might take a bit more notice if I was a bit more— myself" (*the Half-Blood Prince*, 603). This seems very curious, as she, in order to realize her Oedipal phantasies, titillates Harry's Oedipal jealousy. In the same novel, when Ron and Harry confront her in an empty corridor, kissing Dean, she turns into a vindictive woman, who, according to Karl Abraham's classification of women with penis envy, humiliates a man by removing him from the penis, or the penis from the man. She humiliates Ron for his lack of sexual experience: "Just because he's never snogged anyone in his life, just because the best kiss he's ever had is from our Auntie Muriel—" (269). She says further, "I've seen you with Phlegm, hoping she will kiss you on the cheek every time you see her, it's pathetic! If you went out and got a bit of snogging doneyourself, you wouldn't mind so much that everyone does it" (269). She adds, "Harry's snogged Cho Chang! And Hermione snogged Victor Krum, it's only you who acts like it's something disgusting, Ron, and that's because you've got about as much experience as a twelve-year-old" (270). When she starts going out with Harry, she tells Ron that she has never really cared for his approval or permission. Jokingly, she mentions that she has told Romilda Vane that Harry has got a tattoo of Hungarian Horntail across his chest, and about Ron she says that he has got a Pigmy Puff,

“but I didn’t say where...” (500). She says that in order to point out Harry’s machismo and Ron’s lack of it, symbolized by the respective tattoos.

Ginny fears losing Harry to her rivals— all those girls who try to capture Harry’s attention. In *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, she reflects on the journey ahead for Harry, before kissing him on his birthday: “I’d like you to have something to remember me by; you know, if you meet some Veela when you’re off doing whatever you’re doing” (99). Also, when Harry plans to visit the common room of Ravenclaw and Cho decides to take him there, she fiercely protests, urging Luna to volunteer, as she cannot evidently stand Harry’s proximity to his former girlfriend.

Like Hermione, she is less like a stereotypical female character. She does not mingle, or at least we don’t know if she does, with girls her age. The masculinity prominent in her psychology is noticed by Harry: “She was not tearful; that was one of the many wonderful things about Ginny, she was rarely weepy. He had sometimes thought that having six brothers must have toughened her up” (*the Deathly Hallows*, 116).

The two women featured in this paper might help prove that ‘Masculinity’, or ‘Femininity’, is not biological, but psychological. Hermione Granger and Ginny Weasley are women who have strong sense of individualism, active and fertile imagination, independence of thinking and a strong sense of judgement. Conversely, if ‘Femininity’ is associated with passivity, we come across a number of characters who are passive, and therefore, feminine, for example, Neville Longbottom, Peter Pettigrew and Hagrid. Yes, feminist objections to the series for being sexist, and one that upholds patriarchal value systems, seems at times to be true, when critics like Heilman and Dressang tend to analyze Rowling’s treatment of women by generalizing them. Freud’s notion of the ‘Penis Envy’, as I have endeavoured to prove in relation to the series, is not only the acquiring of the penis, or desiring the father or the father-substitute, but also a craving for power that have been denied to the women. The irrationality perceived in Cho Chang is also perceivable in Ron, and even at times, in Harry. If Rowling makes the women behave irrationally, or hysterically, or with passivity, she might have then wanted to voice Luce Irigaray’s opinion that women become paralyzed or hysterical because they have no means and no metaphors for expressing desire.

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