Harry Potter's World: Renaissance Science, Magic, and Medicine

On display December 18, 2017 – January 27, 2018

In 1997, British author J. K. Rowling introduced the world to Harry Potter and a literary phenomenon was born. Millions of readers have followed Harry to the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry where he discovers his heritage, encounters new plants and animals, and perfects his magical abilities. Although a fantasy story, the magic in the Harry Potter books is partially based on Renaissance traditions that played an important role in the development of Western science, including alchemy, astrology, and natural philosophy. Incorporating the work of several 15th- and 16th-century thinkers, the seven-part series examines important ethical topics such as the desire for knowledge, the effects of prejudice, and the responsibility that comes with power.
This exhibition, using materials from the National Library of Medicine, explores Harry Potter’s world, its roots in Renaissance science, and the ethical questions that affected not only the wizards of Harry Potter, but also the historical thinkers featured in the series.

This exhibition was developed and produced by the National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health and was curated by Elizabeth J. Bland. It has been traveling around the United States since 2009.

To explore this world more, visit the NLM exhibition webpage.

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**Galter Library posters highlight Hogwarts courses**

Inspired by courses offered at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, these posters showcase images from actual 16th, 17th, and 18th century books that cover subjects similar to Hogwarts classes. Posters on display soon in the library. Excerpts below.

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**HERBOLOGY**

*The study of plants and fungi, both mundane and magical*

A required course for all 1st through 7th year Hogwarts students

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**HISTORY OF SCIENCE**

*Alchemy, Astronomy, and the Life*

An optional course for 6th and 7th year Hogwarts students

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**Required Readings**


2. **Pharsalia, sive de viribus, et unitate, et usu magistri Alexandri.** printed by W. Rawlinson, the adb: 1662.

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Herbology

Beware! *Corona imperialis* is beautiful, but deadly. It is toxic when raw. The flowers emit a skunky fragrance that repels pests. Thankfully, the odor isn’t as bad as *Stinksaop*, which smells like rancid manure, but can help nurse sick animals.
History of Science: alchemy, astronomy, and the like

This young girl is receiving electrical treatment for her paralyzed arm from a Medical Electrical Machine. No doubt Skel-Gro would have been more effective! But, as Harry would find out, it is excruciatingly painful to regrow bones.

Care of Magical Creatures

What is this seven-headed, goat-legged, cyclopic creature? Is it magical or mythical? Is it friendly or cantankerous? Consult Ulisse Aldrovandi’s History of Monsters to find out.

These posters were created by the Special Collections Working Group (Ramune Kubilius, Katie Lattal, Corinne Miller, Abebi Pendleton, and Steph Thor) and feature images from rare books in Galter’s own collections.
Harry Potter's World speaker series

In January 2018 we will host lectures on a variety of topics related to the world of Harry Potter. Northwestern University faculty members from the Feinberg School of Medicine and the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences will share their expertise on history, art, literature, and medicine, and how they relate to the world of magic. Watch this page for updates on event times and locations.

Tuesday, January 9
3:00pm

*Herbology and Potions Primer: The Healing Magic of Herbs*

Prepare for your O.W.L. (Ordinary Wizarding Level) exams in this magical potions and herbology refresher. Explore the creation of various draughts and libations with healing properties. Cultivate an appreciation for herbal medicine through a demonstration that explores how beginner wizards can create herbal Infusions and Decoctions; Capsules, Tinctures; Salves; Poultices and Syrups.

Taught by Hogwarts Visiting Professors Melinda Ring, MD and Rupa Mahadevan, MD from the [Osher Center for](#)
Integrative Medicine at Northwestern University, along with wizard-in-training teaching assistant Joshua Kaplan.

Location: Wieboldt Hall, Room 109

Friday, January 12
12:00pm

From Hogwarts to Charlottesville: The Uses and Abuses of the Middle Ages

Katharine Breen, PhD

Associate Professor of English, Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences

Location: McGaw Pavilion, Kellerman Classroom (2-322)

Friday, January 19
12:00pm

From Harry Potter’s garden: Mandrakes, Monkshood, and more

Richard Miller, PhD

Alfred Newton Richards Professor of Pharmacology, Feinberg School of Medicine

Location: McGaw Pavilion, Room 1-401

For more of Richard Miller's work on Harry Potter and pharmacology, visit his blog about the intersection of pharmacology, chemistry, biology, and humanity.

Tuesday, January 23
12:00pm

Magic in Medieval Fiction and Reality

Richard Kieckhefer, PhD

Professor of Religious Studies and History, Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences

Location: Wieboldt Hall, Room 109
Thursday, January 25
Ricardo Rosenkranz, MD
Clinical Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Feinberg School of Medicine
Location: TBA

Light refreshments will be provided. Questions? Contact Steph Thor at stephanie.thor@northwestern.edu.

Activities in the library
Throughout December and January we invite patrons to relax and enjoy Potter-themed activities in the library. Stop by the circulation desk for more info.

De-stress with coloring!
#ColorOurCollections coloring pages and pencils available throughout the library.

Wolf, Historiae Animalium, Konrad Gesner, 1551. Excerpted from NLM’s Color the Patronus, available here.
Share a #potter photo on Instagram!

@galter_special_collections

#harrypotter #NUFeinbergMed
#northwestern