

### Kelly R. Orazi

#### **Heroism, Humanity, and the Celtic Mythology in Lloyd Alexander's *Prydain Chronicles***

The concept of heroism in children's fantasy literature can generally be thought of as rather simple. More often than not, the protagonist is set up as the "Chosen One" that will recognize and defeat the rising evil in the magical world. This heroic archetype certainly seems to concentrate on the personal journey of the protagonist. However, some of the best writers of children's fantasy never have their protagonist truly journey alone. This paper will look at the concept of heroism in one of fantasy's greatest and often-overlooked children's series, Lloyd Alexander's *Prydain Chronicles*. In Taran's progression from "Assistant Pig Keeper" to "Hero" Alexander does not simply borrow from Celtic mythology, but interacts with it to explore themes of heroism and humanity. And while the original mythology almost always depicts heroism as a personal and exclusive act, this paper will explore how the *Prydain Chronicles* interacts with mythological themes of glory, honor, courage and magic to illustrate heroism as a communal and cooperative act that is beneficial to not just one person, but all mankind.

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