

Harry Potter and the assault on Christianity 🚫



[CHARLES MOORE](#) 

The Daily News

Another tsunami of Harry Potter hysteria is swamping us with the release of the seventh and final volume in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series of novels: *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. Parents are lining up to purchase the book (\$45 list price) for their kids (and themselves).

I've even heard some Christian parents express delight that the Harry Potter novels have sparked reading interest in their hitherto literarily indifferent offspring - the implication being that content doesn't matter as long as kids are reading something. Could a similar case be made for reading pornography?

In the context of occult literature and cinema, Harry Potter is relatively soft-core, but its sanitized portrayal of the black arts arguably makes it more potently subversive. Interest in the occult incited by getting caught up in the Harry Potter phenomenon is likely to carry over into deeper exploration.

Linkage denied

Potter advocates, disingenuously, pooh-pooh any linkage of Harry-mania to increasing popularity of Wicca and other forms of paganism. Rowling herself has stated: "I truly am bemused that anyone who has read the books could think that I am a proponent of the occult in any serious way. I don't believe in witchcraft in the sense that they're talking about at all."

However, Rowling is the product of a post-Christian, postmodern culture that believes magic, demonology, Wicca, and seances to be completely harmless, and it's quite possible she is sincerely unaware of the inherent dangers of her writing. However, in a 2000 *Guardian Weekend Magazine* interview, Rowling did acknowledge that Wiccans "are constantly thanking me."

Harry Potter apologists argue that there are witches in C.S. Lewis's Christian-themed *Narnia Chronicles* series of fantasy novels for children. True. There are witches in a lot of traditional children's literature, and in the Bible for that matter. But the issue is not exposing children to the concept of witchcraft and wizardry per se, but rather the context in which these characterizations are presented.

In Lewis's books, most traditional children's literature, and the Bible, witchcraft is portrayed as unambiguously negative and dangerous - an evaluation grounded in Christian teaching that anything in the spiritual/supernatural realm that does not glorify God is deceptive and spiritually harmful.

Sorcery is specifically referenced in the Bible as a violation of divine law (eg: Deuteronomy 18:10-12; Galatians 5:20). The Potter books make no such judgment. Evil is identified in relative rather than absolute terms, with witchcraft touted as a force for promoting good - radically contradicting Christian belief.

"Oh, lighten up," I can imagine some readers retorting. "Harry Potter is just harmless fantasy and fun for kids."

Fantasy it is. But from a Christian perspective, children immersing themselves in Harry Potter are being desensitized to the dangers of spiritual practices explicitly condemned and forbidden by Holy Scripture.

The Bible says: "There shall not be found among you anyone who ... practises witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord ..."

In the New Testament, St. Paul warns: "Now the works of the flesh are plain ... sorcery ... those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

This is the crux of the matter for Christians vis a vis Harry Potter. Do we really believe what the Bible and Christian tradition teach about witchcraft, wizardry, and the occult? And if not, by what authority do we contradict clear biblical teaching?

If so, have we the moral courage to honour our convictions, even if it means opting out of a pop-cultural steamroller like Harry Potter at risk of being called religious fanatics, extremists, fundamentalists, or just plain weird?

Engaged in struggle

This issue, of course, transcends our topical focus here on Harry Potter.

"If a person turns to mediums and wizards ... I will set my face against that person, and will cut him off from among his people," God says in Leviticus.

The Harry Potter phenomenon is, whether deliberately or obviously, part of a broad cultural assault on Christianity, not at all unique in today's contemporary literature and the entertainment media, which are increasingly anti-Christian.

Christians are - or should be - engaged a struggle for the hearts and minds, and indeed the souls, of our children. This is no room to "lighten up" on these matters of integrity.

Those who opt to sit on the sidelines of the culture wars are passively defaulting to the adversary.

Charles W. Moore is a Nova Scotian freelance writer and editor whose articles, features, and commentaries have appeared in more than 40 magazines and newspapers in Canada, the U.S., the U.K., and Australia.

cwmoore@gmx.net