

Idaho Center for the Book

newsletter

"...because people read t-shirts."



Upcoming Biblio Events

Booker's Dozen 2002 • Idaho Artist & Eccentric Book Exhibit

- | | |
|---|---|
| April..... Albertson College Art Gallery (Caldwell) | July..... Coeur d'Alene Public Library |
| May..... Ada Community Library (Boise) | August..... Priest Lake Public Library |
| June..... East Bonner County Library (Sandpoint) | September... Idaho Falls Public Library |

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In this issue

HARRY POTTER IN IDAHO

Our Photochromic HooDooVooDooJuJu Issue!

Acknowledgments: For assistance in preparing this "Harry Potter in Idaho" issue, special thanks to Jim Irons, Adrienne Yoder, Gloria Ostrander-Dykstra, Cheryl Little and Carol Borger.

Newsletter Harry Potter fabric background, courtesy The Cotton Club (Boise) <http://www.cottonclub.com>

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TWIN FALLS



Times-News photo by Bruce Shields

Some Christians See Sinister Side to Movie

By Steve Crump, Times-News writer
Twin Falls, Idaho

It's hard, Kathy Caldwell concedes, to ignore Harry Potter these days.

"They're giving extra credit at school for reading the books, so that's an incentive for the kids to want to read them," said the mother of three. "But the Bible tells us that witchcraft is evil, and witchcraft is what Harry Potter's about."

Caldwell isn't alone. Some adults don't think children should be going to the Harry Potter movie or reading J.K. Rowling's books, because they think Potter mania makes sorcery seem appealing.

Harry Potter is a young wizard attending Hogwarts School of Wizardry. In the four popular books by Rowling and the new movie, Harry and his friends overcome evil with the use of spells and incantations.

A loosely organized group has been spreading the anti-Harry message through work of mouth in fundamentalist and evangelical congregations nationwide, and by encouraging parents to view a video entitled "Harry Potter: Witchcraft Repackaged," subtitled "Making Evil Look Innocent."

"For us, witchcraft is against God's commandments," said the Rev. Tim Chandler, pastor of In His Name Christian Fellowship. "J.K. Rowling admitted she did a lot of research on witchcraft, and anything that glorifies witchcraft, especially to children, is wrong."

Caldwell and Chandler, neither of whom has read any of the Harry Potter books nor seen the movie, have no problem with fantasy in children's literature, they say.

"The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" is an example," said Caldwell, who urges her kids, ages 8, 12 and 13, to read children's Christian fiction.

Some conservative Christians say 20th century British novelist C.S. Lewis, who wrote "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" and "The Chronicles of Narnia," understood how to tell a child's fantasy story without glorifying witchcraft. "It's not like there aren't any alternatives to Harry Potter," Chandler said.

Many educators, including some in parochial schools, and advocates of efforts to promote literacy are vocal Harry Potter fans, and skepticism about the morality of Harry Potter novels is not universal among fundamentalists.

Watergate figure-turned-evangelical minister Charles Colson likes "the appeal of other worldly stories like Harry

Potter ... they tap into our hunger for God's wonder."

On his web site, Colson suggests using the fascination with the extraordinary that builds in the Harry Potter series to turn on youngsters to the fascinating stories found in the Bible.

Chandler says the decision about whether or not to expose a child to Harry Potter is the parent's. "We're evangelical, but we try to be contemporary," he said. "We're certainly not against encouraging a child's imagination."

Most of the children in his congregation freely steer clear of Harry Potter, Chandler adds, noting that one pre-teen girl who expressed admiration for the books later changed her mind.

"Schools are taking classes to see the Harry Potter movie," he added. "I think that's wrong; there are better things that schools should be doing than going to movies."

It comes down to whether parents take witchcraft seriously and think it's a threat of Christian values, Caldwell says.

"We believe it is real."

Letter to the Editor of the Twin Falls Times-News

Literature invites new behavior

Many thanks to those vigilant folks working night and day to protect us from the evils of Harry Potter! Sadly, they neglected to tell us that the Potter case is just the tip of the iceberg! Dangers lurk on every child's bookshelf! Little Red Riding Hood, with her basket of wine and other goodies, will surely turn our babes into alcoholics! Alice will lure them down the rosy path to the Wonderland of insanity! One hint of *Harold and his Purple Crayon* and that night they will be caught spray-painting graffiti downtown! One whiff of *The Call of the Wild*, and they will be out howling with the wolves! One glimpse into the *Night Kitchen* and they will dance around the house in their birthday suits!

It is all so clear to me now: the root of my taste for lazy afternoons, sunny spots and poetry is none other than that black-hearted Winnie the Pooh! Woe to the children forced to read these seductive tales—the poor innocents are doomed to lives of Imagination, Creativity and Curiosity!

Stephen Poppino, Twin Falls

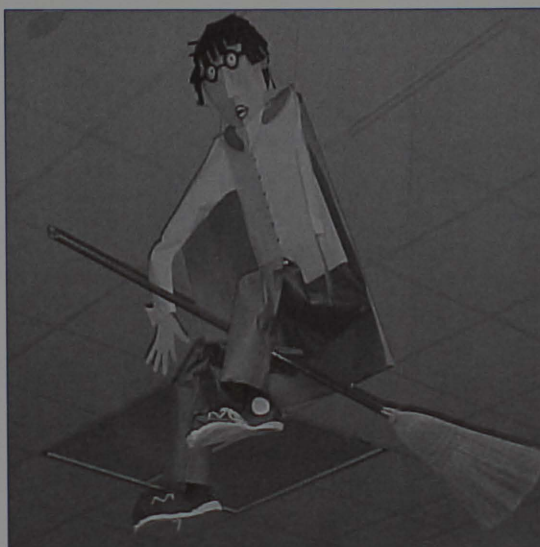


Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Poppino
Courtesy, Stephen Poppino

I was born in Washington, DC in 1955. Moved to Davis, California in 1961. (My father taught Latin American history at the University of California campus.) Attended UC Davis and Cal State Hayward, where I graduated with a music degree in 1978. Earned my library degree at the University of Washington in 1982. Have worked as the Reference Librarian at the College of Southern

Idaho since the fall of 1983. I am married to a librarian and we have three children, aged 17, 14, and 12. We are all avid readers.

COEUR D'ALENE



Photos of Ramsey Elementary library by Chris Valique

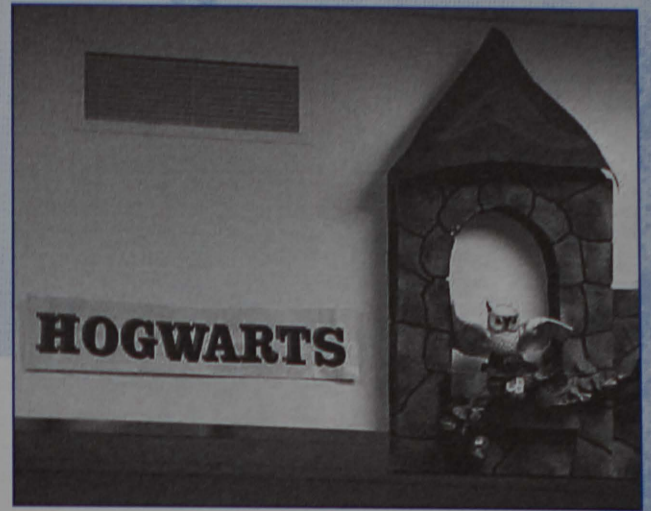
"We have Harry Potter flying around our library with the castle, sorting hat, wizard, dragons and the flags of the different houses. We love Harry Potter." Chris Valique, Ramsey Elementary, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.



"I haven't had any negative responses to Harry flying around the school library. I have had only good comments. Witch-craft-as-usual here."



"I did all the things free hand, but Harry wasn't a big hit until the movie came out. He will fly until the last book is published. (I work at Hastings also and we don't know when #5 is coming out.) The kids like



Harry because he flies all over the library and they never know where he is going to be next!"

Chris Valique, Librarian

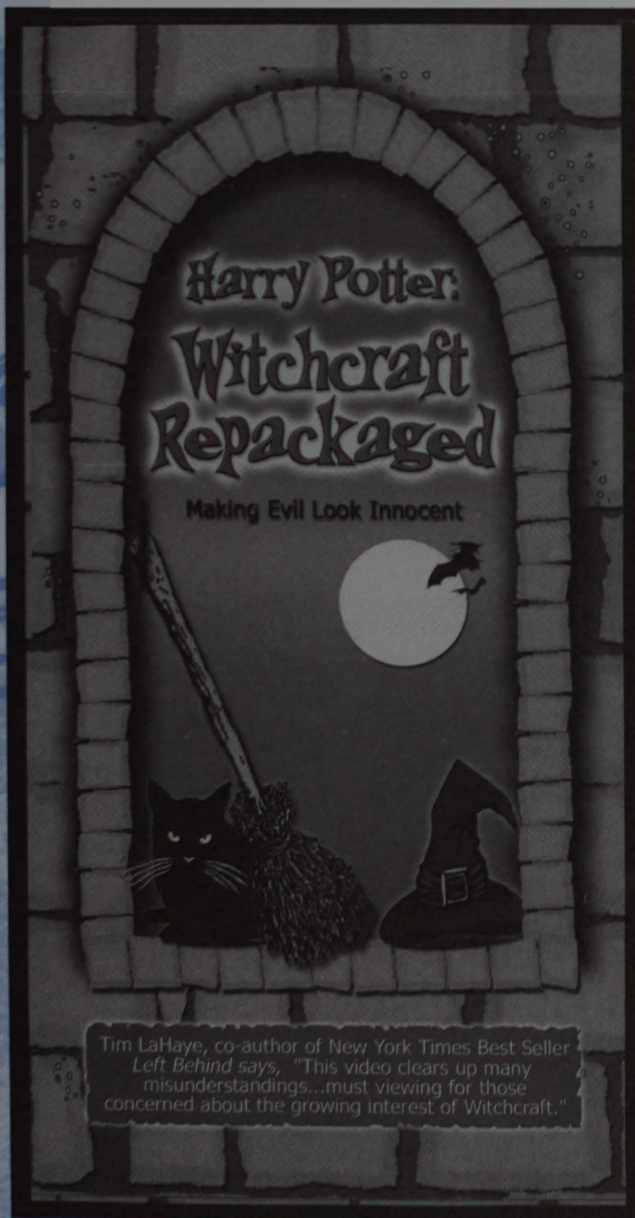
NAMPA

Ladies' Mid-Winter Breakaway Session

The First Church of the Nazarene (Nampa) sponsored a January 2002 "Ladies' Mid-Winter Breakaway Session" entitled "What Shall We Do With Harry Potter?" According to a church announcement, this seminar was to present "an informative video about the subject matter in this popular book series. Moms and/or grandmas will learn about the subtle and not so subtle references to occult practices discussed in this children's 'fantasy.'"

The video in question is *Harry Potter: Witchcraft Repackaged*, and is available from Jeremiah Films at 1-800-828-2290 and at <http://www.jeremiahfilms.com>

Idahoans may remember Jeremiah Films for their controversial documentary regarding the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, *The God Makers*.



BOISE

The "Cheap Slam on Harry Potter" T-shirt

Christi Nogle

This is a T-shirt in the grand tradition of bumperstickers like "My kid can beat up your honors student" and sayings like "I'll be grateful when they're dead." In other words, it's a cranky, small-minded attack on something from which a lot of people get wholesome enjoyment.

The key to this kind of attack is to make sure the target really is wholesome, but that there is some kind of resentment toward it. Harry Potter is fairly wholesome: it's great that kids are reading; it's great that people are coming together out of a love for Harry Potter; it's great that people are "helping out the economy" by buying all the accessories to the book. The books might really be quite inventive and fun, for all I know. At some point, however, the whole thing becomes quite disgusting. Kids have to have new versions of things that they already have because they want the versions with the logos on them, and some parents resent that. Readers and writers resent that, out of all the great books available, these are the ones that people buy and love. Anyone who hasn't read the books resents that so many others have and that they will not quit talking about them.

Even otherwise-sane media outlets such as NPR have been devoting numerous segments to Harry Potter lately, because of the movie's release. The first inspiration for this shirt came when I was listening to NPR, and a bookseller was talking about high prices for Harry Potter books. She said that a first-edition of the first book, from Britain, is worth \$24,000. This book is only four years old!

The second inspiration came when I went to see the movie. I know, I know. I shouldn't have done it. A friend and I saw the previews and decided that it would be the perfect escapist release from the pressures of pre-finals studying. "How whimsical," we thought, "to become like children again, to believe . . . in magic." Oh, but the experience wasn't anything like what I expected. The children in the audience were screaming, I think because they were so sold on previews to other movies that they wanted to leave right then and see *Monsters, Inc.* and *Scooby Doo*. The *Monsters, Inc* preview even made a point of saying that it was playing right then, right next door.

As the movie began, I was pondering in the idea of a movie existing only to sell other movies and books existing to sell more books and accessories. I had already bought a \$5.25 ticket and a \$4.00 Pepsi because of Harry Potter; maybe I would somehow be brainwashed to buy the books and the toys. Maybe it was just my state of mind, but the movie seemed to be trying to put some thoughts like that into my head. Harry Potter was like a Cinderella, a whipping boy for his (fat, unattractive) cousin. The cousin kept getting wonderful things, but Harry was deprived — until — Oh, but I don't want to spoil the movie for you. Suffice it to say, there was an emphasis on things that Harry got because he deserved them, because he was a better boy than the cousin.

So there is a distinction in the movie (presumably in the book too) between things that are gotten because one is good and deserves them and things that are not deserved. The message is that good children should get the things they want. That is not materialistic; it's just fair. This moral reasoning for spending is similar to the Visa campaign that itemizes three things you can buy with your Visa and then concludes with the idea that the happiness you get from having those things is priceless. Voila, the slogan:

To see what Nogle typeset, expose front and back of newsletter to sunlight.

I used a standard T-shirt and computer transfer paper. I spent \$4.44 on the T-shirt at WalMart (but bought three in case I messed up, so \$13.32). I spent \$1.98 on a package of Harry Potter alphabet stickers to help me design the type, but then found a free font on the web that looked better. The transfer paper cost \$12.00 for ten sheets, but I used only three (\$3.60). That is \$8.04 for the actual cost of the T-shirt and \$19.26 for items I bought but did not use.

If I had it to do over again, I might have tried to illustrate the design. I did not use illustrations because I didn't want to distract from the simplicity of the idea, and also because the font was quite decorative alone. I also dislike the Harry Potter illustrations and did not want to use one of them. Nevertheless, a nice photo of an owl or a magic wand might have added to the T-shirt's appeal.

Otherwise, I am pleased with the T-shirt. I think it conveys my feelings on the issue in a concise manner. I was a bit concerned that it might seem "anti-book" rather than "pro-book," but I think that, since it clearly presents the big money that's being made from Harry Potter, it will be read as an attack on this particular book's mass appeal rather than as an attack on books in general.

Bibliophiles on Broomsticks

Idahoans not satisfied with reading, banning, watching videos or attending seminars about Harry Potter may wish to follow in the footsteps of his broomstick. Harmon Travel of Boise is now advertising "Tracing the Path of Harry Potter," a ten-day tour that visits every major Potter landing strip, including London, Bristol, Gloucester, York and Edinburgh.

For more information:

<http://www.harmontravel.com/HarryPotter.htm>



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