



The Gwyneth



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Returning to the Magical World of Harry Potter!

Mystical Wonders of Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix!
By Séamy Colvin-O'Carroll

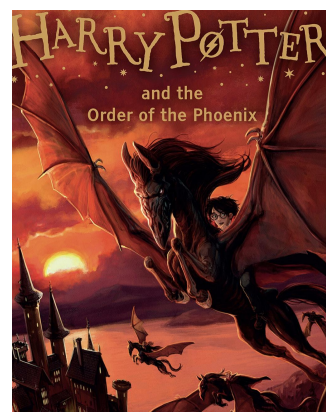
Here we go again. After a summer break away from the wizarding world of Harry Potter, I have returned to what I do best; cynical deep-dives into J.K Rowling's most infamous literary work. This month, I took on the gruelling task of reading what I suspected would, like most its predecessors, leave a sour taste in my mouth.

'Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix'.

It was as if Rowling predicted the mindset I had going into this book. She proved me wrong; creating a book that takes

the cake as my favourite in the series so far!

It has drama, it has action, and arguably (for a book written by Rowling), decent character development! While I'm sure this rare complement of the Harry Potter series is being adored by our editor here at 'The Gwyneth', I must follow it up by raining on her parade. Whilst a decent read, 'Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix' has its fair share of downsides, which at times made the temptation to close the book hard to resist. The experience made me question what it is about Rowling's character-building which makes me so inconsolably upset.



Let's start with the positives, of which, to my utmost surprise, are many. We should begin by discussing arguably the most important thing that this book did right... the plot!

While its predecessors didn't necessarily have bad plots, you often found it predictable or underwhelming. For me the climax would come at lacklustre. The climax in this book however, was beyond captivating! It felt

like something was at stake; the fate of the characters (who you have spent 4 whole books with) is up in the air. Every plot point I had previously criticised up until this point was finally culminating to be something special! Don't get me wrong, I wished the final outcome would have deviated more. Rowling could have experimented to shake things up. However, I was not nearly as disappointed at its outcome as I was in earlier books. What gripped me about this plot was the environment Rowling created. One of my primary criticisms of this franchise up until this point was that I felt Rowling never took advantage of the world outside Hogwarts to do some external world building. The storylines always followed Hogwarts, a familiar setting by the time I reached book four. Her writing gave a sense of enclosure, lacking in any bigger world other than the classrooms and dormitories of our protagonist. I was more than pleasantly surprised when this book gave me what I asked. The change in scenery during this

most pivotal point in this book made it fresh, adding. The unpredictability hooked me in, and I began (for the first time) to wonder what was going to happen? What would become of Hogwarts? Of Harry and our gang?



Speaking of characterising, for once this has shown to be one of my positive points (and my negatives sadly, but that will come later)! While writing this book, Rowling seemed to remember that characters outside of Harry, Hermione and Ron existed! You read that right everyone! Rowling finally developed more secondary characters, some having existed from the first book, who have previously only played the same one-dimensional roles unchanged. It seemed as though Rowling was forgetting to

check her character roster before starting the previous 4 books. I could carry on ranting about Rowling's questionable character-building, but I will say that I greatly appreciated the newfound life given to characters such as Neville Longbottom and Severus Snape in particular. Now, I won't go into this too much so as to not give spoilers to our wonderful readers. Readers I am actively encouraging to read the books! I don't know what's more shocking, the fact that I don't want to spoil a Rowling book because I actually think people should read it, or the world we live in where I praise authors for remembering to give a sentence or two to characters who up until this point had been mere literary furniture.

Now to move on to those dreaded negatives. For the most part, they were consistent, simply made worse by the fact that we are 5 books in and still haven't been resolved! In light of this, I am going to make a conscious effort to focus on one downside to this book, a fresher one. This criticism revolves

around Rowling's constant neglect for her secondary characters, even ones who have been central to the story. Now I'm sure you are wondering how I can put character-building and development in my negatives when I have just put it in my positives but hear me out. I stand by the fact that I think Rowling did a really great job in this book to breathe new life into background characters, but I also think that in doing so she seems to have forgotten to place any focus at all onto (somewhat) main characters like Hagrid and Dumbledore. In this book, they have pretty much no role, and honestly this is a huge upset. Rowling seems to have a big problem with character consistency and balance, resulting in her ineptitude at keeping character development for those outside the 'golden trio' going for more than 2 or 3 books. This is due to the fact that she adds so many new characters that old ones, such as Dumbeldore, who were just starting to become more interesting are almost written off to make way for the next set of characters. Adding new

people to a series is not a bad thing, in fact I greatly encourage it! Though I also encourage reading books by authors who can sustain background characters without it being at the expense of others. This way Rowling could write a truly magical world with a variety of characters present for people to connect with and enjoy.

To conclude, I do genuinely think that this book is worth a read! While I have huge problems with some of the ways that Rowling writes her characters, the plot is really quite enjoyable and I loved seeing some development within individuals old and new! Hopefully this is the start of an incline for the Harry Potter series, maybe even a sign of how I will rate the series as a whole. I guess we'll just have to wait and see next time, when I will be reviewing 'Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince', with, after this installment in the series, what I expect will be a far more optimistic attitude.

Rating: 4/5

Out and About

By Emily MacNaughtan

Do you know those days where absolutely nothing sounds more delightful than an enjoyable day out with friends? You must then also know the feelings of dread in trying to plan the perfect outing. To draw a solution to your dilemmas, here is a list of lively things to do in your local area when you hit the streets!



Shopping:

[The Piece Hall, Halifax:](#)

An old marketplace built in 1779, this centre has a fabulous range of shops to sustain your every need. You name it; crystals, soaps, sweets. The Piece Hall is a scenic spot to hang out, and being at the center of Halifax has close access to bus routes and trains for your trips.

[Leeds Corn Exchange, Leeds:](#)

This quirky building is full of fun, independent shops, with a creative bustle and beautiful architecture! Also very close to a brilliant vintage shop, [Blue Rinse](#), which stocks unique clothes

(and some pretty awesome bum bags!)

[Sunbridge Wells, Bradford:](#)

Bradford's first underground retail complex, this incredible venue offers an eclectic mix of shops and restaurants.



Activities:

[Escape Hunt, Manchester:](#)

This brilliant company offers a great mix of different escape rooms to lead you into different worlds. With plenty of options to choose from, this escape room leads you on an hour-long expedition for up to 6 people.

[Electric Bowl, Halifax:](#)

A classic form of entertainment. Great fun for everyone! A restaurant offers simple meals and drinks during your bowling sessions.

[The Rex Cinema, Elland:](#)

This charming cinema is one of the oldest-running

cinemas in England. Local and welcoming, the Rex offers a brilliant cinematic experience, with good prices and ice-cream intervals!



So what do you think you'll try? There are plenty of things just around the corner!

The Injustice of Seating Plans

By Elliot Carpenter

September. New classes, new teachers, new books... new seating plans. The Russian roulette of the new term. Of course, '*NHGS is a family!*', but haven't we all had family rifts? Nobody wants to be sat next to Auntie Sue at the Christmas dinner party. It ruins the holiday experience. Sometimes teachers don't get it; the wrong seat in class can destroy your learning experience. In my and many others' opinions, seating plans are ruining students' education.

Some lessons, regardless of the seating plan, you are always going to hate.

Chemistry, for me, English, for someone else. That sense of torment is inescapable. Sitting next to someone you're comfortable with makes lessons more enjoyable. Let me put it to you in context. In Maths, you are seated next to a student you argued with last year, a lingering unforgiven feud preventing any kind of interaction. You begin to dread going to Maths; it's boring, it's uncomfy, it's awkward. You've asked the teacher, but you've been told '*we all have to do things we don't like sometimes!*'. When your eyes aren't drifting between shut and open, you're worrying about what the student is thinking about you, what they're telling their friends about you. Maths is no longer the collaborative subject you once enjoyed. Your eagerness to learn and go home and work hard for your grade has sunk. Your grade drops a level, or two. But it's only one subject. What does it matter?

Until the scenario repeats, in almost every subject. Not necessarily someone you strongly dislike, but

often rather an unfamiliar face who you're unsure of how to approach. In one or two lessons, you're sat next to a friend, thankfully, and those lessons seem a lot more enjoyable - unless you're in Year 7, where most lessons seem to be organised alphabetically, so if you don't see eye to eye, every lesson is tedious. It's evident that seating plans work better with smaller children, more open to new friendships. Teachers will tell you it's good to meet new people... but it's unnecessary and potentially harmful to your learning experience. I admit, letting new students choose their own seats, bearing in mind some will arrive with companions from primary school and some arrive with nobody, doesn't end well. Varying seats, at least, can let them form new bonds and avoid awkward situations if a certain group does not work well together.

In Upper School, on the other hand, I would argue that scrapping seating plans entirely would be the only correct way forward. In Year 10, GCSE courses start, and

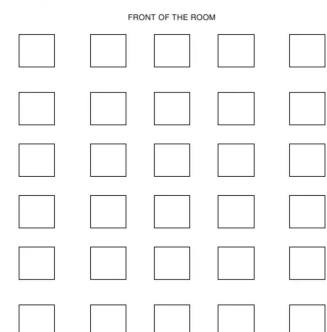
the students have been attending the school for three years already. They know who they can work well with, and who will only distract them. The teacher, too, should be able to spot who is a distraction, should anyone fail to place themselves suitably. I stress, letting children have free rein is not what I'm suggesting. Suitable intervention where necessary, as teachers already do in the current method, would separate people abusing the system. GCSEs are already stressful enough, and affording a slight change like this can alleviate some pressure, motivate pupils to attend school and create strong 'working relationships', strengthening both friendships and the standard of work.

Besides just the concept of a formal seating arrangement in itself, in some ways, is a failure. 'Boy-girl seating plans'? Are we still so stuck in such outdated beliefs to the extent that we are still pushing the idea that boys are not friends with girls, and that girls are not friends with boys? It isn't the 1950s anymore. One common reason for the

"boy-girl" seating plan is to put rowdy boys in a situation where they can't be rowdy with other boys, at the ultimate expense of girls. The idea of a 'boy-girl seating plan' is aging badly, but perhaps that is an argument for another day.

Seating plans are outdated, and can - and do - have detrimental effects on a student's motivation and passion for learning, which has already been sliding downhill since the beginning of the pandemic. What is 'living to learn' without the desire to learn in the first place? There is no harm in putting trust into pupils. Set them free.

What are your beliefs on seating charts? Email @ [The Gwyneth](#) to share your thoughts!



From aspiring to inspirational
By Momnah Shahnaz

Photography, by its definition, is 'the art or practice of taking and processing photographs' however, after speaking to Qamar Zaman, it has become evident to me that photography, like other professions, is deep and layered. One single photograph has the capability of portraying a rich story. The minute details in each photograph hold a significant amount of power.

What initially inspired you to get involved in photography within the wedding industry?

A: I have always enjoyed photography from an early age. I started off with the film cameras before moving onto the high end professional digital ones. The inspiration comes from many areas, the key being that if you have a creative mind then there are no limits to what you can capture. Getting into weddings was purely by chance, I did a couple of family weddings and from there some of the guests who were at these weddings asked me to photograph their family functions. The rest as they say is history.



Which photographers influenced you the most and how did they influence your career path and photography?

A: The biggest influencers for me were 2 photographers. The first was Steven McCurry, an amazing photographer who captured amazing images from South East Asia, Pakistan, India and Afghanistan. His style was very emotive and it really captured the feel of the country and its people. The other one is a Chinese photographer, Sails Chong. Again an amazing photographer who specialises in weddings and fashion. His style is the polar opposite to McCurry in that it's all about selling a fantasy to clients in terms of his photography.

What do you try to portray with your photography and how do you achieve that?

A: I try to portray a natural, relaxed style in photography. For weddings it's very much a 'documentary' style whereby I capture natural reactions, natural photos. For the bride and groom however it's different in that there are certain poses that I set to achieve classy, elegant bridal images.

How did your career path develop? How did you go from being an aspiring photographer to actually doing it for a living?

A: In all honesty photography is a hobby/passion. I work full time as a Project Manager and photography is an outlet for my creative side. I've never considered it a job. It's something I enjoy.

What's the motivation behind taking photographs?

A: Motivation is always about capturing a moment that a client can look back over the years with happy memories.



What advice would you give to any aspiring photographers?

A: Best advice I can give is practice, practice, practice. The more you do this the better you will get and don't be afraid to try new things with photography, develop your own style and above all enjoy it.

Tell us the story behind your favourite photograph.

A: I have many photos that I can look at and they take me back to a certain place or time. Perhaps one of my favourite photos of all time is of a young Afghan girl taken by Steve McCurry in 1984. The girl in the photo has witnessed the horrors of war yet her eyes have the most amazing intensity that I have ever seen. This

photo was featured on the cover of National Geographic and became a worldwide sensation. Many years later the photo was taken again with the young girl now a grown woman. The years of hardship had taken its toll on her but the eyes still had everything, a fierce determination to survive and do the best she could with what life had handed her. It's a very sad photo but has everything from beauty to raw emotions of hardship.

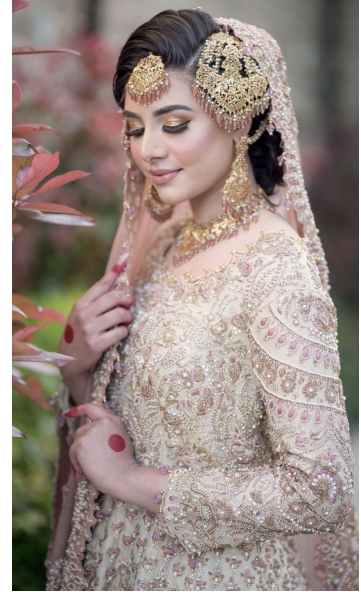
What is your favourite aspect of being a photographer?

A: Meeting my clients is my favourite, each one is different with different expectations but above all it's being thankful that they trust me to capture the most important day of their lives.

What is the most difficult part of being a photographer?

A: The most difficult part, especially with weddings is the timings, things very rarely run on time and as a photographer you have to think and work fast. On some occasions I may only get around 30 mins to get the couple shot done, as a result of this I

have to be creative and plan my shots ahead.



Netball's Back!

By Isabel Johnstone

October has arrived. As we leave the warmth of summer behind, school is coming at us in full swing, alongside miserable weather and inexplicable tiredness.

But something else has peaked its head around this autumn...

You guessed it, international netball!

English netball is coming back in full force! Preparation for the 2022 Commonwealth games (held in Birmingham this summer), and the first test series of the year, the English team certainly

means business. Recent international competitions have been a bit of a mixed bag for England, having placed third in the 2019 Liverpool World Cup after winning the 2018 Commonwealth games. This year they're out for a win to defend their title.

In late September, England played a three match test series in Christ Church, New Zealand. Coming away with a fabulous two out of three matches won; claiming series victory. A truly incredible achievement as the first time England have ever beaten New Zealand in a test series. They played at 8am, and you can bet I was hung on every second in my free's (I have a pile of undone homework and zero regrets. Even if it was hard staying quiet whilst watching them in the library).



England Roses lost to the Qiwī Silver Ferns in the match for the final in the World Cup, but the England squad looks to be stronger than ever, with

new talent coming through from the 2021 Super League, and they definitely showed their grit and determination, resulting in this incredible win.

Even more exciting news is the "Roses Reunited" tour, which is another three series test match against Jamaica in early December in Nottingham, which sees all the Roses players that we haven't seen since the World Cup return to the international stage once again. This series will absolutely be one to watch, and with it being the first time spectators are allowed back, the atmosphere will be incredible. Tickets are on sale now on the England Netball website if you feel like giving it ago- I've already got mine.

St Augustines Center -

Halifax:

By Grace Allsop

St Augustines, a charity centre in Halifax has helped magnificently with providing for and supporting refugees. They offer specialist advice on how to support and help.

Some ways in which you can help are:

- Donations - these help keep the centre up and running and you can also provide ideas on how to fundraise.
- Donate goods - you can donate specific items that are required and can be seen on the website.
- Raise awareness - this is vital so a lot of support can be provided and the centre can remain secure. The centre primarily focuses within Calderdale but also works nationally.
- Connect - you can pay attention to any new news.

Take a look at their website to find out more.

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