

It's the people who burn books that do Satan's work

It's frightening, really, the idea of good, honest, God-fearing people burning copies of Harry Potter books.

It's them, not author J.K. Rowling, who do Satan's work.

Everyone is entitled to his opinion. Every parent has a right to decide what his or her children will read or view.

If you don't like Harry Potter, then don't let your children read it. Don't let them go to the movie.

But don't burn the books.

Book burning is too close to book banning. And while you have every right to decide what your children will read, you have no say when it comes to others' children. Or the country as a whole.

Most of the world thinks Harry Potter is a harmless fantasy. Most people are not bothered by idle talk of witches or Halloween fantasy. They accept the Harry Potter books for what they purport to be: good stories, nothing more.

A few rigorous Christians don't buy mixing up wizards, witches, evil spirits and the like. It's their right to speak out in the marketplace of ideas.

But book burning, like flag burning, is more than just free speech. It may be legally protected, but it's ugly. It's intended to do more than make a statement.

Around here, opponents handed out fliers at the theater when the Harry Potter movie opened. That's fine.

Elsewhere, though, demonstrators pitched copies of the Harry Potter books into a fire in the street. Interestingly enough, there were only a few dozen book burners, but hundreds of counter-protesters across the street defending the freedom to read and write books.

You can burn a book, after all, but you can't burn the ideas it contains. We suspect the Harry Potter books will survive this and future tempests. They are good stories, and they are harmless, at least to children who have been taught the difference between right and wrong, the difference between good and evil, the difference between fact and fiction.

Any parent who is the least bit worried about Harry Potter leading his or her child astray should ask if they have taught their child to deal with this?

Children who have been brought up right and taught to think won't have any trouble distinguishing fact from fantasy — or Satan from the Truth.

Book burners, on the other hand, push us perilously close to the days of Hitler and Stalin. That's not what we need today.

— Steve Haynes



Diet of worms a little unsettling

Harry crawled under the bed and spent his entire Christmas vacation in a corner.

That was exactly how he liked it, daughter Lindsay said, as she carefully set the box turtle down in her room the day she arrived home.

As pets go — Harry did. I didn't see him again until she pulled the bed away from the wall as she was getting ready to leave and retrieved the missing terrapin from his hidey hole.

She claimed that she had fed him during the week he was under the bed. You couldn't have proved it by me, but she showed me the meal worms she had kept on top of our television for the week. There were, she said, several missing.

I was ecstatic. Especially since I hadn't bothered to look in the little box on top of the television. Meal worms are just that — fat, ugly, slug-like worms that get in meal. I'm certainly glad there were fewer of them, but I could have wished that the turtle could pick a less



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
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disgusting diet.

Lindsay said that he prefers June bugs but they are hard to come by in the middle of the winter, so she buys him meal worms at the pet shop. That's almost as bad as the times I've had to go to the pet shop to buy crickets to feed my son's lizards.

Harry is, by the way, the class turtle at McLouth Middle School, where Miss Lindsay is a science teacher.

We were slated to get the class rabbit also, but at the last minute, one of the munchkins took him home. This was fine for us, I found out, but not so good

for the rabbit — he became lunch for the family dog.

I guess we're really lucky that daughter only keeps a few animals in the classroom.

One science teacher here kept snakes, lizards and a tarantula in her classroom. I'm not sure I'm ready to deal with any spider that's big enough to have mice for lunch.

Maybe daughter could just overfeed the meal worms and use them as pets for her class. Her seventh and eighth-graders should love that. Especially the girls.

Husband's promises not empty

When my husband makes a promise, he keeps it. Even if he has to work past dark to do it.

Saturday morning, he asked me, "Would you like to see a wall of your new house standing today?"

"You bet!" came the instant reply. "OK, then. You'll have it," he promised.

With that, he set to work. Marking and measuring, sawing and nailing, doing all the things carpenters do to make things fit as they should. First he had to rebuild a corner of the old house that had suffered termite damage, then it was on to the basement to build a divider/support wall down the middle (not the wall I was referring to); next he finished the floor beams and installed enough of the floor to work on. By this time it was after 5 p.m. and the sun was sinking low.

I, of course, had been busy, too. My tasks, however, are not as challenging as Jim's. Hey, pulling nails and re-stacking lumber is hard work! It may be a "no-brainer" but it is hard.

With daylight fading, Jim plugged in the spotlights and "poured on the coal." An outside wall began to take shape. Finally he asked, "Wanna give me a hand?"

I knew this was not the time to begin clapping, so I jumped in and, together, we lifted the west side, north corner wall of our new bathroom. After checking the level, Jim announced, "I like it!" He shot in a nail and there it stood — the first wall of our new home.

It is said that building a house together is one of the most stressful experiences a couple can go through. That would be, of course, a couple who ac-



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
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tually had plans to disagree over. See, we've eliminated that problem. Jim just has the plans in his head and everytime I ask, "Can we do this or that?" he nods his head agreeably, saying, "Yes, Dear." He knows I'll probably forget about it by the time we get ready to build anyway. This way, we don't have anything to fuss about.

— ob —

I promised to pass this on to all you "Old Geezers" out there. You see, "Geezer" is slang for an old man. Old Geezers are easy to spot. At sporting events, during the National Anthem, Old Geezers hold their caps over their hearts and sing without embarrassment. They know all the words and believe in them.

Old Geezers remember World War I, the Depression, World War II, Pearl Harbor, Guadalcanal, Normandy and Hitler. They remember the Atomic Age, the Korean War, the Cold War, the Jet Age and the Moon Landing, not to mention Vietnam.

If you bump into an Old Geezer on the sidewalk, he will apologize. If you pass an Old Geezer on the street, he will nod or tip his cap to a lady. Old Geezers trust strangers and are courtly to women. Old Geezers hold the door for

the next person and always, when walking, make certain the lady is on the inside for protection.

Old Geezers get embarrassed if someone curses in front of women and children and they don't like the filth on television or in movies. Old Geezers have moral courage. They seldom brag unless it's about their grandchildren.

It's the Old Geezers who know our great country is protected, not by politicians or police, but by the young men and women in the military serving their country.

This country needs Old Geezers with their decent values. We need them now more than ever. Thank God for Old Geezers!

From the Bible

For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God. This also is vanity and vexation of spirit. — Ecclesiastes 2, 26

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Movie didn't turn kids to witchcraft

To the Editor:

My hat is off to Mr. Ladd Wendelin for his letter last week. The people who have nothing better than to dissect the "evil and satanic" content of a PG rated movie need to get a life.

My daughter and I have both seen the Harry Potter movie twice, once in Topeka (to a sold out crowd at every showing) and last Saturday evening in Oberlin. Saturday was my daughter's birthday and as part of her "party," I took her and four of her friends (with their parents' permission) to see the movie.

Brianna spent about a third of the movie in the lobby with me because she was bored (having already seen the movie once) and guess what?? When we got home after the movie, the show was not even mentioned!! That is how

Letters to the Editor

much of an impression it left in the minds of these five 9 year olds.

I can only surmise from this that any "evil or satanic" ideas that may be in this movie aren't making much of an impression. Any impressions put in the minds of these kids is being put there by the adult influences in their lives.

I think anyone has the right to object to this movie if they so choose, but I do object to them trying to force their beliefs on me or my 9 year old. If you are going to hand out flyers, don't give this trash to the kids.

They don't understand it anyway. My daughter read it and I read it to her

and she still didn't understand what it said or what the big fuss was about. Her biggest comment about the movie was "that stuff isn't real, they do that with computers and mirrors!!"

Out of the mouths of babes! Thank you, Lord, for giving me such an intelligent child and for helping me raise her right.

I've tried to teach my child the difference between reality and fantasy. Try doing the same with your child and you won't have a problem with what they see in life.

Bev Reiter
Oberlin

Reader understands why Muslims give up life

To the Editor:

If "U" have two, three, four wives (or more), each involving another mother-in-law and some squabbling kids, plus a honey-do/want list, Would "U" hope dying in a holy war could be a relief?

What do President Bush's non-constitutional Afghanistan war (undeclared by Congress), ALL WARS, terrorist strikes, as Twin Towers, Pentagon, Oklahoma City bombing, Waco

Massacre, Columbine School shooting, gangs, rumbles, etc., alcohol, tobacco, drugs and abortion have in common? (The Innocent suffer.)

Financially, Bingo, lotteries, raffles, GIVERNMENT (taxing all the people to benefit one), insurance, gambling and Social Security, all have many losers per winner. All the foregoing, like Herod (who had 2,000 children killed) are spawned by personal greed.

Jesus endorsed capital punishment by submitting to it! No one is prepared to live till they are ready to die. The greatest of all tragedies is to ignore His gift of eternal life. • A-dmit "U" "R" a helpless hell-bound sinner! • B-elieve the Lord Jesus Christ is thy only hope! • C-ommit thyself to his will for thee! "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation"...Heb. 2:3A

Frank Sowers, Benkelman