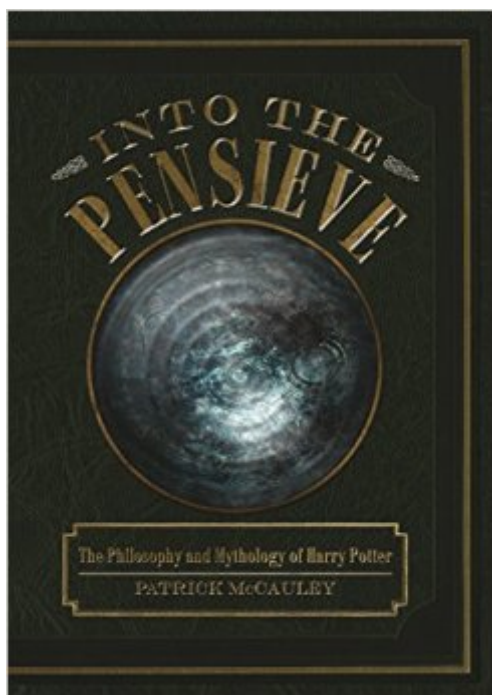


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Into The Pensieve: The Philosophy And Mythology Of Harry Potter



Synopsis

This book takes a look at the arc of the storyline in Harry Potter, digging below the surface to explore ethical, mythological, and religious meanings in J.K. Rowling's best-selling series. Why do we find ourselves so intrigued with the tale of Harry Potter? Many of the millions who passionately read the Harry Potter series found they could relate to the details, dreams, and fears of Harry's life. From a phoenix that dies and rises again to Dumbledore, a character who appears in a realm beyond death, there can be little doubt that Rowling's story delves into profound themes and ideas. She tackles issues of grief, responsibility, individual excellence, and heroism in the face of violence and corruption. This philosophical analysis shows that if, in fact, we do find ourselves reflected in Harry's story, then we may also find that our destiny and individual potential resonates with his as well.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A responsibility (or, at least, a choice) of philosophers and theologians is to take an apologetic approach to their discipline and culture at large. That is, a good philosopher or theologian will not stand at the fringes yelling esoterica that doesn't speak to the larger audience but will look for those points of connection between culture and their particular discipline. Patrick McCauley does this admirably well. He begins the book by suggesting that the Potter phenomenon is a "culture-bearer" calling attention to a shift about to occur in a society's self-understanding. While that may be making a larger claim for "Harry Potter" than is warranted, McCauley

unpacks much that a casual reader of the Harry Potter series (like me!) might not have noticed. My wife and, especially, our middle daughter are both avid fans of the series. Early on in my reading of this book I felt this: I am sitting in the Gryffindor lounge, a fire is crackling. My wife, daughter and I are reading. In the room also are Paul Tillich, Joseph Campbell, J.K. Rowling and McCauley. Now and then one of them looks up and says “did you notice that?” and we listen and nod. Now and then CK Chesterton or Aristotle or Plato or Aquinas stick their heads in the door and make a very interesting observation. I received an electronic copy of this book to review for NetGalley. About seventy pages in I knew that I would buy a copy. I did so, read it and passed it along to my daughter. Some of his treatment is more in line with Campbell’s appreciation of mythology – “the symbol of the Father, Guides, and themes from tales and myths.

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