



Potter Fans Applaud Dumbledore's Outing

By GayWebMonkey.com

"Dumbledore is Gay!" probably isn't the headline most *Harry Potter* fans expected to wake up to on Saturday morning, but that's exactly what they got.

Potter scribe J.K. Rowling, wrapping up a brief tour of the U.S. with a stop at New York's Carnegie Hall on Friday, sent shockwaves through her two-thousand-strong audience when she mentioned that Albus Dumbledore, headmaster of the wizarding school Hogwarts, was gay.

Although a brief moment of silence followed that statement, the crowd reportedly then erupted into applause, causing Rowling to say, "I would have told you earlier if I knew it would make you so happy."

This isn't the first time Dumbledore's sexuality has come up, Rowling told the audience. "In fact, recently I was in a script read-through for the sixth film, and they had Dumbledore saying a line to Harry early in the script, saying, 'I knew a girl once, whose hair...'

"I had to write a little note in the margin and slide it along to the scriptwriter—'Dumbledore's gay!'" she said, according to a ABC News report.

The audience's favorable response to the admittedly surprising news was echoed, for the most part, in reactions shared around the globe this weekend.

USA Today, for instance, talked with a few of the people in attendance at the Carnegie Hall affair, both of whom had nothing negative to say about the outing of the Hogwarts headmaster.

Kristen Coppola of Selden, N.Y., told the paper, "I think a true fan wouldn't care if that comes out. Like she said, she wants the books to break all kinds of prejudices—why not that one?" Her friend Kim Saldin of East Northport, N.Y., added, "I think it's great—she hadn't revealed any gay characters in the past, and they exist in society, so why not in the book? Some people are going to go nuts, but I think most people aren't going to care."

Likewise, gay rights campaigner Peter Tatchel told BBC News, "It's good that children's literature includes the reality of gay people, since we exist in every society. However, he added "I am disappointed that she did not make Dumbledore's sexuality explicit in the *Harry Potter* book. Making it obvious would have sent a much more powerful message of understanding and acceptance."

"Jo Rowling calling any *Harry Potter* character gay would make wonderful strides in tolerance toward homosexuality," Melissa Anelli, who runs the Harry Potter fan site www.the-leaky-cauldron.org, told the Associated Press. "By dubbing someone so respected, so talented and so kind, as someone who just happens to be also homosexual, she's reinforcing the idea that a person's gayness is not something of which they should be ashamed."

Of course, not all reactions were so positive. Laura Mallory, a mother of four from Georgia who has tried to get schools to ban the Harry Potter books on multiple occasions, told ABC News that the Potter series has "an anti-Christian agenda," and, "this only further supports that."

"My prayer is that parents would wake up, that the subtle way this is presented as harmless fantasy would be exposed for what it really is—a subtle indoctrination into anti-Christian values," Mallory added. "The kids are being introduced to a cult and witchcraft practices."

Such reactions seem to be in the minority, though. Most mirror *Potter* fan Patrick Ross, of Rutherford, N.J., who told the

Associated Press, "It's certainly not what I expected. (But) a gay character in the most popular series in the world is a big step for Jo Rowling and for gay rights."