

## Going Cuckoo

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Recently a number of people have asked me what I think about the J.K. Rowling controversy...not sure "controversy" is the correct word here. The news. The situation. The whatever.

Here is my take on it. I don't think for a minute that she—or her publisher—orchestrated the whole thing in order to sell books. Rowling doesn't need more money. Publishers, of course, *always* need more money. But more than that, they need to maintain a mutually happy relationship with their top-selling author.

I think she simply wanted the freedom to write a book without the celebrity, the demands, the publicity, and the endless mindless circus that had begun to accompany her previous publications. The publisher respected that wish and agreed to publish her new book under a pseudonym. (I think their mistake was making the alleged author seem so interesting—and unlikely—that people started investigating)

It got good reviews, which much have been gratifying for her. It got minor sales, which is typical of a first novel; and probably she would have gone on to write more under that name and gradually built up a reputation and greater sales and a few fans.

It would have given her the kind of job most of us have as writers: to work hard, in solitude, taking pleasure in the act of writing without the overwhelming demands that Harry Potter had probably placed on her toward the end. Having her cover blown has ruined it, has destroyed that possibility. And then on top of it...to have some of the public accuse her of masterminding it....well, I feel really sorry for her.



Terrific jacket, by the way!

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