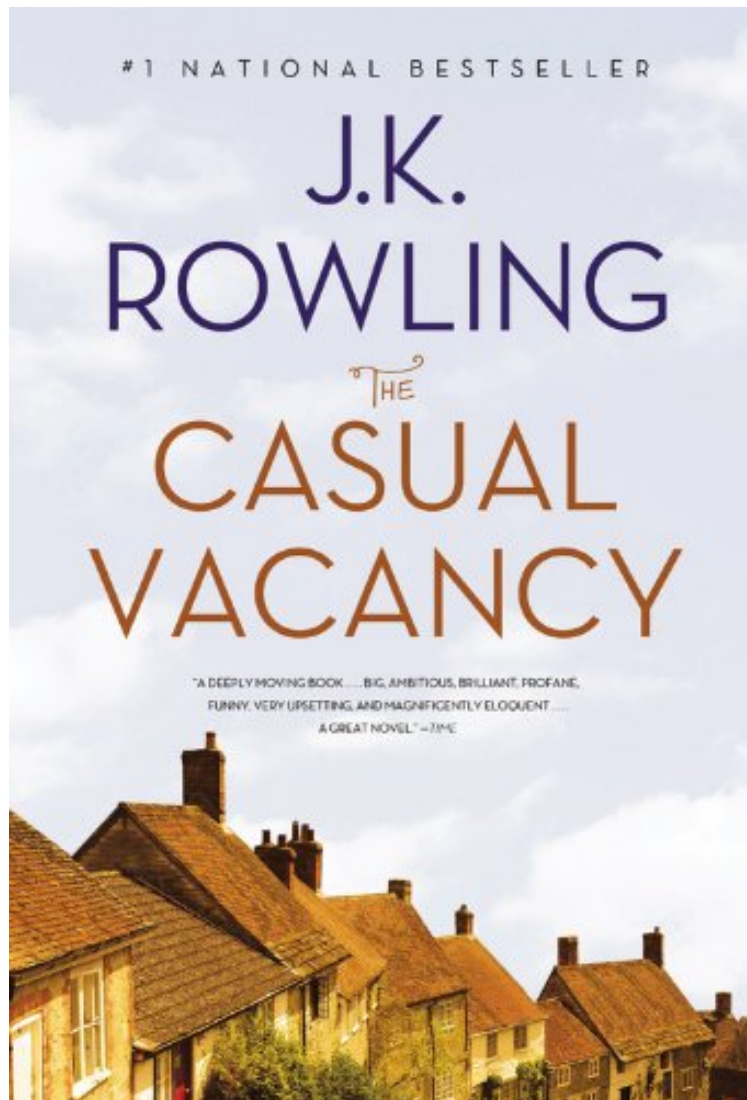


(Get free) The Casual Vacancy

The Casual Vacancy

J. K. Rowling

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J. K. Rowling : The Casual Vacancy before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Casual Vacancy:

1470 of 1552 people found the following review helpful. Brilliant, Disturbing, Not for Everyone By Simply Keith Having read some of the more negative views, I have to say this: Would you have ranked "1984", "The Bluest Eye", "The Grapes of Wrath", or "Great Expectations" so badly? Guess what, some of the best stories aren't fun-filled light reading! Some of the best works are disturbing, even sad. So, if your view of literature is that a book can only be worthwhile if you can breeze through it having a fun adventure, then don't bother with this book. This is something else entirely. That said, "The Casual Vacancy" is a disturbing character study. It is written in third-person omniscient

point of view. It does require some effort to handle a story with some 18 or so viewpoint characters, so this book will be at too high a reading level for some. I normally don't like the omniscient POV, but this story had to be told that way and Rowling handles it with expertise. So, what is this book about? It is about pain and cruelty and why people become cruel. There are no traditional protagonists or antagonists, just people going through life. Rowling explores the various ways that people become cruel, angry, or jaded with each main character showing a different form of cruelty and a different reason for it. And, this book is about the people that get hurt by other people's pain and anger. This isn't an easy book to read, probably the reason so many have reviewed it negatively. But, this is a brilliantly written book, just not for everyone. This novel is written with a seldom-seen narrative structure. In this structure the story begins with a simple, perhaps commonplace, connection between a group of people (in this case, someone dies, which has some effect on each of these characters). The narrative then explores how each character's life led him or her to be present for that connecting event and then the character moves on past the single event. As this structure is used for a character study, the connecting event may not even be particularly important. Instead, we see a collection of interconnected characters as the main thrust of the novel, rather than a single story unfolding. In this case, we follow how the death at the beginning of the novel affects approximately 18 characters. I highly recommend this book to those who want to read something thought-provoking and actually about the real world. But, if you want some light reading that you don't have to think about, then stay away from "The Casual Vacancy". To those who reviewed it negatively because it wasn't like Harry Potter, I can only ask whether they were paying attention. Rowling explored many of these themes, hidden behind the window dressing of fantasy, in those books. That is why Harry Potter was not just another of the countless stories about magical children. She continues this exploration in "The Casual Vacancy", but without the magic and without the restrictions of children's literature. Edited to add: I realize that Rowling has described this as a dark comedy. I don't know why she has said that. Perhaps she had intended this to be a comedy, and there are some satirical scenes, but it grew into something else as she developed and revised it. Whatever the case, I saw very little that was humorous in this book. I did greatly appreciate the book, but I don't know why she would claim it was a comedy, dark or otherwise. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Troubles among the town By Jim This was a long mini-series type book. The main conflict is about the political position to fill and the people who want it. There are no heroes in this story. The teens are mischievous and some are downright nasty. The married couples are bored with their marriages. The story starts slow, but when it picks up, the story flows. At first the negative side of the characters are amusing perhaps funny, but it gets deep. There is one character that really is a good person but is in a position that she will never achieve her potential. That's the saddest part of these stories. The ending is wild and yet satisfying. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Disappointing By tlckirk If it were any other author I would have stopped reading after the first few chapters. Far too many characters introduced very quickly, to the point where I nearly started keeping a chart of them and their relationship to each other. Worse, none of them were likeable, and only a few get much more likeable as the book continues. Sympathetic? Yes, I could give them that by the end of the book. Realistic? Sadly so. It's a masterful depiction of small town dynamics and personalities, except for the 'who cares' aspect. JKR failed to give us someone and something to root for. The pace picks up toward the final chapters, at least, and she does a talented job of tying things together and wrapping up the affairs of the large cast. I only know this because after all the pleasure I've taken in her other works I felt like I owed it to her to see this through.

A big novel about a small town... When Barry Fairbrother dies in his early forties, the town of Pagford is left in shock. Pagford is, seemingly, an English idyll, with a cobbled market square and an ancient abbey, but what lies behind the pretty façade is a town at war. Rich at war with poor, teenagers at war with their parents, wives at war with their husbands, teachers at war with their pupils... Pagford is not what it first seems. And the empty seat left by Barry on the parish council soon becomes the catalyst for the biggest war the town has yet seen. Who will triumph in an election fraught with passion, duplicity, and unexpected revelations? A big novel about a small town, *The Casual Vacancy* is J.K. Rowling's first novel for adults. It is the work of a storyteller like no other.

Praise for *The Casual Vacancy*: "I had come under the spell of a great novel.... A big, ambitious, brilliant, profane, funny, deeply upsetting and magnificently eloquent novel of contemporary England, rich with literary intelligence.... This is a deeply moving book by somebody who understands both human beings and novels very, very deeply." —Lev Grossman, *Time* "A vivid read with great, memorable characters and a truly emotional payoff.... Rowling captures the humanity in everyone." —People "This book represents a truckload of shrewdness.... There were sentences I underlined for the sheer purpose of figuring out how English words could be combined so delightfully.... genuinely moving." —Washington Post "A positively propulsive read." —Wall Street Journal "Often entertaining.... Rowling does a nice job laying out her 20-plus characters' endless pretensions and weaknesses, which she punctures with gleeful flicks of a surprisingly sharp comic blade." —Entertainment Weekly "The *Casual Vacancy* is a complete joy to read.... a stunning, brilliant, outrageously gripping and entertaining evocation of British society today." —The Mirror (UK) "A study of provincial life, with a large cast and multiple, interlocking plots, drawing inspiration from Elizabeth Gaskell and George Eliot... The *Casual Vacancy* immerses the reader in a richly peopled, densely imagined world... intelligent,

workmanlike, and often funny."?The Guardian (UK)About the AuthorJ.K. Rowling is the author of the bestselling Harry Potter series of seven books, published between 1997 and 2007, which have sold over 450 million copies worldwide, are distributed in more than 200 territories, have been translated into 73 languages, and have been turned into eight blockbuster films.As well as an Order of the British Empire for services to children's literature, J.K. Rowling is the recipient of numerous awards and honorary degrees, including the Prince of Asturias Award for Concord, France's Légion d'honneur, and the Hans Christian Andersen Award, and she has been a commencement speaker at Harvard University. She supports a wide range of causes and is the founder of Lumos, which works to transform the lives of disadvantaged children.