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The Grey School of Wizardry

In 2004 Oberon Zell-Ravenheart established the Grey School of Wizardry, a magical education system drawing upon J. K. Rowling's novels about the boy wizard Harry Potter. In Rowling's alternate England, the children of wizard families are educated at Hogwarts, where they study "Spells", "Potions", and "Defence Against the Dark Arts", among other subjects. The Grey School has a seven-year programme (like Hogwarts). The four houses of Slytherin, Gryffindor, Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw are mirrored by four houses named for the elementals associated with the four quarters, sylphs, salamanders, undines and gnomes (air, fire, water and earth).

The Grey School has Potteresque features, such as the "Magick Alley" site where textbooks and school equipment may be purchased, which is similar to Diagon Alley in Harry Potter's London, where wands and robes, spell ingredients and companion animals (owls, cats, and toads) can be acquired (Cusack 2010, 73-76). Since 2004 textbooks aimed at making wizardry and magic attractive and interesting to children and young adults have appeared. The first was *Grimoire for the Apprentice Wizard* (2004), which contains material on magical arts, conducting rituals, cosmology, wizards of history (including Éliphas Lévi, Charles Godfrey Leland, Aleister Crowley and Gerald Gardner), and a multitude of other subjects, assembled into seven blocks of study (Zell Ravenheart 2004). Several textbooks are of the dictionary or compendium type; volumes on gargoyles, dragon lore, and a bestiary that recalls the "Care of Magical Creatures" taught by the half-giant Hagrid at Hogwarts (Zell-Ravenheart and DeKirk 2007). These works are evidence of the breadth of the Grey School's curriculum.

Zell-Ravenheart has gathered many influential Pagans and esotericists to teach and mentor in the School, including Raven Grimassi, Donald Michael Kraig,

Patricia Telesco, Raymond Buckland, Lady Amythyst, and the late Lance Christie, co-founder with Zell-Ravenheart of the Church of All Worlds (CAW). Over the years the Grey School has developed in interesting ways; for example, since 2013 it has operated in Second Life, so that students and teachers can interact in a virtual world where there are "live lectures," "real-time classes and exams" and "live award presentations and commencement ceremonies" (Grey School of Wizardry 2017). The School admits students from eleven years of age though many students are older. The Grey School offers a comprehensive, non-denominational magical education, although it bears evidence of Oberon Zell-Ravenheart's commitment to an ecological Pagan vision as the basis for social transformation. Its inspiration in Rowling's Harry Potter franchise recalls the CAW's origins in Robert A. Heinlein's *Stranger In A Strange Land* (1961) and affirms Zell-Ravenheart's conviction that fictions can and should influence the "real" world.

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