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## "No more parties, we have to organize secret lesbian gatherings. In 21st century London!" - JK Rowling's allies complain

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[Christina Romanowska](#)



JK Rowling - still Harry Potter's beloved mother - at the London premiere of the 6th part of the saga 'Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince', November 16, 2009 (Photo by Michael Melia / Alamy Stock Photo)

"'Harry Potter' is the last thing my daughter listens to before she goes to sleep. And when she's done, she starts over." British teacher has a problem with JK Rowling.

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*"Dress however you want. Call yourself whatever you want. Sleep with any adult who agrees. Live your life as best you can – in peace and safety. But firing women from their jobs for saying that biological sex exists?"* (JK Rowling, Twitter).

*"[Trans women are women. Trans men are men. Non-binary people are non-binary people](#) . Attention: JK Rowling"* (Human Rights Campaign, the largest LGBT+ rights organization in America, Twitter).

JK Rowling's coronation as the queen of cultural polarization, or - if you prefer - the "queen of transphobia" or "self-canceling" takes place in the summer of 2019.

JK Rowling "follows" the Twitter account of 36-year-old Magdalen Berns, co-founder of For Women Scotland. She is a charismatic radical feminist from an English-Argentinean family with strong leftist roots (her mother was a co-founder of the Communist Party of Great Britain).

Berns would die three months later at the Marie Curie Hospice in Edinburgh.

- At that point, Rowling ceases to be simply an author of books for children and younger youth or the crime [series about Cormoran Strike](#) . For many, she becomes an icon, for others a problem, and for still others - a warning signal.

*He exists as a figure who is nominally left-wing, but who often becomes a symbol for conservatives – as someone who "finally told the truth".*

And this is a very interesting phenomenon – says Andy Jones, a teacher from near London, a father of three children (two of whom are immersed in the world of Hogwarts).

Interesting also because the lens through which society sees itself turned out to be her, Harry Potter's mother. Because what else was the saga of the little wizard?

Rowling fired her first shot in the culture war a year earlier, when she liked a tweet describing trans women as "men in dresses". Her spokesperson puts out the fire - her hand slipped - but the media world, watching the celebrity author's hands (against her will) will later consider this to be "the first media contact with the *gender critical* movement".

A moment later, he will defend Maja Forestater, an economist and consultant dealing with the problem of poverty, who lost her job at the prestigious American-British think tank Centre for Global Development Europe for a series of tweets that "[men are still men, even if they claim](#) to be women".

Six years after JK clicked on Berns' profile, in April 2025, [the UK Supreme Court rules in the case of For Women Scotland](#) v Scottish Government that the terms "woman" and "man" in

the Equality Act 2010 refer to biological sex, not the legal gender acquired by transgender people.

"I like it when everything goes according to plan," JK Rowling comments on X, photographing herself with a cigar - Churchillian for some, misogynistic for others.

The internet is on fire in response to the photo – exactly as she planned.

Tolkien's Successor Initiates Terf Wars: The Year 2020 and the Essay That Divided the World

*"People who menstruate. I'm sure there used to be a word for them. Can someone help me? Kobzi? Kobłeta? Kobieta?"* (JK Rowling, Twitter).

*"This is not an innocent joke. This is an exclusionary strategy"* (American YouTuber Natalie Wynn aka ContraPoints, Twitter).

In 2020, Rowling publishes an essay on her website called "TERF Wars" - the play on words with "Star Wars" is probably not accidental - that quickly changes the front of the culture war.

It seems that [radical "classic" feminists \(the acronym TERF](#) , which has a pejorative connotation, comes from *"trans exclusionary radical feminist"* ) throughout the English-speaking world - in fact, the entire world - are getting support from the popes of the pop culture world.

We are talking about an influential middle-class billionaire, a former unemployed single mother who was barely making ends meet,

*she created a showbiz universe on the scale of Tolkien or George Lucas, but she never abandoned her leftist ideals. And she didn't forget her roots.*

Rowling writes directly in the essay that she has experienced domestic violence, including sexual violence. "I'm not doing this to gain sympathy, but to make other women understand why I care so much about spaces just for women. The word "woman" has become controversial. But I will not kneel under the threat of violence and defamation," she declares.

It soon becomes clear that the Queen's reign will be uncompromising and turbulent.

The Queen does not seek applause, does not ask for mercy. Steely tone, sharp retorts, constant readiness for battle, irony. Queen Rowling stops handing out fairy tales. In return she has arguments, paragraphs and warnings. Instead of a scepter she holds a court order and a copy of the Equality Act. From Hogwarts she moves to Castle X.



Dariusz [Rosiak, a former BBC and Radio 3 journalist](#), creator of the "Report on the State of the World", is convinced that JK Rowling loves internet inbas and is their author herself.

- She is probably the type of person who can simply afford it and draws energy from the fights. And the fact that some English people do not like her or even hate her - it does not surprise me at all. The culture war that we are witnessing has ploughed through a pragmatic society and polarized it greatly - says Rosiak. - The fact that no ideology has ever seriously swept through England may not have immunized people to the fact that such media disputes should be approached with distance.

The same year that Rowling cocks and throws away her essay, Zuza from Wrocław comes to London. She's escaping from stifling Poland. She wants to get some fresh air. And if things go well, get to meet Rowling.



J.K. Rowling Wikipedia

She manages to do the latter, but not the former. As she claims, a lesbian in the UK lives in two worlds. One is the world of events, meet-ups, chats. The other is the world in which it is



inappropriate to say that a woman is an adult human female person. That is why lesbians who sympathize with JK Rowling meet in conspiracy ("Jesus, secret societies, fuck you").

Kelly Frost, a single woman who works in a puppet theatre in London, confirms: - You know, dating these days is a nightmare.

*It's not that it's hard to find someone - it's that I can't be myself. That if I write on a dating profile, "I'm only interested in biological women," I'll get kicked off the app.*

And so it happened – I was kicked off Her, an app for lesbians. Can you imagine? And on other profiles – there were slogans galore: "No TERFs", "JK Rowling is a slut", "Trans rights are human rights", "Queers for Palestine".

And suddenly I feel like this is not the place for me. That if I don't subscribe to this whole ideological set, then what am I? A monster? A Nazi? A girl wrote to me once. A nice, cool conversation. And then - boom. She found something in my profile that suggested I might be "anti-trans" - and immediately: "Fuck off." She doesn't know who I am, what I do, how I love women. One suspicion was enough.

"Trans women aren't taking anything away from cisgender women." 2021, or Rowling's doxxing

*"Yesterday, three activists stood outside my house trying to dox me, hanging up signs and taking pictures of my address. Maybe - and I'm just throwing this out there - the best way to prove that your movement is not a threat to women would be to stop stalking, harassing and threatening us."* (JK Rowling, Twitter)

*"Yesterday we posted a photo we took outside JK Rowling's house. Since then we have received a huge amount of serious and threatening transphobic messages. That is why we have decided to remove it. Love to our trans sisters."* (Holly Stars, actress and trans activist, deactivates Twitter account after posting this post).

A few months earlier, Dana Aliya Levinson, a transgender artist, writer and activist, writes an open letter to JK Rowling published in the Huffington Post. In a very personal way, she describes her childhood, growing up with gender dysphoria and traumatic experiences of violence and rejection. She shows how Rowling's books - especially the Harry Potter series - were a source of hope and an escape for her in moments of the deepest suffering.

*"I want you to realize that the cost of existing as a trans child was so great that I considered suicide before I was even ten," she confesses.*

This makes the author's public statements all the more painful for her, as they, in her opinion, [contribute to the marginalization and stigmatization of transgender people](#) .

The letter is not only about Levinson's personal struggle for [survival and acceptance](#) , but also a moving plea for empathy and understanding. The most powerful message is Rowling's

reminder that “recognizing trans women does not take anything away [from cis women](#),” and that the words of public figures have real power—they can heal or they can hurt.

JK Rowling never addresses this letter directly. But two years later, in early 2023, in an interview with Entertainment Weekly, she will say that her statements about transgender people are "deeply misunderstood" and that she "never intended to hurt anyone."

Rowling Dehumanizes LGBT+ Community and Academia Divided

- Is Rowling a transphobe? She is an enemy to trans people - wonders Professor Krzysztof Fordoński from the Faculty of Applied Linguistics at the University of Warsaw and a translator of fiction. - She is a person who dehumanizes them. In my opinion, she herself does not act out of calculation, but from strong convictions, which does not change the fact that she is acting wrongly. Rowling does not need publicity, so her involvement is perceived as authentic, although controversial.

[There are about 240 thousand transgender people in Poland - probably more than the votes cast for the Razem Party](#)Save for later



- In reality, the issue at hand is important only to a part of society. I can't imagine that someone working in Scotland packing frozen fish would be very bothered by what a colleague thinks of Rowling. But it is clear that she has divided the LGBT community and academics themselves.

Aleksander from Krakow, who now lives in Edinburgh, has been expelled from [the academic community](#), although not because of his sympathy for Rowling - he considers her a transphobe.

He came to Scotland after his studies – first Germany, then Manchester, finally Edinburgh. Before that, he lived in the US for a year. He was part of the “environment” everywhere – open, engaged, progressive. He moved in intellectual and cultural circles, was invited, participated in meetings.

- There is such a salon. Not in Krakow, here in England. A small literary and academic environment. The most important ones would come, writers, public authorities, intellectuals. Adam Michnik, Jacek Dehnel, Olga Tokarczuk led workshops.

- We talked about things that interested me. When it came to transgender, I allowed myself to have doubts. Not provocatively – simply out of a desire to understand. But that was enough.

*I was labeled a transphobe, a xenophobe, a right-winger. And that was it.*

I'm not invited anymore. There are parties, my friends still meet there. But I don't get messages anymore. It's like the person starts to stink.

Aleksander misses. Because those were really cool things. Conversations, literature, thinking.

- I still admire these people because I grew a lot with them. Exclusion is a fact that I simply have to accept. I no longer fit into the mold.

The beginning of this "narrative shift", as he calls it, is roughly when JK Rowling was giving her first "terf" likes. - Around 2017-18, Facebook discussions on social issues started ending in sentences.

Fascinated by transgenderism and cross-dressing - men dressing as women - the gay man cannot sign under the sentence: "Trans women are women" without reservations. Not because he does not sympathize, but because he believes that "the truth also means something". But he does not yet sense the red lines.

- My friend said that if she saw me, she would cross the street - says Aleksander. - That was the first time I realized that I was no longer welcome. That they were no longer my people, and questions were perceived as aggression.

Today he finds a soothing explanation in "philosophy, rationalism and the Enlightenment". Alexander quotes [the guru of scientific atheism Richard Dawkins](#), sometime [freethinker Christopher Hitchens](#).

- Religion has fallen. But a new one has come. There are new dogmas. [And they cannot be questioned](#) - he says. He had a depressive episode, deleted his Facebook account, went on three months of sick leave. He lost his entire social life.

But she still lives in a bubble. She doesn't talk about her views at work because she works in the National Health Service, the British health service, and there are certain policies there. Very progressive, very inclusive.

- If you ask me about Rowling, I have the impression that few people really know what she said and what her views are. Most people simply repeat the narrative that their own media feeds them.

The problem is that people read in a very one-way direction: if someone reads "The Guardian", they often also read "The New York Times", they read "Wyborcza", they also read "Krytyka Polityczna" or OKO.press - and a closed ecosystem of information is created.

Similarly, if someone reaches for "Spectator" and "Do Rzeczy", they rarely look at anything outside this bubble.

*As a result, if something is published in "Wyborcza", you are immediately a "leftist", and if it is published in "Do Rzeczy" - a "fascist".*

- Modern public debate works like a labeling system: everything and everyone is immediately pigeonholed - he shrugs. - People like me have it the worst, outside the pigeonhole.

He once went to a meeting of the Human Gay Male group. He left early. - It was pure misogyny. And maybe transphobia too. But mostly guys who don't want to acknowledge that their problems aren't the same as women's. That was theater, I don't play into that.

"She provided a safe place for women." 2022, or Beira's Place discriminates

*"88 percent of victims of sexual crimes are women. Beira's Place was created because it was sorely needed. The number of people using Beira's Place is growing. I would rather no woman needed a place like this" (JK Rowling, Twitter).*

*"Does Beira's Place offer services to trans women who have experienced violence from men? If so, Rowling is recognizing that trans women are women. If not, she is discriminating against them and could be sued" (Jolyon Maugham, lawyer and activist, director of the Good Law Project, Twitter).*

In December 2022, JK Rowling is launching a women's support centre in Edinburgh called Beira's Place for victims of sexual violence over the age of 16. She is said to be giving £1 million for it. Beira is the name of the Scottish goddess of winter.





The managers of Beira's Place, from top left: Susan Smith - one of the directors of For Women Scotland, Margaret McCartney - doctor, lecturer and publicist, Johann Lamont - retired teacher, former Labour MP, cooperative member, JK Rowling, Rhona Hotchkiss - nurse, former advisor to the Scottish Government and prison governor, LGBT+ rights advocate . Photo: Press materials

Elaine Craig, an activist and therapist with the Scottish section of the LGB Alliance, an organization for gay, lesbian and bisexual people (the lack of the letter T in the acronym is not accidental, and is not used by organizations that dissociate themselves from transgender people), describes the previous local refuge – ERCC, the Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre – as a place that was supposed to protect rape victims but lost credibility when it was run by someone assigned male at birth who identified as a woman. Craig does not use this neutral terminology, but speaks of a “biological male”.

- Ordinary people have begun to see how far this ideology has gone. How much it has taken over our health service, universities, administration. And how much it ignores the needs of women - Craig argues.

- Rowling did what the state should do: she provided a place for women to talk about violence without censorship or fear. A woman who has been raped should not have to consider who the therapist is in terms of identity. She has the right to know that she is talking to another woman. Period.

I ask her if Rowling was the one who divided the English.

Elaine: - It's not Rowling who divides society. It's an ideology that destroys the rights of homosexual women and men and the safety of women.

Her sister was caring for Magdalen Berns, the activist who launched Rowling's adventure into the culture wars, while she was dying in a hospice. "A strange coincidence, isn't it?"

As a therapist, she was associated for two years with the notorious [Tavistock Clinic - before it became notorious](#) for its controversy over transitioning minors. The so-called Cass report criticised the clinic for [its lack of solid scientific evidence](#) for some of its treatments and for its hasty referral of minors for hormone treatment. It recommended closing the Tavistock Clinic and [reforming the care of transgender young people](#) in the UK.

- I was at Tavistock in the early 2000s and I could already see that their attitude to homosexuality was warped - based on Freudian theories that saw being gay or lesbian as a form of arrested development. They began to put young, often autistic lesbians on a transition path before they had any chance to understand their orientation.

*I'm talking about girls with a double diagnosis – with autism, with depression – who instead of therapy received hormones, blockers, surgeries.*

They had mastectomies, they became infertile, before they could even come to terms with the question, "Who am I?" Elaine says.

- And this is especially tragic for girls on the autism spectrum, who do not "metabolize" emotions like neurotypical people - so if they hear: "Maybe you're a boy?", they stick to this version because it gives them some order.

Elaine says that she now expects nothing from institutions, because she already knows how deeply they are taken over by various ideologies. She runs a company with her partner, employs women from Eastern Europe, and provides them with decent conditions and security, for which she herself had to fight. "They can't take anything from me, because I built everything outside their system," she says firmly.



Freud statue in front of the Tavistock Clinic. Photo: Mike Peel/Wikipedia under the CC4.0 license

- Everyone says that JK Rowling financed everything, the whole Supreme Court case. But that's not true. She gave 70 thousand pounds to a case that cost a quarter of a million. The rest came from ordinary women. They put in five, ten, twenty pounds - sometimes from benefits, sometimes from their last paycheck. It wasn't some big machine. It was us - women without structures, PR, who said: "Enough!"

- But Rowling gave us something else - a voice that could not be ignored. When we say something, no one listens. When she says the same - the whole world hears and discusses - admits Sally Wainwright from the Lesbian Persistence collective, cooperating with For Women Scotland.

Harry Potter, Wizards, and Muggles: Leftist Values from Dickens' World

For Andy Jones, such a voice is still "Harry Potter", [anti-systemic and political, which - he believes - carries within itself the paradigms of the 20th century](#) . Here he lists a whole catalogue taken straight from [Ken Loach](#) , Chesterton, [Orwell](#) , even [Dickens](#) : equality, solidarity, opposition to racism and fanaticism, criticism of authoritarian power, faith in education, defense of minorities and the power of grassroots civic activities.

These, he says, are classic ideas of the British left – especially the Labour left, focused on social justice, equal opportunity and the common good. Andy's students often chose Harry

Potter as a subject for educational projects – examining the wizarding and Muggle worlds as a metaphor for 20th-century totalitarian systems, propaganda, anti-oppression and identity building. For many of them, it was their first lesson in politics – hidden in a world of spells and broomsticks.

All these phenomena are still outside our window, they have only evolved or taken on different names – I notice.

- Yes. Harry is basically reflecting current social tensions - Andy nods.

Rowling's books live on in his family: "We listen to audiobooks for kids in the car. Sometimes they ask about Taylor Swift, sometimes [Sabrina Carpenter](#) , but most often they want to go back to Harry Potter. It's the last thing my daughter listens to before she goes to sleep. And when she's done, she starts over," Andy says.

Speaking of Hogwarts. When HBO Max celebrates the 20th anniversary of the "Harry Potter" film series with "Return to Hogwarts," [JK Rowling doesn't get an invitation to the gala](#) . She only appears in archive footage with the note "Filmed in 2019," which internet users are quick to notice.

*- Being excluded from your own story is a strange feeling. But a woman knows what silent erasure feels like - she writes on Twitter.*

- You weren't excluded. You left. And you took the climate of fear with you - retorts Dan Savage, an LGBTQ+ columnist.

Hogwarts outshines LEGO Star Wars and Mortal Kombat. The year 2023 and secret lesbian meetings

*"If you support trans people, if you see us as full-fledged humans with dignity and rights, then boycotting Hogwarts Legacy is a good thing ." —Jessie Gender, trans journalist and commentator, Twitter*

*"It disappoints me that @jessiegender still doesn't understand: if someone really wants to be ideologically pure, it's not enough to boycott my books or films. You have to burn down libraries, destroy everything with an owl on the cover, and maybe even get rid of your own dog" (JK Rowling, Twitter).*

*"Because JK Rowling retweeted my tweet with an absurd argument, I'm leaving Elon's app today. She knows that such a gesture is nothing more than an invitation to hate directed at me" (Jessie Gender).*

As gamers from around the world enter the magical world of "Hogwarts Legacy" in February 2023, the internet is abuzz behind the scenes. The boycott of [the highly anticipated game](#) is intended as a public demonstration of opposition to Rowling's transphobic statements.



She doesn't participate directly in the development of the game, she's not really involved, so [the criticism focuses on the fact](#) that she makes money off her brand - even if indirectly, by selling rights or receiving royalties.

Probably not insignificant, because "Hogwarts Legacy" sold over 12 million copies in two weeks, bringing in a billion dollars in profit. And beating such hits of the gaming division of Warner Bros. as LEGO Star Wars and Mortal Kombat.



Hogwarts Legacy Photo. Avalanche Software

- Ultimately, it turns out that [cancel culture](#) has no greater power than nostalgia - comments Andy Jones.

A few months later, Kelly Frost, a single dater with pal Mary Ellen, will stop organising Shabby She – “the best lesbian party in south-east London”.

"We did it for eight goddamn years. A safe place where a woman could pick up another woman. There were dances, there were kisses, there were weddings. Babies were born because their mothers met on our show," Kelly says.

“But that stopped when it was no longer allowed to say, ‘A lesbian is a woman.’ When we set the line on who could attend – clearly and calmly: ‘only biological women who truly love women’ – that’s when it all started. Within hours of the email about the new rules going out, the pub’s social media accounts were awash with accusations: [transphobia, hate](#) , bigotry, supporting [‘extremist TERFs’](#) and a threat to the community.”

And what about the owners? – I ask.



- They called and cursed under their breath: "We've been running this pub for 30 years. They won't tell us what to do." For a moment I thought it might last. Until an email came: "The costs of running a pub are high, the media risk is too high." They thanked us for the years together. And they wished us all the best.

She and Mary Ellen looked each other in the eye and said, "That's it." They try to go back somewhere else. Finally they find a quiet place. "But we've never had sixty women at a party again. Now? Fifteen. Maybe twenty. We're playing guerrilla warfare—we book the place as 'Kelly and Mary Ellen, 25 Friends.'

Secret lesbian meetings in London in the 21st century. Sounds absurd.

- Because that's absurd - Kelly replies. - But we're not going to disappear. This was our place and our truth. We won't bow down, we won't explain ourselves. Shabby She was more than a party - it was our mark, our rebellion, our love. And we'll come back full-on, I promise you that.

Daniel Radcliffe and Emma Watson vs. Rishi Sunak. 2024, or April Fools' Day

On April 1, 2024, J.K. Rowling posts a series of tweets in which she refers to famous transgender people as "women," then concludes: *"April Fools! Just kidding. Of course, the people mentioned in the above tweets are not women at all, they are men - every single one of them ."*

*"It's hate speech. And not just towards me - I got thousands of hate messages after her tweet"* (Katie Neeves, a transgender woman and one of Rowling's listed, X).

*"No one should be punished for stating simple biological facts"* ( [Rishi Sunak, Prime Minister of Great Britain](#) , X).

*"Trans women are women. Any statement to the contrary erases the identity and dignity of trans people"* ( [Daniel Radcliffe](#) , actor, Harry Potter, X).



'Harry Potter - 20th Anniversary: Return to Hogwarts' is a nostalgic journey through time without the participation of JK Rowling Photo HBO

*"Transgender people are who they say they are. They deserve to live without having their existence constantly questioned"* ( [Emma Watson](#) , actress, film Hermione, X).

*"Trans women are women. Trans men are men"* (Rupert Grint and Bonnie Wright, actors, film Ron and Ginny Weasley).

*"No breach of regulations found. No legal action will be taken against JK Rowling"* (Police Scotland, X).

Patriarchy has changed form and is coming back. The year 2025, or "this is gaslighting and the new patriarchy"

*"I love it when a plan works"* (JK Rowling, X).

*"Horrible, disgusting shit – exactly. Monstrous behavior from a loser"* ( [Pedro Pascal](#) , actor, Instagram).

- Honestly? Thirty years ago, when Section 28 was repealed [a law that banned [the "promotion of homosexuality"](#) by local authorities and state schools], we thought it was over. That we had won. But patriarchy doesn't go away - it just changes form. And it comes back.

*I preferred the old lesbophobia of the seventies and eighties. At least it was honest. Like, "We don't like you because you're a lesbian." Okay, I could live with that.*

I knew who I was dealing with.

But is this new? [This is gaslighting](#) . They say, "We love you, we support you, but you can't say you like women. Because it's exclusionary." I'm sorry, but how can I be a lesbian if I can't say I'm attracted to women? That sounds like a joke. And that's why we're fighting back," says Sally Wainwright of Lesbian Persistence.

When Sally walks into London's High Court on April 16, she feels like this is a day that will go down in history. She's not sure if she's the only one, but she's definitely one of the few people in the courtroom who are 100 percent certain they'll win.

- I knew it. The formal legal intervention as a voice for lesbian communities made the case so clear that losing was impossible - says Sally with conviction.

It all begins over a year earlier. Sally, alone, with no formal affiliation with any organization, initiates something no one else – no association, no group – has done before: legal intervention from a lesbian perspective.

The intervention goes to court, which, however, does not allow for an oral argument. The only tool of struggle was a document – written argumentation.

- But what a document it was! Our lawyers were simply brilliant. They wrote a text that was so strong, so logical and clear that the judges could not ignore it. And they did not ignore it - enthuses Sally.

The issue boils down to one question: Does gender in British law mean biological sex or the sex written into a document, the so-called certified sex? [This is not just a matter of semantics](#) . It is about whether women's and lesbian organizations will have to accept men who declare themselves as women - as lesbians.

- If the court had ruled that it was about the gender on the certificate, it would have opened the door to state sanctioning of sexual harassment of women. I think the judges understood that too. Their questions during the hearing made it clear: they do not believe in this absurd narrative that a man can become a woman just because he says so - says Sally triumphantly.

On April 16, the media circulates videos outside the Supreme Court building of a group of women from For Women Scotland celebrating the verdict. Sally is among them.

Kelly Frost was not in court the day the verdict was announced. She was in London, on the roof of a posh Soho bar, where a private party was being organised by one of Scotland's women's rights campaigners.

"It was a 'join us to celebrate or join us to have fun – but let's be together' kind of party. Women from all over England and Scotland came together. Friends and strangers, young and old.

The atmosphere, Kelly recalls, was unique.

– It was wonderful. Warm for this time of year. We stood on the roof, drank, sang. “Up the Women”, “We Are Women”. We felt invincible, we laughed, we cried. Moments like these remind us that we cannot be silenced.

Retired electrician interested in Malta vacation, not JK Rowling

The only social group that doesn't seem to care about JK Rowling, her supporters or opponents, are [British pensioners](#). We know each other from our holidays in Malta, sometimes we talk about the weather and holiday plans. I ask them about Rowling.

Dawn was at the café where Rowling wrote her first books. The cake was average, but the atmosphere was "full of spirit."

She believes that the writer went through hell and not only stayed afloat but also went far, which makes her someone inspiring – even though she hasn't read any of the books.

Debbie, equally sincere, wrote back: "Sorry, Krystyna, I haven't read Harry Potter, so I can't help you."

Josephine, known as Jo to her friends, doesn't think of JK as much as Dawn does, but she thinks it might be her own jealousy. Rowling has earned millions, while she – the author of several novels – has earned only a thousand pounds. But she says this without regret, rather with amusement.

Then there's Brian. He's 75, was an electrician in Birmingham for 55, and has just asked in the group: "I'm going to Malta for 40 days. Who's joining me?"

In his world, JK Rowling was never the queen of any universe. The world is simply supposed to be warm enough to sit on the balcony of the Canifor Hotel in the evening and watch nothing happen.

*Edited by Marek Markowski.*



At the premiere of 'Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban' (part III of the saga). Rowling and the three main actors: Emma Watson (Hermione), Rupert Grint (Ron) and Daniel Radcliffe (Harry). London, May 31, 2004. Photo. CARL DE SOUZA / AFP