



The Harper Effect

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Sixteen-year-old Harper was once a rising star on the tennis court--until her coach dropped her for being "mentally weak." Without tennis, who is she? Her confidence at an all-time low, she secretly turns to her childhood friend, next-door neighbor Jacob--who also happens to be her sister's very recent ex-boyfriend. If her sister finds out, it will mean a family war.

But when Harper is taken on by a new coach who wants her to train with Colt, a cold, defensive, brooding young tennis phenom, she hits the court all the harder, if only to prove Colt wrong. But as the two learn to become a team, Harper gets glimpses of the vulnerable boy beneath the surface, the boy who was deeply scarred by his family's dark and scandalous past. The boy she could easily find herself falling for.

As she walks a fine line between Colt's secrets, her forbidden love, and a game that demands nothing but the best, Harper must decide between her past and her future and between two boys who send her head spinning. Is the cost of winning the game worth losing everything?

The Harper Effect Details

Date : Published December 27th 2017 by Pan Macmillan

ISBN : 9781760552091

Author : Taryn Bashford

Format : Paperback 384 pages

Genre : Romance, Young Adult, Sports and Games, Sports, Contemporary

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From Reader Review The Harper Effect for online ebook

PinkAmy loves books, cats and naps says

GR deleted my original review because I criticized the writer's behavior instead of the book so I'll only criticize the book and the writing as not something I can recommend. I won't dump on the writer for her behavior towards reviewers or trash the book in keeping with GR Guidelines. If you decide to read anyway, my strong recommendation is borrow don't buy.

Maddie P says

I hate to state the obvious, but allegations made by a reviewer who has a personal vendetta against the author cannot necessarily be trusted. In terms of The Harper Effect, like others who have actually read the novel, I loved it. The writing style was really refreshing, being easy to read with some really interesting phrasing that stayed with me, or had me re-reading it just to enjoy it again. The story was fast-paced and the characters came across like real teens even though they were moving in the seemingly unreal world of professional tennis. I wasn't sure about reading about tennis, but I loved the Coach Milo scenes and found myself rooting for Harper who grew into a gutsy, determined heroine by the end. And my new favourite book boyfriend is Colt Jagger!

Trisha says

So good to read a sporty YA where the sport is part of the plot, part of the MC's journey, and authentically depicted. Plus I love tennis.

Harper does make some silly mistakes, but she learns from them, and always tries to do better. Love the differing views of family, all real, all valid.

Milo is terrific, Jacob needs lots of hugs, Aria flies, Colt is swoony and Harper loves them all.

Wish I knew for sure if this was 2017 or 2018. Messes with my system.

Jeann (Happy Indulgence) says

EDIT: After being threatened with legal action by the author in response to my 2 star review below, I will no longer be supporting this book. I've since dropped it to 1 star. No one should ever feel unsafe for reviewing a book with their honest opinions. The original author's comment is here, and I also blogged about it here.

I enjoyed the glimpse into a professional tennis player's life in this one, and the message behind it in that resilience is built through downfalls.

However, I didn't agree with the main character's actions - lying to her sister and hooking up with her ex-boyfriend behind her back, stalking the love interest and turning up unannounced, forcing him to do what she wanted by refusing to leave. Her behaviour was never addressed as crossing the line in the book which I

found to be disturbing.

Rob De says

This is an engrossing debut novel by Australian author, Taryn Bashford that provides an indepth look at the heady world of the professional tennis circuit.

Beginning with a 17 year old Harper Hunter being dumped by her coach and then her doubts as to whether she is indeed good enough. We journey through her friendships- both with her sister Aria and next door neighbour Jacob the three of whom have been inseparable since childhood. That changed with Harper away on tour so much and Jacob and Aria becoming an item, but now that they have split up Jacob and Harper's feelings for each other have resurfaced. Complex enough?

Now throw into the mix her explosive and troubled new doubles partner Colt Jagger and we really start to see a change in Harper's attitude both on and off the court.

How hard is it to break into the senior tennis circuit and how much is Harper willing to give to achieve her dream?

This is mostly a sports success story that also tackles friendships, growing up and relationships issues.

ambsreads says

THIS REVIEW IS ALSO ON MY BLOG, PLEASE CLICK [HERE](#) TO CHECK IT OUT (the formatting is much better on the blog, trust me)

R E V I E W

Since I read this book in 2017 and this is a review coming in 2018 I just want to quickly mention that this was my 200th read of 2018.

Anyway, The Harper Effect was a contemporary I was excited to read. When my mum was younger she played tennis competitively and was aiming for Wimbledon when her coach passed away and she fell away from the sport. To this day, I don't think you'll find someone who talks about tennis as passionately as my mum. So, when I got the opportunity to receive this book and saw tennis in the blurb I jumped on it.

I forgot how romance filled YA books can be and The Harper Effect is full of romance. Very messy romance. The romance took up maybe around 80% of the book, with family dramas taking another 15% and the 5% being tennis. Which, left me in this messy spot or do I keep reading for the tennis? I did.

The tennis parts are good. The characters are good. But, the romance undercuts this and makes the story feel cheap in some parts. Particularly with the fact the main character is pursuing her sister's ex-boyfriend. Even if you don't believe in the girl code (which you should) this is so wrong. The fact that he wasn't even supporting either sister (which made him a pretty shitty person, and he really was) really frustrated me. Especially since he got such a spotlight in The Harper Effect.

Obviously, these kids are in their late teens so they have hormones and all that, but I didn't feel as if it added much to the story. I feel Harper would have done better with better friends and building a relationship with her sister instead of destroying it.

I did like Colt though, who is Harper's mixed (mum said the mixed is very important here) doubles partner. He had a backstory that was something I could relate to parts of. He was passionate and a fighter and some

of his conversations are ones I have had with people in my life. I truly appreciated the inclusion of his character but in some places, I feel it was dealt with incorrectly, especially the ending of this book.

The Harper Effect was a solid four star for me until all the messy contemporary drama unfolded on the page. I was struggling to keep myself reading it, which is never how it should be in my opinion.

Harper herself was a tad annoying. She was entitled and never really tried to understand Colt's story or what he was going through, which was really annoying. The guy had to fight for his ranking and she had the best of the best to help carry her through. It just really annoyed me that she never tried. She simply tried to bring Colt into her life without taking in consideration how strange it may be for him.

It was great to read a book set in Australia with places I understood what looked like. It was also great to be able to support an Australian author.

Overall, The Harper Effect was an enjoyable read. I would have preferred it to have more familial relationships rather than romantic but that wasn't the case, unfortunately for me. I'm definitely not a hater of this book but I am not blown away. I would still recommend it if you're looking for a fluffy but serious book set in Australia. This would probably be a great book for that female athlete in your life who isn't a reader.

EDIT

I have since changed my review rating on Goodreads to a one star. The author threatened legal action on a reviewer on Goodreads, stating the reviewer had a personal vendetta against her. Goodreads is a safe place for reviewers to share their opinions, not everyone is always going to agree with your book or the content involved. I feel the inappropriate actions of the author cancel out every good thing I have said here. Keep that in mind when you decide whether to support this author.

Also, if you're looking to buy any books over at Book Depository, feel free to use my affiliate link! I gain a small 5% commission at no extra cost to you.

Brittain *Needs a Nap and a Drink* says

My review was just a gif and it still got removed? Really?

Not going to read this book. Ever. Overpriced and sounds pretty terrible in my opinion.

Since when is expressing an opinion grounds for getting a review removed? I wasn't even a bitch this time!

Aentee says

If there was an option to give negative stars, I would. Never have I read such badly written prose, poor excuse for chapter development, or uninspiring protagonist. Awful metaphors abound, including but not limited to:

- "He smiles. And his whole face unfastens like a window blowing in the breeze, letting in fresh air and sunshine. It's as if I've witnessed one of the Seven Wonders of the World; seen something not many people get to see."

The Seven Wonders of the World called, they would like to send a cease-and-desist to prevent their good

name from being used in this manner.

- “I shake my head, my appetite blown up with my heart. To buy time to find all the pieces of me and put myself back together, I make coffee.”

Even the firmest believers in the power of caffeine would find these sentences hard to believe.

- “I fight to summon the trusty list of reasons to pull away, but it’s like swinging a racquet in custard.”

I know there’s a paucity in tennis analogies and idioms, but I would have hoped a published author could come up with something better than RACQUET. IN. CUSTARD.

That’s just a taster, not even a fraction of the awful writing. But the book tops (or bottoms?) itself with this gem:

- “I let a breath I was holding dribble out.”

And y’all thought “I let out a breath I didn’t realise I was holding” was bad.

The book also had multiple instances of casual cultural misappropriation and racism. Presented in that casual, microaggressive way of ignorant people who believe they’re worldly and cultured. If you’re not Native American, I don’t want you to go around calling regular old plaits “Hiawatha hair”. It’s freaking offensive. Also, there is no such thing as an “Indian princess scarf”, especially not one that a random white girl wears in her hair while lounging around on her couch. People’s culture are not your costumes. Also the only non-white character in this book appeared for a total of 2 seconds and spoke in broken English - despite the fact that these kids were jetsetting all around the world for a large part of the novel.

I don’t even have the energy to go into how demeaning this book ultimately is to sibling relationships, to girls with ambitions. Not to mention that singularly awful love triangle. But rest assured, I’ll return soon with a full review.

This author threatened a reviewer with legal action over a two-star review. I personally think that Jeann was being generous. What a mess, that’s three hours of my life I’ll never get back - but apparently Goodreads is on a deleting spree of all the negative reviews for this book. Listen, no one has to have a personal agenda to rate this book poorly. Nothing any reviewer can write will be more damning than the actual novel itself.

Full review to come.

Ann Elise Monte says

My original review was removed for daring to state my reasons for not wanting to touch this book. Fine. We all know why this book isn’t worth reading anyway.

Alexandra says

Seventeen dollars for an *e-book*??? This publisher must have mistaken this author for Steven King.

MC dates her sister's ex-boyfriend knowing it'll hurt her sister? I already dislike her. And I don't tend to like books with unlikable, jerkwad, MCs.

Love triangle? Done to *death*, and extremely tiresome. Just a lazy way to amp up angst and drama, IMO.

Readers get to have opinions, and express them.

Pocket Full of Pages says

Thank you so much Pan Macmillan for sending us a copy of The Harper Effect to review. Thank you for also letting us be part of this blog tour!

'The Harper Effect' by Taryn Bashford is a debuting young adult novel allowing readers to discover the art and lifestyle of a teenager and her dream of becoming a professional tennis player. But for any teenager, this lifestyle includes first loves, friendship, grief and the ability to follow your dreams.

Whilst we made our way through this novel, we couldn't help but love the author's connection to tennis! We haven't found too many novels that include sporting/athletic aspects which we have really enjoyed however, we have loved seeing it in this novel!

Taryn Bashford has done an incredible job with providing a message behind each word written. This novel doesn't just follow a teenager's love for tennis, it provides inspirational messages about determination, forming strong relationships, grief and forgiveness, especially with the ability to forgive yourself.

We all must follow our hearts in order to follow our dreams!

Sammi says

I really enjoyed this book! Also what a brilliant time to release it!! It will make a perfect summer read while you watch tennis on the tv!!

To the book.....

So the overall plot is fairly predictable, but its the details that make this book so enjoyable. Parts of this book make you want to slap the characters because WTF were they thinking!! But as we all know, mistakes are part of growing up, and there are some pretty epic mistakes made in this book.

I know that a lot of people will hate the love triangle in this book, I know I did. But it was part of the story and it helped the characters involved to grow and move out of their comfort zones! And yes I know girl code/sister code and all that, but less face it these things happen in real life. At least there were consequences and the characters learnt from their actions.

I also just want to say that it is clear that the characters behaviour is not condoned and I believe the author did a great job, through the story, of explaining why this love triangle was included in the book.

These characters though!! I think the author has done a fantastic job creating realistic characters that aren't always likeable.

Throughout the book we get to watch all the characters grow and mature. Harper, our MC, can come across as a brat fairly often, but a lot of 16 year old kids can be. She also makes some truly terrible decisions, but she learns from these and they help her to grow as a person.

Jacob on the other hand I despised. His attitude was frustrating and while he did get better towards the end of

the book I still couldn't bring myself to like him.

My favourite characters were Aria and Colt! Mostly Colt haha. These two faced some tough challenges. Arias were mostly due to stupid decisions made by Harper and Jacob, which I'm glad happened because seriously she deserves someone better than Jacob!!

I would love a story from Colts POV!! He goes through so much throughout the book and I think his take on things would be interesting to read.

Overall this is a fun, easy read that I highly recommend! You'll laugh, you'll want to punch characters in the faces and hopefully you'll enjoy a fantastic story

Thank you to Macmillan Australia for sending me a copy and allowing me to take part in this blog tour

Tatiana says

Kirkus Reviews convinced me to read this. Australia, tennis, romance? Yes, please.

Harper Hunter, a 16-year old aspiring professional tennis player, is failing. She seems to have plenty of skill, but no mental strength to get to the top of the tennis ranking. Her coach abandons her, believing she just doesn't have what it takes to be a winner. Distraught, Harper finds herself at the center of family drama at home too, when her older sister is in a midst of a breakup with their mutual childhood friend (and accidentally, Harper's long-time crush, Jacob). When Harper's new coach suggests that Harper should pair up with another up-and-coming player Colt, things get even more complicated. Because Colt is hot (and, naturally, tormented), and Jacob wants to be with Harper instead of her sister, Aria.

Here is what I have a problem with Kirkus' review. I don't agree that "details about tennis and the struggles of teens on the cusp of adulthood are nicely balanced." The tennis parts are very strong. I actually had to check back to see if the author had been a professional tennis player (she hadn't). Apparently, I can read about training drills and game strategies all day. What I didn't care for is most of that wretched love quadrangle. It is overwrought, with hormonal kids throwing their lives away over stupid crushes. I wish The Harper Effect was either: 1) a simpler romance with LOTS of tennis (there is enough drama in that sport as it is, evidently) and MUCH less Colt angsting about his problems and playing hot/cold games with Harper; or 2) a romance-free story; there is a lesson in the book about staying true to your dreams and not giving up on them when side problems arise, and that would have carried the book just fine.

Not an unpleasant reading experience. I just wish the story was shaped a little better.

Colleen says

This book got to my gut! Chortling one minute, digging for tissues the next.

Impressive must-remember-that-one, are the ingenious metaphors and vivid word pictures that spring from the pages.

Set in the competitive world of tennis, it explores awakening young love that can confuse and unravel, but similarly shows how special love can uplift and encourage.

Food for thought for many a teen trying to decipher friendship vs love and the difference between the two.

Madeline says

I feel obliged to write a preface to address the drama surrounding this book. I'll be honest, I don't condone authors threatening reviewers with legal action simply because they disagree with their opinions. But as Bashford has not commented, I have no way to verify the facts of the reviewer. To be honest, it's also none of my business.

The Goodreads community also has a lot to answer for: intentionally giving a book low ratings when you haven't read it, leaving unhelpful and snappy reviews, and leaving disgusting hateful anonymous messages for the author. To be honest, the reviewers annoyed me more than anything.

Now that's out of the way, I really enjoyed this book. Bashford's characters were well rounded and complex without being overly dramatic. I found the balance of drama and self awareness refreshing. Harper's development is considerable, making the story truly a buildingsroman tale. There is a nice balance between the repercussions of her actions and her development in making decisions. There's a difference between not liking a character, and a character being poorly written.

Additionally, the architecture of the world is flawless. I have never played a game of tennis in my life, and I felt right at home. Different locations, players, and tournaments meld effortlessly and the introduction of tennis lingo is subtle enough for the reader to follow.

My only gripe with the novel is a few minor inconsistencies. The use of the American spelling of 'mum' is an interesting choice - although, I admit very minor. The plot also felt at times very predictable and safe. But that again is personal opinion and a tendency towards harsher endings.

All in all, an excellent debut novel.
