



# Harry Potter and Draco Malfoy:

An analysis of race, prejudice, and class in the *Harry Potter* novels

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Harry Potter och Draco Malfoy:

En analys av ras, fördom, och klass i *Harry Potter* romanerna

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## Abstract

This essay explores how in the Harry Potter series, J. K. Rowling's magical heroes function as paradigms whose roles reflect on issues of race, prejudice and racism. Those issues include good and evil, socialism and aristocracy, purity and impurity, freedom and indebtedness. This essay focuses on showing how those themes are reflected and confronted in the dipole between Harry Potter and Draco Malfoy. Additionally, the Critical Race Theory, a theory that examines how culture uses and asserts power and race in society, is implemented to show how race and prejudice are reflected in the magical world. By further analyzing Harry and Draco's upbringing and social milieus in relation to the theme of good vs. evil, the development of these characters is presented in response to their contrasting surroundings. The paper concludes that these characters evolve in the final novels and make conscious choices to achieve the common cause of defying evil, despite their opposing backgrounds.

**Keywords:** J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter, Draco Malfoy, Prejudice, Race, Racism, Good vs. Evil, Critical Race Theory

## Sammanfattning

Denna uppsats utforskar hur J. K. Rowlings magiska hjältar, i Harry Potter-serien, fungerar som en paradigm vars roller reflekterar frågor kring ras, fördomar och rasism. Dessa frågor inkluderar gott och ont, socialism och aristokrati, renhet och orenhet, frihet och skuldsättning. Denna uppsats fokuserar på att visa hur dessa teman reflekteras och konfronteras i dipolen mellan Harry Potter och Draco Malfoy. Dessutom implementeras Critical Race Theory, en teori som undersöker hur kultur använder och sorterar makt och ras i samhället, för att visa hur ras och fördomar återspeglas i den magiska världen. Genom att ytterligare analysera Harry och Dracos uppväxt och sociala miljöer i förhållande till temat 'gott mot ont', presenteras dessa karaktärers utveckling som ett resultat av kontrasterande omgivning. Uppsatsen drar slutsatsen att dessa karaktärer utvecklas i de sista romanerna och gör medvetna val för att uppnå det gemensamma målet till att bekämpa det onda, trots deras motsatta bakgrunder.

**Nyckelord:** J. K. Rowling, Harry Potter, Draco Malfoy, Fördom, Ras, Rasism, Gott mot Ont, Critical Race Theory

“It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities.”

— *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*

The Harry Potter series has, since the first chapter of the first novel to the last chapter of the final novel, had the common theme of concurring ‘evil’. The depiction of evil in the novels can be related to the Voldemort’s belief that blood purity is superior to all other bloodlines, with the main goal of achieving a total elimination of impurity. There are plenty of characters that the readers get to know during the Harry-Potter series, both good and evil, and both heroes and villains. One character that stands out in these novels, is the popular antagonist and bully, Draco Malfoy. Draco is a young boy full of prejudice influenced by his surrounding environment, but who develops tremendously by the end of the series. Draco’s family has a strong connection to ‘the dark side’ of wizards who firmly believe that blood purity in the magical world should be preserved and therefore is strongly influenced by those beliefs. In comparison, Harry Potter enters the wizarding world as a blank canvas, with no blood-purity prejudice forced on him by the magical society, influencing his beliefs. By applying the Critical Race Theory (CRT) and by analyzing race and class hierarchy in the magical world, I show that the characters of Draco Malfoy and Harry Potter are not flat and instead develop through the novels in response to their upbringing and surroundings. To do so, I analyze and compare their upbringings and social circles in relation to the existing or non-existing beliefs of blood prejudice and superiority.

To highlight this topic, the focus will be on the first and second novels, with some help from the sixth and seventh novels of the series. The choice to use these four novels was due to the first two novels introducing us to the characters and the blood prejudice that becomes a main theme in the series, whilst the sixth and seventh novels conclude the series and show us

how these characters have grown through their choices. In the first novel, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, both characters are introduced to the reader and I will use it to compare their upbringings and social circles. In the second novel, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, the issues of blood-purity prejudice and blood-hierarchy that will influence the whole series are presented to the reader, when the Chamber of Secrets is opened and all 'blood-traitors' shall be killed. In the sixth novel, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, Draco Malfoy joins the Death Eaters and Lord Voldemort chooses him to murder Hogwarts' headmaster. Here, the story of Draco Malfoy becomes more complex and shows his true feelings and intentions. Lastly, in the final novel, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, the battle of good vs. evil takes place, and Draco Malfoy and Harry Potter's characters are unfolded when the evil ones are defeated.

Lois Tyson discusses the Critical Race Theory, otherwise known as CRT, and racism in our society. Tyson explains that "the concept of race was originally introduced in the field of natural history merely as a convenient way to refer to groups of human beings in different geographic locations, not with the intention of separating human beings into physiologically distinct groups" (374). Despite that, the result was that those groups were categorized by their physical features, leading to a cultural hierarchy with the white race being considered superior to all others (Tyson 374). Racism cannot be eliminated because it sustains a human mechanism programmed to react defensively against anything different. That is an evolutionary characteristic developed in humans to protect them in the natural world. They needed to recognize and isolate the 'different' to sustain the compactness of the tribe. In that light, racism is a congenital characteristic of the human species. Thus, an argument of the complete erase of racism is a utopian one. Even in today's politically correct world we cannot shake off our feeling of discomfort towards difference, we just learn to accept it.

Tyson analyzes how race and racism are embedded in our day to day lives, but also highlights the subconscious assumptions we make about race to show that racism has not disappeared, but “still thrives in its ‘undercover’ existence” (369). According to Tyson, the term ‘racialism’ refers “to the belief in racial superiority, inferiority, and purity based on the conviction that moral and intellectual characteristics, just like physical characteristics, are biological properties that differentiate the races” (360). Meanwhile, the term ‘racism’ refers to “the unequal power relations that grow from the sociopolitical domination of one race by another and that result in systematic discriminatory practices (for example, segregation, domination, and persecution)” (Tyson 360). Thus, the deliberate act of prejudice and systematic racism occurs regularly, but only when those who exert it belong in the superior group and expect to elude with it, due to their superiority (Tyson 361).

Critical Race Theory as presented by Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic follows six propositions or otherwise called tenets, and two of those tenets are the most relevant to the theme of racism as presented in the novels. The first tenet is that racism is common and not something that diverges from the ordinary (Delgado & Stefancic 33). Tyson explains this further and adds that when it comes to racism, people often tend to think that it only applies if it is in a visible form, such as “physical or verbal attacks against people of color; the activities of white supremacist groups” etc., thus the term ‘everyday racism’ was invented (369). This term highlights that racism includes therefore not only of the visible but also of the invisible kind, including “emotionally draining, stress-provoking forms of racism”, and that those invisible forms are not exceptions, but the rule (Tyson 369). The second tenet that Critical Race Theory presents, is that race is a social construction made to be manipulated by society when convenient (Delgado & Stefancic 49). Race and racism often focus on the similar or different physical

features that people have based on their origins and ignore the similar or different mental features such as intelligence and personality traits that people share (Delgado & Stefancic 34). Thus, society chooses to create races based on physical features and supply them with various attributes that make them either superior or inferior to others. Tyson emphasizes this with the example that “the physical differences between light-skinned blacks and dark-skinned whites [...] are much fewer than the physical differences we often see among members of each group” (372). Therefore, racism is a social construction and is based solemnly on appearance differences and heritage. Tyson further discusses this tenet, and states that since “our attitudes toward race are constructed by society, then society can reconstruct them” meaning that equality between the races can only be achieved if we change those racist attitudes, even if unconscious, that people have (382).

One of the central themes in the Harry Potter series is the fight against ‘evil’, where evil represents the preservation of the pureblood wizards’ superiority in the magical world, thus race and class in the magical world, are not defined by heritage or appearance but by the, or the lack of, blood purity. Elaine Ostry discusses that Rowling uses “the battle between good and evil” in her novels in order to “combat two evils of our time: materialism and racism” (89). Accordingly, since race is defined through blood-purity, the purer the bloodline is, the higher the social status of a wizard is. Affluence in the magical world is therefore not necessarily earned by hard work but comes to those who are higher on the social scale. Elizabeth E. Heilman and Anne E. Gregory argue that “among the wizarding families, there is a hierarchy, often based on social class and profession and related to the quality of bloodlines. The higher your social standing, the better your job, and the more power you have to make it difficult or easier for others around you” (250). Hence, better job opportunities are presented to those who are pure-blooded, leading to

better affluence and a higher social standing. Those privileges in the magical world can be compared to white privilege and the “social advantages, benefits and courtesies that come with being a member of the dominant race” in this case, white, such as better job opportunities (Delgado & Stefancic 136). Tyson explains that white privilege can be explained as “a form of everyday racism” since the term privilege itself is based on disadvantage, meaning a person is privileged only when contrasted to someone who is not (379). Thus, a wizard is only seen as superior due to the purity of their bloodline, when compared to less pure wizards.

Blood has huge importance in the magical world and is one of the few things that divide wizards into categories based on the purity of their blood. The blood hierarchy and those categories start with pureblooded wizards and witches at the top. A pureblood wizard is defined through their ancestry and magical abilities being able to be traced back to several generations. It is these wizards and witches that are the most ‘valuable’ to Lord Voldemort, due to their blood-purity. Next, there are half-blooded wizards and witches, who come second in the hierarchy and have one pureblooded parent and one non-magical or Muggle-born parent. Muggle is a term used in the novels to describe non-magical people. The term ‘half’ is not referring to an exact mathematical percentage of magical blood but indicates that magical ancestry is mixed with Muggle ancestry. These wizards and witches are often referred to as ‘blood-traitors’ by Lord Voldemort and his followers, since they, according to his ideology have betrayed him (Rowling, *HPDH* 200, 376). There are also Muggle-born wizards and witches, referring to those who were born by non-magical parents but have magical abilities themselves, and they share the lowest place at the hierarchy, together with Muggles. An example of a Muggle-born wizard is Hermione Granger, one of Harry Potter’s best friends, whose parents are Muggles (Rowling, *HPCS* 121). Both Muggle-born and half-blood witches and wizards are seen as equally inferior and wanted

dead by Lord Voldemort and his Death Eaters, due to the impurity of their blood. Also, any pureblood wizard who is associated with Muggle-born or half-blood wizards or witches is seen as a blood traitor by the Dark Side (Rowling, *HPHBP* 242). Lastly, some people are children of wizards and witches, but who have not inherited any magical abilities, called Squibs. These people are often hidden due to the family's shame that they produced an incompetent 'wizard'. These divisions of wizards due to their blood status show that magical abilities are not something that can only be inherited from other witches and wizards, but something that can be developed throughout ones' childhood, therefore making it originally not exclusive to pureblooded wizards.

Raymond I. Schuck argues that the dichotomy that exists between those "who only accept 'pure' wizards and those who accept others", "reaffirms a difference between blatant racism and more subtle forms of racial hierarchy" (21). In the sixth novel, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, Professor Slughorn tells Harry that his mother, a Muggle-born witch, was so good that he thought she was a pureblood witch, thereby revealing the embedded prejudice in the magical world, that pureblooded wizards are better and stronger than other wizards due to their blood-purity (Rowling, *HPHBP* 59). This is debunked by Harry himself, when he explains that his best friend is best in his year but also Muggle-born, to which Professor Slughorn answers by saying "Funny how that sometimes happens, isn't it?" (Rowling, *HPHBP* 59). Professor Slughorn then tried to cover up his prejudice when he understood that Harry did not find it 'funny' by saying that he is not prejudiced and talking about other strong Muggle-born wizards and witches he has taught (Rowling, *HPHBP* 59). Thus, Slughorn's prejudice towards Muggles works as a reaffirmation of Slytherins being pro-blood-purity. This example shows that blood hierarchy is deeply embedded in the magical world, and wizards and witches often make

unconscious racist statements, which connects prejudice in the magical world to the racism we know of in our society.

When it comes to class discrimination and class hierarchy in the magical world, pure-blooded witches and wizards are, by most, considered superior to other witches and wizards. Heilman and Gregory explain that “the core narrative drama of outsiders and insiders, which plays out in competition among houses and also in large scale struggles between light and dark forces, is related to differences in beliefs about purebloods and Mudbloods” (251). Mudblood is a term referring to Muggle-born wizards and witches and used by those who believe that muggle-born wizards and witches should not be allowed to enter the magical world. Both the term Muggle-born and Mudblood are intended to belittle the wizards’ humanity and worth. Schuck highlights that the magical world can be considered divided into two sides, the ‘good’ being represented by Dumbledore and those who believe all wizards should be equal, and the ‘bad’ being represented by Voldemort and those who believe that all ‘blood-traitors’ and Muggles should be eliminated (9-10). Almost all the characters of the series fall into the gray zone; Dumbledore himself, the ‘leader’ of the light magicians, has a dark past but also proved to use Harry glorifying the saying ‘the end justifies the means’. Only Voldemort is a character of a one-dimensional ethic. He is pure evil, feeling no sympathy, love, or anything remotely good. In a way he is the absolute to whom everyone else measures up against. The good side is represented by the ones who stand up and refused to join Lord Voldemort and his followers, who in their turn embody the ‘bad’ side (Rowling, *HPPS* 59). Both sides exist in relation to blood-related and therefore racist principles, with the ‘bad’ side creating discrimination against blood prejudice and the ‘good’ side trying to diminish it.

For one to understand how Draco's and Harry's choices are influenced by their environments, one must first go back to their upbringings since both these characters' childhood was problematic, but in different ways. Since Harry did not grow up in the wizarding world, he has not been brought up with the prejudice that Muggles and muggle-born wizards are inferior to pureblooded wizards, making him a sympathetic character who fights for equality between all magical beings. Harry is a blank canvas when he enters the magical world, free from blood prejudice and socially constructed ideas of blood purity implicating higher class. And maybe, after all, that is why Dumbledore sent Harry off to live with his only blood relatives, the Dursleys even though they mistreated him, after his parents were murdered by Lord Voldemort. Ostry explains that Harry could have easily turned bad, since "the kind of neglect he encountered at the Dursleys would realistically create an antisocial boy desperate to curry favor and win power for himself; instead, when he magically receives attention beyond his wildest dreams at Hogwarts, he instantly rejects this status" (97). This means that Dumbledore knew that due to Harry's fame and his reputation of defeating Lord Voldemort, he would have become a whole different person influenced by fame and the power that comes with it, possibly making him bad, had he grown up in the magical world.

Harry is an orphan and was raised with his only living family members, the Dursley's, that loathed him, making sure that he always feels at their mercy. All through his childhood, Harry is forced to live in a dark cupboard under the stairs, cook and clean for the family, but also wear his cousin Dudley's old clothes (Rowling, *HPSS* 20-21). He is described as small and skinny, showing that he is not well taken care of by the Dursley's (Rowling, *HPSS* 21). The abuse is not only physical but also mental, with Harry pointing out that the Dursleys often pretended he was not there or that "he was something very nasty that couldn't understand

them” (Rowling, *HPSS* 24). Heilman and Gregory explain that “adolescents are searching for a place to belong, and when they are unable to find it, they can become at risk for many other difficulties” (249). Strangely enough, although Harry grew up with the Dursley’s, who neither loved nor respected him, he developed an appreciation of everything he got in life and turned out to be compassionate and treating all others around him as equals instead of turning ‘bad’. Even when Harry suddenly became even more famous than he was before by the end of the first novel, he never lost his modesty or humbleness, often forgetting he was famous in the wizarding world. Harry also hardly ever uses his power or wealth against other people, in comparison to Draco who almost always does. When he retrieves the Philosopher’s Stone in the second novel, he does not wish to use it, in comparison to Lord Voldemort, who wants to use it and will do everything in his power to do so (Rowling, *HPSS* 323). He is therefore known for his selflessness and braveness which are traits he partly inherited from his loving parents but also developed because of his rough childhood, making him a product of his environment.

In comparison Draco is brought up in a wealthy pureblood family who stand behind Lord Voldemort and his ideology that blood purity must be exclusive to the wizarding world. The environment where he grew up focused on, wealth, power, class hierarchy, and fame, but most of all hate against Muggles. The Malfoy family has had a long history of blood prejudice and superiority, since before Harry was born, connecting them to the evil side. Draco’s father, Lucius, is known for being one of Lord Voldemort’s Death Eaters, who are his most loyal followers. When the end of the First Wizarding War came, he and his family claimed that he was under the ‘Imperius Curse’, that is him being under complete control of Lord Voldemort resulting in the Malfoys joining the ‘good’ side temporarily until Voldemort came back (Rowling, *HPSS* 117). Though Narcissa, Draco’s mother, was caring and affectionate towards

Draco she never stood up to her husband's mistreatment (one can say that is a reflection of patriarchal status in the magical world), showing Draco that standing up to unfair and degrading behavior is not an option. This results in him following these ideologies and acting according to those, by being hateful towards others who are not pureblooded or on his social level during his time at Hogwarts.

Although Draco was well taken care of by his family during his time at Hogwarts, often receiving treats and packages, he lacked the emotional love and support that Harry received from his teachers and friends (Rowling, *HPSS* 155). He was raised with the high standards of his father, reminding him always that he had to be perfect and that he was not good enough. He is also brought up with a feeling of obligation towards his parents and an indebtedness to his family heritage, to be a perfect pure-blood dark wizard. Harry has no such burden. He is completely blissful at first but soon enough faces an obligation, the obligation of 'The Chosen One'. Harry's fame exceeds his name without him knowing. And he constantly then feels that he must prove himself and measure up to the hero status that everyone seems to have fitted him in.

The expectations his father has on Draco continue to emerge throughout their first year at Hogwarts. Heilman and Gregory discuss how the Malfoy family and especially Draco and Lucius "serve as reminders of what privilege is and what it enables one to do and say", since both have, throughout the novels, made comments against people who are inferior to them due to their wealth and blood status and get away with those due to their privilege (244). They continue by pointing out that those comments are made in an effort to remind others of their superiority, and thus, to diminish and reduce others' position in comparison to theirs, but they also reveal the hierarchy that pureblooded wizards and their families embrace (Heilman & Gregory 244). This behavior is therefore a very good example of how racism is a systematic practice and as Tyson

explains, occurs regularly “only when those who do it can expect, by and large, to get away with it” (361).

In his midst of trying to both please but also live up to the expectations his father has of him, Draco tries to be like him. This can be seen through Draco’s constant statements that all wizards and witches at Hogwarts who are not pure-blooded or are associated with Muggles, are inferior to him and other pure-blood wizards from the old wizarding families. The first time the reader is presented with those ideas is at Madam Malkin’s shop when Draco and Harry are getting fitted for their school robes in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*. There, Draco discloses that he believes that “the other sort” should not be let in at Hogwarts since “they’re just not the same”, referring to Muggle-born witches and wizards (Rowling, *HPSS* 84). Later, when Harry and his friends are onboard the Hogwarts train, Draco and his friends enter Harry’s compartment looking for Harry, Draco claims that his father has told him, that the Weasley family have “more children than they can afford” and that Harry soon will understand that “some wizarding families are much better than others” meaning that those who are not pure-blood or wealthy are inferior to him (Rowling, *HPSS* 116). Although the Weasleys are pure-blooded and originate from an old wizarding family, Ron’s father who works at the Ministry of Magic is very interested in Muggles (Rowling, *HPCS* 32 & 235). This interest makes the Weasley family inferior to other old wizarding families according to those who believe that blood-purity is superior to other bloodlines, even though they are pure-blooded, implying that their social status is not high, due to their family size, poverty, and relation to Muggles.

Both Harry and Draco make choices throughout the novels, based on their upbringing, presuppositions, and experiences. To explain this, one must look back at the first novel where Harry attends the sorting ceremony at Hogwarts. Harry has all the traits that make

him a great fit for Slytherin. As the Sorting Hat sang in the sorting song, “in Slytherin you’ll make your real friends, those cunning folk use any means to achieve their ends”, meaning Slytherins are ambitious, driven but also real friends (Rowling, *HPSS* 126). During the sorting ceremony, the sorting hat sees “plenty of courage”, a good mind, lots of talent, but also “a nice thirst to prove yourself” in Harry (Rowling, *HPSS* 129). But Harry insists on joining Gryffindor based on the rumors of Slytherins being wizards who turn bad, even though the sorting hat insists that he “could be great” and that Slytherin will help him “on the way to greatness” (Rowling, *HPSS* 130). Harry has lost both his parents who were his only family, because of Lord Voldemort, which makes it almost natural for him not to choose to join the Dark Side. After he is sorted into Gryffindor, Harry is relieved (Rowling, *HPSS* 130). Heilman and Gregory discuss the prejudice that the Slytherin house but also what traits the other houses represent, and explain that when a student is sorted in one of the four houses, it “establishes the way in which students are perceived by others around them as well as the way in which they should perceive themselves” (246). They add that Slytherins are often described as “dark, unattractive, greedy, and a bit dense” (Heilman & Gregory 246). Thus, Draco is almost pressured into fitting into those descriptions and live up to the life that is chosen for him by his family, whilst Harry is pressured to decline the offers to join Slytherin due to the murder of his parents.

Harry’s choice to join Gryffindor and therefore the ‘good’ surroundings, influences the whole narrative and plot, but is a choice he consciously makes based on his beliefs. Harry’s first interaction with Slytherin’s reputation was when he and Hagrid, the Hogwarts gamekeeper, are walking through Diagon Alley. There, Harry asks Hagrid about the Hogwarts houses, and Hagrid tells him that he would be better off in Hufflepuff than Slytherin, since “there is not a single witch or wizard who went bad who wasn’t in Slytherin”, accentuating that Voldemort also

was a Slytherin (Rowling, *HPSS* 86). Thus, Harry's perception of Slytherin was influenced by Hagrid, resulting in Harry disliking Slytherins without even meeting a single Slytherin himself. Schuck points out that when it was Harry's turn to be sorted in a house, he already had developed a dislike for Draco and his friends, which then influenced his choice (18-19). Schuck also explains that since Dumbledore told Harry that his choice mattered when he was being sorted, "the books show Harry as having the opportunity to side with those who would exclude Muggle-born wizards but choosing to side with those who would include such wizards", meaning that Harry has always had a choice, meanwhile, Draco did not (19). Chantel Lavoie states that children, even those in the magical world, "have important decisions to make" and the novels "emphasize that they need to consider individual preference, conscience, and right and wrong rather than what the majority think and do" (42). Harry's choice to, therefore, side with the oppressed instead of the oppressors, although he is within the "dominant racial class", but also to be able to choose in the first place make him the "anti-racist-white hero" of the story (Schuck 19-20).

Heilman and Gregory explain that the desire to make and keep the wizarding world pure stems further back than the Malfoys' blood prejudice and can be traced back to when Hogwarts was first founded thousands of years ago (251). One of the four founders, Salazar Slytherin, believed that Hogwarts should only allow pureblooded students to attend, meaning that Muggle-born or half-blooded wizards would be excluded. Salazar also created the Chamber of Secrets, where only the true heir of Slytherin would be able to open it and "unleash the horror within, and use it to purge the school of all who were unworthy to study magic" (Rowling, *HPCS* 159). Hence, Harry decides to not join Slytherin, based on a choice between light and darkness,

influenced by his surroundings, whereas Draco was pressured by his surroundings due to prejudice and ideologies.

The choices both Harry and Draco have made regarding their social circles, mirror the environments that they have grown up in. Friendship is not something that both these characters value, proving once again that they are a product of different and contrasting environments. Both Harry and Draco have two friends who they always are with and are the 'leaders' of these groups. Both are popular in their houses and are very competitive with their studies and houses. They both live a life they did not choose, with Harry being 'The Chosen One', destined to save the wizarding world from Lord Voldemort, and Draco being expected to become a Death Eater and live up to his father's achievements (Rowling, *HPHBP* 265). Harry's association and empathy for wizards and witches of non-pure descent mirror his lack of friendships during his childhood and upbringing. Harry does not care about a wizard's blood status but instead values true friendship. His partners in crime and main friends are Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger. Ron is a pureblood wizard who is poor and whose father works at the ministry of magic, in a department where he researches muggle objects and their use. His father is therefore looked down upon by other wizards, due to his interest and association with Muggles (Rowling, *HPCS* 32). Hermione is a Muggle-born witch, meaning she has no wizard descent and therefore is an outcast in the magical society, meaning that even if her magical powers are outstanding, she will not be seen as an equal due to the blood prejudice (and this is mainly by those who believe that blood purity is superior, not everyone). Kristen L. Cole explains that "Rowling's representation of rich (Malfoy) as evil and lower income (Potter, Weasley, and Granger) as good also privileges a particular socioeconomic representation" (153). This representation is therefore crucial in order for the reader to understand how the contrasting

characters of Draco Malfoy and Harry Potter represent the different views that the prejudice and accepting sides have.

Draco Malfoy's social circle consists of wealthy, pureblood families who have a lot of power in their hands, are full of prejudice and hate towards others inferior to them, which mirrors the environment he was brought up in. His father is an active member of Lord Voldemort's followers, the Death Eaters, which means that he is one day expected to join the Death Eaters himself. The character of Draco Malfoy, who is, according to Ostry "both a classist and racist" is used to highlight those racist ideologies of blood prejudice that the Dark Side embodies (92). Draco is sorted into Slytherin, a house where only pure-blood students from wealthy families can attend. This means that his social circle is constricted to pureblood wizards, who most likely will be prejudiced against others inferior to them. Draco often uses his father's status as a threat of power and is more interested in making allies, mainly because that is what his father taught him (Rowling, *HPSS* 268, *HPCS* 116). He is known for being self-centered and is always in the company of Vincent Crabbe and Gregory Goyle who also are kids of two Death Eaters, often using them as his bodyguards (Rowling, *HPSS* 115). Draco and his two friends are very snobby and constantly bully Harry, his friends, and other students (Rowling, *HPSS* 158). Karren Manners Smith suggests in her essay 'Harry Potter's Schooldays: J.K. Rowling and the British Boarding School Novel' that since Draco and Harry are the same age, jealousy and snobbery motivate the bullying (76). She also suggests that Draco is only hanging out with Crabbe and Goyle, since no one else attending the school is in his social milieu, leaving him stuck with these two boys whose fathers are political allies with his (Manners Smith 76). Accordingly, Draco and Harry through their school life both have a small inner circle of trusty

friends, which is an indicator that Draco is capable of caring for, and depending on people closer to him, but Draco's social circle is more constricted to pure-blooded, prejudiced students.

In the two final novels, we see that both Harry and Draco are forced to join the Great Wizarding War, which changes them both for the better. Harry and his friends are trying to find the remaining Horcruxes, while Draco is recruited by Lord Voldemort and joins the Death Eaters. Both, in the beginning seem eager to be the new disciples of their teams, but soon enough the journey to adulthood and their choices influence their future significantly. Harry's idol and headmaster of Hogwarts, Albus Dumbledore, appears to be not the man that he had idolized for so long and sets the wizarding world's fate in Harry's hands. Dumbledore did things like providing Harry with his father's invisibility cloak and constantly hinting on what Harry must do to defeat the Dark Lord, whilst having in mind his plan coming to fruition sometime in the future. That plan was the defeat of Lord Voldemort and keep wizards who are not pure-blooded safe. Although those things formed Harry and made him develop as a person, they do not redeem Dumbledore from his actions of setting a young child in danger in the hope that he will execute the prophecy. Similarly, Draco's trust towards his family and the Dark Side was beginning to break when he was ordered to kill Dumbledore by Lord Voldemort. Despite the fact that he never had the relationship that Harry had with Dumbledore, he recognized him as an authoritative figure, synonymous with the good days that he had spent in Hogwarts. Draco realized that Lord Voldemort gave him this quest as a test he was certain Draco would fail, thus Lord Voldemort intended to kill him as an act of revenge on his father's failure. By the end of the novels both Harry and Draco have accepted their duality, and that is the most important message of the book. There is no pure good or pure evil, but rather a gray zone that you should accept to find peace within you. Draco steps back from killing Dumbledore and leaves the Death

Eaters and Harry accepts that Lord Voldemort will always be a part of him, showing the readers that one can always change for the better.

To conclude, the lesson J.K. Rowling teaches the readers through her novels is that with friendship, solidarity, and love for each other one can conquer all evil, and in this case, prejudice. As Ostry explains, Rowling's novels "intend to teach children that what matters is one's character, not color, pedigree, or wealth" (89-90). Harry has a strong bond with his two friends, and the trio stands up for each other when needed even though they do not belong in the same racial or social class. Therefore, they do not choose their friends based on their social status but based on their personality traits. Together, and with the help of other wizards who share the same ideas as they do, they defeat Lord Voldemort and his supporters the Death Eaters. In comparison, Draco who is someone brought up by members of the dark side and fed with the ideology of blood purity and superiority refuses to kill Dumbledore when the time comes, since he realizes that this is now more than just being superior, prejudiced and joining the Dark Side. Draco also helps Harry to not get killed when he is captured, by risking his life when lying to his family and other Death Eaters to get Harry out of trouble, torture, and death. As Ostry explains, through Rowling's novels "readers are sure to notice how she teaches them a lesson about tolerance that can be applied to their own lives and history: they learn that they should judge people by their merits, actions, and morals rather than their race" (Ostry 93). Thus, J.K. Rowling also teaches the readers that it is never too late to change and make conscious, anti-racist choices.

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