Racism and multiculturalism in J.K. Rowling’s Harry Potter novels

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1. Introduction

J.K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* series consist of seven novels about a world in which the norm is that humans do magic and animals are not always regular animals. The magical world is separated from the non-magical, although they sometimes overlap. In the wizarding world itself, there are divisions between magical people based on their blood status, and other partitions between humans and magical creatures.

The divisions between magical folk are not important to all characters in the series, but still play a main part in the story concerning segregation and oppression of those who are not considered to be “pure” enough by the series’ main antagonist, Voldemort, and his followers. The partitions between humans and magical creatures are somewhat more general. Even though wizarding people do not recognize the segregation of magical creatures as such, it is to some degree even institutionalized by the way creatures do not share the same rights that humans have in the legal system. Those wizards or witches who claim to, and seem to not have any prejudices against other humans, still can display prejudice against creatures.

In this essay, the *Harry Potter* series will be analyzed in three different sections. I will use African American criticism and Critical Race Theory (CRT) in the discussion of ‘race’ and segregation that occurs between three different groups. This section will explain along what lines the world of *Harry Potter* is segregated and to what extent. Further, it will contain a case-study of house-elves through the lens of postcolonial criticism, that shows how certain groups are relegated to the status of “subaltern”, what form their oppression take and how they respond to it. I have chosen the elves, who are at the very bottom of the social ladder, because the extent of their oppression has been cut out from movie adaptions, and Rowling herself has liquidated the house-elf plot from the last novels. They provide the clearest example of differentiation between the groups of magical creatures, even though as a group they do not play an important part the series. The main concepts that will be used in this section are the issues of subaltern, mimicry and anticolonialist resistance. Finally, I will look at the novels through a multicultural perspective to see how Rowling has portrayed contemporary multicultural England and how it connects to the racial divisions in the magical world.
This essay will argue that the *Harry Potter* series discusses racism on several different levels, with an emphasis on humans. Part- or non-humans are discriminated against, but not given nearly as much space. The essay will also argue that Rowling has made an alternative version of multicultural contemporary England to show that origins, skin color, blood status and species do not matter when it concerns the issue of discrimination. Concludingly, the essay will claim that racism and multiculturalism are attached to each other and difficult to separate. The *Harry Potter* novels show this by how the problems of racism are dealt with, and solved with separate outcome for different parties. In this case, racism against humans is defeated to some extent, but the discrimination against part- and non-humans still remains for further discussion.
2. Background and previous research

Joanne “Jo” Rowling was born in England, in July 31, 1965. She has written three books for adult readers under the pseudonym Robert Galbraith, but became famous for the *Harry Potter* series, which she wrote between 1997-2007 under the name by which she is best known; J.K. Rowling. Numerous articles about Rowling discuss her commitment to helping people in poor situations; for instance, she has worked for Amnesty International in London. Rowling herself also lived in relative poverty before her breakthrough.

*Harry Potter* has become phenomenally successful in the sense that the series has been read by millions of people over the world, been translated into more than 65 languages, has its own film adaption, theme parks in Great Britain and in the States, an upcoming play in London, and a new movie coming out. When the first novel in the series, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* (*Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* in the United States), came out in 1997, it did not take long for the book to gain popularity, and favorable reviews soon started appearing. In the review “Debut author and single mother sells children's book for £100,000”, Dan Glaister focuses on Rowling’s personal life as a single mother and her road to fame and wealth after releasing the first novel in the series. The book itself does not receive any criticism in the review, only kind words. Rowling’s novels, and Rowling herself, have received similar acclaim from numerous different reviewers. Critics have praised the effect that the novels have on children, as they read more and at the same time gain increasing tolerance for other cultures. In fact, some have called the series called ‘the most influential book in the world’ (Kozlowska; Paul).

Despite its success, the *Harry Potter* series was also received in a more negative way among readers and critics. In *J.K. Rowling: a biography*, Connie Ann Kirk writes that people’s first responses to Rowling's novels concern issues with originality of her work, and according to more religiously conservative critics, that it is too focused on the occult. Kirk concludes that Rowling has received criticism for the quality of the work, in that it seems mass-produced (Kirk). In addition to this, the books have been critized for reasons like encouragement of rebelling against authority, being poorly written, and for lack of a multicultural approach in her character descriptions. Rowling has also received a lot of critique for not taking a more progressive stance on slavery. Bethany Barratt concludes from
Gizelle L. Anatol’s edition of critical essays that the house-elves still are enslaved and that the end of the last novel embraces this slavery rather than rejects it (Anatol 11; Barratt 52).

It was not long after the first release of *Harry Potter* before scholarship on the series started appearing. A general search for “Harry Potter” in the MLA database yields 658 entries, of which 219 are peer reviewed. The earliest entry is from 1999, two years after the first book in the series was published: The article “The Rise and Rise of Harry Potter”, written by Nicholas Tucker, celebrates Rowling’s imagination and discusses how she has managed to create a world that consists of reality and fantasy. The rest of the MLA entries extend until the current year, 2016. These entries concern many different subjects, such as heteronormative heroism, symbols and myths, the impact the novels have on younger readers, authority, and gender issues. In addition, several entries concern race, discrimination and cultural/national otherness, which are particularly relevant to my research question.

For example, one of the more recent works on the Harry Potter series is Jackie C. Horne’s article “Harry and the Other: Answering the Race Question in J. K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter*”. Horne discusses the situation of house-elves and goblins, and that these magical creatures have been forced into a niche. While the battle against evil is the series’ main focus, Horne wonders if there will be a new story that includes the battle for marginalized groups of house-elves and goblins, who indeed are mentioned in the novels but never really engaged with by anyone other than Hermione Granger (Horne).

In the article “The less you lot have ter do with these foreigners, the happier yeh’ll be: Cultural and National Otherness”, Marion Rana discusses discrimination in the Harry Potter novels with an emphasis on how prejudices in the series are most often against non-human magical creatures such as the house-elves. Rana argues that discrimination is not shown against people of different races or geographical origins (except from snobbery concerning blood status and class), but against non-human creatures. In more detail, Rana adds the house-elves’ situation to her argument and exemplifies it with the house-elf Dobby, who is the only house-elf to oppose their discrimination and therefore is frowned upon by both magical humans and other house-elves (Rana).

In conclusion, the *Harry Potter* series has been both praised and questioned by reviewers and critics in all possible ways, sometimes for the same reasons. For instance, the influence the novels are having on children, is praised for being something positive at the
same time that it is criticized for threatening young people's respect for adults or authority. A general search in the MLA database shows that the research is varied and continues to develop. J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* has made a clear mark in the world of literature.
3. Theoretical framework

3.1. African American criticism and Critical Race Theory

African American criticism originates from the Atlantic slave trade. After slavery was prohibited in America in 1865, people of color were ostensibly free and equal citizens. However, even if they were not slaves anymore, they still faced discrimination and exclusion.

Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic explain that critical race theory (CRT) builds on critical legal studies and radical feminism. It usually consists of activists and scholars who are interested in the relationship between race, racism and power, and put it into a broader perspective (Delgado & Stefancic 3-5). Delgado and Stefancic sort critical race theory into six basic tenets: Everyday racism (1), racism as a result of interest convergence (2), socially constructed race (3), racism in the form of differential racialization (4), people’s identity as products of intersectionality (5), and voice of color by racial minorities (6) (Critical Theory 352-353; Delgado & Stefancic 6-10). In this analysis, tenets 1 and 6 will be of special interest, which will be discussed in context in the analysis.

Along with everyday racism and voice of color from CRT, there are some concepts from African American criticism that also are relevant when answering this essay’s questions: race, racism, institutionalized racism, internalized racism and intra-racial racism. All of these concepts will be explored further in the analysis. The reason for why African American criticism is of use in the discussion is because it is the sort of criticism that has fully articulated racial discrimination at this point, due to African American literature’s dealing with racism as an African American experience (Critical Theory 344).

3.2. Postcolonial criticism

In order to understand the postcolonial theoretical framework, it is critical to first mention colonialism. Ania Loomba writes that it has been practiced by different imperial societies throughout history, such as the Inca Empire, the Mongols and various Western European empires, for wealth and control of international markets (Loomba 7-8). The difference between how it has affected the colonized countries is that those colonized by Europeans have
been economically restructured for the purpose of being closer to the colonizers’ home countries (3).

Postcolonial criticism aims to study and explain the consequences of imperialism and colonialism. It is a theoretical framework that can be used to analyze works even beyond those by postcolonial writers, since it gives tools to explore how things like sexual orientation and ethnicity, for instance, work together. The framework can be applied to all sorts of texts, since postcolonial and anticolonial ideologies can be present in any literary text (*Critical Theory* 399). It can often be used to analyze literature which is produced by cultures that have developed in response to colonial domination, and focuses on several issues, such as race, class, sex, gender, religion and cultural beliefs (398-399).

Some concepts from postcolonial criticism that are relevant when answering this essay’s questions are the subaltern, colonized consciousness, mimicry and anticolonialist resistance. They will be briefly explained here and later also put into context as the analysis follows.

Colonial ideology always creates a social hierarchy (*Diverse World* 193). In a hierarchy, someone always has to be at the bottom. That person is called the ”subaltern”, and their inferior status is determined by things like race, class or gender (193-194). A subaltern can easily receive a ‘colonized consciousness’ from internalizing their oppression, by believing that they are less worth than the dominant culture (194). Another postcolonial concept is ‘mimicry’ and means that colonial subjects imitate their colonizers (*Critical Theory* 403). On the other hand, ‘anticolonialist resistance’ may occur, which refers to activities on different levels that fight against colonial domination (*Diverse World* 196).

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak worries that postcolonial studies undermines its own true cause to destroy cultural dominance in the world, and instead being supporting imperialism by being a discourse of the first world, male, privileged, academic and institutionalized. She writes that “imperialism establishes the universality of the mode of production narrative, that to ignore the subaltern today is, willy-nilly, to continue the imperialist project” (Spivak 94).

Loomba argues that what is behind the wish to recover subaltern voices is about an interest in changing contemporary power relations (Loomba 203).
3.3. Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is a term that is used to describe culturally diverse societies that consist of several groups with different cultures or religions, and who all should be tolerated and respected. The expression comes from political philosophy and is about how cultural and religious diversity should be responded to, as members of minority groups are not treated as equal citizens when it comes to mere toleration of group differences (Song).

Multiculturalism has been used as an umbrella term concerning disadvantaged groups such as African Americans, women and people who differ from the norm sexuality. However, it often focuses on immigrants who are minorities (for example Muslims in Western Europe or Latinos in the United States) and indigenous people such as the Natives in North America (Song).

In this essay, multiculturalism refers to all different species that exist in the wizarding world, as the situation concerning races and origins in that world is special in relation to the real world. It will not refer to the nationalities in the human world, since they are not mentioned or made issue of in the novels.
4. Analysis

4.1. Race and racism

First, it is crucial to bring up the issue of “race” as a concept. The discussion of race is sensitive nowadays due to how present it is in societies around the world, particularly in relation to racial discrimination. The subject has been important in history, a great deal because of extremist groups who were motivated by racism in the past century; the Ku Klux Klan in the United States during 19th and 20th century and Adolf Hitler in Germany during the first half of the 20th century being two of them. “Racism” can be described as 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) (Critical Theory 344). The term “race” is frequently used in scholarship about Harry Potter, and therefore it will be used to separate different groups of species from each other in this essay as well.

Segregation often has to do with power dynamics, in which people from two cultures might dislike each other to the extent that they become separated by a more powerful group. Elizabeth Abel discusses racism during the early 20th century, when people of color were looked differently upon and as a result treated badly. “Racial signage” is a term that refers to the purpose of separating white and colored people as much as possible by using signs in places like rest rooms or drinking fountains. Abel writes that “racial signage was defined as the voice of the public: it became both intentionally and unintentionally a mode of private expression”, meaning that segregation between two cultures arose from individuals who wanted distance from people different from themselves (Abel 10). This racial segregation in the States is strongly connected to the how Jews in Nazi Germany had to wear the Star of David when outside their homes, so that everyone could make difference between a Jew and a German. In Harry Potter, people with one or two non-magical parents are forced to sign up in a Muggle-Born Registration Commission, initiated by the Ministry of Magic when it has been infiltrated by the pure-blood movement. In addition, they get their wands taken, since they are not pure-blood, not magically able, and therefore have not earned the right to have a wand. A wizard without a wand is no wizard.
There are three types of segregation in the magical world of *Harry Potter*. The first two are strictly between humans; one between magical humans and “Muggles”, and another between magical humans only. The third is between magical humans and different groups of magical creatures (non-humans).

4.1.1. Magical and non-magical humans

Prejudices between “Muggles” and magical humans go in both directions. Wizards’ prejudices against Muggles are exemplified by Hagrid, the Hogwarts gamekeeper, when he uses the term ‘Muggle’ in a negative sense in his first meeting with the Dursleys: “If he wants ter go, a great Muggle like you won’t stop him” (*Philosopher* 47), in which Muggle clearly signifies that Hagrid’s opinion of them is one of prejudice and contempt. Kate E. Behr mentions that Rowling shows how wizards’ treatment of Muggles can be closely compared to colonial powers’ treatment of native populations (Behr 125). Horne concludes that there are several great wizards who support “Muggle Rights”, even if Muggles are not aware of the oppression against them (Horne 93). Barratt argues that some Muggles on the opposite indeed are aware, such as the Dursleys (Barratt 83). The oppression, in this case, does not take a regular form, but rather magical people disliking or being unable to understand the Muggles as they live their lives totally different from the magical ways. Voldemort, however, oppresses Muggles by mercilessly killing them and blaming them for ruining a pure-blood world takeover, or for just being in the wrong place at the wrong time. One example is Frank, the Riddle House’s manager, whom Voldemort does not bother to call anything but ‘Muggle’, since he does not think that he deserves any respect or the right to live (*Deathly* 18-19).

In addition to this, Alyssa Hunziker mentions wizard ‘abnormality’ as something that tears the Muggle world and the wizarding world apart. Members of one world find members from the other world odd because of their way of dressing, behaving or speaking (Hunziker 56). For instance, the Dursleys, are of the opinion that wizardry is abnormal and do not want it in the family (*Chamber* 8) They even think that the word ‘magic’ is bad enough, so they refer to it as “the ‘M’ word” (7-8). However, the Dursleys have a special relation to the magical world, since Harry’s mother was accepted by Hogwarts and Petunia (Harry’s aunt) did not, even though wanting to.
4.1.2. Magical humans: Blood status

The segregation in the magical world that occurs between magical humans is depending on blood status. It originates with one of Hogwarts’ founders, Salazar Slytherin, who wanted to refine the selection of students at Hogwarts and differentiate between those with “pure” magical blood and those with non-magical ancestry, whom Slytherin did not want at the school. This opinion was adopted by Tom Riddle, later Lord Voldemort, who took Slytherin’s ideas further and applied this “rule” to all magical humans. Blood status is determined by ancestry and can be seen as creating a sort of social ladder in the wizarding world. However, this desire for segregation is only active among Voldemort’s followers.

There are four kinds of blood status in the wizarding world. Pure-bloods are witches and wizards of ‘pure’ ancestry with no Muggle ancestors, like the Malfoy family. Half-bloods are witches and wizards who have at least one wizarding parent, but no Muggle ancestors, such as Harry Potter and Tom Riddle/Lord Voldemort. Half-bloods are inferior to pure-bloods, according to those who think that blood status is important. Muggle-borns are witches and wizards with two Muggle parents, such as Hermione Granger. Muggle-borns are, according to some pure-bloods, not considered to be ‘real’ magical people. They have therefore been given a low status on the social ladder and are referred to derogatorily as “mudbloods” by some. However, they do not have lesser magical abilities than other wizards (Chamber 89; Walters 5). There are also squibs, who are non-magical persons with two wizarding parents. These are rare in the wizarding world, but one example in the series is Argus Filch, the caretaker at Hogwarts. Squibs are considered to be a shame to themselves and their parents (Chamber 110-111; Walters 5, 7-8). This is interesting, since Rowling portrays Filch negatively and has given a work that is considered menial, which agrees with the portrayal of squibs’ skills as being minimal or useless.

Viewed through the lens of Critical Race Theory (CRT), people with another blood status than pure-blood are exposed to everyday racism. It takes form in physical and verbal attacks, for example by being followed in stores or overhearing sarcastic comments about oneself. Everyday racism is signified by that someone is exposed to attacks or comments in an ordinary day (Critical Theory 352; Delgado & Stefancic 6). In Harry Potter, one person who faces this is Hermione. Since she is Muggle-born, she has to endure several rude comments from Draco Malfoy, who thinks that pure-bloods are superior. Malfoy picks a
fight with some members of the Gryffindor quidditch team, and when Hermione enters the discussion he says “'No one asked your opinion, you filthy little Mudblood’ (Chamber 86). This makes Hermione (and others) very upset, and it is not the only time she is being referred to as mudblood by Malfoy through the series.

Despite those who divide humans in the magical world into groups based on blood status, most characters are of the opinion that it does not matter. They avoid discrimination and falling into thoughts and habits of those similar to Salazar Slytherin and Voldemort’s, although, it does become an issue with Voldemort’s increasing power.

The emphasis on blood status that flows through the novels is connected to real historical events concerning the persecution of certain social groups in Nazi Germany. Rowling has expressed in an interview that the pure-blood movement was a conscious choice meant to recall the equivalent aspect of Nazism: "I wanted Harry to leave our world and find exactly the same problems in the wizarding world. So you have the intent to impose a hierarchy, you have bigotry, and this notion of purity, which is this great fallacy, but it crops up all over the world. People like to think themselves superior and that if they can pride themselves in nothing else they can pride themselves on perceived purity. So yeah that follows a parallel [to Nazism]” (EdwardTLC). This is a rather important comment due to the weight of the events in Germany, and in the quote, Rowling herself confirms and approves of the connection.

The pure-blood movement’s division of magical humans can, to some extent, be compared with how exposed groups of people in Nazi Germany were treated. Nancy Reagin discusses the similarities between Hitler and Voldemort, and writes that Rowling has compared them to each other in more than one interview. It is also widely known among readers that they share the same kind of ideology (Reagin 6.1-4). Robert G. L. Waite writes that there had been a long history of Anti-Semitism in Germany even before Hitler rose to power (Waite 86). Similarly, in Harry Potter, Voldemort was not the first to try to separate humans by blood-status: Salazar Slytherin, who lived long before Voldemort’s time, meant to shut out those who were not pure-bloods so that they could not attend Hogwarts. Voldemort considered himself to be the heir of Slytherin and took over his work (Chamber 229-231). Barratt makes a point in that both Hitler and Voldemort were half-bloods in the way that some of Hitler’s ancestries were Jewish and Voldemort had a non-magical father, which makes it rather interesting that they turned against people like themselves (Barratt 72). Reagin
concludes that both of them have rejected any comparisons of themselves to being half-bloods (Reagin 6.1-2).

Barratt also points out that removal of human rights based on racial division is something that occurs in *Harry Potter* as it did during Hitler’s time in power. In Germany, the Jews and half-Jews lost their citizenships and most of their rights, and therefore made them more vulnerable and easier victims. In the magical world, a Muggle-Born Registration Commission is initiated. In Nazi propaganda, Jews were held responsible for things like the credit crisis and spreading disease in Germany, as well as the loss of World War I (Barratt 67-68). In the same way, people who are not pure-bloods become victims under Dolores Umbridge, the Senior Undersecretary to the Minister for Magic and first seen in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, and her propaganda pamphlet “Mudbloods and the Dangers They Pose to a Peaceful Pure-Blood Society” (*Deathly 205*). This strategy of ‘blaming the victim’ is a way of making discrimitory actions valid (Barratt 68). The hatred of supposedly impure wizards is comparable to the hatred of Jews in the sense of progression, by escalating violence and stricter rules. At first, Slytherin only wanted pure-bloods to attend Hogwarts, which later progressed into not wanting other people to live.

It is not a coincidence that even the year of Hitler’s death, 1945, was the same year that Grindelwald, the powerful dark wizard before Voldemort, was defeated (Anelli & Emerson; Waite 98). The connections of the pure-blood movement to Nazism are visible in a great deal of wizarding history, in which magical humans were divided based on blood and lost their human rights in ways similar to Nazi Germany. It happened long before Voldemort and Hitler, and Rowling has clearly stated that the similarities are no coincidences (Reagin 6.8).

However, comparisons between the wizarding society of *Harry Potter* and Nazi Germany should be made carefully, as Nancy Reagin concludes: the biggest issue concerns the size of the crimes against humanity. Both Voldemort and Hitler made awful things and murdered people on racial basis, but Voldemort and his supporters ruled over a population, in which the size is not really comparable to the millions of people that died during Hitler’s reign. This shows only that Rowling’s fiction is inspired from real historical events that are far more tragical and extensive (Reagin 6.37-38).
4.1.3. Magical non-humans

The segregation in the wizarding world concerning magical creatures is another story than the one between humans. The different groups of magical creatures in *Harry Potter* rarely interact with each other in the books; rather, interaction tends to take place with humans. The line between humans and magical creatures is sometimes fluid, since both parties can be a part of one individual being.

The race with the worst relationship to humans is the goblins. They are mostly known from Gringotts, the wizard bank that is owned by humans but run by goblins (Horne 89; *Philosopher* 56-57). Gringotts was created by the goblin Gringott in 1474, which explains why goblins are allowed to be responsible for wizards’ money and valuables even if they are considered to be untrustworthy (AllCentralFlorida).

It is important for goblins to show that they do not consider themselves to be inferior to human wizards, which is described by the goblin Griphook, who says “I recognize no wizarding master” after having chosen to leave Gringotts for becoming controlled by wizards (*Deathly* 244). Goblins have, according to Horne, “not taken kindly to the assumption that humans are by nature at the top of the hierarchy” (Horne 89).

Further, Horne writes that, in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, “a member of an oppressed racial group is allowed to speak against institutionally-based wizardly oppression” for the first time (Horne 92-93). This is done by the Griphook, when he, Ron and Harry discuss differences between wizard and goblin rights; Harry does not think that it is of importance, but Griphook argues that the reason for why goblins cannot carry a wand has to do with institutional oppression (92-93).

Throughout history, goblins have rebelled against humans, according to the series’ Professor Binn’s lectures about goblin rebellions and riots in history (Horne 89-90). Due to this, goblins and other non-human creatures are not allowed to carry wands according to ‘Clause three of the Code of Wand Use’ (*Deathly* 394-395; *Goblet* 119; Horne 90). Horne connects the clause to wizards’ historical exclusion of goblins, giving themselves privileges which were denied to goblins. The overall opinion about goblins among wizarding people is that they are dangerous and erratic. Horne also writes that goblins are bad company for
humans, giving the example of a wizard being seen with goblins in a pub, and thereafter being questioned by several if he is up to no good (Horne 91).

Like goblins, centaurs are their own race (and not a half-breed between a horse and a human) and often have rather poor relations with humans. In *Harry Potter*, the centaurs have a quite distinct opinion about humans and are proud to be a race apart from them (*Phoenix* 667). Centaurs refuse to be used by humans and do not help them, which is why Firenze, a centaur tutoring at Hogwarts, is not looked kindly upon by the other centaurs in the Forbidden Forest and is banished from his herd (530, 667). That does not stop Firenze from holding to his original values as a centaur; as centaurs are very knowledgeable about things like astronomy and seeing the future (Divination), Firenze does not value the original Divination professor’s knowledge as highly because she is a human being and cannot know more than him (531).

Half-giants are part-humans in that they are both giant and human, or come from the union of a giant and a human. Giants fall under the same law as goblins concerning wand use, meaning that they are not allowed to do it since they are non-human. However, if someone has one giant parent and one wizarding one, that person becomes a half-giant and is thereby permitted to use a wand.

Half-giants do not necessarily have bad relations with fully human people or hold lower positions in society, but they may be ashamed of their origin. In most of the series, Hagrid does not seem to think less of himself than of other wizards, but when the journalist Rita Skeeter writes a negative article mentioning Hagrid’s ancestry as partly consisting of giants, he is deeply ashamed (*Goblet* 380-382, 391-396).

Madame Maxime is a half-giant in the series who holds a leading position as headmistress of another wizarding school. With her, we see the idea of “passing” as fully human, since she can and does, and thereby receives certain privileges. Maxime, in contrast to Hagrid, is very insulted and denies her relationship to giants by blaming it on having big bones when Hagrid asks her about it (*Goblet* 372-373). Madame Maxime’s denial of giant heritage can be compared to the concept of internalized racism from African American criticism, which originally refers to the effects of a psychological programming of people of color into believing in white superiority. Internalized racism often results in intra-racial racism, which for Madame Maxime means that she, as a half-giant, discriminates against other half-giants, or those with features similar to giants, because they are not like the superior
group of humans (*Critical Theory* 346). The reason for why she does not want to speak to Hagrid about her ancestry may have to do with the fact that she is applying intra-racial racism to herself as a half-giant. That half-giants in *Harry Potter* are vulnerable due to their origins most certainly has to do with the common opinion of giants in general being vicious and stupid (*Goblet* 374). Therefore, like Madame Maxime, they keep quiet about it. Maxime might also lose some, if not all, of her privileges, if it came out that she is half-giant. Although Hagrid does not feel too ashamed to recognize a giant as his mother, he does not brag about it either, but only speaks his mind when he thinks that he has found someone who is like him.

Another group of segregated people are werewolves, who usually are fully human but turn into werewolves during full moon. Werewolves live in wizarding society, just as half-giants, but they might not feel like ‘normal’ people even if they can pass as humans most of the time. Dolores Umbridge loathes those that she considers part-human, and she is presumably scared of werewolves (*Phoenix* 271, 638, 665). She introduces anti-werewolf legislation that makes it almost impossible for people with the condition, who live ordinary lives when not transformed, to get an employment and therefore have to take jobs behind their abilities or live in poverty (271).

Harry’s teacher, Remus Lupin, is one such werewolf who suffers from Umbridge’s legislation. He is a very knowledgeable wizard, but prejudices prove to be strong in wizarding society when Lupin is revealed to be a werewolf. Ron, although having grown respect for Lupin, expresses a deep fear that lies in most wizards’ hearts when he shouts “Get away from me, werewolf!” (*Azkaban* 253; Green). When Lupin is revealed as werewolf, it does not take long before there are higher powers trying to prevent him from living an ordinary life as a human. Lupin is scared of creating a family due to his situation, even though he does not consider himself of less worth than an ordinary wizard (*Deathly* 174-176).

Werewolves in *Harry Potter* do usually not tell anyone about their condition, since they can be looked upon as diseased and face discrimination. Tiffany L. Walters writes that Rowling has stated in an interview that the situation for werewolves in *Harry Potter* is a metaphor for HIV. Walters provides this as the most extreme example of discrimination against wizards that are not fully human, and refers to Nash’s comparison of Umbridge’s actions of wanting to get rid of all part-humans to Hitler’s will to create a ‘pure’ race (Walters 49-50).
4.2. Subaltern and anticolonialist resistance

4.2.1. House-elves as the subaltern

In contrast to Walters’ suggestion of the most extreme example of discrimination against non-wizards being discrimination against werewolves, I would like to provide the situation of the house-elves as another example, since they really are non-wizards, and werewolves can live as humans when they are not transformed. Viewed through the lens of postcolonial criticism, house-elves can be considered being the subaltern of the whole series.

In a social hierarchy, someone is always at the bottom. The word subaltern refers to those at the bottom of the social ladder, and means that they are deemed inferior because of things like their race, class or gender (Diverse World 193-194). Subalterns are deprived of equal opportunities to better their lives and equal justice under the law. This means that people who can be described as subaltern have less rights and legal protection and can be treated as slaves to those in power, as will be demonstrated in the case of the house-elves. If subalterns are considered inferior by a society’s dominant culture, the subalterns can easily believe that they are as well. They internalize their oppression, which in postcolonial theory means to have a colonized consciousness (194). It is never explained why the house-elves became servants or why they remain oppressed.

The first house-elf the reader meets, in Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, is the Malfoys’ house-elf, Dobby, who has come to warn Harry against going back to Hogwarts. In this scene Harry asks Dobby to sit down and receives the answer: “Dobby has never been asked to sit down by a wizard - like an equal” (Chamber 16). This shows that house-elves do not have the same place in society as magical humans, who rule in the wizarding world.

Further, when Dobby shakes his head in response to the question whether he has met many decent wizards, he immediately punishes himself, since a house-elf must not speak ill of the family that he or she serves (Chamber 16; Goblet 331-332). The house-elves are servants and the families are ‘masters’ and “The house-elf’s highest law is his master’s
bidding” (Deathly 161). Since Dobby reacts in this way, it suggests that house-elves have a colonized consciousness.

That house-elves such as Dobby are afraid of their masters and seem to be treated as less than equals show that house-elves indeed are oppressed. They often have reason to fear their masters. Dobby receives death threats five times a day from his masters (Chamber 133); such threats are not as common in every house-elf’s life, but Dobby provides a fine example of what kind of behavior house-elves must endure.

When Voldemort was in his fullest power, the house-elves were treated especially badly. According to Dobby, “We house-elves were treated like vermin, sir! Of course, Dobby is still treated like that, sir,” he admitted, drying his face on the pillowcase. “But mostly, sir, life has improved for my kind since you triumphed over He Who Must Not Be Named. Harry Potter survived, and the Dark Lord’s power was broken, and it was a new dawn, sir, and Harry Potter shone like a beacon of hope for those of us who thought the dark days would never end, sir” (Chamber 133-134). Here Dobby explains that the life of a house-elf has been worse than it is in present time, even if Dobby himself is still treated the same way by the Malfoy’s.

The house-elves’ situation creates a question as to why they accept their fate and do not leave when treated badly. The answer is that house-elves are not allowed freedom unless they receive a piece of clothing from their masters. Dobby wears a pillowcase: “Tis a mark of the house-elf’s enslavement, sir. Dobby can only be freed if his masters present him with clothes, sir. The family is careful not to pass Dobby even a sock, sir, for then he would be free to leave their house for ever” (Chamber 133). It is never explained who or what determines this rule.

However, not all house-elves want to be free. Winky, another house-elf in the series, is a good example of a house-elf with a fully colonized consciousness. She is ashamed and heartbroken after being set free by her family and will not let anything comfort her. Since it is a house-elf’s duty in life to serve humans, Winky utterly fails with hers when she loses her position. Winky also thinks of Dobby as a bad elf for not having concerns for his old family (Goblet 124, 329-333). She is worried about Dobby’s desire for freedom and fears that he will have to answer to the Department for the Regulation and Control of Magical Creatures for not following the law or diverging from the house-elf norm (89-90). That Winky (together
with most other house-elves) and Dobby think so differently about their oppression can be explained by Critical Race Theory (CRT). CRT’s sixth basic tenet, voice of color, is a way of describing separate members of minority groups as own individuals, meaning that they may not react to things like oppression, in the same way even if they are alike (Delgado & Stefancic 6-10). Therefore, even if Winky and Dobby come from the same background and inheritance as house-elves, they may still think of the treatment of their kind totally differently.

To Kreacher, the Black family’s house-elf, the master-servant relationship looks somewhat different than it does for Winky, as he practices mimicry, which refers to the subaltern’s attempting to embody the culture of the oppressor in order to be accepted. Mimicry is practiced when a subaltern imitates members of the dominant culture in things such as clothing, speech, behavior and lifestyle. Subalterns do this because they want to belong the culture. Mimicry is a result of the belief of being inferior because not being a part of the dominant culture, having a colonized consciousness (Diverse World 195). In Kreacher’s case, it is the Black family’s opinion (especially Mrs. Black’s) about blood purity that he imitates through his behavior towards ‘impure’ wizards. Large parts of the Black family share Voldemort’s desire to keep the wizarding blood pure, a view that Kreacher also internalizes and adopts in order to be the perfect house-elf (Deathly 158-159; Green). However, Kreacher is inherited by Harry when the last member of the Black family dies, but he does not immediately respond to Harry’s wishes even if he is Kreacher’s legitimate master. This has to do with Kreacher lacking respect for Harry as a half-blood. Consequently, the house-elf rule of following the master’s orders no matter what does not always apply in the Harry Potter novels. Kreacher, who practices mimicry in order to be more liked by his masters, chooses what kind of master he wants to have when demanding kindness and respect in return for his labor. This, however, may have to do with that Kreacher’s loyalty to his former master takes over his duty as house-elf, and not because he practices resistance deliberately. Although, as Dumbledore says, “Kreacher is what he has been made by wizards” (Phoenix 733), as all other house-elves are inferior to wizards because they have been told that they are. He also feels as bad as any house-elf when failing to obey his master’s orders – when they have earned his respect (Deathly 158).

Horne compares the Harry Potter series’ description of house-elves in books 1-4 with white stereotypes of African Americans as “happy darkies”: servants who were supposed
to be “simple, loyal, and childlike, happy to serve their betters” (Horne 81). By taking Dobby as example, Horne argues that Rowling uses the house-elves as something to laugh at, for instance, by their mismatching of clothes and unwillingness to get reasonable conditions at work as free elves. The latter is exemplified when Dobby bargains for low wage and less free days off work, when beginning his employment at Hogwarts (Goblet 330-331; Horne 81). Further, Horne writes that critics disagree about the reasons for Rowling’s portrayal of Dobby. Elaine Ostry’s opinion is that Rowling wants to help younger readers to understand slave stereotypes. Bryccan Carey argues that Rowling wants her readers to follow Hermione’s example and take action against discrimination. Farah Mendlesohn, however, believes that this portrayal is not about a political agenda, but a lack of imagination on Rowling’s part (Horne 81). In any case, Horne is clear on that the similarities that can be drawn between representations of African American slaves and the house-elves are quite uncomfortable for the educated reader because of the usage of stereotypes, which is a direct translation of the slavery that goes on in *Harry Potter*.

That Rowling wants her readers to recognize and fight discrimination is interesting because of how she treats the matter later in the series. Since the similarities between house-elves and African American slaves are made so clear from the beginning, it is odd that Rowling suddenly chooses to let the issue fade away. The issue will be dealt with deeper in the concluding section of the essay. It has its peak in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* and *Harry Potter the Order of the Phoenix*, in which Hermione takes a stand against the house-elves’ situation.

4.2.2. Anticolonialist resistance

Anticolonialist resistance refers to efforts to free one’s land or culture of colonial domination. It takes form in performed activities and means to “rescue individuals unjustly imprisoned by the colonialist regime” (Diverse World 196).

Hermione’s interest in the house-elves’ situation awakens when she finds out how badly they are treated, and that even Hogwarts has over a hundred of them working unpaid in the kitchen (Goblet 124-125, 161-162). She recognizes institutional racism in wizarding society when she learns that elf enslavement goes back centuries, meaning that
racist policies and practices against house-elves are present in wizarding society (Critical Theory 345; Goblet 198). Therefore she founds her own institution, the Society for the Promotion of Elvish Welfare (S.P.E.W.), through which she wants to improve house-elves’ conditions (Goblet 198-199; Horne 85). Hermione also begins to knit hats and scarfs and hide them for the house-elves at Hogwarts to find when cleaning, and consequently ‘force’ freedom on to them (Phoenix 230-231, 298). These actions can be compared to anticolonialist resistance, even if Hermione is not an elf herself.

Hermione’s encouragement of resistance is frowned upon. People around her think that she is taking it too far with S.P.E.W. and interrupt her in ways like when her friend Ron says: “I’ll sponsor you to shut up about SPEW” (145). In addition, that S.P.E.W. is an acronym to ‘vomit’ shows how Rowling has worked for undercutting the seriousness of the interpretation of the institution. Hermione’s arguments against the ill treatment of house-elves receive opposition from several people who say that house-elves do not want any salary or holidays (Goblet 161, 233; Horne 87). Ron is very clear about his opinion on the subject when saying to Hermione: “They. Like. It. They like being enslaved!” (Goblet 198). The reader must think about that house-elves in the wizarding world have not been an issue for thought for many people who grew up in it, which makes it more abnormal to someone like Hermione, who grew up in the Muggle world. This suggests that both she has an outsider status and that Hermione therefore can feel more sympathy for the elves.

Dobby, aside from other house-elves, does also recognize the oppression of house-elves even if he may not be fully aware of it. He does not consciously take action against the slavery like Hermione does, but his actions still have some effect: “‘Dobby has travelled the country for two whole years, sir, trying to find work!’ Dobby squeaked. ‘But Dobby hasn’t found work, sir, because Dobby wants paying now!’ The house-elves all around the kitchen, who had been listening and watching with interest, all looked away at these words, as though Dobby had said something rude and embarrassing.” (Goblet 329-330). The quote shows that other house-elves disapprove of Dobby’s new way of life as a free elf, going against their own law of serving a family. He too is exposed for his beliefs, similar to Hermione, but for Dobby it is his own ‘race’ that goes against him.

Harry Potter could have sent a stronger message to the reader about oppression and discrimination through the house-elves, rather than just through the issue of blood status
and how magical creatures are treated. However, for some reason, Rowling chose not to emphasize this issue even if she initially put some effort into making it a big deal. However, the evidence of oppression brought up by Rowling is clear. Hermione takes a stand against it and tries to reach out to people, but mostly meets nonchalance. Dobby serves as an example of how oppressed can escape from their situation. Kreacher can be seen as a commentary on the oppressive cruelty of the system, due the portrait of his own will. One of the most important facts about free elves in *Harry Potter* is that they cannot find paid work, because the system of house-elves being looked upon as slaves is too entrenched in wizarding society. As several critics have noted, Rowling seems to have emphasized on the issue of oppression and then decided to, more or less, forget all about it. If a change of elf-treatment were on the agenda, the characters in the series should react more to the oppression that actually is going on, but they do not. Horne writes that the later novels in the series show ways in which adults in the *Harry Potter* series act around different kinds of discrimination and oppression. Those who openly take a stand against Voldemort and his movement do not necessarily think about other forms of discrimination that also occur in the wizarding world. Horne gives Mrs. Weasley as example, who wishes she had a house-elf to do her housework, which indicates that she does not put the enslavement of house-elves in a greater perspective of discrimination. In addition to this, Horne refers to Westman’s argument about house-elves as being ‘natural’ slaves in the wizarding world, a cultural formation that the adults in the series maintain by not opposing the oppression or even questioning it (Horne 87).

Also, Hermione’s commitment to the cause of oppression is shut down, both by other characters, but more importantly, by the author. S.P.E.W., which is mentioned quite often in the fifth novel, disappears completely in the last ones. Horne adds that Hermione, whenever she brings up the issue of elf rights, is consistently interrupted by other characters or by the author (Horne 87). It happens in ways like someone’s entering in the room, telling them to go finish packing (leaving Hermione in the middle of her argument) (*Goblet* 138).

The reader does not learn whether someone else fights for the elves’ cause, or if it remains the same. Nevertheless, the system of oppression is still in place at the very end: Harry still thinks of Kreacher as inferior to him at the very end of the series, when he wonders “whether Kreacher might bring him a sandwich” (*Deathly* 749). Harry might not mean it, but this way of thinking at house-elves is imprinted in his mind, and Rowling has chosen to not do anything about it.
4.3. Multiculturalism

In her article, Green writes that the thing characters in the series must learn is tolerance of difference, which also matches with what message the novels are sending out (Green). Rowling has said that “The Potter books in general are a prolonged argument for tolerance, a prolonged plea for an end to bigotry, and I think it’s one of the reasons that some people don’t like the books, but I think that’s it’s a very healthy message to pass on to younger people that you should question authority and you should not assume that the establishment or the press tells you all of the truth” (The Leaky Cauldron).

*The New York Times* acknowledges Rowling’s quote in an article. It reports that study results of the direct contact between members of unfriendly groups can lead to breaking down of stereotypes and reducing distrust, and extended contact can do even more. If adolescents read about different cultures cooperating, it can result in more positive attitudes and less stereotypes about people from other cultural origins (Paul). In a different article, researchers and psychologists have come to the conclusion that Harry Potter improves people’s attitudes towards groups that are stigmatized, such as immigrants and refugees (Kozlowska).

Nowadays, the issue of multiculturalism is often discussed as a public policy failure in Western European nations, and is therefore mentioned in the context of the ‘death of multiculturalism’ since 2010-2011, meaning that many people do not think that it works as a policy anymore. Muslims make up the group in the Western world that has become most vulnerable because of this “failure”, as they have been labeled as potential extremists and terrorists, as their culture often visibly differs from the Western standard. Social exclusion and cultural segregation are results opposite of what multiculturalism stands for - trying to preserve cultural differences between the nation and the ‘newcomers’. Marinus Ossewaarde writes that, in the end of 1990s, images and stereotypes of migrants had become negative, and things like the terror attack of World Trade Center in 2001 locked this picture into people’s minds (Ossewaarde 173-175).

Before ‘the death of multiculturalism’, critics have spoken differently from each other about multiculturalism. In Two critiques of multiculturalism, Ayelet Shachar discusses
both Jacob T. Levy and Bhikhu Parekh’s different approaches, where they are each other’s opposites. Levy brings up the negative aspects of multiculturalism and focuses on reducing wrongs and dangers that may come from a multicultural society, since he is aware of what pain and suffering inter-cultural conflict and violence can cause (Shachar 261, 267). Shachar reads Levy’s opinion being as such, that there is no “intrinsic value in ethnic and national identities, nor in respecting cultural diversity as such” (267).

In contrast to Levy, Bhikhu Parekh focuses on a “multiculturalism of hope”, as Shachar puts it (Shachar 262). Parekh sees diversity as an opportunity to enrich cultures instead of a risk for repression or other negative outcome that may follow. If people from different cultures live together with each other, they can learn new things and develop new skills and personality traits from it. However, according to Shachar, Parekh is somewhat over-optimistic regarding equal opportunities for all members to shape their own new cultural identities. This is because many people who are oppressed do not have the same opportunities and therefore do not get a chance to shape their personalities in relation to the new cultures they meet. Minority leaders can instead isolate them for breaking their cultural ‘code of silence’ if they have talked about domestic violence or ‘honor killing’ outside of their own cultural group (266).

In the Harry Potter world, Voldemort and his followers would be closest to Levy’s approach to multiculturalism for not believing in mixing of purebloods with Muggles or people with Muggle ancestry, but that has to do with the blood line. Voldemort does not have a problem with associating with magical creatures; in fact, he uses them (giants) for his advantage in the final wizarding war and also has a werewolf as one of his closest followers.

In addition, the magical world is separated from the non-magical world for a reason. The Ministry of Magic has set up very strict rules concerning magic-making in front of non-magical people, and wizards often try to adjust to the non-magical world when paying a visit, in ways such as wearing “Muggle” clothes and not flying on a broom. This is mostly to protect the Muggles, since they would not be able to cope with that there is an entire world that is unknown to them.

Regarding Harry Potter and Parekh’s optimistic approach, Arthur Weasley is the person closest to that way of thinking. He is very fascinated about Muggle objects and their way of living, and thinks that both parties could learn a great deal from each other. He
has an open mind towards what he does not know, an approach that is rare in the wizarding world, at least when it concerns Muggles.

One of the most recent news articles on *Harry Potter* in *The New York Times* focuses on the upcoming play “Harry Potter and the Cursed Child” in London. In social media, fans of the series have reacted strongly to the fact that the character Hermione Granger will be performed by a black woman. Rowling has responded that the only description of Hermione there is says that she has brown eyes, frizzy hair and is very clever, and that white skin never was specified (Poniewozik). This is interesting considering how Rowling has worked with the character descriptions in the series.

Hogwarts is supposed to be multi-racial, even though it appears predominantly white. Rowling has been criticized for having brief or nonexistent descriptions of people, who accordingly to their descriptions, are not white. Lee Jordan is only described as a boy with dreadlocks, and Dean Thomas as “a black boy even taller than Ron” (*Philosopher* 94, 122). The Patil twins, who have Indian origin in the movie adaptations, are not described as such in the novels. Cho Chang, a girl in Ravenclaw that Harry finds attractive, is described as “very pretty” in the novels (*Goblet* 78). It does not say anything about her foreign-sounding name, or that she looks different from other girls due to her Asian origin. Here, race is mentioned, but not made issue. These characters ought to stand out from the crowd based by their appearance or names, but instead of putting any weight in it at all, Rowling instead lets it pass by, making it look like a stereotypical description (Hunziker 57). It could be argued, that Rowling is working with a matter of tokenism, to create an appearance of diversity because it is like a policy rule in today’s society. However, aware of it or not, it seems like she has created an optimistic or utopic version of multicultural Britain.
5. Conclusion

It is easy to divide the magical creatures of *Harry Potter* into their own races, as they already are divided into goblins, house-elves, giants, centaurs, etc. In that case, however, humans would have to comprise one single race, regardless of they are magical or non-magical and there is segregation between them. In addition, there are some individuals who are both human and giant or turn into werewolves. It then becomes more difficult to make clear divisions, since some people occasionally transform into something else. There are also the Animagi, whom I have not discussed in this essay, who are magical people who can take the shape of animals. Are these individuals human, animals or – like Harry’s uncle probably would say – freaks? Nonetheless, everyone belongs to a race, but the distinctions between the races in *Harry Potter* may not be as simple as they first seem.

The plurality of races lays the groundwork for plenty of opportunities for racism and discrimination. Especially, as the races do not interact but often keep to their own kind in several cases, the isolation adds to the prejudices against “the others”. This is a fact in all possible relations in the wizarding and the non-magical world. Rowling has made it quite clear to the reader that the characters judge by appearance, and may change opinions about others as they get to know them.

Scholars have agreed on that *Harry Potter* can help with erasing bigotry and teaching young people about tolerance and that other cultures are not a bad thing. Critics, however, are often of the opinion that Rowling has not portrayed a multicultural world according to how it should look. When only speaking about humans, Rowling she seems to have created a racial utopia, although most characters appear to be white. The few “foreign” characters that the reader meets are being described as such either by their names or by their appearance - nothing about geographical or cultural background. In this way, Rowling has created a multicultural world based on typical racial aspects, which looks a lot like tokenism – that the “foreign” characters are added because it is not commonly accepted to discriminate against certain races and therefore are placed there to weigh up against the white majority.

Rowling has indeed included many kinds of geographical origins. If judged by the characters’ names or how they are described, people can be interpreted as related to Asia, India or, roughly assumed, Africa. That, in addition to the fact that the characters are not
described in more detail, could lead to that readers do not comprehend the multicultural references, but only sees the characters with “weird names” as stereotypes of something that does not really belong to this society. For instance, Cho Chang’s name is identifiably Asian and stands out from all other characters concerning her geographical origins.

That Rowling has created a utopic vision of multicultural Britain and put all the problems onto the magical world could be a way of trying to show real-life issues from a new perspective. Rowling has developed racial issues in another direction than skin color in order to show that it is unfair to discriminate, since no-one can help where they come from. First, Rowling shows that there is no ground for racism or discrimination, since it is difficult to even decide on what racial divisions should be made in the wizarding world. Most characters are part of more than one “race”, including pure humans who can have Muggle ancestries. Secondly, Rowling shows that all kinds of people (and creatures) can be discriminated and that no-one is spared. One example of this is Lucius Malfoy, who mistreats Dobby and later gets to taste his own medicine when being treated ill by Voldemort. This ought to succeed Rowling’s main purpose with the novels, to teach young readers about how bigotry is present everywhere, but that tolerance against other cultures can make it smaller or even disappear.

That human characters who stand out from the masses, for instance by their names, give the illusion of a multicultural and tolerant society, which also was Rowling’s intentions. Seen from a postcolonial way of thinking, Rowling has not created any racial stereotypes among the human compared to Dobby who is an example of “happy darky” and the African American slavery. Because of this, the illusion of a tolerant multicultural wizarding world is intact to those who do not overanalyze the novels. The brief (or non-existent) descriptions of non-white characters do not pose a threat against the *Harry Potter* novels possibilities to educate young readers.

The loose thread about house-elves as the oppressed subaltern is a subject that Rowling has not finished. As concluded in the analysis, it grew bigger in the series, especially for Hermione, but after *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* and *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* it fades away, leaving an attentive reader with unsolved questions. Perhaps, the issue grew so big that it did no longer fit in the series’ plot, and that it rather would need to process in its very own literary work. However, it is something that Rowling really ought to finish, since it follows the same line as the oppression of human groups in the wizarding world, but on a different level. It is possible that the house-elf issue could highlight
the subject that is discrimination to a bigger extent, and thereby give the reader more insight into how the wizarding world functions and in how many ways it can be applied onto the real world. In that way, the plot and the magical world would become even more real. This may have been Rowling's purpose from the beginning, but as the number of pages show, the two books mentioned above are the longest in the series. The subject grew to big to not take over the whole plot and make the series solely about discrimination.

Racism is an attack against multiculturalism. Both issues are somewhat each other’s opposites, since, in theory, there should be no racism in a well-functioning society. However, they are connected in the matter that a multicultural society lays ground for racism. In the end, the wizarding world cannot escape racism completely, which also is shown in the very last novel with the house-elf issue and Kreacher who is still not seen as an equal to human wizards. It may not be conscious racism as the one Voldemort exercises, but it is still there. This disability of fully solving the issue of discrimination can be why the Harry Potter novels seem incomplete or too narrow, when being thoroughly researched. The world has too many problems on different levels for being displayed in a literary work, even if it consists of seven books and additional explainatory editions. However, Rowling has made a great deal of explaining reality through fiction, both concerning racism and multiculturalism, and has added a whole new universe to the world of literature.
6. Works cited


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