

Social class in great expectation

People, Charles Dickens



Social class played a significant role in the universe depicted in Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*. Social class determined the manner in which a person was treated and their access to education. Yet, social class did not define the character of the individual. Characters were treated differently because of their social class in this novel. Seeing the contrast between how the poor and the rich were treated will give a clearer understanding of how much social class matter. In chapter 27 when Joe comes to see Pip, he treats Joe in a different manner before because Joe was now in a lower social class. His feelings about Joe's arrival were " Not with pleasure... I had the sharpest sensitiveness as to his being seen by Drummle. " He was afraid that Drummle will look down on him because of Joe's lower class. This is an example of how social class ultimately affects the way people think. A person's social class determined the amount of education they had. A person like Joe who was a common blacksmith had no education at all, and Pip had poor education at a small school when he was in the early days of being a lower class. The teachers barely gave effort to educating the lower class kids, spending more time sleeping than teaching, and Pip had learned more from Biddy than from the actual teacher. Even though Pip had an education when he was a low class, his education with Mr. Pocket was much greater. Another example of how social class affects education is the difference of education between the two convicts. Magwitch, born poor and low class had no education at all while Compeyson, born rich was high class and a gentleman with an education. Education is a factor in showing how social class greatly determined people's lives. Social class played a significant role in the universe depicted in Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*. After

exploring how social class was associated with the way people were treated, how much education they had, but not with their true character, these facts have become easy to discern. With these points proved, the fact that social class mattered in most but not all things had no doubt become clear in the mind. It is strange how different social class had been back in Pip's days and now. This just shows how much of an impact the idea of a social class really is.