

# Pride and prejudice: socialization assignment

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Colonization Social class has a monumental impact on a person's social behavior; their impressions on other individuals and society as a whole are greatly influenced by their social class/position. These "first impressions" can have disastrous effects to both the person forming the impressions and the person/people to whom they are directed towards, often because these perceptions blind people from their own personal faults and foibles.

As a result, social class predominates their lives, influencing their every motive and action. In the novel *Pride and Prejudice*, Austen employs this theme in which various characters that pertain from multiple social classes come into conflict with each other and, as a result, experience personal growth or retardation. Tabular Rasa is the concept that human beings are "born without built-in mental content and that their knowledge comes from experience and perception" (Locke 89). As such, an individual begins their knowledge of the outside world starting from their upbringing.

Their personality, their morals, and their social and mental behavior are all derived or at least greatly influenced by their culture and upbringing. As a result, individuals form stereotypes and prejudices apropos of other individuals, certain groups of people, or even society itself as they also form a perception of themselves that is greatly influenced by their own world. In the case dealt in *Pride and Prejudice*, the characters' worlds are their social class. Mr. Darcy, or as he is referred to in the novel Mr. Darcy, and Ms. Elizabeth Bennet are two examples of individuals that appear to have so much in common.

They both were not in the lower social class and they both come from recognizable and revered families. Despite these “similarities”, however, they were memorably different. To the mind of Mr. Darcy, he had a grandeur that leads him to believe himself superior to others, have little to do with Elizabeth, her immediate family, or even the entire town of Meryton, who were just a “collection of people in whom there was little beauty.” This ultimately led to the Meryton people getting an unpleasant perception of him, whom they thought of him as: “... With great admiration for about half the evening, till his manners gave a disgust which turned the tide of his popularity; for he was discovered to be proud, to be above his company, and above being pleased” (Austin 11). Of course, this negative perception of people of lower class ultimately comes from his social upbringing. It is shown that Mr. Darcy has a huge inflated opinion about himself and for the people that reside in the same social class as him, and a very unfavorable one for those that are lower than him, like Elizabeth.

He was a member of the highest social class of society, a wealthy gentleman with an annual income exceeding 100,000 pounds. His sense of himself being of higher worth and quality combined with his and proper. She is described as an intelligent young woman, with “a lively, playful expression, which delighted in anything ridiculous,” (Austin 10). She interacted with individuals that pertained to both the lower class and the higher class, however, she was not thought of to reside in either one. She often presents a playful good-natured impertinence that does not offend.

Despite these estimable characteristics of Elizabeth Bennett, Mr. Darcy still wanted nothing to do with the Bennets as he slighted Elizabeth by refusing to

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dance with her at a ball in Derbyshire and by making rather demeaning remarks about her while she was within earshot; she was “tolerable”, but “not handsome enough to tempt [him].” However, over a gradual period of time through their later interactions with each other, an attraction between them started to blossom. Mr. Darcy’s offensive and flat impression of Elizabeth quickly changed. His pride and prejudice started to erode away.

He was gradually evolving over time from a pompous elitist into a more humble man. This grand change eventually led him to propose to Elizabeth, whom at first was not even worthy of his time and effort to interact with.

There are characters, however, that try to sabotage the evolving relationship between Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth. Lady Catherine, the aunt of Mr. Darcy, thought of Mr. Darcy’s marriage to “a young woman of inferior birth, of no importance to the world, and wholly unhealed to the family,” as repulsive. She even took out some of her time to visit the Bennets to safeguard no marriage between Elizabeth and Mr.

Darcy would actually take place. Caroline Bingley, Mr. Bingley’s sister, shows her own prejudices and hate towards the modest Bennets as well. She aspires to the higher levels of aristocracy through marriage to Darcy and looks down upon the lower social class. Like Lady Catherine, Caroline Bingley finds the Bennets to be unworthy of associating with the elite, the rich, the upper social class. There is one character, however, that ultimately transforms from a person of “great humility of manner” to an arrogant, conceited, and presumptuous man through his moving to a higher social class.

Mr. Collins was seen as the "lowest of the low", residing at the bottom of the established social hierarchy. He was considered to be inferior by the higher social class. However, due to a fortunate chance caused by Lady Catherine, he becomes a clergy man and thus experiences great social upheaval. He attains pride, respect, and money, and this greatly affects his perceptions about other individuals. He was no longer filled with humility as he was described before but now felt self-important. He was filled with mighty inflated pride, such as Mr.

Dared was in the beginning. His humility has been altered greatly and been replaced with arrogance and vanity due to "early and unexpected prosperity." Wealth, power, and prestige, all characteristics of the Upper Social Class, are all dangerous things that could lead to disastrous social problems. It mentally corrupts people and dictates/influences their decisions throughout their life, leading them to make discriminatory impressions of other people and over-inflate their opinions of homeless.