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As Farah Mendlesohn notes in her essay "Crowning the King: Harry Potter and the Construction of Authority," "attempting to write a critique of a body of work that is clearly unfinished is a challenge to any academic" (159). Despite such difficulties, literary critics, including Mendlesohn, found the interpretive challenge too tempting when it came to analyzing J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter series. Unfinished though it was until 2007, critics could not resist putting forth arguments about Rowling's novels, and the world(s) they depict, arguments that could only be proven definitively once the series had concluded.

One issue in particular has led to vastly different interpretations of the Potter series: the books' stance on issues of race and ethnic otherness. As many readers have noted, the Harry Potter books are deeply invested in teaching their protagonists (and through them, their readers) how to confront, eradicate, and ameliorate racism through its depiction of the racism that underlies Voldemort's campaign against "Mudbloods." This essay will discuss two different intellectual traditions of antiracism education—multicultural antiracism and social justice antiracism – and explore how Rowling draws upon each in order to show both her protagonists and her readers how to approach the challenging task of fighting racism. It will also explore the implications of her decision to privilege a multicultural antiracism pedagogy over a social justice approach.

The critical response to the issue of race and ethnicity in the Harry Potter books has been varied, to say the least. On one end of the spectrum, critics such as Karin E. Westman have suggested that the Harry Potter novels offer a trenchant critique of "materialist ideologies of difference," a critique that Brycchan Carey argues demonstrates "opportunities for political activism available to young people in the real world" (Westman, "Specters" 328; Carey 104). Such critics believe that Rowling's texts create an implied

reader who is asked to condemn the racism of the wizarding world—not only the distinction between "Mudbloods" and "pure bloods" voiced by its more extreme members, but also its limitations of the rights of sentient others and its foundation on enslavement of house elves. On the other end of the spectrum can be found critics such as Mendelsohn, who argue that "Rowling's world of fantasy is one of hierarchy and prejudice" (177). In between are those who argue that the texts' attitudes toward race are contradictory, simultaneously embracing both radical critique and conservative traditionalism (Ostry, Anatol). Now that the final volume in the Harry Potter series has been published, which of these many positions on race and ethnicity in the text can be supported most convincingly?

In order to begin to answer this question, I believe, we must look first not at the novels themselves, but at *antiracism* as a word and a concept. For, as Alistair Bonnett points out in his history of the term and the various movements that have claimed or disavowed it, "different forms of antiracism often operate with different definitions of what racism is" (4). Different readers can find Rowling's novels conservative or liberal in their depiction of race relations not because some are right and some are wrong, but because they draw on different traditions of thought about what constitutes racism, and what remedies are required to overcome it.

The general term *antiracism* is a relative newcomer to the English language. Although "anti-racist" dates to the 1930s, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, antiracism was not widely used until the 1960s, and then primarily in countries where either French or English was spoken (Bonnett 10). During the 1960s, two very different definitions of the concept emerged, definitions that were from the start in tension with one another. While both definitions agree that antiracism centers on "those forms of thought and/or practice that seek to confront, eradicate, and/or ameliorate racism," they differ in what they label racism, and in what steps they believe should be taken to eradicate and/or ameliorate it (4). One line of thought, which has its roots in the European Enlightenment, argues for universalism, "the conviction that people are all equally part of humanity and should all be accorded the same rights and opportunities" (19). Those who embrace a universalist approach to antiracism typically see their main task as overcoming prejudice; if we rid ourselves of prejudice (our own and others'), we will see how those of a different race are the same as we are, and will thus treat them fairly.

During the same period, however, a different approach to antiracism developed, one that often conflicted with a universalist approach. This approach to antiracism, termed *relativism*, also has deep roots in European history, dating back to the writings of the eighteenth-century philosopher Michel de Montaigne. Montaigne wrote of Europeans' encounters with

New World civilizations not to point out the superiority of his fellow Frenchmen, but to call into question the idea that French manners and norms were natural, and therefore superior. Relativism, then, emphasizes the belief that "truths are situationally dependent" and that "cultural and/ or physical differences between races should be recognized and respected; that different does not mean unequal" (Bonnett 13).

In many ways, these two definitions of antiracism form the two faces of one coin, with the strengths of one pointing to the weaknesses of the other. A universalist approach embraces the idea of emancipation for all, but can easily slip into colonialism, mistakenly concluding that culturally specific Western norms are "universal" and therefore in need of promulgation to other, less enlightened societies or races. A relativist approach would seem to ameliorate this problem, recognizing and honoring difference. Yet focusing on human difference can also easily slip into an anti-egalitarian discourse; as Bonnett notes, "respecting difference can easily turn into asserting hierarchy" (17). Respecting racial differences can slide very quickly into respecting racial *inequality*; you, other culture, are by nature different, so it is only natural that you are inferior, too.

Such differing beliefs about what antiracism is, and should be, led, of course, to very different approaches to antiracist education and practice. As Bonnett notes, one can "do" antiracism in "a variety of not always complimentary ways" (114). While Bonnett lists six different types of antiracism practice, in contemporary educational discourse antiracist work is typically "done" using two of the approaches he describes.[1] The most common takes the form of multicultural[2] antiracism, an approach that affirms the value of diversity as a method of combating racial oppression. Since the late 1980s, learning about and celebrating other cultures has become a cornerstone of educational practice in many British, Canadian, and American schools. The goal of such multicultural education is not simply to become familiar with the traditions of other cultures, but to "enable empathy," to "generat[e] cross-cultural understanding and solidarity," enabling students to "see things from others' point of view" (Bonnett 94–95). Part of this understanding stems from the creation of "positive racial images" (97); celebrating Black History Month, teaching about the role of Islamic scholars in the development of early mathematics, or learning about the Navajo who worked as codebreakers for the U.S. Army during World War II would all be examples of multicultural antiracism practice. Proponents of multiculturalism believe that, by learning about the culture of other races, or learning about positive role models of members of previously ignored groups, students will learn to rid themselves of their prejudices, which in turn will lead to a more egalitarian world.[3]

Less common in K-12 education is what Bonnett terms "radical antira-cism," an approach that focuses less on personal awareness of prejudice and more on developing critical thinking skills in order to confront racism[4] (104–6). I will refer to this approach as *social justice antiracism* rather than *radical antiracism*, as educational discourse has embraced the former rather than the latter label during the past decade. While a multicultural approach to antiracism work focuses on individuals learning about others and about their own biases, social justice pedagogies focus on teaching students to examine the social, political, and economic structures in which they live. In particular, it draws upon the framework of oppression, "a hierarchical relationship in which dominant or privileged groups benefit, often in unconscious ways, from the disempowerment of subordinated or targeted groups" (Adams, Bell, and Griffin 5). In other words, social justice antiracism assumes that racism lies not only in individuals, but also in the institutions that grant privileges and power to certain racial groups in a society, and restrict other racial groups from the same. Such a belief leads social justice antiracism to demand that students question, deconstruct, and challenge those institutional structures that contribute to, or actively foster, racism (104). Studying the redlining of black neighbor-hoods; changing the name of "Columbus Day" to "Rethinking Columbus Day" on the school calendar; teaching how legal punishments for white drug users are often less severe than those for drug users of color—all are examples of social justice antiracism pedagogy. Learning to recognize power and privilege in her own culture, rather than learning to appreciate the cultures of others, proves the key task for the student trained in social justice antiracism.[5]

While both multiculturalism and social justice work would seem to align more closely with a relativist rather than a universalist approach, Bonnett suggests that such an assumption can be deceiving in the case of multiculturalism. "Multiculturalism affirms difference, but for universalist ends," he suggests. As evidence for this claim, he notes how often rhetorics of "world togetherness" and "one world" are collided and conflated with those of "cultural diversity" and "cultural affirmation" throughout a great deal of multicultural discourse. (95)

Because of the inherent tensions between universalist and relativist approaches to antiracism work, it proves unsurprising that the practical approaches to antiracism that stem from them would find much to criticize in each other. Multicultural antiracists, who focus on working within exist-ing social, political, and economic structures, often criticize social justice educators and activists for "hi-jacking antiracism for its own [radical] political ends" (Bonnett 115). In turn, social justice advocates often view

multicultural approaches, with their focus on the individual, as naïve, or even as conservative, working to distract students from the institutional (i.e., true) causes of racism (107–8; 114–15).[6]

What approach to antiracism education does J. K. Rowling draw upon in order to teach her antiracism lesson to Harry Potter, Hermione, Ron, and through them, to her readers? Intriguingly, one can find traces of *both* a multicultural *and* a social justice approach, as well as the tensions between them, in the seven books that depict the coming of age of the teenage wizard. To demonstrate this, I would now like to turn to the novels, narrowing my focus to two of the main "races" depicted in Rowling's stories: the house-elves and the goblins. Most of the following discussion will draw upon *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, but with references to earlier books as needed, to show how Rowling deploys both a multicultural *and* a social justice approach, exploring the benefits and limitations of each. We can see the multicultural approach in Rowling's depiction of the house-elves, while a social justice lens brings the more difficult race of the goblins into focus.

Rowling creates many different sentient races in the course of her Harry Potter novels. Such races can be grouped by how each interacts with the wizarding race. Some races, in traditional high fantasy fashion, are purely evil. Wizards interact with races associated with the Dark Arts only as enemies. Giants form a subgroup of this type, racial others hunted to the point of extinction by Aurors or other wizards. A second group are racial others that may be at odds with, or dangers to, wizards in *some* circumstances, but that in others work for them: for example, in Book 1, the troll that invades the school is bad, but in Book 3, the trolls who guard the Fat Lady's portrait serve wizarding interests. Leprechauns and veelas seem to be in similar circumstances, at least as witnessed by their actions during the World Cup match at the opening of Book 4. A third group consists of those races that choose to separate themselves entirely from the world of the wizards, such as the Centaurs, who deem teaching wizards to be treason against their race. This essay is most interested in the final two groups, groups that interact more closely with wizards than any of the other races depicted in the novels: the house-elves and the goblins. House-elves willingly serve the wizards as servants or slaves, accepting their subservient role in a racial hierarchy. In contrast, the goblins interact with wizards in many ways as equals, a power relationship that causes much tension between the two groups.[7]

Several previous critics have discussed Rowling's depiction of the house-elves in Books 1–4. As Farah Mendlesohn, Elaine Ostry, and Brycchan Carey all point out, Rowling's depiction of Dobby and his fellow elves contains uncomfortable echoes of many of the stereotypes held by whites

of enslaved African Americans. Simple, loyal, and childlike, happy to serve their betters, Rowling's house-elves speak in a patois closer to 1930s and 40s Hollywood misconceptions of "darky" dialect than to any actual African-American speech pattern. Even the house-elf Dobby, who desires and gains freedom, proves more an object of humor (as were many black characters in twentieth-century popular culture) than a model of what a free elf can accomplish. Harry, and through him, the reader, is invited to laugh at Dobby's mismatched clothing, his bargaining over wages with Dumbledore (he wants lower, rather than higher, wages than the headmaster offers), and his assertion of his "free will": "Dobby is a free house-elf and he can obey anyone he likes and Dobby will do whatever Harry Potter wants him to do!" (6.421).[8] The critics disagree, however, about Rowling's reasons for connecting Dobby in particular, and the house-elves in general, with negative stereotypes of enslaved African Americans. Elaine Ostry suggests that Rowling "means to help young readers understand the stereotypes about slaves when (or if) they learn about them in school" (96), while Bryccan Carey argues that Rowling intends her readers to follow Hermione's lead into overt political antiracist action once they have "grasped the truth" of bigotry and discrimination and have learned "how that truth has been applied or abused in the historical world" (114). Karin Westman is more circumspect, arguing that the "*possibility* for change" lies within Rowling's portrayal of the characters' "increasing awareness of the culture's recurring prejudices based on supposedly 'natural' differences" ("Specters" 327, italics added). Farah Mendlesohn, though she admits the possibility that the house-elves might eventually be freed by the end of the series, believes that Rowling's use of stereotypes points to her lack of imagination rather than to a deliberate political agenda, and suggests that such a lack of imagination is ultimately damaging to the young reader: "However much the house-elves may turn out to be happy if they are freed, it will never take away the impression of 'happy darky' that is created by the character of Winky" (181). Mendlesohn also points out that the humorous method by which house-elves can be set free—by a master giving them clothes—keeps all of the power in the hands of the oppressor, rather than allowing agency to the oppressed (181). Though Rowling's overt ideology may be antiracist, her implicit ideology, suggests Mendlesohn, is markedly at odds with her antiracist intent.

Now that the series has concluded, where has it left Dobby, Winky, and the other house-elves? We can begin to understand their fates by placing Rowling's depiction of the house-elves, and how Harry learns to interact with them, in the context of the universalist, multicultural approach to antiracism work. The most important way to fight racism, Harry learns, is to be kind to the elves, to treat each individual elf as an equal. To put

it in Dumbledore's words, Harry must learn to see elves as "being[s] with feelings as acute as a human's" (6.832), a multicultural emphasis on universal emotional identification. In Books 2–4, Harry begins to learn this lesson through his interactions with Dobby. To bring the lesson into greater prominence, Rowling introduces a third major elf character in the series' last four volumes: Kreacher, the "distinctly unlovable" house-elf loyal to the Voldemort-sympathizing Black family (7.191).

Kreacher proves far less appealing an elf than does the comic Dobby. Old, almost naked, baggy-skinned, with bloodshot eyes and a snout-like nose, Kreacher continually whispers insults about Sirius and the other members of the Order of the Phoenix after the Order takes up residence in the Black family's London house in Book 5. Mrs. Weasley is disgusted by Kreacher's lax housework, while Ron and his brothers find him a "nutter" for his devotion to pure-blood wizards and his life's ambition to "have his head cut off an stuck up on a plaque" (5.76). Sirius, though he advocates humane treatment of house-elves in general, has less tolerance for Kreacher; when no one has seen the elf for a while, Sirius speculates "I expect I'll find him upstairs crying his eyes out over my mother's old bloomers or something. . . . Of course, he might have crawled into the airing cupboard and died. . . . But I mustn't get my hopes up . . ." (5.505).

Hermione is the only one who defends Kreacher to the other wizards. Despite his aspersions on her "Mudblood" lineage, she protests that Kreacher "isn't in his right mind" and that not only she, but also Dumbledore, "says we should be kind to Kreacher" (5.108, 76). Harry, like the Weasleys, finds Kreacher hard to like. Over the course of the last three novels, however, Harry must learn the lesson that Hermione and Dumbledore teach: he must learn to be as kind to the decrepit house-elf as he is to Dobby. When Harry grows angry at Kreacher's betrayal of the Order at the end of Book 5, Dumbledore spells out the lesson directly:

> I warned Sirius when we adopted twelve Grimmauld Place as our head-quarters that Kreacher must be treated with kindness and respect. I also told him that Kreacher could be dangerous to us. I do not think that Sirius took me very seriously, or that he ever saw Kreacher as a being with feelings as acute as a human's. . . . Sirius did not hate Kreacher. . . . He regarded him as a servant unworthy of much interest or notice. Indifference and neglect often do much more damage than outright dislike. . . . (5.832–33)

Dumbledore's words prove more than abstract ideas when, at the start of Book 6, Harry inherits not only the Sirius' family estate and household goods, but also the Black family house-elf—the "distinctly unlovable" Kreacher. Although Harry does not make Kreacher an object of fun, as did Sirius and the Weasley boys, neither does he treat him with any semblance of kindness or even respect. On Dumbledore's advice, he sends the elf to

work in the Hogwarts' kitchens, only remembering him when he needs someone to spy on Draco Malfoy.

Although Harry is beginning to see how the work of the school is done quietly and unobtrusively by the house-elves (Harry assumes that the Christmas presents "must . . . have been delivered by house-elves in the night" [6.389]), this realization doesn't yet allow him to challenge others when they mistreat elves. For example, when Professor Slughorn tells him he's tested his wine for poison by having a house-elf taste every bottle, Harry thinks to himself that Slughorn's actions amount to "abuse of house-elves." Harry's thoughts turn not, however, to what it must have been like to be one of those elves, but instead to Hermione and what she might think if she ever heard of Slughorn's actions. Rather than speaking up in the face of elf oppression, Harry remains quiet; he says nothing to Slughorn, and even decides not to tell Hermione about it (presumably because he wants to avoid having to listen to Hermione's outrage) (6.485). While Harry is beginning to see that wizarding culture relies on the labor of the elves, he is not yet ready to talk openly about it, or to make elf liberation a cause worth fighting for. A social justice approach to antiracism is not one that Rowling suggests her protagonist need pursue.

Instead, Harry, initially through Dumbledore and later on his own, learns to fight his unconsciously racist attitudes toward elves on a *personal* level, by learning to recognize that elves have feelings. Once he is able to recognize that elves, like humans, feel emotions, Harry can then learn to identify with, and have sympathy for, the plight of individual elves. Cultivating this ability to identify begins in earnest in Book 6, when Dumbledore relates the story of the elf Hokey, whom Voldemort framed for murder. Actually, Dumbledore does not just *relate* Hokey's story; he takes Harry back through the Pensieve in order to witness scenes, allowing Harry to "meet" Hokey himself. Dumbledore leads Harry to recognize the way that Ministry prejudice against house-elves aided Voldemort's plan: "the Ministry was predisposed to suspect Hokey—" he says, leading Harry to interrupt "—because she was a house-elf." Interestingly, Harry's recognition of the institutional prejudice makes him think of political, rather than personal, solutions: "He had rarely felt more in sympathy with the society Hermione had set up, S.P.E.W." (6.439).

Yet Harry's feelings do not lead him to embrace Hermione's way of fighting social inequities. Instead, he continues to fight on a personal level, employing a multicultural approach, as witnessed by his changing behavior toward Kreacher during Book 7. This change in Harry's behavior occurs, significantly, after he hears the story of how Kreacher was used and left for dead by Voldemort, and then had to witness the self-sacrificing death of his beloved master, Regulus Black. At first, Harry resists feeling sym-

pathy for the elf, with Kreacher's betrayal of Sirius blinding him to all else. However, when Hermione (of course!) points out that house-elves are loyal to those "who are kind to [them]," Harry remembers Dumbledore's words—"*I do not think Sirius ever saw Kreacher as a being with feelings as acute as a human's*—" and starts to realize that both he and Kreacher are mourning for dead Black brothers (7.199). Only after he recognizes this similarity between his and Kreacher's losses, and the feelings that stem from them, does Harry begin to take Dumbledore's lesson to heart. Harry still gives Kreacher orders, but does so kindly, with a marked change in tone. He says "please," asks "Do you think you could do that for us?" and even gives the elf a present (7.199). By the end of the series, Harry (and through him, the reader) has learned the central lesson of multicultural antiracism: to treat others with kindness, respect, and sympathy.

Multicultural antiracism, unlike social justice ideology, focuses its response to racism on personal, rather than political, change. Thus, although Harry has "sympathy" for Hermione's overtly political efforts to liberate the house-elves through her creation of the Society for the Promotion of Elvish Welfare, he does not follow Hermione's lead, preferring personal to political solutions, a multicultural rather than a social justice approach. Several critics, however, suggest that Rowling's series does not completely eschew a social justice agenda. Karin Westman, in her analysis of the first four books in the series, argues that Rowling's humorous depiction of Hermione's liberation efforts through the ludicrously named S.P.E.W. is intended to satirize "numerous left-wing fringe movements more prominent in British than American culture and at the nineteenth-century tradition of well-to-do liberals speaking for the lower classes whom they have never met"; such satire can coexist, she suggests, with "Rowling's investigation of how cultural beliefs are naturalized as truth" (325), a stance more in line with the critical thinking aspect of social justice pedagogy. Brycchan Carey, even more hopeful, declares that Hermione's political actions reflect Rowling's explicit intention to promote "political participation for young people" (106), an overt social justice goal. Do such interpretations hold up when we take the final books into consideration? Does Rowling both satirize *and* embrace the tenets of social justice antiracism pedagogy? Looking at Hermione's antiracism education in terms of both multicultural and social justice pedagogy can help us to better understand the ambiguity with which Rowling's novels treat her campaign for elf rights.

Hermione's introduction to the racism in the wizarding world is very different from Harry's. Rather than responding to an elf on a personal level, as does Harry toward Dobby, Hokey, and Kreacher, Hermione's awakening begins with a recognition of institutional racism. Her campaign on behalf of elf-rights starts not when she witnesses an individual elf suffering or

mistreated, as did Harry, but rather when she recognizes how her own privileges as a student at Hogwarts are supported by the labor of others:

> "But they get *paid*?" she said. "They get *holidays*, don't they? And—and sick leave, and pensions, and everything?"
>
> Nearly Headless Nick chortled so much that his ruff slipped and his head flopped off, dangling on the inch or so of ghostly skin and muscle that still attached it to his neck.
>
> "Sick leave and pensions?" he said, pushing his head back onto his shoulders and securing it once more with his ruff. "House-elves don't want sick leave and pensions!"
>
> Hermoine looked down at her hardly touched plate of food, then put her knife and fork down upon it and pushed it away from her.
>
> "Oh, c'mon, 'Er-my-knee," said Ron. . . . "You won't get them sick leave by starving yourself!"
>
> "Slave labor," said Hermione, breathing hard through her nose. "That's what made this dinner. *Slave labor*."
>
> And she refused to eat another bite. (4.182)

Social justice antiracism asks students to examine institution-wide structures of power, rather than looking only at the individual and his or her feelings and beliefs about race. In particular, it asks students to identify how such institutions place certain groups in dominant and other groups in subordinate positions, and calls for those in positions of power to examine their own privileges, recognizing how institutional practices that work to their advantage may rely on the *disadvantaging* of other groups.[9]

Hermione's recognition of institutional racism leads her not to individual acts, but to the creation of an institution of her own: The Society for the Promotion of Elvish Welfare (S.P.E.W. for short), a group focused on political action. As she tells Ron and Harry, her organization will focus not on personal consciousness-raising, but on agitating for institutional change:

> I've been researching it thoroughly in the library. Elf enslavement goes back centuries. I can't believe no one's done anything about it before now. . . . Our short-term aims . . . are to secure house-elves fair wages and working conditions. Our long-term aims include changing the law about non-wand use, and trying to get an elf into the Department for the Regulation and Control of Magical Creatures, because they're shockingly underrepresented. (4.224–25)

In the early volumes of Rowling's series, as signaled by the humor-provoking acronym S.P.E.W., such an institutionally-focused approach to antiracism work is more an object of laughter for the reader than an example of how a reader should act against oppression. When Hermione tries to get other students to join her organization, no one gets as agitated about institutional racism as she does: "Some people, like Neville, had

paid up just to stop Hermione from glowering at them. A few seemed mildly interested in what she had to say, but were reluctant to take a more active role in campaigning. Many regarded the whole thing as a joke" (4.328–29). When she fails in interesting students, she thinks that perhaps "it's time for more direct action," and considers trying to contact the elves who work in Hogwarts' kitchens to get the oppressed themselves to agitate for institutional rather than personal change: "decent wages and working conditions!" (4.320). The text, though, like the Hogwarts students themselves, seems to regard Hermione's politically-based antiracism work as a joke.

In her denigration of Hermione's activism, Rowling may be creating a critique of the social justice approach to antiracism work, similar to the accusations of multicultural antiracists who upbraid social justice antiracists for hijacking their issues for their own political ends. A more nuanced reading suggests that Rowling may be attempting to critique a social justice approach that fails to first embrace a personal, multicultural approach. Such an interpretation seems to follow from Hermione's actions in the cause of elf liberation in Books 5 through 7; such actions gradually become focused less on political agitation and more on personal acts. For example, the idea she has to help her fellow students better understand the oppression of the elves, a "sponsored scrub of Gryffindor common room, all proceeds to S.P.E.W." (5.159) is never pursued; instead, Hermione starts knitting hats and leaving them around for house-elves to pick up by accident, trying to trick them into setting themselves free (5.255). That Dobby collects all the hats himself shows not only Rowling's deft hand with humor, but also her distrust of a social justice antiracism pedagogy empty of the more personal approach embraced by multicultural antiracism.

Rowling's depiction of the elves as a race that loves being enslaved may also be an attempt at humor. Yet this depiction places her in a difficult double bind as the series progressively increases its focus on its antiracist themes—how can you argue on one hand that Mudbloods should be granted the same rights as pure-blood wizards, but suggest on the other that another sentient race is, by nature, servile to another? Rowling may have begun to realize the corner she had backed herself into, as the references to S.P.E.W. grow sparser in Book 5, and then disappear completely from the series' final two volumes. Having pointed to the institutional, as well as the personal, roots of the racism of the wizarding world, Rowling seems to want to back away from Hermione's institutionally-based solutions, replacing an ideology that suggests that institutions themselves may be inherently racist with one that points to the flaws of the people who *run* the institutions as the true culprits. The craven Fudge, and later, the

authoritarian Scrimgeour, are the real problem, not the way the laws and culture create a system in which one group is granted greater rights and privileges at the expense of others. Get rid of racists who run the institutions (as well as the racists like Voldemort who want to take them over), and racism will be eradicated, the texts seem to suggest.

While Hermione may back away from her politically-based solutions to the racism she sees in wizarding society in the final volumes in the series, she never stops talking about the institutionally-based racism that she has begun to recognize. And it seems significant that it is not only the students who fail to respond to Hermione's calls for political action; throughout the final books in the series, whenever Hermione brings up the issue of elf rights with adults, her conversations are consistently interrupted, either by the narrator or by adult characters. For example, in Book 4, when Percy and Hermione begin to argue about Winky, Mrs. Weasley breaks up the argument by insisting that the children go and finish packing (4.154), while Mr. Weasley tells Hermione that although he agrees that Mr. Crouch treated Winky horribly, "now is not the time to discuss elf rights" (4.138–9). In Book 5, Hermione tries to engage Lupin in a discussion of elf rights: "I mean, it's the same kind of nonsense as werewolf segregation, isn't it? It all stems from this horrible thing wizards have of thinking they're superior to other creatures . . ." (5.170–71). Rowling, significantly, doesn't allow us to hear Lupin's reply, making us unsure about whether he agrees or not. While it is easy for these adult characters to see the racism of Voldemort's anti-Mudblood campaign, it seems less easy for them to engage in a discussion that might point out the ways in which their own culture is supported by the oppression of other races, especially that of the elves.[10]

In fact, Rowling's later texts demonstrate the ways in which many of the adults in the wizarding world collude with the racism that is articulated on a more overt level by those whom they are purportedly fighting against. For example, Mrs. Weasley wishes that she had a house-elf to do her housework, while Sirius (as Mendlesohn notes), though he advocates kindly treatment of the enslaved, never questions the institution of slavery itself ("If you want to know what a man's like, take a good look at how he treats his inferiors, not his equals" [4.525]). Even Fred, George, and Hagrid all agree with Ron that the elves do not want to be freed. Westman argues that Rowling shows the reader that what wizarding culture holds forth as "natural" and thus not subject to change—house-elves are just "natural" slaves—is actually a cultural formation, one that the adults themselves play a role in maintaining (326–27). Such ideology, though less explicitly stated than the overt racism of Voldemort and his followers, is, at heart, the same as Voldemort's prejudice against Mudbloods, one

that the trio must fight just as they fight against Voldemort. Such a fight may in fact be more difficult, because the ideology that says that house-elves *want* to be enslaved is one held not by the overt icon of evil, but by almost every adult the teens respect—explicitly by Fred and George and Hagrid; implicitly by the Weasley parents, who silence Hermione's questions; and even by Dumbledore, who, though sympathetic to Dobby, does little as the leader of the institution of Hogwarts to change its reliance on uncompensated elf labor. When Ron ridicules S.P.E.W. in Book 5, Hermione responds "It's not 'spew.' . . . It's the Society for the Promotion of Elvish Welfare, and it's not just me, Dumbledore says we should be kind to Kreacher too—" (5.76). While Hermione argues that Dumbledore is on the side of institutionally-based change, the evidence she summons to link him to her cause—"Dumbledore says we should be kind to Kreacher too"—places him firmly within the multicultural, rather than the social justice, antiracism camp.

Is Rowling intentionally demonstrating the ways that adults, in the guise of protecting children, teach them through example to ignore the racism that underlies their own privilege? Or is she complicit in the silencing of Hermione? I would like to begin to answer this question by examining a racial "other" of the Potterverse as yet unexplored by literary critics—the race of the goblins—and comparing their depiction to Rowling's depiction of the house-elves. First introduced in Book 1, but not featured in any meaningful way until Book 7, the goblin Griphook returns to play a vital role in the retrieval of one of the hidden horcruxes. Griphook, however, proves more than a simple plot device; his return signals Rowling's attempt to rethink her earlier satirical dismissal of the social justice approach to antiracism. With Book 7's depiction of the goblins, Rowling uses racial difference less as comic relief, as in the case of the house-elves, and more as overt social critique. In particular, Rowling begins to take more seriously the idea that racism can be defined not simply as individual, personal acts of prejudice, but also as cultural and institutional structures and policies that create advantages for dominant group members and disadvantage for people (or creatures) from subordinated groups. By examining the relationship between Griphook and Harry, and, on a larger scale, between the goblin and wizard races, Rowling begins to demonstrate the ways that institutional and cultural racism can lead dominant group members to oppress racial others even when they do not intend to, even when they are explicitly trying *not* to be racist. Harry's interactions with the actual goblin Griphook, and, perhaps more importantly, with the wizarding culture's assumptions about "goblins," point to the difficulties in fighting racial oppression when antiracism work relies only on a multicultural approach, one in which racism is defined only as a personal, rather than a social, ill.

Evil other; dangerous but used other; enslaved other; and separatist other—these are the four types of racial other that Rowling depicts during the course of the first six Harry Potter books. Goblins, however, do not seem to fall into any of these four groups. Unlike the Centaurs, they interact with the wizarding world on a daily basis through the wizarding bank, Gringotts. They are clearly not slaves, as are the house-elves; nor are they unabatedly evil, or else why would wizards trust them with their money? They might perhaps be placed in the "dangerous but able to be used" category, yet their intelligence and power seem far greater than that of the trolls or the leprechauns. They don't simply "work for" Gringotts, a bank owned by humans; they "run" it (1.63). In fact, the goblin bank employs humans such as Bill Weasley; one possible path advertised in career pamphlets at Hogwarts proclaims that the bank employs human wizard "Curse-Breakers" looking for "thrilling opportunities abroad" (5.657). As Gornuk, another goblin, reveals when he explains why he left the Bank in Book 7, the Gringotts goblins do not work under the supervision of humans; once the Voldemort-controlled Ministry takes over the bank, humans try to make him perform "duties ill-befitting the dignity of my race," requests that he rejects because "I am not a house-elf" (7.296). Griphook leaves the Bank when it becomes clear that goblin autonomy and power is being undermined: "Gringotts is no longer under sole control of my race. I recognize no Wizarding master" (7.296). Goblins, then, clearly have more power than any of the other nonhuman species depicted in Rowling's novels.

Yet the goblins are clearly subordinated in some way to wizarding government control. In Book 4, we hear that goblins are expected to interact with the "Department for the Regulation and Control of Magical Creatures" (4.449). The department includes a subdepartment: the "Goblin Liaison office," which suggests that wizards and Goblins are of separate but fairly equal status. House-elf Winky's fears that the rebellious Dobby will be "up in front of the Department for the Regulation and Control of Magical Creatures, like some common goblin," however, points more toward a subordinate, rather than equal, relationship (5.130; 4.98).

Why would goblins, entrusted with the riches of the wizarding world, need to be "regulated" and "controlled" by wizarding government institutions? Though Ron and Harry, poor scholars of the History of Magic, may not understand, those readers who, like Hermione, pay attention to Professor Binns' lessons could tell you that goblins, unlike house-elves, have not taken kindly to the assumption that humans are by nature at the top of the hierarchy of sentient magical creatures. In Book 3, Hermione's reading of *Sites of Historical Sorcery* informs her that the inn in Hogsmeade was "the sight of the 1612 goblin rebellion" (3.77), while in Book

4, we hear that early in the term, "Professor Binns, the ghost who taught History of Magic, had them writing weekly essays on the goblin rebellions of the eighteenth century" (4.234). That Binns is still lecturing on goblin rebellions and riots at Christmastime of the same term suggests that goblin resistance was not merely a single event, but a way of life (4.392). Hermione makes it clear that goblins weren't rebelling against their own leaders, but against wizards when she tells Ron that "Goblins don't need protection. . . . they're quite capable of dealing with wizards. . . . They're very clever. They're not like house-elves, who never stick up for themselves" (4.449). Just how goblins "stick up for themselves" is never discussed directly, yet the narrator's aside that Professor Binns "could make even bloody and vicious goblin riots sound as boring as Percy's cauldron-bottom report" suggests that the goblins fought with violence against the wizarding world (4.392). Such a violent response is a far cry from the obsequious self-abasement of the house-elves. In contrast, such a response calls to mind actual historical and current-day political movements against racial and social class oppression in Great Britain—the Scottish insurgencies of the eighteenth century, the Chartist riots of the nineteenth, and the uprisings of the Irish in the twentieth.

What, precisely, were the goblins fighting for? Again, Rowling provides little specific information. Yet a careful reader, particularly one schooled in a social justice approach to antiracism, can piece together an explanation: the wizarding world excluded goblins from the privileges it accorded itself. In answering the exam question "*Describe the circumstances that led to the Formation of the International Confederation of Wizards and explain why the warlocks of Liechtenstein refused to join*" (5.725), Harry remembers "The confederation had met for the first time in France . . . Goblins had tried to attend and been ousted" (5.726). Not only have the wizards excluded goblins from their meetings; they have also denied them the privilege of carrying a wand by "Clause three of the Code of Wand Use" (4.132). That this restriction has been in place for many centuries can be inferred from the questions on the O.W.L. History of Magic exam, which asks "*In your opinion, did wand legislation contribute to, or lead to better control of, goblin riots of the eighteenth century?*" (5.725).

Significantly, Harry skips this last question completely while taking his O.W.L. exams. Ron, too, has difficulties remembering goblin history; when his mother asks how he did on his History of Magic exam at the end of the fourth year, he cheerfully reports, "Oh . . . okay. . . . Couldn't remember all the goblin rebels' names, so I invented a few. It's all right . . . they're all called stuff like Bodrod the Bearded and Urg the Unclean; it wasn't hard'" (4.618). Unsurprisingly, both Ron and Harry fail their History of Magic O.W.L.'s. Remembering the details of those who actively resist

the naturalized norm of a social hierarchy that places human wizards on top seems of low concern to Rowling's male heroes, at least in the first six books of the series.

In place of historical information on the goblins then, is the "idea" of the goblin in circulation within wizarding culture. Physically, the goblins are described in terms that link them with the villains of traditional British fantasy and adventure novels: "The goblin was about a head shorter than Harry. He had a swarthy, clever face, a pointed beard and, Harry noticed, very long fingers and feet. He bowed as they walked inside" (1.72). Their skin color, as well as their "dark, slanting eyes" (4.446), mark them as physically other, while their most visible work — lending money to wizards — suggests they are morally suspect, a modern-day embodiment of the stereotype of a Jewish moneylender or perhaps even an Italian Mafioso. Wizards who associate with goblins are immediately suspect; after seeing Ludo Bagman in the company of goblins in a Hogsmeade pub, both Hermione and Rita Skeeter question whether he is up to no good (4.450), while the *Daily Prophet* uses an "alleged link to subversive goblin groups" to discredit a witch who resigned her post in the Wizengamot in support of Dumbledore (5.308). That goblins are held in little regard by the wizarding world in general can be seen by the narrator's casual linkage between goblins and a creature Professor Lupin teaches his students to fight in Defense Against the Dark Arts class: "After boggarts, they studied Red Caps, nasty little goblin-like creatures that lurked wherever there had been bloodshed: in the dungeons of castles and the potholes of deserted battlefields, waiting to bludgeon those who had gotten lost" (3.141). Fred and George view the goblins as "play[ing] dirty" when they refuse to pay Ludo Bagman, who bet on Harry to win the Triwizard tournament (4.732). Insisting that Harry didn't win outright, but tied with Cedric, seems to be a cheat to the Weasley twins, a mere technicality, one that makes the goblins as poor keepers of their word as is Ludo Bagman, who refused to pay George and Fred after losing a bet on the Wizard World Cup.

Having planted both clues about the history of the goblins and about the general wizarding assumptions of this racial "other" throughout her first six books, Rowling forces her protagonist to confront the gap between history and stereotype by reintroducing in Book 7 a character first mentioned way back in Book 1: Griphook, the goblin that guided Harry to his parents' treasure vault at Gringotts. Though Griphook's behavior conforms to many of the stereotypes wizarding culture holds about goblins, it also calls such stereotypes into question in provocative ways. Rowling's depiction of Griphook also begins to draw Harry's, and the reader's, attention away from defining racism in merely personal terms, and toward seeing racism as a structural, institutional, and political system.

At the beginning of the rapprochement between Harry and Griphook, Rowling continues to suggest that the first step in mending the breach between racial others lies in a multicultural antiracism approach, one that focuses on individual, personal acts of kindness, acts that force one to look beyond racial stereotypes and recognize the value in each individual. When Griphook, along with Harry and his friends, is captured by Death Eaters and taken to Malfoy Manor, Harry asks that the goblin perform such an act by lying to Bellatrix Lestrange: "Griphook . . . you must tell them that sword's a fake, they mustn't know it's the real one, Griphook, please—" (7.467). Despite the goblins' traditional enmity for humans, despite even being tortured himself, Griphook decides not to betray Harry's trust (7.471). In return, Harry rescues the goblin, an act that surprises Griphook. He is also surprised when he sees Harry himself digging a grave for the dead house-elf, Dobby: "Goblins and elves are not used to the protection or the respect that you have shown this night. Not from wand-carriers" (7.488). Given the history of human interactions with goblins and house-elves, Griphook seems right to be surprised; kind, even loving, treatment of elves seems a rarity in the wizarding world. Yet both Harry and Griphook offer the other a measure of kindness and trust, the first steps, Rowling suggests, in overcoming prejudice.

Yet as the relationship between Harry and Griphook unfolds, the larger social and institutional racism embedded in the culture of each continually points to how difficult such rapprochement can be without an understanding of how power has been distributed between races and cultures in a society. Griphook makes it clear that the oppression goblins experience at the hands of the wizards is not just personal, stemming from the actions of a few bad wizards, but institutional:

> "The right to carry a wand," said the goblin quietly, "has long been contested between wizards and goblins.
> "Well, goblins can do magic without wands," said Ron.
> "That is immaterial! Wizards refuse to share the secrets of wandlore with other magical beings, they deny us the possibility of extending our powers!" (7.488)

When Ron and Griphook begin to fight about who's right and who's wrong, Harry attempts to diffuse the argument, protesting "It doesn't matter. . . . This isn't about wizards versus goblins or any other sort of magical creature—" Griphook, however, won't allow Harry to detach the fight against Voldemort from the historical enmity between the goblins and the wizards: "But it is, it is about precisely that! As the Dark Lord becomes ever more powerful, your race is set still more firmly above mine! Gringotts falls under Wizarding rule, house-elves are slaughtered, and who amongst the wand-carriers protests?" (7.488–89).

Significantly, this is the first time in the Harry Potter novels that a member of an oppressed racial group is allowed to speak against institutionally-based wizardly oppression, rather than against a specific wizard gone bad. Throughout the novels, such racial groups have rarely had the chance to speak for themselves, to give direct witness to the damaging effects of wizarding acts and beliefs on their racial groups. Dumbledore and others are praised for their support of "Muggle Rights," but no Muggles speak of their oppression, oblivious as they are of it. Lupin does not speak out for werewolf rights; instead he leaves Hogwarts when his true identity is revealed. Hagrid remains, but hides his half-giant heritage in shame, and then hides his giant brother whom he rescues from abuse. Rita Skeeter makes fun of Elphias Doge for championing merpeople rights. And with the exception of Dobby, the house-elves are only too happy to accept their position subordinated to human wizards. Here, however, Griphook gives voice to the institutional and cultural oppression inherent not only in Voldemort's rule, but within normal, everyday wizarding culture itself.

Rowling goes on to show how the institutional and the personal inter-twine in her depiction of Griphook and Ron's arguments about Gryffindor's sword. The yawning gap between their societies is embodied in each culture's beliefs about the wizarding hero's weapon. Ron, like all wizards trained at Hogwarts, believes without doubt that the sword was made for Godric Gryffindor. The goblins, however, tell another story about its provenance: "'No!' cried the goblin, bristling with anger as he pointed a long finger at Ron. 'Wizarding arrogance again! That sword was Ragnuk the First's, taken from him by Godric Gryffindor! It is a lost treasure, a masterpiece of goblinwork! It belongs with the goblins!'" (7.505–6)

Ron, drawing on cultural stereotypes, believes that Griphook's motives stem from greed, and suggests that the goblin pick another reward instead of asking for Gryffindor's sword as a prize for helping Harry and his friends break into a Gringott's vault. Griphook bristles in anger at the assumptions behind Ron's statement: "I am not a thief, boy! I am not trying to procure treasures to which I have no right!" (7.506). Institutional oppression leads to personal enmity, enmity that can easily lead those who experience it to forget their knowledge of a larger institutional problem. It's easier to hate a specific individual than it is to hate a faceless institution; it is also easier to hate an entire racial group than it is to consider how racial oppression may have led that group to feel enmity toward yours.

Harry, brought up believing in a clear division between Voldemort and Dumbledore, between absolute evil and absolute good, wants to impose the same strict binary on the racial groups wizards and goblins. Establishing such a binary, however, proves difficult. When Harry asks Hermione if what Griphook has said about Gryffindor's sword is true, she

replies "I don't know. . . . Wizarding history often skates over what the wizards have done to other magical races, but there's no account that I know of that says Gryffindor stole the sword" (7.506). Bill muddies the moral waters even further when he urges Harry to be careful of working with Griphook not because goblins are evil, but because they have such different cultural norms:

> "To a goblin, the rightful and true master of any object is the maker, not the purchaser. All goblin-made objects are, in goblin eyes, rightfully theirs."
> "But if it was bought—"
> "—then they would consider it rented by the one who had paid the money. They have, however, great difficulty with the idea of goblin-made objects passing from wizard to wizard. . . . They consider our habit of keeping goblin-made objects, passing them from wizard to wizard without further payment, little more than theft." (7.517)

The Electronic Frontier Foundation has interpreted the goblin concept of property rights as a symbolic representation of current-day arguments against the concept of perpetual copyright (Plummer; Pulsinelli), casting the goblins in the role of anticapitalist villain for desiring to retain perpetual ownership of all they have made. For this American reader, though, Rowling's depiction of the goblins and their quest to reclaim lost cultural artifacts such as Gryffindor's sword (or the goblin-made tiara offered by Mrs. Weasley to Fleur) uncomfortably echoes Native American struggles to reclaim artifacts taken by white anthropologists and collectors for study. British readers may be reminded of the claims of those who support the return of the Elgin Marbles and other antiquities "vandalized" by imperialist cultures to their nations of origin. Readers familiar with such real-life cultural protests may find it difficult to dismiss Griphook's version of Griffyndor's sword as Ron does, deeming it just another "one of those goblin stories . . . about how the wizards are always trying to get one over on them" (7.506). Ron, as he does throughout the series, here embodies the naturalized beliefs of the wizarding culture, beliefs that dismiss any claims of institutional oppression as mere "complaining" and "lying"—protests that social justice educators often hear from their students when first beginning to teach dominant-member groups about institutional, rather than individual, racism.

Bill assumes that Harry understands the institutional basis of Griphook's enmity, stemming as it does from the history of human/goblin relations— "Dealings between wizards and goblins have been fraught for centuries— but you'll know all that from History of Magic" (7.517)—yet readers know that Harry's grasp of Professor Binns' subject is sketchy at best. And so, because Harry cannot reconcile his need for a clear line between good and evil with the situation at hand (and because he cannot learn to

"like" the goblin, as a multicultural antiracist must), he comes to a deci-
sion that rejects the tentative rapprochement between goblin and wizard
that Rowling holds out as a tantalizing possibility. Standing on the same
type of technicality that George and Fred described as "play[ing] dirty"
when the goblins did it to Ludo Bagman back in Book 4, Harry decides
"We'll tell him he can have the sword after he's helped us get into that
vault—but we'll be careful to avoid telling him exactly *when* he can have
it." (4.732, 7.508). Harry is uncomfortable with his decision, recognizing
his "ends justify the means" approach as disturbingly similar to that of the
oppressive wizard Grindewald—"FOR THE GREATER GOOD." Instead
of acting on his discomfort, though, Harry "pushed the idea away. What
choice did they have?" (7.508). Throughout the novels, Rowling, through
Dumbledore, has insisted that choice, rather than talent, is what decides
a person's character. Thus, Harry's refusal to acknowledge that deceiving
Griphook is a choice he made, rather than the only course open to him,
seems particularly significant, a sign that the "shame" that Harry feels
after making his decision is more than warranted.

Rowling, unable to allow Harry, her hero, the same moral ambiguity
that she later grants Dumbledore, backs away from the implications of
Harry's shame. She does this by continuing to invoke the racial stereotypes
of goblins established earlier in the series, in particularly by pointing to
how goblins, as a race, care little for the pain of others. She also allows
Harry off the hook for deceiving Griphook, making Griphook betray Harry
first. There is, however, a small sign that Harry may be growing more
aware of his own participation in the construction of racist ideology; while
Ron calls Griphook "that double-crossing little scab" for running away
with Gryffindor's sword and leaving them to fight the goblins and Death
Eaters alone (7.547), Harry, intriguingly, thinks about Griphook's actions
not in terms of goblin treachery, but in terms of wizarding perfidy: "in
that instant Harry knew that the goblin had never expected them to keep
their word" (7.540).

In Book 5, Harry recognized that a wizard-made statue in the lobby
of the Ministry of Magic, a statue depicting a noble wizard and witch
surrounded by a fawning house-elf, Centaur, and goblin, was less a de-
piction of truth and more a fantasy, a fantasy intended to instill the belief
in its viewers that the hierarchical relations between humans and racial
others is natural and proper. Such a fantasy, Harry recognizes, does not
reflect reality, but rather *constructs* a racial hierarchy with wizards at the
apex. It seems significant, then, that while both house-elves and centaurs
join Harry in the final battle against Voldemort that concludes the series,
goblins are notably absent. Crafting a new vision of cooperation between
the magical creatures of the Potterverse may be possible when racism is

defined as personal, individual acts—be kinder to house-elves, and the problem is solved—but far less likely when a broader definition, one that calls attention to institutionalized as well as individual racism, enters the fantasy realm.

Despite the series' inability to embrace a social justice antiracism pedagogy, the ending of the final volume in Rowling's series cannot help but show the problems inherent in cleaving solely to a multicultural approach (although I would suggest that these surface not on the level of explicit, but rather on the level of implicit, ideology). Multicultural antiracism has worked for Harry, for Harry now treats Kreacher with kindness, having learned the lesson that elves have feelings just as wizards do. Yet while multicultural antiracism has changed the way Harry, a member of the privileged class, responds to the elves, what does it offer the elves themselves? The final volume of the series demonstrates an all-too-likely outcome of multicultural antiracism—making the privileged feel better about themselves without doing much to change the oppression of the other. To begin with, the feelings that Harry witnesses and comes to understand in Kreacher and the falsely imprisoned Hokey are both related to their roles as servants to wizards. Kreacher's despair stems from his witnessing the death of his master, Regulus Black, while Hokey's stem from being falsely accused of the murder of her mistress. Elves, it seems, are allowed to have feelings, as long as those feelings relate to the humans they serve. Elves are also allowed, in the best Rudyard Kipling/Gunga Din fashion, to die in order to save their human masters, as the fate of Dobby demonstrates. Finally, elves are allowed to remain servants, albeit happy ones. After Harry begins to recognize Kreacher's feelings, Kreacher changes his ways, becoming more pleasant—he calls Harry "Master Harry," he does what Harry asks willingly, he cleans up both himself and his house, and he even becomes an object of humor in his loyalty to his new owner:

> There was the sound of pattering feet, a blaze of shining copper, an echoing clang, and a shriek of agony: Kreacher had taken a run at Mundungus and hit him over the head with a saucepan.
> "Call 'im off, call 'im off, 'e should be locked up!" screamed Mundungus, cowering as Kreacher raised the heavy-bottomed pan again.
> "Kreacher, no!" shouted Harry.
> Kreacher's thin arms trembled with the weight of the pan, still held aloft.
> "Perhaps just one more, Master Harry, for luck?"
> Ron laughed.
> "We need him conscious, Kreacher, but if he needs persuading you can do the honors," said Harry.
> "Thank you very much, Master," said Kreacher with a bow. (7.221)

The elves participate in the final battle against Voldemort, but Rowling offers no sign that the defeat of the Dark Lord will free the elves from their centuries of bondage to human wizards. In fact, in the very last line of penultimate chapter, Harry wonders "whether Kreacher might bring him a sandwich" as he imagines resting in his bed in Gryffindor Tower after the end of the battle (7.749). While Harry's last thought—"I've had enough trouble for a lifetime"—explicitly refers to the troubles keeping the Elder Wand might bring, on the level of implicit ideology, it also seems to suggest that disturbing the "natural" order of the wizard/elf hierarchy is also trouble that Harry would like to avoid. Though Voldemort's overt racial oppression of Mudbloods has been overturned, the parallel oppression of the elves and goblins that underlies wizarding power must, once again, be repressed, be forgotten, even by the series' self-sacrificing champion of antiracism.

In her June 2008 commencement speech at Harvard, "The Fringe Benefits of Failure, and the Importance of Imagination," J. K. Rowling links imagination directly to a multicultural antiracist pedagogy. For Rowling, imagination is "not only the uniquely human capacity to envision that which is not, and therefore the fount of all invention and innovation. In its arguably most transformative and revelatory capacity, it is the power that enables us to empathize with humans whose experiences we have never shared" ("Fringe"). Through the imagination, she argues, "Humans . . . can think themselves into other people's minds, imagine themselves into other people's places" ("Fringe"). After defining imagination in this broad way, Rowling links it directly with antiracism efforts by describing her time working in the research department of Amnesty International in London. In multicultural antiracism fashion, she describes the *personal* effect witnessing the sufferings of oppressed others had on her. Such examples are immediate, compelling, and build in intensity as she describes them: "I saw photographs of those who had disappeared without a trace . . . I read testimony of torture victims . . . I opened handwritten eye-witness accounts of summary trials and executions, of kidnappings and rapes" ("Fringe"). Rowling, as she has demonstrated throughout her series, is a fervent believer that experiencing the situation of others through the imaginative power of story will lead the listener to a greater awareness of the oppression in the world.

Intriguingly, though, after relating her Amnesty experiences, Rowling goes on to point to the pitfall inherent in a solely multicultural approach to anti-oppression work: "those who choose not to empathise may enable real monsters. For without ever committing an act of outright evil ourselves, we collude with it, through our own apathy" ("Fringe"). Her choice of the

collective pronoun "we" points to the idea that few are completely free of the wish to *not* empathize with the oppressed, to *not* act in the face of pain, to *not* see the pain that empathy shows us. The solution, then, Rowling suggests, lies not solely in empathy, in a multicultural antiracism approach, but rather, in an empathy that *gives rise* to acts of social justice: "Amnesty mobilizes thousands of people who have never been tortured or imprisoned for their beliefs to act on behalf of those who have. The power of human empathy, *leading to collective action*, saves lives, and frees prisoners" ("Fringe," emphasis added).

Rowling's speech does little to show what such collective action might look like, however, choosing instead to focus on stories of her personal responses to the reality of oppression. And though her novels show moments of collective action in the fight against Voldemort, at heart they are about the emotional growth of a boy, rather than the depiction of the rise of a collective political movement. Many would say this focus is appropriate, given that this novel is intended for younger readers, who, according to Rowling's antiracist pedagogy, need first to learn empathy, and only later to learn the ways of collective action. Child development theory might concur, urging that the intended readers of the Potter books aren't old enough for the more abstract concepts of social justice; instead, they must first work on envisioning antiracism on a personal level. Yet as recent work by psychologists and sociologists such as Mahzarin R. Banaji and Debra van Ausdale has begun to demonstrate, children as young as three understand and deploy abstract racial and ethnic concepts, in both positive and negative ways.[11] If such young children can learn and use such abstract concepts, might they also be capable of understanding collective action? Teachers such as Valerie Ooka Pang suggest it is not only possible, but necessary, to combine both a multicultural and a social justice approach in the K-12 classroom, teaching students to become both "self-directed *and* community oriented" (77, emphasis in original). Asking students to see that "caring" and "justice" are integrally interrelated, and to explore how caring can lead to action, is a far better goal for antiracist pedagogues to embrace, rather than simply espousing one approach at the expense of the other.[12]

As Rowling demonstrates in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, it is easy to imagine collective action when the enemy is clearly defined, and is clearly evil, as are Voldemort and his power-hungry followers. It is much more difficult to imagine what collective action might look like when deployed against one's own social institutions, and especially against one's own naturalized beliefs. Will Rowling create a new series, one in which Harry, Hermione, and Ron's children struggle with the more dif-

ficult task of recognizing the claims of the goblins and the elves, and work collectively with these marginalized groups to change the power structures of their society?[13] It would be a far more difficult task, but one that many would be eager to see the multi-talented Rowling take on.

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Notes

[1] The other four ways of "doing" racism as described by Bonnett are as follows: "Everyday antiracism" consists of the actions of individuals unaligned with government or political parties, and is most evident in "cultural production (especially music), youth cultures, media, and religion" (Bonnett 89). "Psychological antiracism" focuses on training in racism awareness and in developing positive racial images of previously oppressed groups. "Anti-Nazi and Anti-Fascist Antiracism" narrows its focus to fighting Nazi and neo-Nazi threats. Finally, "Representative Organization Antiracism" focuses on secondary education and the workplace, with the understanding that members of oppressed groups need help from those in power to overcome their disadvantage. This approach "reli[es] on the notion that creating multiracial organizations changes the culture of these organizations and enables them to become more sustainable and efficient in a multiracial market place and the local and wider community" (111–12). Affirmative action programs would be one example of this type of antiracism.

[2] For a longer discussion of the rise of multiculturalism in American education, see Jeynes, chapter 13, and Spring, 442–46.

[3] For examples of texts for teachers that model a multicultural approach to classroom pedagogy, see Kendall, *Diversity*; and Siccone.

[4] Bonnett suggests that in the United States during the 1980s, "multiculturalism" was often associated with a "radical, almost insurgent, meaning . . . a challenge to the status quo" (90). The *Oxford English Dictionary* listing for *multiculturalism*, however, does not include the radical definition Bonnett mentions in passing, and today, the common knowledge meaning of "multicultural" aligns closely with the more general definition Bonnett discusses, "the celebration of cultural diversity, and not as a necessarily subversive programme" (90).

[5] Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is a touchstone text for social justice pedagogues. See also Ayres, Hunt, and Quinn; Adams, Bell, and Griffin.

[6] As example of a critique of multicultural antiracism pedagogy from the left, see Godfrey Brandt's *The Realization of Anti-Racist Teaching*. Of course, there are those who criticize multiculturalism from the right, as well; for the neoconservative point of view, see, for example, the work of Dinesh D'Souza.

[7] I focus here on nonhumans only, recognizing that power relations among humans (wizarding, Muggle, and Mudblood) might also be productively examined. Mike Cadden helpfully suggests that Mudbloods might be thought of in terms of disability (Cadden, personal communication, June 2008), another identity category critics are currently theorizing, as the rise of Disability Studies suggests.

[8] Here and throughout, I will use numbers to refer to the different volumes in Rowling's series, i.e., (6.421) refers to Book 6, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, page 421.

[9] This concept, articulated in terms of white privilege in the United States, dates from Peggy McIntosh's article, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." Since the publication of McIntosh's seminal article in 1998, several books and many articles have been published that explore the concept of race privilege in more detail. See Cassidy and Mikulich; Jensen; Kennedy; Rothenberg; Sullivan; and Williams. While the concept of privilege has been linked primarily to whiteness, social justice pedagogy makes it clear that the concept of dominant and subordinate power structures, and the privileges and disadvantage they create for different groups, can be applied to multiple identities (racial, sexual orientation, religious, etc.), not just to whiteness. See the essays in Carol Vincent's recent collection for essays on social justice as applied to class, sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity, and ability; see Schmidt, and Adams, Bell, and Griffin for theory and practice.

[10] When I presented an abbreviated version of this paper at a conference recently, several audience members protested that Hermione's S.P.E.W. efforts were meant to show the problems that result when those who work for social justice do not listen to those for whom they are organizing. "What if the elves really *want* to be slaves?" these audience members protested. Such protests can seem valid when we remember the objections made by many Third World feminists against the assumptions made by feminists in the West, protests against the ways that Western feminists read their own assumptions about liberation from patriarchy onto Eastern women without taking into consideration differences in culture, geography, and history. For example, assuming that wearing the hijab is inherently sexist and degrading, without asking Muslim women why they wear the hijab, or recognizing the role it played and continues to play in protesting Western colonization (Armstrong, 295). Yet, I would argue, there is a significant difference between foisting one's own

version of feminism onto another and insisting that another wants to be a slave for you and your kind. While Western women may benefit indirectly from Muslim women refusing the veil, Harry and his fellow wizards benefit *directly* from the idea that elves want to be their slaves. For Rowling to create another sentient race that truly desires enslavement is dangerous and irresponsible, I would argue; such a creation is far too likely to play into wish-fulfillment fantasies only too common in our own world that other races or nationalities desire to serve our needs.

[11] Mahzarin R. Banaji is the creator of the Implicit Association Test, which measures associations that we are not conscious of, including race-based association. In an interview, Banaji said, "We created a child version of the Implicit Association Test, so that kids as young as age five and six can take the test. It's all based on sound and pictures. We were expecting to see that children that age would show no bias. That's not at all what we found. And that surprised the hell out of us. Bias is shown early and at the same magnitude as it is in adults. We did a test with three-year-olds. To our great surprise again, the bias is not only there, it's the same level as it is in adults. We think it has to do with cultural privileging." For more information on the test (or to try a version out yourself), go to https://implicit. harvard.edu/implicit/. Van Ausdale's work focuses on classroom observations of preschoolers, and describes the many ways that very young children can and do deploy abstract concepts of race.

[12] One can see how multicultural and antiracist pedagogies are gradually becoming integrated by examining changes made in subsequent editions of a key teacher-training textbook, Banks and Banks' *Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives*. In the first edition of the book, published in 1989, the Banks describe two of the goals of multicultural education in universalist terms: first, "to transform the school so that male and female students, exceptional students, as well as students from diverse cultural, social-class, racial, and ethnic groups will experience an equal opportunity to learn in school" and second, to develop more positive attitudes toward "others" (19–20). By the second edition (1993), the Banks' have become frustrated with the way multicultural education has become overly focused on changing the content of classroom teaching only, arguing that changes in content should only be one goal of multicultural pedagogy; two others goals are calling attention to the "knowledge construction process," and embracing an "equity pedagogy," ideas taken from social justice approaches (20–21). By the fourth edition (2001), two additional goals have been added—"prejudice reduction" and the creation of "empowering school cultures" (20)—as has a new chapter on "The Colorblind Perspective in Schools: Causes and Consequences." Another key essay undergoes a title change; Geneva Gay's "Ethnic Minorities and Educational Equality" becomes "Educational Equality for Students of Color," while the section in which it appears changes from "Ethnicity and Language" to "Race, Ethnicity, and Language." Finally, in the seventh edition (2007), Gay's essay, which focused on *children*, is dropped, replaced by Gloria Ladson-Billings "Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory and Practice," which shifts the focus to the need for teachers

to change their explicit and implicit ideological assumptions in order to create culturally empowering classrooms for students from oppressed groups.

[13] Some might argue that the conventions of the high fantasy genre, with its dependence on a good versus evil binary, is inherently unable to depict the more nuanced antiracist agenda advocated here. Yet, as Karin Westman has argued, such an anti-oppression agenda is not unheard of in children's fiction, at least as far as class dynamics are concerned, as readers of Jonathan Stroud's *Bartimaeus* trilogy are well aware ("Power").

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