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**THE DOMINANT MALE IN THE LIGHT OF
TRADITIONAL MASCULINITY IN J.K. ROWLING'S
HARRY POTTER**

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Abstract:

This research paper discusses how teenage characters in Harry Potter novel series struggle to prove their masculinity and dominance over their peers. The behaviors, experiences, and relationships with family and peers of four main characters are tackled as elements determining these characters' status as masculine. The characters in question are: Harry, Ron, Neville and Draco. In this paper, Harry is mainly referred to in terms of his relationships with the other three, and of how his fame impacts their self-esteem. Ron, Harry's best friend, struggles to prove his worth as he is overshadowed by Harry. Neville is the son of two talented wizards who lose their sanity at the hands of a Voldemort's follower, and who is underestimated because of his grandmother's comparisons of him to his parents. Draco acts according to his complex feelings for Harry, and struggles to assert himself and show superiority over other male characters.

Key Words: Traditional Masculinity, Self-esteem, Dominant, Superiority, Sport, Feelings, Feminine

ملخص البحث:

تناقش الدراسة الحالية صراع المراهقين الذكور لإثبات مكانتهم الذكورية، ولتفرض السيادة علي غيرهم من المراهقين الذكور. تشير الدراسة إلي سلوكيات وخبرات وعلاقات أربعة من المراهقين: هاري، ورون، ونيفل، ودرابكو؛ مع أسرهم وزملائهم كعوامل مؤثرة علي مكانتهم كذكور. حين تتناول الدراسة الحالية شخصية هاري، فهي تشير إليه أغلب الوقت في إطار علاقته بالشخصيات الثلاث الأخرى، وكيف يؤثر هو وشهرته علي تقديرهم لذواتهم. وهناك رون، الصديق المقرب لهاري، الذي يعاني من أجل أن يثبت ذاته في ظل شهرة وشعبية هاري التي تغطي علي إنجازاته. أما الشخصية الثالثة فهي لنيفل، ابن لساحرين متميزين فقدتا عقليهما بسبب التعذيب علي يد ساحرة تابعة لفولدمورت. يعاني نيفل من ضعف التقدير من قبل جدته التي تقارنه بوالديه. أما عن رابع الشخصيات، درابكو، فتصرفاته تكشف عن مشاعره المتضاربة تجاه هاري، حيث يجاهد هو أيضا من أجل إثبات نفسه وتفوقه علي غيره من الذكور.

كلمات دلالية: الذكورية التقليدية، تقدير الذات، ساند، التفوق، مشاعر، أنثوي.

Introduction:

First, masculinity is defined in terms of men's relationships with each other, and not only in terms of opposition to femininity. Advantages of legal protection, social privileges and benefits are granted to men who fulfill the traditional masculine roles and who possess masculine physical and emotional traits (Connell 3-23). Traits like toughness, lack of emotional expression and the denial of all signs of weakness mark what is called traditional masculinity (Burn and Ward 254-263; Randell et al. 490). The teenage male characters' aim to be traditionally approved of as masculine is either supported or hindered by their family conditions, and their participation in sports. Feelings and their expressions or lack thereof are another aspect that define these characters' position as masculine or not among their peers.

• Family Support and Status as Related to Self-esteem

Self-esteem is defined as the general positive idea, and the self-respect one has about and for himself/ herself (Sedikides and Gress 110-138). According to Wang

and Ollendick, there is an affective element in the definition of self-esteem. They suggest that the self-evaluation as part of self-esteem is followed with emotions for the self as a reaction to the ideas one has about himself/herself (253-271). The level of one's self-esteem can be approximately evaluated through how one views his/her body, academic or professional achievement, social and athletic skills and ethnicity (Abdel-Khalek 4). Self-esteem is usually driven from the comparisons one holds between himself/herself and others. One resorts to adopt new behaviors or change his/her previous known behaviors so that he/she could get others to see them in a certain way. The concept of self-esteem as a personality trait is argued to be different from the view of self-esteem as a state that is effected by feelings, events and changes (Gilovich et al. 68).

Ron, Harry's best friend, has five older brothers, three of whom have achieved academic or professional success before he started his first year in Hogwarts School for Witchcraft and Wizardry, and the other two of the brothers are a twin who gain awe and

attention by being mischievous and creative in unfamiliar ways. Teenagers who are academically high achievers receive their parents' approval, while those who are athletic and who maintain a positive relationship with their colleagues receive their peers' support (Harter 610-642). Ron's brothers: Bill, Charlie and Percy are good students who get prestigious jobs and opportunities after graduation. Bill and Charlie both travel abroad, and Percy ends up working at the ministry of magic as an assistant of important figures like Barty Crouch. As a result, they are constantly praised by their mother, Molly (Rowling, CHS 48; GF 47, 48). On the other hand, Fred and George are Quidditch players who are funny and witty. Consequently, they are popular among their colleagues, especially on Ron's fifth year at school as they start their own business that targets the school students (Rowling, GF 44-46).

Ron's jealousy of his brothers, and later Harry, is interrelated with the perfectionism he develops as a result of being the son of a perfectionist mother who brags about her academically and professionally successful sons while degrading Ron's behaviors, and being the younger brother of Fred and George, who are far from supportive. Ron, especially on his first years at school, does not get much credit from his family.

Perfectionism is known as one's tendency to aim to fit into high personal criteria, and one's close attention to whether these criteria are met or not (Lo and Abbott 96-116). There are two types of perfectionism. First is the adaptive perfectionism which takes place once the individual sees that he/she could achieve his/her target, meeting the high criteria he/she is seeking (Slaney et al. 130-145). The second type of perfectionism is maladaptive perfectionism, which refers to the state in which one realizes his criteria is not met, leading him to focus his attention to persistent self-criticism (Frost et al. 449-

468). Ron's behavior indicate that he is a perfectionist of the second type.

Ron's achievements are most likely to be misunderstood or underappreciated by his family. For example, Ron's broken wand saves him and Harry from Professor Lockhart's memory loss charm (Rowling, CHS 320), and his idea of using his father's car helps him and Harry to get to Hogwarts as they miss the school train, yet his mother gets angry with him that he endangers himself and Harry, and risks his father's job and reputation (72, 92). Even as Ron proves talent in Quidditch, and as he is appointed prefect, Fred and George, his older brothers, do not show him much support; they, rather, constantly mock him (Rowling, OPH 148, 530, 532, and 631).

In the light of these views, and adding that lack or scarcity of family support is suggested to have direct connections with low self-esteem in male teenagers (Wang et al. 227), Ron is seen complaining of Percy, an older brother, becoming Head Boy in Hogwarts (Rowling, PA 11-13). Percy's achievement adds to the gap of success between Ron and his older brothers, which, in turn, adds to Ron's sense of inferiority. Ron goes on, sadly, narrating his brothers' examples of success and achievements (Rowling, GF 45). He speaks of how his aspiration to be an auror is far-fetched, saying that only "the elite" of witches and wizards are taken (Rowling, OPH 212).

Defense mechanisms are defined by Freud as "ways of trying to reduce stress and anxiety; they involve denial or distortion of reality and they operate at an unconscious level" (qtd. in McConnell 488). Ron uses sarcasm as a defense mechanism against his feelings of worthlessness as he deals with his brothers' achievements. He makes fun of Percy working with powerful people at the ministry like Barty Crouch, making success and discipline, that normally gain people's respect, look like they invite mockery and shame, thus would not make Percy more favored or appreciated than him

(Rowling, CHS 48; GF 324). This is further asserted as Crocker and Park claim that teenagers tend to belittle the achievements they could not make as a strategy to protect their self-esteem from going down (8).

Even in terms of the power given to him to set order, as part of being a prefect on his fifth year, Ron does not dare to apply it when it means challenging his older brothers, Fred and George. As the twins start their project of magical projects, illegally selling these at school, Hermione, a prefect herself, tries to stop them, threatening to report them to the school management. She asks Ron, their brother, for backup; yet, he denies her support, asking her to "leave [him] out of it" (Rowling, OPH 206, 207, 210). Ron is finally given the chance to prove himself as a competent student, by fulfilling his role as a prefect; yet, he chooses to give in to Fred and George's authority over him, voluntarily letting go of the power granted to him to set order, allowing them to go on with their mischief. Thus, Ron loses one aspect of at least one kind of power that Harry does not enjoy.

His family, though friendly and cooperative, does not seem to be the best at supporting Ron (Rowling, CHS 92). For example, he does not receive a new wand for a long time and he has to use a broken one which causes him, as a result of being broken, problems of casting spells improperly, and, as a result, moments of embarrassment (Rowling, CHS, 77, 79, 118, and 203). He later gets terribly looking robes to wear for the ball which he rejects, yet does not get an alternative, getting scolded by his mother as a result (Rowling, GF 133).

The family's scarce share of given approval and misunderstanding of his deeds might be one reason why Ron is not self-confident. Moreover, as both Fred and George leave school after causing much chaos as a final attempt to defy Dolores Umbridge (Rowling, OPH 616-623), Ron

expresses his concern over his mother upcoming letter in which she, somehow, as he expects, would blame Fred and George's mischief on him (627). Ron's inaction and cowardice at times can be explained by the way his family sees him. Leary and MacDonald believe that kids think about themselves the same way their parents and caregivers think about them (401-420).

However, Ron sometimes manages to save the day. During their stay at Dean's Forest, Ron saves Harry from the lake, and obtains the Gryffindor's sword, which he uses to destroy one of the Horcruxes, i.e. soul vessels. Yet, as he prepares to stab the Horcrux, the part of Voldemort inside it taps on Ron's insecurities, trying to magnify his doubts of Harry and Hermione being in love with each other, and insinuating that Molly, Ron's mother, would prefer Harry to be her son, rather than Ron (Rowling, DH 303-308).

Ron's self-esteem issues are not made any better with Harry being his best friend. Harry is the boy who lived, who survived the killing curse performed by the most powerful dark wizards of his era, and mysteriously causing this wizard's disappearance and loss of power. He, then, is already famous and loved before his arrival at Hogwarts. He is always attracting all the attention, sympathy and admiration that Ron desperately needs. The comparison Ron establishes between himself Harry on whether what he gets is the same as Harry does, suggests a sense of insufficiency and a feeling of being mistreated and undervalued (Rowling, PA 59).

Ron is seen by family and friends as second to Harry. As Ron receives a letter notifying him of being made a prefect, his brothers, Fred and George, show disbelief, and Hermione thinks the letter is directed to Harry, showing shock as Harry tells her it is for Ron (Rowling, OPH 148, 150, 151).

Both Harry and Ron take part in the rescue of the Philosopher's stone (Rowling, PHS 288-304) and Ginny (Rowling, CHS,

315-321), attacks Malfoy for calling Hermione a terrible name "mud-blood" (117), uses his power as a prefect to defend Harry against one of their colleagues, Seamus, who accuses the former of lying about the return of Voldemort (Rowling, OPH 202), and fights against the death-eaters at the ministry (719-754) and at the final battle (DH 402, 508-520, 525-532); yet only Harry is seen fit for serious talks and discussions with the grown-ups like Dumbledore and other professors, while Ron is sent to take care of trivial matters, or is only allowed to stay because he is Harry's friend (Rowling, CHS 350; OPH 558). Ron is the only one of the three friends who is left out from Professor Slughorn's party invitations, something that sparks Ron's jealousy from both Harry and Hermione (Rowling, HBP 234):

"Harry, Harry, just the man I was hoping to see!" he boomed genially, twiddling the ends of his walrus mustache and puffing out his enormous belly, "I was hoping to catch you before dinner! What do you say to a spot of supper tonight in my rooms instead? We're having a little party, just a few rising stars, I've got McLaggen coming and Zabini, the charming Melinda Bobbin — I don't know whether you know her? Her family owns a large chain of apothecaries — and, of course, I hope very much that Miss Granger will favor me by coming too."

Slughorn made Hermione a little bow as he finished speaking. It was as though Ron was not present; Slughorn did not so much as look at him (195).

Another male character whose self-esteem is effected by his family and peers is Neville. He has self-esteem issues which

does not make him much of a rival to his peers. He is not very talented in magic, either. It is suggested that family experiences in childhood has a cause and effect relationship with how one views himself/herself; people who have more positive experiences are reported to have higher self-esteem than those with negative experiences (Stinson et al., 993–1013). Furthermore, beside high demands and expectations from their parents or caretakers, teenagers need support and love to help them have high self-esteem (Mogonea and Mogonea 192).

The family conditions both Harry and Neville went through are similar to a great extent; both of them lose their parents by the hands of dark wizards or witches: Harry's parents are killed by Voldemort, while Neville's are tortured to insanity by Bellatrix Lestrange (Rowling, GF 502). Besides, both teens have to live with relatives until they join Hogwarts, and to whom they go back in the summer holidays. These relatives are not supportive; Harry's aunt and her husband mistreat him and always deprive him of the simple childhood pleasures while excessively pampering their son, Dudley. Neville, too, has a tough grandmother who does not think very highly of him (Rowling PHS 21-40, 133, 134; CHS 1, 2, 7-11, 20-22; PA 2-6, 20-22; GF 17, 18; OPH 25-28, 475).

As the eleven-year-old Neville speaks of himself, he cannot show magical abilities before school until very recently that his family is becoming to believe he is a muggle, i.e. non-wizard (Rowling, PHS 133, 134). His grandmother does not think very highly of him, causing him to believe that he would not pass his O.W.L tests as the head of the Wizarding Examination Authority is a friend of hers, and she already has the same opinion about Neville as her friend. Neville, unsurprisingly, does not score very highly on the tests (Rowling, OPH 653; HBP 152). As Kim and Lee explain, academic stress in kids can be attributed to parents', in this case

the caretakers', negative relationship with them (1519-1532).

Neville's low achievement is further proven as he struggles during the group training against dark magic that Harry offers his friends, making more mistakes than the rest of the group. Aboard the Hogwarts train to school, and as Neville finds himself in the spotlight, trying to show Harry and Luna a new magical plant he has got, he fails to impress them by accidentally causing the plant to explode (Rowling, OPH 172).

Neville's family effect can be understood in the light of Erikson's psychosocial theory. Erikson's theory proves that teenagers get a sense of industry when their achievements are valued by others, mainly their parents and caretakers; and, contrarily, they develop a feeling of inferiority when they are found underachieving or incompetent (Maier 84).

Harry, being able to handle Malfoy's bullying, can be explained by the emotional support of which he has plenty, while Neville's weakness and clumsiness might be referred to his little share of love and support, and to the pressure his family and grandmother place upon him. He speaks of his aunts and uncles trying to push him as a child to show magical abilities by endangering him until his powers reveal themselves, and he tells his friends how his grandmother would like him to [uphold] the family honor", expecting him to try to take part in the Triwizard championship which is a very dangerous competition (Rowling, PHS 133, 134; GF 161). More than that, during the battle against the death-eaters at the ministry, where Neville's life, along with his friends', is at stake, Neville's only weapon, his wand, gets broken and all he can think of then is that his grandmother is going to kill him for breaking the wand that once belonged to his father, as if facing her anger is scarier than dealing with evil witches and wizards who are trying to kill him and his friends (Rowling, OPH 732).

According to Julie Gjelsvik, Neville's Remembrall, the ball that glows once he forgets something, is a symbol of male vulnerability. The ball is stolen by Malfoy, who flies off on his broomstick until he is caught by Harry. Furthermore, the broomstick, a symbol of power and speed, two traits commonly treated as masculine, signals Neville's lack of traditional masculinity as he fails to use it during the first flying lesson that witnesses Malfoy's mischief (5, 6) and (Rowling, PHS 110).

Harry, however, is more privileged than Neville. Harry is lucky enough to find another family in the Weasleys, who stand by him in times of difficulty and who provide a warm family environment for him when he stays with them before school or goes shopping for school supplies with their sons and only daughter (Rowling, CHS 25-70; OPH 56-120). According to Parker and Benson, kids provided with attention, love, care and support by family are more likely to have higher levels of self-esteem than the kids who do not get the same privileges (519-530).

Harry receives an invitation from the Weasleys to attend the Quidditch World Cup with them, where he has a lot of fun getting away from the Dursleys' ill-treatment of his aunt's family. The fact that five members of the Weasleys all take the burden of going to pick up Harry to their home before the beginning of the world cup matches, confirms the solidarity among themselves and which they provide to Harry. The large number of the Weasleys, being nine members, works as some sort of compensation for Harry's lack of real family (Rowling, GF 8-141, 24, 26, 38). He is also welcome to spend some special events like the Christmas holidays at their place, and is accompanied by Mr. Weasley to attend his court hearing at the ministry of magic (Rowling, OPH 56-125; HBP 67-113, 271-291; DH 33-127).

On the other hand, when Harry goes through a period of no contact with his

friends, the Weasleys and his godfather, he experiences frequent episodes of loss of control and lack of anger management (Rowling, OPH 59-61, 68, 76, and 80). This family-like treatment Harry gets on the Weasleys' part works as a defense line against the challenges Harry faces so that he can live like a normal teen despite all the burden on his shoulders living with the traumatic death of his parents, plus all the other events that ensue ending with having to be the one who kills Voldemort.

Draco Malfoy is Harry's colleague and is the son of Lucius Malfoy, a death eater, i.e. a follower of Voldemort. As Malfoy introduces himself to Harry on the train, "Ron gave a slight cough..." and his cough was interpreted by Draco as a suppressed laugh at his name. The interpretation of a cough as a mocking laugh gives a hint at Draco's low self-esteem which is enhanced by his father's past actions. Draco's attempt at saving his own face uses his father's status as a rich, powerful man compared to Ron's poor and underprivileged family (Rowling, PHS 115, 116).

However, Malfoy is scarcely found bragging about anything other than his father's money, position or connections. He joins the Slytherin team for Quidditch only after his father buys the whole team a new set of broomsticks, and is chosen to be a prefect student on his fifth year at Hogwarts (Rowling, CHS 117; OPH 173). As the O.W.L tests approach, Malfoy brags to his friends and colleagues about his father's close relationship with the head of the Wizarding Examination Authority that supervises the tests (Rowling, OPH 652).

Nevertheless, his father's connections and richness rarely bring him the satisfaction of being better than Harry, the Chosen One or, at least, his equal. He complains to his father about Harry joining the Quidditch Gryffindor team, and soon enough, he is the new Slytherin seeker. However, that does not help him take over Harry as the Gryffindor's team wins

(Rowling, CHS 117, 181). Malfoy also uses his father's position to threaten Alastor Moody, his professor, after the latter punishes him for annoying Harry and Ron, yet he only gets more humiliated as Moody, whose previous job was to hunt death-eaters, refers to his old knowledge of Malfoy's father, hinting the mal-reputation of Lucius Malfoy being a previous death-eater:

Malfoy, whose pale eyes were still watering with pain and humiliation, looked malevolently up at Moody and muttered something in which the words "my father" were distinguishable.

"Oh yeah?" said Moody quietly, limping forward a few steps, the dull clunk of his wooden leg echoing around the hall. "Well, I know your father of old, boy. . . . You tell him Moody's keeping a close eye on his son . . . you tell him that from me. . . ." (Rowling, GF 174).

Other than family and parents, peers also provide information about oneself and others. Going through different experiences with their peers, teenagers gain more self-knowledge themselves (Newcombe 454). The more peer support teens receive, the more self-esteem they have (Gunnarsdóttir 14). Neville's character evolves as he spends more time in Harry's company, surrounded, as well, by many male peers. As Harry teaches him to stand up to Malfoy, his bully, on their first year, telling him that "he is worth ten of Malfoy" (Rowling, PHS 160), he stands up to Malfoy again attacking him once the latter makes an impression of mentally ill people, probably secretly referring to Neville's parents who lost their sanity due to torture (Rowling, OPH 334).

Neville's involvement with Harry helps him turn into a warrior against evil who fights with Harry at the ministry,

supporting and urging him not to hand the prophecy to Lucius Malfoy although the death-eaters are threatening to kill Harry's friends, including Neville himself (Rowling, OPH 730-738). As Harry, Ron and Hermione leave school on their last year to find and destroy Voldemort's Horcruxes, Neville, along with Ginny, Luna and others, shows courage defying the death-eaters' authority at school, getting tortured by them as a result (Rowling, DH 465-479). Furthermore, he is the only one to stand up to Voldemort during the final battle after Harry's alleged murder by Voldemort, when everyone else temporarily loses hope and courage. Not only this, Neville manages to kill Nagini, Voldemort's very dangerous snake and Horcrux (598, 599). Even before that, Neville shows respect for the school rules as he stands against his friends, Harry, Ron and Hermione to stop them from going out at night, threatening to fight them if necessary (Rowling, PHS 292).

Trying to be treated and seen as masculine, males abide by stereotypes of manhood and masculinity (Pfeffer et al. 652-672). According to Vandello et al., males are expected to be achieving so that they can be respected as masculine enough. Failure to demonstrate power threatens them to be regarded as low-value males (1325-1339). Harry is easily distinguished from Ron in terms of courage, although both of them adopt a similar risk-taking attitude, sometimes. An example of this is when the students are on the train to Hogwarts and some disturbance is noticed outside the compartment of Harry, Ron and Hermione. Harry, thirteen years old at this time, takes the initiative to step out of the compartment to investigate what is happening, while Ron stays still, speaking "from behind Harry" (Rowling, PA 86). Rushing outside of the compartment, Harry is nearly attacked by the dementors. He faints while hearing screams of people calling for help. Though losing his consciousness, he is still worried about others' safety. He "wanted to help...

", although "... there was a rushing in his ears.... he was being dragged downward" (88).

Ron's display of fear contributes to his inferior status as a male compared to Harry. He looks and sounds anxious before Hagrid's first class as a teacher of the magical creatures' class because Hagrid is known for his eccentric taste of breeding dangerous species (Rowling, PA 103). More than that, he gives Harry the initiative of trying to climb the weird-looking ladder leading to the divination classroom (106). Ron, just like the majority of witches and wizards, fears to utter Voldemort's name, who is commonly referred to as "you-know-how" or "the Dark Lord". Harry, however, is the only one among his peers who uses the name without fear since year one as Dumbledore instructs him to: "Call him Voldemort.... Always use the proper name for things" because "fear of a name increases fear of the thing itself" (Rowling, PHS 216).

Other than fear, Ron does not handle pain and lack of privileges very well, as compared to Harry. Both of them, along with Hermione, settle in Dean's Forest as part of their quest to find Voldemort's soul Horcruxes. As they find one of the Horcruxes, taking the shape of a locket, they decide to take turns wearing it since it proved to cause anyone who wears it for a long time to be short-tempered and easily provoked. The three friends have to endure hunger and cold in the deserted forest, along with the annoying side-effects of putting on the locket. According to Maslow's theory of motivation, there are needs that motivate the human behavior, and these needs are divided into a hierarchy starting from the most to the least basic. The most basic are the physiological needs that revolve around the need for food, water, sleep and sex. When these basic needs are not met, the human will never want anything else. On the other hand, when these needs are fulfilled, one becomes ready to seek the fulfillment of

higher needs like human interaction and achievement (Maslow 36).

Aggression that arises in Ron towards his friends can be explained by the lack of proper fulfillment of his need for food and adequate rest. However, Ron experiences more irritation than Harry and Hermione, becoming rather mean, although all of them are going through the same experience. Ron's annoying attitude shows itself mainly in his objection to Hermione's cooking, and his aggressive tone of speech with both her and Harry (Rowling, DH 232-234).

Being unable to handle temporary tough circumstances in comparison to Harry, puts Ron in an inferior status to him. More than that, complaining about Hermione's voluntary cooking instead of thanking her for the effort, reflects Ron's lack of appreciation for others, and his desire to be served and pampered unconditionally, which further brings him down in comparison to Harry, in terms of handling responsibilities.

Ron's previous life conditions as a child are already more luxurious than Harry's, at least in terms of familial warmth and hot meals that he can get without much effort, unlike Harry, as Harry himself recalls, who used to be starved and neglected by the Dursleys (Rowling, PHS 19-45; CHS 11, 35, 44; DH 234). Consequently, Ron's behaviors at Dean's Forest may not be an indication of innate weakness and lack of discipline; it rather suggests that his attitude is one driven by the unfamiliarity he finds in the situation, and which he is suddenly put through. Harry's and Ron's different family circumstances, then, may play a role in their different levels of will power and resistance at tough times.

Saved from under the lake by Harry as part of the second challenge for the contestants in the Triwizard Championship, Ron goes on narrating false tales about how he was captured by the merpeople, i.e. sea creatures, only after he had fought bravely

against fifty of them (Rowling, GF 429). He is attempting to get some of the attention and praise Harry is receiving after the latter saved him, so that he would be another champion, not just a friend of the champion. Similarly, as friends and colleagues compliment Harry on his skills as their Defense against the Dark Arts instructor, Ron tries to grab the attention towards him, asking Harry if he "[saw him] disarm Hermione", bragging about his performance on the training (Rowling, OPH 367).

Ron's inferiority to Harry is also money-related. Ron, who is much poorer than Harry, feels terrible after he found out that the money he thought he had paid Harry for the omnioculars, i.e. a tool that resembles binoculars, that the latter bought him was fake money. He goes as far as to suggest that Harry knew that the money was fake and that he took it so that Ron would not feel indebted to him, which is an accusation that Harry denies (Rowling, GF 79, 459, 460).

Draco Malfoy's weakness is stressed as his mother tries to get things done for him. As he is chosen by Voldemort to kill Dumbledore, Narcissa Malfoy, Draco's mother, begs Snape to do this task instead of her son, thinking that Malfoy is too young and that he will fail and get himself killed. She urges Snape to swear to protect Malfoy no matter what, and to kill Dumbledore for him if he fails (Rowling, HBP 17-31). Trying to prove his masculinity, Malfoy rejects Snape's help (Rowling, HBP 268-270). According to Randell et al, male teens find it essential for their masculinity to resist needs that would make them appear weak and feminine (490).

Malfoy does not only depend on his family name and connections; attempting to let the death-eaters inside Hogwarts, Malfoy uses enchanted coins for confidential communication, an idea that he gets by eavesdropping to Hermione's conversation with her friends. Nonetheless, as Malfoy talks about how he has managed to let

Voldemort's followers in, he mentions how Hermione's idea helped him, still referring to Hermione using the same offensive term "mud-blood" (Rowling, HBP 490). This further indicates that Malfoy is used to taking people for advantage, feeling no gratitude for their help, as if things should go his way and others should help for nothing in return. Belittling others' help, Malfoy reflects his tendency to deprive anyone, but himself, of credit, focusing mainly on his part of the work done so that he would gain praise and respect to please his ego.

To conclude, Ron's self-esteem, then, is most of the time brought to its lowest point by his family treatment, his family circumstances, his mediocre skills and some of his personality traits. Being the Chosen One's male best friend, Ron's achievements are obscured as compared to Harry's. Neville, too, like Ron, has self-esteem issues. His self-worth is linked to how his family treat him and to the trauma he experiences due to the loss of his parents. Peer support, however, helps Neville to adopt a different attitude towards himself, which is reflected in a change of his actions. Malfoy's grudge against Harry is suggested to be encouraged, at least partially, by Harry's superiority over him, and Harry's loath of and disinterest in his friendship. This, in turn, threatens Malfoy's view of himself, hence, his self-esteem.

- **Feeling as Feminine; Violence and Defense Mechanisms as Channels for Suppressed Feelings in Males**

Complaining and help-seeking are found in the series as adopted or rejected by some male characters. Their attitude towards help-seeking adds to or subtracts from people's respect of them as males. On the other hand, to release feelings of anger, jealousy and hurt, male characters resort to physical and verbal violence. Besides, violent sports, like Quidditch are highly appreciated by them. The game also helps them gain approval and admiration of each

other and of girls. Harry, Ron and Malfoy all take part in the sport which witnesses a reflection of and/or leads to a change in their self-esteem and others' view of them.

Ron complains of how his mother needs help around the house, an elf, for instance, and how the Malfoys are richer than they are (Rowling, CHS 43). Adding to that, Ron expresses his displeasure with his possessions, e.g. Errol, his owl. He later complains about how Ginny, his younger sister, chose a silly name for his new owl: "Pigwidgeon" (Rowling, CHS 30, 32; GF 49, 133).

To add to the list of complaints about what he gets or does not get, Ron belittles his father's job at the ministry. His father works in a department concerned with the misuse of magic and magical objects, which is more concerned with the muggles than any other department in the ministry. Being the son of a wizard who deals with muggles in a world in which a lot of wizards regard the non-wizard world with disdain, Ron's self-esteem is not at its best. The father himself, Arthur Weasley, is self-conscious of being less privileged than other wizards (Rowling, PA 67). As Malfoy brags about his father's position and connections, and what important information he knows, Ron criticizes Malfoy, saying that Malfoy is "... making it look like he knows everything and [they] don't", linking the father's positions and status to one's level of knowledge, thus, superiority (Rowling, GF 143).

The fact that Ron complains a lot suggests, adding to his insecurity and lack of self-confidence, his dire need to be heard and seen; to grab the attention of his friends and family just like his brothers do, whether by using positive or negative methods. Constant complaining also suggests Ron's inability to deal with his problems, hence, his use of the projection defense mechanism, i.e. claiming that others are causing one's negative feelings (McConnell 488), blaming his family and their financial and social status for his misery. Attributing

his problems to external elements of family and friends is Ron's strategy to protect his sense of self (Crocker and Park 291-313). Ron's constant complaints may be one reason why he is not viewed as less valuable than Harry as a wizard. According to a study by Breslin et al., men are found to be less ready to complain at the workplace because they think it would make others view them as less worthy as workers (782-793).

Ron uses displacement as a defense mechanism to release his anger and sense of helplessness. Displacement is the transference of emotions that one cannot deal with properly, like anxiety or anger, to another thing or human that is not very intimidating (McConnell 488). Ron, who becomes aggressive to his friends at Dean's Forest as mentioned in this thesis, even as he receives Hermione's help, shouts at a student younger than him only because the latter happens to be there, right after he has a quarrel with Ginny, his younger sister over her romantic relationship with Dean Thomas. Ginny stresses her right to do with her life what she thinks is right, rejecting Ron's protection, referring his attitude to his lack of romantic life. Ron's inability to beat Ginny in the argument, and getting yelled at and insulted by her explains his attitude towards the student he shouts at as compensation for losing the argument (Rowling, HBP 238-240).

A year after the Hogwarts ball, Padma, Ron's dance partner, lets her friends know that she was not satisfied with the ball because of how Ron neglected her by refusing to dance with her. Moments after being told so by Luna Lovegood, Ron shifts his attention to his new position as a prefect, expressing his desire to patrol the Hogwarts train to "give out punishments if people are misbehaving". Claiming and attempting to exercise his prefect privilege who sets order among his colleagues and has the right to punish them when necessary, Ron is trying to compensate for the insult directed to his power as a male, that he was not good

enough for his female dance partner (Rowling, OPH 174).

The richness Malfoy and his two friends enjoy brings the worst of Ron's behaviors. He becomes obsessed with Malfoy that he goes on making fun of him or trying to upset him to pay him back (Rowling, PA 227, 237), and makes a joke of Malfoy's two friends, Crabbe and Goyle as he and Harry take on their appearance after drinking a transfiguring potion (Rowling, CHS 230, 231). It seems that Ron is trying to feel better by degrading the ones who make him feel bad about himself and his family.

When men experience a threat to their masculinity they tend to get involved in or support violent, aggressive acts like the use of physical and military force (Carian and Sobotka 1-6). Taking part in violent sports or participating in acts of violence like battles are argued to be used by male teens to release their emotions, instead of talking about them (Randell et al. 491). In Malfoy's attempts at proving his power, he puts himself in great danger. When males' sense of power is threatened because they cannot fulfill the level of an aspired level of masculinity or as other males are more capable to prove their worth, they might engage in violent or aggressive endeavors (Reidy et al. 459-465). As Harry manages to ride Buckbeak, a dangerous magical creature that took him off the ground for a quick, yet thrilling journey, Malfoy rushes to ride Buckbeak after Harry:

"Malfoy, Crabbe, and Goyle had taken over Buckbeak. He had bowed to Malfoy, who was now patting his beak, looking disdainful.

"This is very easy," Malfoy drawled, loud enough for Harry to, hear him. "I knew it must have been, if Potter could do it... I bet you're not dangerous at all, are you?" he

said to the Hippogriff. "Are you, you great ugly brute?"

It happened in a flash of steely talons; Malfoy let out a high pitched scream and next moment, Hagrid was wrestling Buckbeak back into his collar as he strained to get at Malfoy, who lay curled in the grass, blood blossoming over his robes" (Rowling, PA 121-124).

Later, as he tries to prove his masculinity, Malfoy rejects Snape's help with the task that the dark lord has assigned him: killing Dumbledore. Although Malfoy is facing difficulty with the task, he prefers to face the possible dangers without an elder's help (Rowling, HBP 268-270).

The fact that Malfoy always bullies Harry although he was eager to befriend him on the train to Hogwarts on their first year (Rowling PHS, 116), suggests Malfoy's deep interest, yet his strong frustration with Harry as the latter rejects his friendship. His suppressed anger gets him to be rather obsessed with Harry, comparing himself to the latter, expressing his anger at Harry getting attention, suggesting that he does not deserve any of this (Rowling, CHS 52, 53).

To avenge himself against Harry for rejecting his friendship, Malfoy emotionally abuses Harry by mocking his loss of consciousness on the train, suggesting Harry's weakness (Rowling, PA 92, 101, 280). There is an association between the loss of consciousness, invited by weak nerves, and femininity. By mocking Harry's fainting incident, Malfoy is shaking Harry's image as the strongest male among his peers. Another time in which Malfoy uses Harry's troubles to his advantage is when Harry is not chosen to be a prefect, unlike Ron and Hermione. Thus, Malfoy tries to provoke Harry by referring to him as "second to Weasley" (Rowling, OPH 179).

Malfoy's jealousy of Harry is proven as he usually strikes with mockery and insults soon after Harry is seen as a champion or savior. Malfoy makes fun of both Harry and Ron following Harry's win

in Quidditch, referring to Harry's loss of family and to Ron's poverty as sources of mockery (Rowling, PHS 210, 239, 240), and he schemes to put Harry into trouble right after Harry is chosen for the Gryffindor Quidditch team, so he challenges Harry and Ron into a duel that never took place so that Harry and Ron would get caught out of bed during the sleeping hours (Rowling, PHS 164). By calling for a duel but never showing up, Malfoy further asserts the assumption of his insecurity and cowardice.

Malfoy's deep frustration with Harry's rejection, goes beyond the latter to reach anyone that happens to be on Harry's side. His choice of Ron as the object of his constant mockery mainly because he is Harry's best friend, marks Ron as Harry's sidekick, who has to deal with Malfoy's bullying not because of who he is, rather because of who he shows up with. Nonetheless, when Ron finally shows skills at Quidditch, Malfoy's jealousy of Ron takes a different turn; Ron is not only the boy that Harry chooses over him, he is now talented and is worthy of admiration himself. So, as he bullies Harry when the latter shows ability or achieves some victory, Malfoy mocks Ron as the latter is playing well, trying to put him down by referring to his old broomstick (Rowling, OPH 269).

Malfoy's inferiority to Hermione is explained by Hermione being the top student of her class and Harry's best friend. These two reasons, Hermione's academic superiority and her close friendship with Harry, urge him to try to put her down, just like he does to Ron. Thus, Malfoy degrades Hermione's origin by verbally abusing her, calling her a "mud-blood", which is a terrible name used to refer to witches or wizards born to muggles (Rowling, CHS 117; GF 86, 87, 104).

As Malfoy gains power, becoming a Prefect on his fifth year, he misuses it for his own privilege. As students leave the Hogwarts train where they should take carriages to take them to school, Malfoy,

along with his friends, pushes first and second year students away so that he can get to the carriages first although it is his duty as a prefect to help younger students (Rowling, OPH 182). Malfoy's attempts to prove his masculine power stops him from voicing his fear to Snape, yet he cries alone in a deserted bathroom. When he realizes that Harry has seen him during his moment of weakness, Malfoy reacts violently cursing Harry with his wand (Rowling, HBP 268-270, 434). This aggressive reaction is meant to make up for the humiliation Malfoy has experienced as his masculine image is ruined when he is spotted while crying, because crying is traditionally a feminine reaction that connotes weakness.

Targeting Ron and Hermione, Harry's best friends, Malfoy is avenging himself for being rejected by Harry as a friend. Moreover, by pinpointing things these two cannot help, like financial status or origin, as indication of worthlessness, Malfoy himself shows weakness, and inability to assert himself or prove his own talent or competence without resorting to things outside himself; his father's money and connections, or his family origin.

When it comes to the male reaction to help-seeking, Courtenay suggests that men are more prone to resist medical care as a sign of toughness and independence, which are traits commonly seen as masculine (1385–1401). O'Brien argues that men resist help or medical attention because they do not wish to look weak (503-516).

Investigating Harry's behaviors at certain times, his friends' and caretakers' actions may sometimes be understood by him as underestimation of him as a male as they offer him help he does not think he needs. As Voldemort regains his power, Harry's safety becomes a necessity for the Order of the Phoenix. Thus, they designate a guard for him as he is about to set off for King's Cross train station. As Hermione reminds him of that, Harry loses his temper and makes fun of the idea (Rowling, OPH

166). Harry hides his head pain from the Weasleys because he thinks he should not be "jumpy" about such a trivial matter, which turns out to be a sign of his connection with Voldemort (Rowling, GF 19, 20). After Harry has his first indirect encounter with the dementors in which he faints, Madam Pomfrey, the school nurse, refers to him as "delicate" which makes Harry get angry (Rowling, PA 94).

It seems that the Order's measures to keep Harry safe suggests that Harry needs protection in the form of a stronger, older male accompanying him in public. This hints his weakness to himself and to those around him, which makes him, a male teen, feel degraded and humiliated. Besides, the language that Madam Pomfrey used to refer to Harry indicates softness and is accepted by the norm in referring to women and girls. Thus, Harry sees that her comment denies his masculinity and, once more, implies weakness. Harry's anger over these three previous instances of sympathy or help-offering can be understood as a reflection of the teens' ideas about masculinity and femininity. As reported by Marcell et al., male teens of the age group of 16-20 usually avoid seeking medical or professional help (966-975). According to Randell et al., male teenagers find it important to remain cool and show strength despite the pain or the challenge they face so that their masculinity would not be questioned (490).

Similarly, Harry sometimes feels as if the elders do not appreciate him as they should. For example, he shows bravery when two dementors revealed themselves in his neighborhood, saving his cousin Dudley by casting the Patronus Charm to scare the dementors away. As a result, he receives a letter from the ministry that he shall be expelled from school and that he has charges pressed against him for using magic outside school while he is underage. Harry receives a very short note from his godfather in response to his actions, warning him not to leave his aunt's house until a solution to

the problem is found. Harry feels angry and underestimated, having expected that his godfather to, at least, praise him for his bravery and quickness (Rowling, OPH 33).

Harry also becomes angry when the Weasleys' attention is shifted to their son, Ron, as the latter becomes prefect. Although both Ron and Hermione are granted this position, only Ron's success occupies Harry's head making him feel inferior to him. As Ron is usually seen second to Harry, the change in the situation in Ron's favor awakens Harry's anger with and jealousy of him (Rowling, OPH 153).

Struggling with negative feelings, the male characters play violent sports to deal with their emotional troubles. As for Quidditch, it is an example of violent sports that males resort to in order to release their feelings. Harry's first achievements at school were in Quidditch (Rowling, PHS 178-179), and later Ron joins the game, too. Though the Quidditch Gryffindor team included female players: Angelina, Alicia, Katie, and Ginny; male characters are more excited about the game (Rowling, PA 177). For instance, Harry insists on using the broomstick that was mysteriously sent him risking the possibility of being subjected to dangerous jinxes, then takes part in a Quidditch match although he has been recently attacked by the dementors (Rowling, PA 254), and Ron drinks what he thinks to be the luck potion, Felix Felicis, before an important match, ignoring the possible consequences of being caught and punished (Rowling, HBP 245, 248, 249).

Although the sports which include a fair share of violence and aggression are believed to release the teenagers' negative energy, it is claimed that the kids who take part in such sports are more prone to resort to violence in other aspects of their lives, too (Wong 321-333). For example, Malfoy insults Harry's and George's families following a Quidditch match which he and his team loses. Feeling insulted, both Harry and George use physical violence to punish

Malfoy for what he says (Rowling, OPH 384-386)

Quidditch is also a male competition that helps boys get the attention of girls. As Alicia, Angelina and Katie show interest in Cedric Diggory, the captain of an opponent team, Fred and George make fun of him, belittling him with insults (Rowling, PA 177). Those male players who are good at the game are viewed by both male and female characters as masculine, and as role models by their male peers. Ron, for instance, is fascinated with Viktor Krum, the famous Bulgarian player (Rowling, GF 71, 79, 90, 142, and 210). One year after Hermione, for whom he has complicated romantic feelings, accompanies Viktor to the dance ball, Ron seeks to join the game himself to prove himself as strong as Viktor (Rowling, OPH 225). Ron himself becomes more popular among girls and he gets a girlfriend for the first time, Lavender Brown, on his second year of being Gryffindor's keeper (Rowling, HBP 186).

It is a game of male competition to gain respect and be admired for fulfilling the expectations of traditional masculinity of being fast, athletic and tough. Teenagers who spend time in the company of peers while playing group sports, like Quidditch, develop more self-confidence and are better to have and apply social skills (Findlay and Coplan 153-161; Petruzzello et al 143-182; Kreager 705-724). Thus, teenagers become more popular and accepted among peers when they take part in sports (Bowker 214-229). As Ron proves himself as capable at the game, he becomes more self-confident and is able to talk about Harry's achievements, not to compare himself to him, but to encourage Harry to take up the mission of teaching his friends and colleagues how to defend themselves against dark magic (Rowling, OPH 303). This means that the game has helped Ron become more confident and assertive around his best friend who always, unintentionally, places Ron in the shadow.

On the other hand, when Ron's performance is not at its best, he feels down and is more self-conscious than usual (Rowling, HBP 242, 243). Since Quidditch is the activity that provides him with popularity and admiration, it becomes very crucial to Ron to maintain his level of performance at the game. When he fails to do so, his anxiety escalates. As Richman and Shaffer suggest, when a teenager's performance does not meet the expectations people place upon him/her, sports participation is more likely to become a burden on him/her rather than a boost for their self-esteem levels (189-199).

Although Ron changes his attitude about Harry and is more confident around him after his participation in the game, the former's self-esteem issues are not completely healed. According to M.H Kernis, people who place their self-confidence on certain achievements have their self-esteem levels become unstable, going up as people praise them, and going down as their achievement are not highly valued (57-90). This assumption is clear in Ron's insecurity one year after his success in Quidditch. Voldemort uses Ron's degraded self-image to weaken him as the latter attempts to destroy one of Voldemort's soul vessels (Rowling, DH 306-208).

Malfoy choosing to join the same activity Harry excels in, Quidditch, and choosing to take the same role, the team seeker, is not only a matter of following Harry and attempting to beat him at what he can do best. Quidditch, which is a famous sport for the magical world, is described as: "... highly dangerous, very exciting and played on broomsticks" (Rowling, PA 13). Being a dangerous game, those who play it well give an impression of being fearless. Courage and risk-taking, which are two traits needed in the game, are linked to masculinity. Since Malfoy already feels insecure about his self-image, being, just like Ron, overshadowed by Harry, it makes sense that he would choose Quidditch, in

particular, to try to bring himself some of the admiration and fame that Harry enjoys as the most prominent male.

Besides, Quidditch community is one which favors male players and their interests over the females', allowing the boys more space than the girls. Male players are presented as better than women players. Cho Chang, the only girl on Ravenclaw team and who is, just like Harry, her team's seeker is made Harry's second. As the match progresses, Harry finally sees the snitch ball he is supposed to catch to end the match. Cho Chang only sees the ball after Harry does, following Harry's chase of the ball (Rowling, PA 278). More than that, Angelina, one of the female players on Gryffindor's team, is referred to during the match by, Lee Jordan, the commentator, in terms of her physical attractiveness and beauty. Even Ginny's excellence at the game is connected to her male siblings being players themselves. She admits that she has learnt to play Quidditch by using her older brothers' broomsticks for practice (530).

Though Harry rejects seeking help or protection because it would either make a bully like Malfoy refer to him as less masculine or belittles his worth in his own eyes. Ron, however, always brings people's attention to his lack of wealth or skill by his habit of complaining. Both Ron and Malfoy use physical and verbal violence as compensation for their self-esteem issues. As male characters strive for superiority over the rest of the male group, they take risks and work hard to join a sport that requires physical strength and speed, and which brings its players popularity and respect. Surprisingly, male characters may resort to feminine ways to establish their superiority.

To conclude, it can be said that the four male characters lead a silent competition over the position of the strongest male. Self-esteem is one issue that these characters face. The paper refers to some incidents in which these male teenagers experience

challenges that both impact and reveal their level of self-esteem. Aspects that effect their self-esteem levels are tackled. Family and peer environments are suggested to have formed how these male characters see themselves and others. Attempting to handle self-esteem problems and to prove themselves superior to their peers, the male teen characters resort to violence and dangerous acts to help them gain popularity and admiration. The targeted audience in such attempts are both their male and female peers, and their elders.

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