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Class or Wealth

In the texts, *Jane Eyre* and the *Wide Sargasso Sea*, many of the characters were affected socially by their class and wealth on several occasions. In the *Wide Sargasso Sea*, it demonstrated how class and wealth has a strong influence towards Antoinette and her mother. Antoinette's family had owned many slaves, and they were very wealthy, though this all turned after the death of Antoinette's father and after the Emancipation Act. This was such a severe change for Antoinette's family that it made her mother, brother and herself to fight for themselves. It all ended up being bad for them because the family was mocked at and they received much hate (WSS. 10). Additionally, because of the class difference between Antoinette's family and the town people, it resulted in Antoinette's mother becoming distant from her daughter. The class differences changed Antoinette's relationship with her mother, and it also led her mother to look for a man that is financially stable so that he can help the family be safe and comfortable.

So, we know that before the Emancipation Act and the death of Antoinette's father happened, Antoinette's family were financially stable. The people in the town treated Antoinette's family horribly once they were no longer wealthy, then Antoinette's mother ended up marrying Mr. Mason. However, based on *Wide Sargasso Sea*, the hatred against the family grew even more, and that's when the family got back to their financial stability status. Antoinette's issue arises from the hatred she receives from "negros," I never looked at any strange negro. They hated us." (WSS. 13). Since Antoinette is dealing with racial prejudice in the form of bullying, she begins to see herself as what they call her, "a white cockroach" which would make her feel paranoid. It didn't matter whether Antoinette's family were rich or poor they were still being threatened and attacked by the people around them, and they were living with fear. "Yet one day when I was waiting there I was suddenly very much afraid..." (WSS. 18). The hate for the family has changed from insults and mocking in the streets to creating a vast, frightening, at the home of Antoinette's family.

Nonetheless, wealth also had a powerful impact on Mr. Rochester's life and how he got to meet Antoinette in the story of Jane Eyre. "Yet as little could he endure that a son of his should be a poor man. I must be provided for by a wealthy marriage", (*JE*. 121) meaning that Mr. Rochester had met Antoinette to serve Mr. Rochester to be the financial stability. That's why Antoinette became the best option for Mr. Rochester. Wealth was the main influential factor that led Mr. Rochester to meet and marry Antoinette. We all have seen throughout these stories that yes, wealth has been a significant role in the lives of Mr. Rochester, Antoinette and her family. The wealthy and class differences made Antoinette step up and handle considerable pain throughout, basically her whole life. What I learned in the excerpts from both Jane Eyre and the Wide Sargasso Sea is that the wealth and class differences have an impact on things and in the texts, it showed how it made Antoinette's life miserable and how it made Mr. Rochester's life to happen the way it did. It also made me think that maybe Bronte's goal was to show the readers what women experience in life because of their submissive role in the male-dominant society.