

CHAPTER THREE

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I would like to conclude the overall ideas that I have conveyed in the thesis. In my thesis, I analyzed the major character of Shaw's *Pygmalion*, Professor Henry Higgins. I found out that Higgins' characteristics are flaunty, misogynist, domineering, and rude.

The proof of him being flaunty is directly shown in Act I, when he is taking shelter from the rain. By taking notes of the girl, people begin to become suspicious of his behavior, and assume that he is a police officer. He retorts with his ability to precisely states people's origin based on the way they talk to him. His actions provoke admirations and envy from a sarcastic bystander and the crowd, after he correctly guesses the gentleman's origin. He also tells the exact gentleman that he is able to pass the flower girl in the scene as a duchess.

Higgins' next characteristic is misogynist. In his conversation with Pickering, he shows his dislike towards women by stating that men's and women's needs will never meet each other, and he adds that he would not bother

to find his significant other by saying that he is a confirmed bachelor for life. The next proof is when Higgins' mother asks him the reason why he is never attracted to a young woman in his life, which he replies by saying that he considers them to be idiots, and have no value for him to become his lover. Another proof is shown in Act IV, when Higgins states that he hates listening to a woman during the ambassador party dinner.

I find that Higgins' third characteristic is domineering. In Act V, he asserts his will on Eliza by rejecting her notion to marry Freddy Eynsford-Hill. Considering her to be his product, or "masterpiece" as he calls her, his arrogance makes him think that he "creates" everything that Eliza earned so far. Another proof of him being domineering can also be seen in Act V. When Eliza is declaring her decision to leave him, he clearly does not approve of it, let alone knowing that Eliza wants to become Professor Nepean's assistant. His rude responses imply that he considers himself to be better than Nepean, someone whom he considers his competitor in his field. He shows another assertive desire to control Eliza's life through forceful measures, such as laying his hands on her.

Higgins' last characteristic is rude. Before even knowing Eliza in Act I, he has already called her a "creature", and her use of language "kerbstone English". In Act V, he calls Eliza a slut out of his annoyance to her, even a worse nickname than the previous ones. He is also often reminded by other characters to behave politely and maintain his best behavior. In Act II, Mrs. Pearce reminds him that he often swears on several past occasions. Even his own mother, Mrs. Higgins, tells him abruptly to go home when she visits her. From the conversation, it is implied

that Higgins often offends her friends who come to her house, and ever since, they stop coming to visit her.

From the analysis on Higgins' characteristics, I can argue that a high class person often treats people inferior to them unfairly. The privilege that they have as higher class people makes them feel superior and they tend to underestimate and look down upon others below them.

In another spectrum, I would like to think that Shaw wrote *Pygmalion* in order to emphasize that the degree of one's social class does not really matter compared to who you truly are. I assume that he wrote the play this way in order to show that high class people could be just as repulsive as how they perceive lower class people. Seeing how Victorian society in England used to be, I think Shaw felt that high class people were hypocrites and superficial, as they were quick to judge others mainly based on their appearances, and they never tried to discover more of who a person really is. In another note, I would like to think that Shaw's purpose in creating Higgins is relevant. Surprisingly, in modern times, humankind has not changed so much compared to the Victorian period. We often consider ourselves as a priority above others, and judge them based on the outer appearance, and how other person is like is often based on what we expected and imagined from that person. Some people even take it so far to earn the glorified outer appearance that our whole society prefers, changing their innate and base traits just to fit in with the rest of the crowd.

However, Higgins' characteristics teach us that being a high class person is perhaps not as admirable and as comfortable as it may seem to the public eye, because in truth, no man is better than the other. They may have better aspects of life compared to the others, but it does not always mean that their morals are better than others, as it is proven through the character of Higgins.

