

# PYGMALION: STATEMENTS

1) No, you two infinitely stupid male creatures: the problem is what is to be done with her afterwards. – Mrs Higgins, Act 3

2) The difference between a lady and a flower girl is not how she behaves, but how she's treated. Eliza, act 5

3) Without accepting the comparison at all points, Eliza, it's quite true that your father is not a snob, and that he will be quite at home in any station of life to which his eccentric destiny may call him. – Higgins, act 5

Here I am, a shy, diffident sort of man.

- Higgins, Act II
- he considers himself like that

I was happy, I was free.

- Doolittle, Act V.
- when he was poor, now he has money and expectations of the class; he realised how happy he was when he was one of the undeserving poor

I haven't any small talk.

- Clara, Act II.
- She needs the "new small talk" in order to be accepted into society.

Besides, she's useful.

- Higgins, Act II.
- She is his housekeeper. She always knew where Higgins's things were, that is why he said that; she helps run his household.

You certainly are a pretty pair of babies, playing with your live doll.

- Mrs Higgins, Act III.
- She said that to her son and Pickering when they explained her what are they doing (the experiment). She is very smart and knows what is going on right away.

England and America are two countries divided by a common language.

- George Bernard Shaw

...there's more ways than one of turning a girl's head

- Mrs Pearce, Act II

Does it occur to you, that the girl has some feelings?

- Pickering, Act II
- He said that to Higgins when he said that if they gave Eliza some money, she would only spend it on drink.

Oh very well, very well, very well

- Higgins, Act II.
- acting like a little child; obeys

A woman who utters such depressing and disgusting sounds has no right to be anywhere – no right to live.

- Higgins, Act I.
- the profound interest in phonetics
- He says that when Eliza tells him that she has a right to be there ( in front of Convent Garden), like he. He is just interested in people's speeches (pronunciation) → a profound interest in phonetics

There cant be any feelings between the like of you and the like of me.

- Eliza, Act IV.
- she is aware of difference of the two of them

I might be open to an arrangement.

- Doolittle, Act II.

I had a good mind to break it.

- Eliza, Act II.
- it's about mirror → she thought it was improper to stand in front of the mirror

Oh men! men!! men!!!

- Mrs Higgins, act III. – str.66
- showing her disapproval to experiment

Of course: that is his profession

- Eliza, act V.
- speaking to Pickering about Higgins
- she realised that she was the experiment

No: that ain't the natural way, Colonel: it's only the middle class way.

- Doolittle, Act V.
- about the marriage

To make a hole in it.

- Eliza, Act IV.
- committing a suicide; to Freddy

Schools joined prisons and mental asylums as the only places where people could be sent against their will.

- Bernard Shaw

But I never thought of us making anything of one another; and you never think of anything else.

- Eliza, Act V.
- to Higgins about Freddy

It's no use talking to her like that, she doesn't understand you.

- Mrs Pearce, Act II.
- to Higgins about Eliza

What right have you to go to the police and give the girl's name as if she were a thief, or a lost umbrella, or something?

- Mrs Higgins, Act V.

## PYGMALION

### 1. class differences

- to be rigid – strict
- high class
- upper class
- lower class, working class -
- after experiment Eliza is classless, is disclassed

### 2. language differences

- cockney – language in gutters (h dropping)
- the power of language

### 3. gender issues

- men – irresponsible, immature
- women – practical, worried about future, down-to-earth

## LANGUAGE

stigmatise - to describe or consider something as very bad, worthy of extreme disapproval (cockney is stigmatised, language and appearance can be stigmatised)

prejudice - dislike or distrust of a person, group, custom, that is based on fear of false information rather than on a reason or experience and that influences one's attitude and behaviour towards them

## ACT BY ACT

### ACT I.

Setting: 11.15 p.m. Convent Garden in front of the Opera House

Eliza: - appearance (poorly dressed, 18-20 years old, her hair need washing, great need of a dentist)  
- she is stigmatised by Clara, Higgins and taxi driver  
- insecure  
- able to look after herself, stand for herself (she has to earn money)  
- ambitious  
- she wants to make progress, improve her life  
- she is smart, but not educated, inventive (she knows how to get money out of people)  
- she is good at what she does  
- she is aware of the prejudice ("I am a good girl, I am.")  
- taxi was a status symbol to her

language: - the cockney (still spoken in the working class district, highly stigmatised – regarded as shameful)  
- the RP-English (spoken by the royal family, the BBC, Oxford; reserved pronunciation)  
- the popular English (in the middle)

Shaw: - criticizes alphabet (spelling)  
- it has to be simplified  
- not satisfied with English  
- Shaw note of cockney: to portray what a difficult task Higgins has set to himself, the purpose of art is to teach, Art should be didactic

Higgins: - Eliza was for Higgins just a flower girl  
- shows professional interest in Eliza

the Coven Garden: - is public place where people of different social strata can meet

bystanders: - represent common people; they represent general opinion  
- they warn her about note-taker, but she stands for herself (she felt prejudice)

her room: - the description of her room: poverty, empty bird cage, posters, bed with all sorts of coverings, draped packing case, chair, table, unused fireplace, broken pane in the window  
- posters indicate that she wants better life; the cage shows her sensitive side, because she didn't throw it away when the bird died; she is not complicated

### ACT II.

Setting: Higgins's laboratory in Wimpole Street; next morning

Eliza: - she is dressed up (she washed herself) → sense of right and wrong  
- wants to climb the social ladder  
- is determined  
- shows ambitions (that was very brave for that time)  
- sense of decency  
- she always tries to do her best  
- an eager student

mrs Pearce: - very realistic, very down to earth  
- she mothers Higgins  
- she comments Higgins' slovenly manners  
- expresses worries about Eliza's future  
- she patronizes Higgins

Higgins: - he wants to remain a confirmed old bachelor  
- scientific type, energetic  
- he considers himself for a shy and diffident man  
- he is not a snob snob, but he criticises snobbery  
- he imposes his opinion on others

Doolittle: - he criticises the middle class morality (just an excuse for never giving anything)  
- he doesn't want more than he asked for, he is not greedy

- »poor cannot afford morals«
- he calls himself undeserving poor (he is able to work, so he doesn't get any charities)
- honest (straight forward)
- shameless
- he is a good speaker (natural gift of rhetoric)
- he is satisfied with his social status
- Eliza says he is a drunk

### ACT III.

SETTING 1: Mrs Higgins's drawing room; a flat on Chelsea Embankment

SETTING 2: Embassy in London, one summer evening after dark

- mrs Higgins:
- practical, down-to-earth
  - she patronizes Higgins
  - she wants to know Eliza's role in the house
  - she knows what her son is like
  - she is aware of Higgins's bad manners and impatient behaviour
  - she considers Higgins and Pickering for »stupid male creatures«
  - she is worried about Eliza's future

- Clara:
- represents the pretension of the middle class
  - she sees the only opportunity for better life through the marriage
  - she finds Higgins an eligible bachelor

Freddy: - he is overwhelmed by Eliza, infatuated; he doesn't have a strong character

- Eliza:
- she shows linguistic development, but she still doesn't master the language
  - she shows lack of social skills (at embassy she improves them)
  - she thinks that she lost Higgins' bet
  - she has done her best, but nothing can make her the same as these people
  - she gains self-confidence as a lady of the upper class

Nepommuck: - through him, Shaw criticizes the English spoken by English (Nepommuck thinks that only foreigners are able to speak so good like Eliza)

- Shaw's humour (haha):
- that time people believe that you are born in class. They rather believe that Eliza is princess than that she climbs from the gutter. Higgins tells the truth about Eliza's origin, but the upper-class members (at the party) prefer to believe the ridiculous theory of the Nepommuck
  - the people of the upper class are ignorant and gullible (lahkovernni)
  - they don't believe that it is possible to learn manners and behaviour

### ACT IV.

SETTING: Wimpole Street laboratory, at midnight

- Eliza:
- she feels that she is more equal to Higgins
  - after the party she starts thinking about her position, about what she deserves as a human being
  - she doesn't want to marry (not like other women from middle class)
  - she remains calm and satisfied when she sees Higgins upset
  - obstructs Higgins for the first time

Pickering: - has always treated Eliza like a lady

- Higgins:
- loses his temper (shows feelings)
  - is deeply wounded

Policeman: - express morality; he calls the upper class people fools, because they think their style comes by nature

### ACT V.

- mrs Higgins:
- want to make Higgins realize what he had been doing, mistreating Eliza
  - she tries to convince him that she is not his property

Doolittle: - smartly dressed

- complaining about being dragged into the middle class
- is not happy and free anymore (because of middle class morality)
- middle class restricts him (marriage, donations to relatives, language lessons)
- invites people to the wedding
- is adaptable to any social status

Eliza: - she is comfortable with herself  
 - she is provoking Higgins  
 - she has gained self-respect from Pickering  
 - she is disclassed («The difference between a lady and a flower girl is not how she behaves, but how she's treated»)  
 - becomes Freddy's wife (she needs love and kindness)

Higgins: - is surprised that Eliza left him  
 - furious, lost  
 - angry, that she did something without being told  
 - he misses her (as a servant, toy)  
 - calls the police  
 - By George, Eliza, I said I'd make a woman of you; and I have. I like you like this.

Pickering: - he is also upset, surprised, distracted  
 - he is still a gentleman

Clara: - betters herself in the epilogue