

My Fair Lady

by Rev. Joe Dirt - Monday, November 14, 2011

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I'm not a huge show tune fan, but I do enjoy some. I definitely enjoy musical theatre, and the occasional musical film from days of yore. One of my favorites is *My Fair Lady* starring Audrey Hepburn and Rex Harrison. I am sure that everyone knows the tale; it is a retelling of the Greek myth of Pygmalion. Who better to retell this tale than Bernard Shaw?

I watched the movie again this weekend. It had been years since I had seen it. I enjoyed the acting, the music and the movie. While I could not sing all the songs like Robin, I did recognize all the tunes.

The film is from 1964 and the Shaw's original play was written in 1912. These are certainly different times when it comes to the relationship between men and women in the Western world. I say this because I had forgotten the ending. As it turned out it was very unsatisfying to me.

Professor Higgins (Rex Harrison) who transforms Eliza Doolittle (Audrey Hepburn) from "gutter snipe" to a lady is a misogynistic boor. After he has presented her to court and fooled everyone he is overjoyed, and unwittingly flings one insult too many at Eliza. She departs the house only to eventually end up at Professor Higgins' mother's house. Professor Higgins at this point realizes that he wants Eliza back and goes to his mother to ask advice only to find Eliza there. Professor Higgins implores Eliza to come back, but she rebuffs him. He leaves, and as he does so Mrs. Higgins says, "Good for Eliza." The implication being that should she stood up to Henry Higgins. I'm with them to this point.

We fade out and enter the final scene of the movie. Eliza enters Professor Higgins' study where he is moping over losing her. He looks up and sees her. She just stands there without word. He then tells her to fetch his slippers and slides down into his easy chair. I just had the feeling that the misogynistic boor won out, and I did not have high hopes for the future life of our newly transformed lady.

Or maybe it is just me.

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