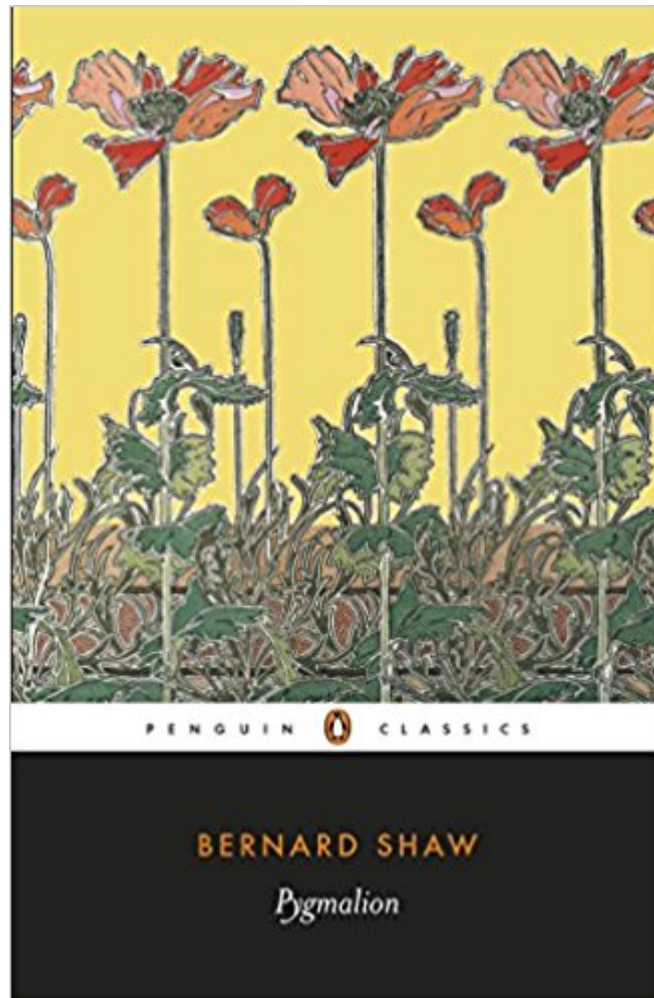




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Pygmalion (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

Shaw's brilliantly witty exposure of the British class system Shaw wrote the part of Eliza Doolittle "an east-end dona with an apron and three orange and red ostrich feathers" for Mrs Patrick Campbell, with whom he had a passionate but unconsummated affair. From the outset the play was a sensational success, although Shaw, irritated by its popularity at the expense of his artistic intentions, dismissed it as a potboiler. The Pygmalion of legend falls in love with his perfect female statue and persuades Venus to bring her to life so that he can marry her. But Shaw radically reworks Ovid's tale to give it a feminist slant: while Higgins teaches Eliza to speak and act like a duchess, she also asserts her independence, adamantly refusing to be his creation. This Penguin Classics edition is the definitive text produced under the editorial supervision of Dan H. Laurence, with an illuminating introduction by Nicholas Grene, discussing the language and politics of the play. Included in this volume is Shaw's preface, as well as his "sequel" written for the first publication in 1916, to rebut public demand for a more conventionally romantic ending. For more than sixty-five years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,500 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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Customer Reviews

Grade 9 Up-Ibsen's classic is well served by the talents of Juliet Stevenson and seven other British actors, all veterans of the Royal Shakespeare Company, stage, and film. With excellent diction and generally convincing emotion, the polished cast conveys the dark despair that touches everyone in the play, and eventually overwhelms Hedda. Brief, but pleasant music gently marks the end of each act, and sound quality is good throughout. Exceptionally complete liner notes make it easy to find a specific track, and there's plenty of playbill-style information about the performers and the play.

While this recordings is not a must buy, it will be a helpful audio component to classes studying the work of Norway's great 19th century playwright. Barbara Wysocki, Cora J. Belden Library, Rocky Hill, CT
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Drama in four acts by Henrik Ibsen, published in 1890 and produced the following year. The work reveals Hedda Gabler as a selfish, cynical woman bored by her marriage to the scholar Jorgen Tesman. Her father's pair of pistols provide intermittent diversion, as do the attentions of the ne'er-do-well Judge Brack. When Thea Elvestad, a longtime acquaintance of Hedda's, reveals that she has left her husband for the writer Ejlert Lovborg, who once pursued Hedda, the latter becomes vengeful. Learning that Ejlert has forsworn liquor, Hedda first steers him to a rowdy gathering at Brack's and subsequently burns the reputedly brilliant manuscript that he loses there while drunk. Witnessing his desperation, she sends him one of the pistols and he shoots himself. Brack deduces Hedda's complicity and demands that she become his mistress in exchange for his silence about the matter. Instead, she ends her ennui with the remaining pistol. The work is remarkable for its nonjudgmental depiction of an immoral, destructive character, one of the most vividly realized women in dramatic literature. -- The Merriam-Webster Encyclopedia of Literature --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I can't say that I enjoyed these plays very much. I find Ibsen's characters to be unbelievable, especially one of the shining stars of his fame and accomplishments, Nora Helmer of "A Doll's House". I guess what I find most obnoxious about these characters is the speed with which they do things, which could be blamed on the necessity of story and play-writing, or it could be that the characters do not show significant glimmers of what they are to suddenly and so surprisingly

become. Nora, for example, is this flitting, domestic plaything (thus the title) for nine-tenths of the play, unable to see her own mistakes and the seriousness of the looming catastrophe ahead. Then, all of a sudden, she is a most advanced, thoughtful, determined individual, come to drastic acts with absolutely no passion and able to express her inmost feelings and will to her husband without missing a beat. I've been in arguments and they don't go like that. Ibsen said of his own work that his plays only just pose questions; they don't make statements. I myself don't buy Ibsen's assessment for a second. It is historically interesting that he considered his plays questions, but they are very clearly works of value statements and modes for societal change (which is exactly what they became). With lines like "If I'm ever going to reach any understanding of myself and the things around me, I must learn to stand alone", would you honestly believe his plays are unbiased vignettes, wondering about human nature, and nothing more?

This book was super cute until the last few pages. (Then it kept me up all night making me rewrite it!) I loved so much of the wit and I honestly just wanted to slow the story down and be a fly on the wall for all the little moments I felt like I missed out on.

I bought a set for a high school humanities type class. My students enjoyed reading it aloud together. We paired it with the Leslie Howard version of the film. Some differences in the script. Interestingly enough Bernard Shaw wrote the screenplay from his original play and the changes he incorporated into the film dialogue became the basis for the differences of the Lerner and Lowe musical "My Fair Lady" from the original script and storyline of the play from the early 1900's. This play was a contemporary story. The film advanced the contemporary setting to the time when the film was made (1936). The Warner Bros. film took the setting back to the original early 1900's and made it a period piece rather than a contemporary story. Have things really changed so much in the last 114 years?

One of the classics and my favorite plays ! The story is timeless and shows us to not judge a book by its cover ! The cover can be replaced so easily , but what's inside does not truly change . Shows the importance of language and culture, but underlines what is truly important and that is something everyone has to figure out on their own , rather than force it on someone else

This edition contains the text, including Shaw's narrative preface and "sequel" (afterword) from the

original publication. Does not include any supplemental material, such as a forward/introduction, footnotes, or critical essays. Good value for price. Play itself is fantastic - written to read as well as view, so it is easy to follow as a reader. Highly recommend the text. If buying for an academic class, consider a book with footnotes and/or context to better understand the text.

I was surprised it was so much like the movie

So THIS is the proper English language? George Bernard Shaw has written (all those years ago: 1913) a tale of the use and abuse of this great language in a wonderfully satirical way. He certainly had some strongly held convictions about what was the right way to speak and what was the wrong way, even though he has exaggerated his beliefs in the presentation of this play. We are all familiar with the IMproper Cockney speech of Eliza Doolittle and the challenge of 'enry 'iggins to teach her the proper way to speak, thereby making a Lady of her, and it is just as much fun to read the play as it is to see it performed on the stage. This is just one edition of Pygmalion available and it has Notes, Chronology, a Preface, etc. to flesh out the story.

Since acquiring my kindle I've been busily filling in the gaps in my classics reading list. I appreciate the variety of free public-domain titles available, although I do definitely notice the lack of any prefatory material that there would be in a printed edition. That said, though, this was a delightful read, and I highly recommend it for anyone, even if you're not sure you're a Shaw fan. Anybody who appreciates deft sarcasm and snark will enjoy his work. Of course, this play was the basis for the musical "My Fair Lady," and it was a wonderful surprise for me to discover just how little alteration there was to Shaw's original text; most of my favorite lines from the musical were his, verbatim, from the play. Until the ending, that is, but no spoilers here. And don't look for the scene at the races at Ascot; that was manufactured for the musical.

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