

George Bernard Shaw and the Liberation of Women: An Analytical Study of Selected Representative Plays

BY

Shrouq Mahmoud Mohammed Sa'deh

Supervisor

Dr. Akram Shalghin

Abstract

This dissertation presents George Bernard Shaw's views on women's liberation. It does so by analysing Shaw's opinions and views on women's rights and liberation in *Mrs Warren's Profession*, *Major Barbra*, *Press Cuttings*, *Getting Married*, *Candida*, *Man and Superman*, and *Heartbreak House*. Shaw presents the new woman as a figure who is discontent with the existing order of things and who is, additionally, financially independent of both father and husband.

The above-mentioned plays were written to serve different sides of woman's rights, and in order to elaborate ideas clearly and extensively, this study employs an interdisciplinary approach which allows the researcher to follow two or more approaches. The first chapter follows the New Historicist's, while other chapters are between Feminism and Marxism.

The overall examination of this research study draws upon how Shaw challenges the typical Victorian representation of female characters, defends the rights of women, and introduces a new type of woman who can stand as a powerful and independent figure and has the ability to carry out the woman's movement at the turn of the century, yet despite his obvious contribution to highlight woman's cause, Shaw did not consider himself as a feminist and did not support the extreme feminist demands. He wanted the marriage institution to maintain its place as the honourable social institution but with equal rights for both parties in this institution.

Key words: double standards, feminist, subordination, suffragettes, women's rights