

Tribhuvan University

Ethical Dilemma of Abortion in Francine Rivers' *The Atonement Child*

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Approval Letter

This thesis entitled “Ethical Dilemma of Abortion in Francine Rivers’ *The Atonement Child*” submitted to the Central Department of English by Pradeep Rai, has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Members of the Research Committee

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Abstract

Francine Rivers' novel *The Atonement Child* shows how deeply Christian beliefs and values govern the Western attitudes and behavior. The protagonist, Dynah Carey, who is a Christian girl, falls victim of unwanted pregnancy due to rape and then suffers a great ethical dilemma whether to abort the child or not. To understand this dilemma I have analyzed the case through the two seemingly opponent views, consequentialist view and the Christian view, as explained by Michael Banner in his book *Christian Ethics and Contemporary Moral Problems*. Though Rivers has tried to ultimately resolve the dilemma in a way it is approved by Christian beliefs and ethics, the dilemma actually continues to remain unresolved, thus suggesting that the author herself is unconsciously in the state of dilemma. To show this, I have employed Homi K. Bhabha's concept of "Third Space".

Key Words: abortion, dilemma, rape, consequentialism, Christian ethics, ambiguity