

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Blend of History and Fiction in Doctorow's *The Waterworks*

**A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English, T.U.
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of
Masters of Arts in English**

By

Dipendra Giri

Central Department of English

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

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Tribhuvan University
Central Department of English

Letter of Recommendation

Mr. Dipendra Giri has completed his thesis entitled “**Blend of History and Fiction in Doctorow’s *The Waterworks* ”** under my supervision. He has carried out his research in 2008 (A.D.). I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voce.

Deepak Giri
Supervisor

Date: _____

Tribhuvan University
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Central Department of English

Approval Letter

This thesis, submitted to the Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by **Mr. Dipendra Giri**, entitled “**Blend of History and Fiction in Doctorow’s *The Waterworks***” has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Members of the Research Committee:

Internal Examiner

External Examiner

Head

Central Department of English

Date: _____

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Abstract

Edgar Laurence Doctorow's novel *The Waterworks* has revisited and reinterpreted the issue of the complicity of facts and fiction in making of history. It has been contended and exhibited that no historical discourse or document can remain untarnished by the personal biases, fictional element and power politics. Similarly, no work of fiction can remain a mere flight of imagination either. A considerable chunk of fact gets in to the fictional and the vice versa. A case in point, the novel refers to the real life New England celebrities in literature like William Dean Howells and James Russell Lowell and the like, commenting upon their long names in comparison to their meager literary output. But at the same time, it centers on a journalist Martin Pemberton, the missing of his father who was experimented upon by an expert but insane doctor Sartorius, etc are purely fictional ones. Also, the reference to the Civil War, the growth of the City of New York, the corruption rampant on the tank and file of the security and police etc render the novel into a realistic and revisionist document which calls in question some of the established versions of American history. In fact, as this thesis conclude with internal evidence from the novel, the blending of fact and fiction, the personal and the public, is inevitable in world today which is increasingly getting narrower and narrower with the development of science and technology, especially in the domain of journalism.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	iv
Abstract	v
Chapter One: Introduction	1-8
Chapter Two: History Redefined: New Historicism	9-22
Historiography and New Historicism	9
Redefining History: A New Historical Approach	12
Chapter Three: Textual Analysis	23-46
<i>The Water Works: A Fictional Realism</i>	23
Textuality of History and Historicity of Text	34
Instances of Blend of History and Fiction in the Novel	37
Chapter Four: Conclusion	47-49
Works Cited	50