

Tribhuvan University

Subversion of Conventional Gender Roles in James Joyce's Selected Stories from  
*Dubliners*

A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English, T.U.  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts in English

By

Mangal Bahadur Thapa

Roll No: 224

T.U. Regd. No.: 6-2-464-121-2011

Central Department of English

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

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Tribhuvan University

Central Department of English

Letter of Recommendation

MangalBahadurThapa has completed his thesis entitled "Subversion of ConventionalGender Roles in James Joyce's Selected Stories from *Dubliners*" under my supervision. He carried out his research from October 2018 to March 2019. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voce.

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Badri Prasad Acharya

Supervisor

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Tribhuvan University  
Kirtipur, Kathmandu  
Central Department of English

Letter of Approval

This Thesis entitled "Subversion of Conventional Gender Roles in James Joyce's Selected Stories from *Dubliners*" Submitted to Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Mangal Bahadur Thapa has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee:

Members of the Research Committee

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\_\_\_\_\_

Internal Examiner

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

External Examiner

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Head

\_\_\_\_\_

Central Department of English

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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MangalBahadurThapa

## Abstract

*The present research paper analyses how James Joyce in Selected Stories from Dubliners subverts conventional gender roles. It claims that Joyce's protagonists and their actions, behaviors, attitudes and personality as a whole virtually challenge the long-standing heterosexual celebration of traditional gender roles that prevailed at the turn of the twentieth century Ireland. It further investigates how the ongoing political, religious and social transformations that spread across Ireland in the late nineteenth and early Twentieth contributed to break the conventional gender roles. Being a witness to the contemporary transformations, Joyce documents the breakthrough that refuted the continuity of hegemonic power distribution between males and females. The research concerns with the liberation and empowerment of female from the limited traditional roles. The paper incorporates the theoretical insights from Gender Studies in order to historicize the gender hegemony of Ireland's patriarchal structure. It takes Judith Halberstam's notion of Female Masculinity and Judith Butler's notion of Performativity of gender to show how Joyce's characters, especially female characters remain non-conformist to the conventional gender roles for their new social identity. It contends that Joyce suggests the potentiality of women's independent individuality in the face of modernity. In this way, the paper concludes with the finding that Joyce's portrayal of characters, especially female Dubliners as new women destabilizes discursive gender stereotypes under the influence of political, religious and social transitions in Ireland during the early twentieth century.*

Keywords: female masculinity, male femininity, new woman, individuality, subversion of gender roles, freedom