

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Unfulfilled Libidinal Yearning: Human Irresponsibility in

John Updike's *Rabbit, Run*

**A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, Tribhuvan University in the
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in English**

By

Rameshwor Bhandari

Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus

Exhibition Road, Kathmandu, Nepal

May, 2010

Tribhuvan University
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Letter of Approval

This thesis titled “Unfulfilled Libidinal Yearning: Human Irresponsibility in John Updike’s *Rabbit, Run*”, submitted to the Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus by Mr. Rameshwor Bhandari has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Members of the Research Committee

(Yadab Prasad Adhikari)

Supervisor

External Examiner

(Rudra Prasad Paudel)

Head

Department of English

Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus

Date:

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deep sense of indebtedness and profound gratitude to my supervisor Mr. Yadab Prasad Adhikari for providing me sincere comments, helpful suggestions, guidance and valuable criticism throughout my work. It was his scholarly guidance and instructions that made this project a reality.

Similarly, I am extremely grateful and indebted to Mr. Rudra Prasad Paudel, Head, Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus for permitting me to write this thesis. Likewise, I acknowledge to my respected teachers Prof. Hrisheekesh Upadhyay, Dr. Binaya Kumar Jha, Mr. Kamal Thoklihang, Mr. Khem Guragain and Mr. Kundan Mishra giving me invaluable suggestions and providing me with materials for the research work. I also thank all other faculty members without whose support this research would have been incomplete.

Moreover, I am deeply indebted to my mother Mrs. Bhagwati Bhandari and brother Janarjan Bhandari for their great help and constant encouragement and blessings throughout my research period. At last but not the least, I sincerely thank my friends Santosh, Ramesh, Arjun, R.C. and Suresh for their genuine ideas and suggestions.

May, 2010

Gongabu, Kathmandu

Rameshwor Bhandari

Abstract

The present thesis makes an intensive study of Harry “Rabbit” Angstrom, a protagonist in John Updike’s *Rabbit, Run*. It deals with the human irresponsibility of Rabbit on the basis of Freudian psychoanalysis. Rabbit, a young man guided more by the impulses and desires, discards his familial responsibilities and runs away when he scrutinizes himself that his alcoholic, old- fashioned and childlike wife Janice cannot fulfill his libidinal yearnings. Rabbit, ignoring his responsibilities to others moves to the lap of a prostitute Ruth Leonard just to quench the thirst of his libido. Hence, the crux of the research is to relate Rabbit’s human irresponsibility with his discontented libidinal yearnings.

Contents

	Page No.
I. Introduction	1-10
1.1. Updike and His Literary World	1
1.2. Rabbit's Desire and His Irresponsibility	7
II. Psychoanalysis: Theoretical Discussion	11-25
2.1. Background and Concept	11
2.2. Structure of Human Personality	14
2.3. Division of Mind	17
2.4. Freud and Psychosexuality	18
2.5. Dream Interpretation	22
III. Unfulfilled Libidinal Yearning: Human Irresponsibility	26-53
3.1. <i>Rabbit, Run</i> : A Synopsis	26
3.2. Emergence of Human Irresponsibility in <i>Rabbit, Run</i>	28
3.3. Unfulfilled Libidinal Yearning: Human Irresponsibility in Rabbit Angstrom	32
IV. Conclusion	54-55
Libidinal Forces: Causes of Human Irresponsibility	54
Works Cited	55-56