

**Tribhuvan University**

**Blurring of Gender Boundaries in *Arms and the Man* and *Saint Joan***

**A Thesis**

**Submitted to the Central Department of English**

**In partial fulfillment of the requirement for the**

**Degree of Masters of Arts**

**In English**

**By**

**Purusha Basnett**

**Central Department of English**

**Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal**

**October, 2007**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I would firstly convey my sincere gratitude to the English Department of Tribhuvan University for granting an opportunity for the Master's degree. With due respect to all the faculty members of the English Department, I will specifically thank Dr. Krishna Chandra Sharma (Head of the Department) and Mr. Rajendra Panthi for his invaluable guidance and assistance while working on the thesis. Besides the English faculty of Tribhuvan University, I ponder in disbelief at the ingenuity of writers such as Elaine Showalter, Helene Cixous, Teresa de Lauretis and Judith Butler, who have contributed much to the issue of gender identity.

I am indebted to my family in Sikkim (India) for their constant support and understanding. And I would lastly thank Jyoti for her unconditional love and being a great source of motivation.

## **Abstract**

*Arms and the Man* and *Saint Joan* by George Bernard Shaw are plays in which the issue of gender is conspicuous. The characters of the play show ample amount of gender dubiety by reflecting traits of nature which is contrary to their biological sex. They also show how the convention of the period influenced the individuals in their gender determination. Besides cultural influence on the characters we see how individual characters show their identity on the basis of their performance. This thesis makes an endeavor to reconcile the gender attributes of characters with what they reflect and what their biological sex is, and in turn show how an individual has inherent in itself both the gender attributes. Thus this thesis with the help of both the plays, along with critical tools, like constructivist feminism, gender studies, post-structuralist theories and interdisciplinary approaches, makes an attempt to show the issue of duality of gender attributes in human beings.

# CONTENTS

	<i>Page No</i>
<b>CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION</b>	1-8
<b>CHAPTER II: THEORITICAL ANALYSIS</b>	
Feminism And Gender Studies	9-13
Subversion Of Gender Identity	13-19
Psychological And Scientific Insights	19-21
Current Gender Scenario	21-25
<b>CHAPTER III: TEXTUAL ANALYSIS</b>	
Feminism And Bernard Shaw	26-27
Masculine Attributes In Female	28-33
Feminine Attributes In Male	33-37
Attributes Related To Ones Own Gender	37-40
Conventional Influence On Gender Determination	40-43
Comparative Analysis Of Different Characters	43-46
Bernard Shaw's Belief In Eugenics	46-47
<b>CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSION</b>	48-50