

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

**Struggle for Authentic Existence in Norman Mailer's *An American Dream***

A thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in English

By

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The thesis entitled "Struggle for Authentic Existence in Norman Mailer's *American Dream*", Submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Dinesh Kumar Ghimire, has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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## **Abstract**

This study examines the struggle of the central character, Stephen Richard Rojack in Norman Mailer's *An American Dream*, to define himself through individual choices and actions, and social engagement. The novel traces the protagonist's journey through a hostile world to define himself as an existential hero. Through actions which include murder, escape, criminality and sexual experiences, he defines himself. On his journey toward definition of himself as an existential hero, Rojack faces fear, fatigue, despair and dread and turns them into energy of desperation. Although the struggle is hard, he is triumphant at each and every step because his opponents could not come out of the structure, which is corrupt. Rojack's energy rests on his attempt to break from the pre-established order and to leap toward an authentic existence through individual choice and action. He is the only character in the novel who is not destroyed or defeated.

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