

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Body Politics in Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in English

By

Shova Subedi

Class Roll No.: 29/066

Exam Roll No.: 480385

T. U. Regd. No.: 6-1-298-70-2002

Department of English

Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara

March 2018

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of English

Supervisor's Recommendation

This is to certify that Ms. Shova Subedi with Class Roll No. 29/066, Exam Roll No. 480385 and T.U. Regd. No. 6-1-298-70-2002 has prepared this thesis entitled "Body Politics in Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*" under my supervision, following the format as specified by the Research Committee, Department of English, Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara. I, therefore, forward it to the Research committee for final evaluation.

.....

Rohit Baral

Lecturer

Department of English

Prithvi Narayan Campus

Pokhara

Date: March 2018

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of English

Approval Sheet

This thesis entitled “Body Politics in Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*” submitted to the Department of English, Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara by Ms. Shova Subedi has been approved by the undersigned members of the Evaluation Committee.

Members of the Research Committee:

Supervisor

Expert

Head

Department of English

Prithvi Narayan Campus,

Pokhara

Date: _____

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not be complete and interestingly possible without scholarly guidance, invaluable suggestions and constant support of my thesis supervisor Rohit Baral, Lecturer of the Department of English at Prithvi Narayan Campus. I express my sincere reverence to him for helping me in making this writing odyssey.

I am very much grateful to Prof. Bishow Raj Adhikari, the Head of the Department of English, P.N. Campus for granting me such an opportunity to carry out this research.

Similarly, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to my respected teachers and all the other professors and lectures for providing me enough suggestions and reference materials to carry out my dissertation.

I owe my highest level of gratefulness to my husband Govinda Raj Adhikari and my family members. I cannot forget my friends Resham, Padma, Sabita and Ranjita who were always ready for helping me and also thanks to sister Gita Karki.

March 2018

Shova Subedi

Table of Contents

	Page No.
Supervisor's Recommendation	ii
Approval Sheet	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Table of Contents	v
Abstract	vi
Chapter 1: Dreiser and Reflection of Reality	1-16
Sister Carrie and the Context	1
Theodore Dreiser and the Novel	5
The Issue of Women in the Novel	10
Review of Literature	14
Chapter 2: Relation between Dreams/Desires and Material Progress	17-31
Women and the Body	17
Body Politics and Literature	25
Chapter 3: Outlook of Patriarchy towards Carrie	32-48
Lack of Communication	46
Material Possessions	47
Social Standing	47
Chapter 4: Emergence of Antithesis between Social Values and Free Sex	49-51
Works Cited	52-53

Abstract

This research work examines the prevalent domination of women's body and their uprising tone of protest against the male centered society in Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*. The female characters like Carrie, Minnie, Julia, Jessica and their bodily experience crystallize the actual domination of patriarchy. The passivity and dominant role of conscious women characters excavates the domination of patriarchy and resistance of women against this animalistic behaviour. These female members are the victim of forced marriage. They do not feel secure even when they are in their family. The female body is taken as a means of sexual entertainment and is exploited uncaring female wishes and feelings by their husband and family members. Hence, acknowledging their misuse of own body, the characters run away from home, leave their husband and while others kill themselves. This novel digs out the dominating nature of patriarchy and their strong challenge to the patriarchal norms and values through their radical action or by utilizing their body: a site of domination and resistance at the same time.