

Describe, explain ;  
analyse the way in  
which a religious  
issue is dealt within  
a ...

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Life revolves around a persons beliefs and attitude to the world but this is affected by many things. One of these is religion and it changes the way in which people think, act and behave. Religious issues are around us all the time and on T. V they are shown through a variety of programmes, especially soap operas. Eastenders is a very popular soap opera that can be viewed on terrestrial television and is one of the many that has dealt with a religious issue.

The specific topic that is going to be focused on from this soap opera is abortion. It involves three main characters, Carol, Bianca and Dan. Bianca is the daughter of Carol and Dan is engaged to Carol. Dan gets Carol pregnant and she now wants an abortion but Dan and Bianca don't want this to happen. Abortion is seen from lots of different points of view and each religion has its own views on the matter.

In this soap opera there is a general debate on whether abortion is right or wrong. Here is a summary of the storyline: Carol and Bianca are in a deep relationship and engaged. Dan has already been together with Bianca, daughter of Carol, and now is having a fling with her back. Carol soon discovers she is pregnant with Dan's child. Though later, Carol finds photographs of Dan and Bianca and starts to question Bianca. Bianca cannot hold on to the truth any longer and blurts out everything to her mother.

Carol now who is devastated by the discovery decides that she does not want the bay anymore. Dan actually wants the baby and so does Bianca. Carol and Bianca have a debate over the issue make many different points. Bianca says that Carol only wants to get rid of the baby because she is angry

and that her anger is controlling her mind. Carol on the other hand says that abortion is perfectly legal and she has the right to do what ever she wants. Carol's explanation for the abortion is that when she thinks of the baby she thinks of Dan.

At this moment she also regrets giving birth to Bianca. She gave birth to one child and it caused so much pain and she did not want this to happen again. This is not the only reason; Carol includes many more to back up her decision for the abortion. She says that at the age of forty she wants to live the rest of her life peacefully without too many commitments. If she has the child now, she will have to spend the rest of her life looking after that child.

Bianca attempts again to persuade her mother not to carry out the abortion. She puts forward a point that you do not want to do something that you are going to regret for the rest of your life. In this final scene you can see Bianca's baby, Ricky and her partner Dan. Also between the conversation of Carol and Bianca, scenes are constantly being switched to show a contrast between a happy family and the situation with the abortion. This specific story is a religious issue because it deals with a situation that can be changed due to religious ideas.

For example, if Carol happened to be Roman Catholic there would be a great chance that she would have decided not to have an abortion. This is so because the Roman Catholic Church believes that life is a gift from God and should not interfere because it is holy. Roman Catholics also believe that life starts at conception therefore abortion is a form of murder, from here another debates arises. There are different opinions on when life begins,

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Roman Catholics believe it is contraception while other people believe it is when the main features of the baby have started to develop and can be seen. Other Christians also have views on abortion. The Church of England and Methodist Church believe that abortion is wrong but have some acceptations.

Such as when the life of a mother is in danger. They still believe that is evil but understand that in certain situations it is the lesser of two evils.

Hinduism is also a religion that has different opinions on abortion like Christianity. The Hindu holy book teaches that abortion is only killing the body and does not harm the soul; therefore the Gita does not disagree with abortion. Hindus believe that the soul will move on to another body.

Some believe that it may even help the soul move stages and achieve Moksha. Not all Hindus agree with abortion, some believe that it is wrong. They believe that God is in everything and respect all life is to respect God. If this respect is broken then this sinful and going against God. Great leaders like Gandhi revealed lots of teachings and some Hindus use these to say that abortion should only take place if the mother's life is at risk. While teachings of Swaminarayan say that you should have nothing to do with abortion at all.

Different issues change across different religions and abortion I only one of them. Soap operas deal with these issues because they want to portray everyday life then they have to include religion too as it is involved in the lives of many people. By dealing with religious issues they can shed light on different people at their lifestyles allowing people to understand the views of other people better. This soap opera probably dealt with abortion as a

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religious issue because the arte of abortion has increased dramatically over the last decade all over the world. Unwanted pregnancies, failing methods of contraception and teen pregnancies all add up to the issue and soap operas can show all the trouble that can crop up if one does no think about the consequences. Using a soap opera is a really good method of putting the message across because many people can relate to the events that take place in them.

When the script is followed not many religious aspects can be seen, in actual fact there are none! But this story is a religious issue because opinions are changed by religion. Even if religion was not included in the soap opera, Carol's decision still would have been affected by her religious beliefs. So religion was applied to the soap opera but indirectly. Though including religious aspects would have been a good idea because the audience then could straight away recognise that abortion is a religious issue. Showing Carol's decision being affected by religion would also have been a good idea for the same reason. If I could deal with this issue I will use documentary style programme.

I will not refer to using a talk show because there will be too many topics and views to consider. Using this method will also bore the audience, as they will have to take in a lot of information. With a documentary I can move step by step to different views and points and then summarise at the end of the programme for a final effect.