

**UNIVERZITA KARLOVA**  
**Fakulta sociálních věd**  
**Institut mezinárodních studií**

**PROTOKOL O HODNOCENÍ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE**  
**(Posudek oponenta)**

Práci předložil(a) student(ka): **Ajten Zimová**

Název práce: **Americký patriotismus a propaganda v John Sutherland Cartoon Production v období rané studené války**

Oponoval (u externích oponentů uveďte též adresu a funkci v rámci instituce):  
**doc. PhDr. Francis Raška, PhD.**

1. OBSAH A CÍL PRÁCE (stručná informace o práci, formulace cíle):

**This thesis focuses on American propaganda and the patriotic content of John Sutherland's productions during the early Cold War. Between 1948 and 1952, the three main partners, John Sutherland Production, Harding College, and the Sloan Foundation collaborated to develop educational material entitled "Fun and Facts about American Business." This work aims to determine what propaganda techniques can be observed in the cartoons and whether these cartoons promote American patriotism.**

2. VĚCNÉ ZPRACOVÁNÍ (náročnost, tvůrčí přístup, argumentace, logická struktura, teoretické a metodologické ukotvení, práce s prameny a literaturou, vhodnost příloh apod.):

**The topic is both original and unique. I think that the student has adopted a creative approach. I have no problem with the methodological or theological underpinning of the work. Moreover, the student has worked well with numerous sources, conducted analyses of content, and provided relevant illustrations.**

3. FORMÁLNÍ A JAZYKOVÉ ZPRACOVÁNÍ (jazykový projev, správnost citace a odkazů na literaturu, grafická úprava, formální náležitosti práce apod.):

**I have no problem with the presentation of the work apart from a few typographical errors. All formal aspects are in order.**

4. KONTROLA ORIGINALITY TEXTU

Prohlašuji, že jsem se seznámil/a s výsledkem kontroly originality textu závěrečné práce v systému:

[  ] Theses [  ] Turnitin [  ] Ouriginal (Urkund)

Komentář k výsledku kontroly:

**There are no issues insofar as originality is concerned.**

5. STRUČNÝ KOMENTÁŘ HODNOTITELE (celkový dojem z diplomové práce, silné a slabé stránky, originalita myšlenek, naplnění cíle apod.):

**Ajten Zimová has selected the topic of early Cold War-era United States propaganda as the topic of her Master's dissertation. Specifically, she focuses on John Sutherland Cartoon Production and the question whether the cartoons in question promoted American patriotism. The treatise consists of an Introduction, six chapters, and a Conclusion. Also worthy of mention are the illustrations Ajten has included. In the ensuing paragraphs, I will offer my comments on each section of the work.**

The Introduction clearly spells out the aim of the dissertation. Ajten addresses two principal questions. The first is: Which patriotic, political, and social characteristics typical for the early Cold War era in the United States are accented in the cartoons of John Sutherland Production? The second question is: Which propagandistic elements and techniques can be observed in the productions of John Sutherland? Subsequently, Ajten provides descriptions of each individual chapter. The Introduction reads well, but I am somewhat disappointed with the misspellings of names. Better proofreading would have helped to avoid these unfortunate errors. However, apart from this minor criticism, the Introduction fulfills its purpose and guides the reader into the remainder of the work.

Chapter 1 discusses propaganda. Ajten defines the concept and discusses its aspects. I am impressed with the summarization of the arguments of leading authors on the subject and the division into the categories of white propaganda, gray propaganda, and black propaganda. As Ajten also writes, propaganda can be horizontal, vertical, rational, and irrational. Moreover, she lists points according to which propaganda can be analyzed, as well as the tools that can be employed in the dissemination of propaganda. This chapter provides a good overview of what Ajten searches for in her later analysis of the productions of John Sutherland.

American national values form the subject of Chapter 2. Ajten again demonstrates her knowledge of Seymour Martin Lipset's idea of American exceptionalism is well recapitulated as are the ideas of Alexis de Tocqueville and Samuel Huntington. The leading characteristics forming American identity are freedom, egalitarianism, individualism, populism, and laissez faire. The student defines these concepts in the American context. Furthermore, she accentuates the role of religion (Protestantism) and God in American politics. Finally, she discusses American patriotism, its role, and its link to the idea of American exceptionalism. I think that this chapter is of excellent quality.

In Chapter 3, Ajten delves into the Cold War and its impact on the social situation in the United States. She begins by emphasizing how the United States invested heavily in civil defense, as well as radio and television communication during the period under discussion. Fear of nuclear destruction increased paranoia, and this was exploited by the American authorities. Ajten then evaluates the role played by increased consumerism in American society in the 1950s. Purchasing new cars and home appliances was promoted as a form of civic duty. Television took on a major function in the promotion not only of goods, but also religion. Moreover, the television networks promoted both pleasure and fear of nuclear Armageddon. American propaganda worked both domestically and internationally in support of US government aims. Ajten reminds us that the US employed similar tactics during the Second World War in the fight against Nazism. McCarthyism was greatly covered by media outlets and even before the government set its sights on organized labor with the aim of preventing Communist influences among workers. This chapter is fine.

Chapter 4 represents an explanation of Ajten's research methodology. She demonstrates knowledge of major authors on the subject and addresses the ongoing debate about the differentiation between qualitative and quantitative research. Ajten clearly states that her research involves qualitative content analysis. Selected cartoons are evaluated on the basis of the following three criteria: spoken word, music, and visual images. Ajten

explains that she has selected a sample of John Sutherland's cartoons and has utilized the following coding techniques: public predisposition, opinion leaders, group norms, reward and punishment, visual symbols, utilization of language, music, appeal to emotion, and individual contact. She then restates her two research questions and offers two hypotheses for each question. The first research question is: Which patriotic, political, and social characteristics typical for the early Cold War era in the United States are accented in the cartoons of John Sutherland Production? Ajten's first hypothesis is: The cartoons will present anti-Communist thoughts supported by a wave of fear and international developments. The second hypothesis is: The cartoons will support Americanism and consumerism, which were typical in the 1950s. Ajten's second research question is: Which propagandistic elements and techniques can be observed in the productions of John Sutherland? Her first hypothesis is: The cartoons from John Sutherland's projection "Fun and Facts about American Business" offer a one-sided view on a complex theme. The second hypothesis reads: The cartoons mainly use techniques that, according to Jowett and O'Donnell, meant to increase the effectiveness of the propaganda. This chapter leads well into the next, which actually introduces the cartoons Ajten analyzes.

In Chapter 5, Ajten presents Sutherland's "Fun and Facts about American Business" project, in which Sutherland Production collaborated with Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer (MGM) and Harding College. Also, latent financing was provided by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. The following cartoons were analyzed using the coding techniques specified in Chapter 4: "Make Mine Freedom", "Going Places", "Meet King Joe", "Why Play Leapfrog?", "Albert in Blunderland", "Fresh Laid Plans", "Inside Cackle Corners", "Only the Beginning", "Dear Uncle", and "The Devil and John Q." Using a standardized format, Ajten analyzes each cartoon and presents her findings. This well-written chapter represents the crux of the dissertation because it involves qualitative analysis.

Ajten's overall discussion of her project forms the subject of Chapter 6. First, she mentions the limitations of the project and obstacles that needed to be overcome. Ajten points out that the John Sutherland cartoons have never been subjected to serious academic scrutiny before. The chapter concludes with the assertion that all the analyzed cartoons have the following in common: 1. People wish to achieve happiness; 2. People are inherently good; 3. History brings constant progress; 4. Everything is material. This chapter clarifies Ajten's findings.

The Conclusion recapitulates the findings of the study. Regarding the first research question, the first hypothesis was only partly confirmed, whereas the second was confirmed entirely. Insofar as the second research question is concerned, both hypotheses were found to be valid. I think that the Conclusion represents a fitting ending to an exciting study.

This MA dissertation is highly informative and the topic is indeed original. Apart from the typographical errors I have already mentioned, the treatise is of excellent quality. I recommend a classification of A or B contingent on the oral defense.

6. OTÁZKY A PŘIPOMÍNKY DOPORUČENÉ K BLÍŽŠÍMU VYSVĚTLENÍ PŘI OBHAJOBĚ (jedna až tři):

**Were cartoons and entertainment, in general, used for propaganda purposes in later stages of the Cold War? Please explain.**

**7. DOPORUČENÍ / NEDOPORUČENÍ K OBHAJOBĚ A NAVRHOVANÁ ZNÁMKA**

(A a B výborně, C a D velmi dobře, E dobře, F nevyhověl): **A or B based on the oral defense**

Datum: **29 August 2024**

Podpis:

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Pozn.: Hodnocení pište k jednotlivým bodům, pokud nepíšete v textovém editoru, použijte při nedostatku místa zadní stranu nebo příložený list. V hodnocení práce se pokuste oddělit ty její nedostatky, které jsou, podle vašeho mínění, obhajobou neodstranitelné (např. chybí kritické zhodnocení pramenů a literatury), od těch věcí, které student může dobrou obhajobou napravit; poměr těchto dvou položek berte prosím v úvahu při stanovení konečné známky.