



POSUDEK OPONENTA BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

Studijní obor: **Anglický jazyk a literatura (dvouoborové studium)**

Název práce: **Chaos, Madness and Their Connection to the Settings in Selected Stories of Edgar Allan Poe**

Autorka práce: **Petra Feketová**

Vedoucí bakalářské práce: **Mariana Machová**

Oponent bakalářské práce: **Richard Stock**

Stručná charakteristika práce

This thesis analyzes four of Poe's stories in terms of madness and setting.

Celkové zhodnocení

This thesis focuses on four of Poe's canonical stories. The choice of the stories seems to be effective, since they all certainly apply to the themes proposed. The systematic approach to each story, analyzing the same type of issue in each, is competent and shows that the candidate knows the stories well and can critically evaluate the works.

I found it hard to be very interested while reading this thesis, unfortunately, since it reads more like an exam than a thesis. It displays the student's ability to choose a relevant theme and mechanically address chosen stories in terms of that theme. This is fine and students need to be able to do this, but in my opinion a B.A. thesis should seek to do more. An original critical argument is missing from this thesis; a character of collegial debate and contribution to the academic conversation is missing.

While the themes of madness is appropriate, they are also blatantly obvious to anyone who reads a couple of Poe's stories. (The theme of chaos is ill defined and not much addressed in the thesis.) So this is not a place where the thesis contributes. The setting, on the other hand, could be a more contentious issue, since that is not what is usually discussed in terms of Poe. It seems to me that the focus is more often on the characters. But unfortunately the thesis does not take the setting as something to strongly support as related to the theme of madness. The thesis does not recognize this potentially unique perspective and seek to support that perspective against other, more common, approaches. Rather, simple connections between setting and madness are cited, and overall my sense of the thesis after reading it is that setting is only proposed as a major part of the thesis, but not in reality a major component. Mostly the analyses describe how and why characters are insane, and the connection to setting is either missing or simplistic.



I found it unnecessary to support or even raise the issue that Poe was a careful writer. This is a basic assumption we have when studying any literature. We usually do not wonder (or care, really) if a writer was careful or not. Plus, this issue does not seem to be related at all to the issues of madness or setting, or at least not specifically. This part of the thesis seemed driven by Poe's own "The Philosophy of Composition", which is particularly ironic since it is probably not an accurate record of how he actually wrote "The Raven". That is, it is included in the thesis not because the student sees it as important, but because Poe himself primes us to focus on this. Anyway, this was positioned as a kind of theoretical basis for the thesis, which it was not.

The thesis is written very well. I recommend that the thesis be defended, although I recommend a relatively low grade, since it is competent, but I think our department should expect better performance from graduating students.

Práci **doporučuji** k obhajobě.

Navrhovaná klasifikace: **dobře**

29. 5. 2016

Datum

Podpis