

Ms. Zuzana Šindlerová's B. A. thesis – review written by the supervisor

Ms. Šindlerová's B.A. thesis, *Southern Belle: Grotesque Distortion of Archetype in Sharp Objects*, is a daring attempt to discuss a non-canonical work and a well-established, yet ever devolving cultural and namely literary concept. Such an idea brings about certain disadvantages, such as lack of relevant secondary sources, as well as potential benefits: e.g. a chance to fully analyze a given phenomenon, and place it firmly within a relevant – mainly historical, but possibly also theoretical or even feminist – context. Unfortunately, in this respect, Ms. Šindlerová's thesis falls short of the promise, and this is the greatest grievance I have as a supervisor – particularly because I was not granted the opportunity to provide any feedback or advice as to the concluding passages of the submitted work. Thus, in my humble opinion, it remains somewhat unfinished.

First, though, I have to applaud the fact that for the introductory parts, Ms. Šindlerová was able to put together a number of substantial studies in the field; therefore, those chapters are nicely detailed. Having said that, a more nuanced approach might be helpful, both in terms of the actual argument and in terms of style. There seems to be a lot of „however“ and „on the other hands“ – that apparently established the dichotomy between the North and the South as an unshatterable fact, not as a fairly complex and complicated relation.

The following analysis, then, relies on the method of close reading and would have worked quite well, had the proper links and connections (as mentioned above) been established. Or, that could have happened at least in the conclusion, which – as it stands – reads rather as a series of separate statements and sentences, based on a few random comparisons, and with one glaring mistake: Joyce Carol Oates is not a Southern writer! There is no further work done with e.g. the feminist theories hinted at earlier – could I ask Ms. Šindlerová to apply them to her primary text during the oral defense?

Finally I have to point out that Ms. Šindlerová could have done a better job proofreading: there are quite a few missing words as well as typos (such as Mrs. Instead of Ms. on p. 11, Mitchell without her first name on p. 49, etc.). These things could have been – and should have been – avoided, I believe.

This being the case, I am suggesting the following grade: either very good/velmi dobře, or good/dobře. The final result will thus very much depend on the review written by the opponent and on Ms. Šindlerová's performance during the oral defense.

Dr. Hana Ulmanová

Prague, Jan 15, 2020