

## **Abstract**

This bachelor thesis observes selected American literary works written at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries from a bit different angle. While we usually associate the term “propaganda” with totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, fiction presents a way of entertainment. However, every literary work, whether consciously or subconsciously, still reflects the particular period. Especially the second half of the 19th century was a very turbulent era full of different changes and paradoxes. How have then the generally acknowledged notions and beliefs, as well as the harmful and challenging social norms, which have been ironically emerging even in the democratic “land of infinite possibilities” and values such as freedom and equality, been reflected in works that are respected and read to this day? Have the authors and the heroes of their stories managed to confront, and eventually escape the merciless social dictate or have they succumbed to it under the ambient pressure? The theoretical part of this thesis will introduce the definitions of propaganda as well as the general historical context. The practical part will then characterize and analyze the individual literary works. What do they say about the society at that time, and to what extent do they oppose or support it?