

UNIVERZITA KARLOVA
Fakulta sociálních věd
Institut mezinárodních studií

PROTOKOL O HODNOCENÍ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE
(Posudek oponenta)

Práci předložil(a) student(ka): **Michal Hromádka**

Název práce: **The Shift in NFL's Stance towards Racial Issues since Colin Kaepernick's Protest in 2016**

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):

The aim of the M.A. dissertation is to analyze the shift in the stance of the NFL towards racial issues by analyzing the statements made from the time when Colin Kaepernick expressed his protest up until the end of 2020. Critical race theory is utilized.

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

The topic is challenging and tackled from a theoretical perspective. Both the argumentation and the structure are sound and sources are utilized well.

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

Apart from a few minor errors, particularly with the use of articles, the work is presented in a lively manner that maintains the attention of the reader. The few grammatical mistakes found in the text in no way detract from the excellent quality of the treatise.

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

Michal Hromádka has selected the controversial topic of American football and race as the topic of his Master's dissertation. The work is organized in a straightforward manner and consists of an Introduction, four main chapters, and a Conclusion. Moreover, there are a number of illustrative appendices. I will offer my brief comments on each part of the work in the ensuing paragraphs.

In the Introduction, Michal addresses the importance of American football in the United States and points out that, whereas most of the players in the National Football League (NFL) are African Americans, only a handful of coaches and high-level managers are. Michal explains that the overall status of American football as the most popular sport means that the NFL is a good platform, in which African American grievances can be expressed and addressed. The Introduction is excellent.

Chapter 1 represents an examination of the theoretical background of the work. Michal explains the role of critical race theory (CRT) in the discussion. He traces the emergence of CRT to the 1970s as an offshoot of critical legal studies (CLS) and radical feminism. It is clear that Michal has superior knowledge and his explanation of CRT and its origins greatly exceeds any basic requirements. I am not surprised when I know that Michal's supervisor is my dear colleague, Kryštof Kozák, who is a well-trained lawyer, as well as an expert on North American politics. Also, Lucie Kýrová, with her expertise on American racial matters, is a highly competent thesis seminar leader. Michal has done well to remind the reader that racial issues represent a factor in other sports than American football. Likewise, he draws attention to the importance of the NFL in American society. The flow of Michal's stream of thought, reinforced by illustrative quotations, makes the chapter all the more interesting for the reader.

Methodology is explained in Chapter 2. Michal's hypothesis is that the NFL's approach to racial issues has changed in favor of being more inclusive over the past six years. In order to test the validity of the hypothesis, he uses content analysis of all major NFL statements regarding the issue of race. Thanks, to this chapter, the reader knows what to expect later on. I have no problem with it.

In Chapter 3, Michal discusses the background of Colin Kaepernick's protest, the form it took, and how Kaepernick was concerned with issues like police brutality against African Americans. The reactions

of fellow players, the NFL commissioner, and, of course, Republican presidential candidate and future president, Donald Trump, are analyzed as is the broader significance of the reactions. The main message here is that racial problems in the United States are indeed more serious than many would like to admit. This chapter is illustrative and flows smoothly into the next one.

Chapter 4 contains Michal's analysis of all fourteen official NFL statements pertaining to racial issues from Kaepernick's protest until the end of 2020. Donald Trump's attempt to turn Kaepernick's protest into disloyalty to the United States and its flag is also placed into context. In a nutshell, NFL statements over time became more sympathetic to racial issues and Trump's attempt to portray protests as unpatriotic backfired. The chapter fulfills its purpose.

In the Conclusion, Michal recapitulates the main points presented in the body of the work and he credits the NFL's altered stance to related matters and the protests organized by organizations such as Black Lives Matter. The NFL changed its stance in accordance with the changing mood in the United States in general. I agree with Michal that he has proved the validity of his hypothesis.

I think that it is obvious that this dissertation represents an excellent mark. Despite some grammatical problems and typographical errors, this work shows evidence of original thought and hard work.

5. OTÁZKY A PŘIPOMÍNKY DOPORUČENÉ K BLIŽŠÍMU VYSVĚTLENÍ PŘI OBHAJOBĚ (jedna až tři):
How has the debate shifted since Joe Biden's ascent to the presidency?

Has the swift conviction of the officer who murdered George Floyd played a role in the changed perception of racial issues?

6. DOPORUČENÍ / NEDOPORUČENÍ K OBHAJOBĚ A NAVRHOVANÁ ZNÁMKA
(A a B výborně, C a D velmi dobře, E dobře, F nevyhověl): A

Datum: 5 June 2021

Podpis:

Pozn.: Hodnocení píše 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.