



Department of Anglophone Literatures and Cultures

Supervisor's Review

David Koranda, "Mamet's Men: Crisis of Masculinity in Modern Society as Represented in the Work of David Mamet" BA thesis

Choice of Topic:

The proposed topic of this BA thesis is certainly both an ambitious and fruitful one. The thesis works through a set of complex theoretical issues in relation to this topic in an intellectually discerning and contextually sensitive manner, and with a confidence that marks this out as noteworthy piece of work for a BA level student.

Thesis statement / aims and objectives:

The project is constructed around a clearly articulated set of objectives, at the core of which is the goal of analyzing the ways in which playwright David Mamet's work has addressed questions of men's roles and relationships. The work successfully brings together theoretical work on gender performance and perceptive analysis of Mamet's plays in order to interrogate myths of masculinity in an American context. One of the chief merits of the work is that it avoids an oversimplification of the troubled issue of gender in Mamet's oeuvre.

Structure and development:

The first chapter offers a succinct overview of the project's objectives. Chapter two surveys the concept of masculinity first in relation to the historical context. It then moves on to some important scholarly interventions in the discourse of gender, specifically those by Judith Butler, Matthew C. Gutmann and R. W. E. Connell. Connell in particular has become a key theorist of the notion of heteronormativity—a term that permits a lucid and nuanced exploration of Mamet's theatre. In this regard Mr Koranda's work reveals an unusually informed approach as well as an ability to critically compare and judge competing interpretations of the work in hand. The main chapters follow a logical path, and the detailed and perceptive close reading of homosociality, homosexuality and femininity in major works by the playwright is to be commended in a thesis at this level.

Research:

Research throughout is deployed with skill and judgement. Mr Koranda's theoretical reading shows initiative and is both well chosen and imaginatively applied to the plays he discusses.

Use of sources:

There are no major formal or stylistic issues concerning the use of sources. Materials have been carefully cited throughout.

Stylistics and language:

Mr Koranda's writing style is excellent—fluent, consistent and accomplished.

Format:

A great deal of care has been taken with format of the project.

I recommend the thesis for defence and propose to grade the work "excellent" / 1 depending on the result of the defence.



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IN PRAGUE



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17.8.2012
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