



FACULTY OF ARTS
OF CHARLES UNIVERSITY
IN PRAGUE



Department of Anglophone Literatures and Cultures

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

M.A. THESIS

AMERICAN LITERATURE SPECIALISATION

**The Importance of a Room of Her Own: Female Spacial Awareness in Selected
American Women's Fiction**

Bc. Jitka Hanžlová

In the introductory parts of her thesis, Ms. Hanžlová underscores the central position that houses occupy in American fiction and proposes that the relationship of literary characters to their domestic space is gendered. This line of thought is then developed throughout the entire thesis, and Ms. Hanžlová for example contrasts the character of Nector Kashpaw from *Love Medicine*, whom she calls a “home destroyer,” with Marie Kashpaw, for whom domestic space is a crucial source of her identity. Marie’s relationship to her home is depicted thoroughly and convincingly, and in fact the greatest strength of the entire thesis lies in its close reading of Erdrich’s novel as well as other primary texts (Gilman’s “The Yellow Wallpaper,” Chopin’s *The Awakening* and “The Storm, and Cisneros’s *The House on Mango Street*). This close reading is moreover supported by plentiful secondary material, albeit material that is primarily focused around the primary texts analyzed in the thesis. Last but not least, the text itself is enjoyable to read; it is clear, rich and vivid.

Having outlined the reasons why Ms. Hanžlová’s thesis deserves an **excellent** grade, it is worth mentioning that while the thesis accomplishes its objective to view houses through the lens of gender, the introduction as well as the conclusion point towards (but do not further develop) analyses of space that would take into account other aspects as well. In other words, what would a non-gendered analysis of houses look like? Even contrasting, for instance, the character of Mr. Pontellier with Nector Kashpaw, would differences emerge; how could they be interpreted? And would Ms. Hanžlová consider the perception of and relationship to space in her selected literary works as particularly American, tied to the notion of the frontier, for example?

Pavla Veselá, PhD.
May 20, 2013

Proposed Grade: **výborně** (excellent)