

**UNIVERZITA KARLOVA V PRAZE**  
**Fakulta sociálních věd**  
**Institut mezinárodních studií**

**PROTOKOL O HODNOCENÍ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE**  
**(Posudek vedoucího)**

Práci předložil(a) student(ka): Zdeněk Král

Název práce: A Libertarian Critique of the U.S. Criminal Justice System

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Vedoucí práce (u externích vedoucích uveďte též adresu a funkci v rámci instituce):  
Jana Sehnálková

**1. OBSAH A CÍL PRÁCE (stručná informace o práci, formulace cíle):**

In his thesis, Zdeněk Král examines libertarian approaches to political issues with special focus on the problems of the U.S. criminal justice system. The goal of the thesis is to “help readers to gain understanding of libertarianism and its current positions on the political scene in the United States; understand libertarian values, ideals, priorities and reasoning; know what their issues with U.S. criminal justice system are and the changes they propose...”

The author formulates the following hypotheses:

- Libertarians share some goals with other political actors, but their reasoning is different and is based on different set of values. The author argues that libertarian values can easily be misinterpreted.
- Libertarians are extremists, although not in negative terms. The highest value against which they judge is individual liberty.
- Libertarians are not an ideological compromise between Democrats and Republicans, i.e. “fiscally conservative, social liberal” as often mistakenly believed.
- Libertarians are gaining influence, but not directly – rather, their influence grows mostly through the GOP and various factions and movements.
- Most libertarians do not refuse existence of criminal justice system *per se*, but refuse paternalistic and moralistic laws.

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

The author selected an interesting and in the Czech Republic under-researched topic. While libertarians have been receiving increased attention in the U.S. due to e.g. the candidacy of Ron Paul and Rand Paul for presidential office, there is still a lot of myths and misunderstanding about the libertarian philosophy and approach to governance. Also, as the author proves, many politicians who are described as libertarians do not always follow all the libertarian principles. Therefore, in his work, Zdeněk first introduces the basic principles of libertarian philosophy in both general terms and in concrete implementation in e.g. establishing the role of government, in economy or foreign policy. The second chapter focuses on the current role of libertarians in U.S. politics. The author examines positions of politicians who are considered libertarian and the influence of libertarian ideas in contemporary U.S. political discourse. He concludes here that the libertarian influence is rather indirect as libertarians operate within the current political system in which they push for libertarian agenda. Special attention is paid to Ron Paul, probably the most libertarian politician in contemporary U.S., Rand Paul, pro-libertarian 2016 presidential candidate, and Tea Party, which the author describes, correctly, as a conservative rather than a libertarian

movement. The most important part of the thesis, the third chapter, then draws on the previous chapters and comprehensively describes and analyzes the biggest issues the libertarians have with the U.S. criminal justice system. The author demonstrates that since libertarians treasure liberty above all, they strictly refuse paternalistic and moralistic legislation. In his analysis, he points out that should some of the libertarian suggestions for reform be implemented, it would solve some of the biggest issues of the U.S. criminal justice, such as overcrowded prisons, increasing cost of incarceration and overburdened courts. The author avoids judgement of the libertarian proposals; he simply describes them as an option to be considered.

In writing the thesis, the author used plethora of sources. Zdeněk successfully identified works by key libertarian thinkers, particularly with focus on the United States.

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

The thesis is well-written and the author should be applauded for his high level of written English. There are no issues with the formal aspects of his work, footnotes and bibliography are carefully arranged and fulfill all the requirements.

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

Zdeněk's thesis is well written, the structure is clear, logically organized and the text is easy to read. The author introduces the basic concepts of libertarianism and incorporates references to the most important libertarian thinkers and their works. From theoretical level, Zdeněk then moves to practical implementation of libertarian ideas in contemporary U.S. politics and describes how libertarians and pro-libertarian politicians contribute and shape political discourse. Throughout his text, he fulfills all the goals and answers all the research questions.

5. SPOLUPRÁCE S VEDOUCÍM PRÁCE (komunikace s vedoucím práce, schopnost reflektovat připomínky, posun od původního záměru apod.)

The author consulted his work regularly.

6. OTÁZKY A PŘIPOMÍNKY DOPORUČENÉ K BLIŽŠÍMU VYSVĚTLENÍ PŘI OBHAJOBĚ (jedna až tři):

- Most of the ideas the libertarians support hinge on their understanding of human nature. How do they perceive it?
- How do you explain the recent increase in libertarians' popularity?
- How do the libertarians view privatization of prisons?

7. DOPORUČENÍ / NEDOPORUČENÍ K OBHAJOBĚ A NAVRHOVANÁ ZNÁMKA (výborně, velmi dobře, dobře, nevyhověl):

The thesis fulfills all the requirements for Master's theses and is recommended for defense. I propose grade **excellent**. I strongly recommend the text for publication.

Datum: June 15, 2015

Podpis: Jana Sehnálková

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Pozn.: Hodnocení pište 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.