



Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci
Filozofická fakulta, katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky
Křížkovského 10, 771 80 Olomouc
tel. 585633103, fax: 585633101, <http://www.anglistika.upol.cz>.

The supervisor's review:

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“The Creation of the Mad Scientist in the Works of H. G. Wells” by Veronika Briatková

The author tackles the subject of genre literature, which does not always lend itself to academic literary criticism easily. On this account, the author includes early on in the dissertation a defence of science fiction, explaining the many roles that it can successfully take on. The dissertation is concerned with the creation of the mad scientist character type in selected works of H. G. Wells. The topic is conceived rather broadly, and the author examines it in some detail from various perspectives. While this complex approach certainly helps to elucidate different aspects of the topic, it occasionally leads to substantial digressions. The overall impression of the text is therefore somewhat fragmentary, almost as if the author herself were a Doctor Frankenstein trying to create a new whole from disparate parts. Admittedly, this slightly disorganised character of the text is in keeping with the nature of the topic, and a careful reader will be delighted to discover gems of insight, many original points and new connections throughout the dissertation.

The author delves in depth into the historical background and draws on findings from multiple disciplines of human knowledge to illustrate her ideas and interpret her examples from H. G. Wells's fiction. Of particular interest, and befitting the subject of the work, is the section devoted to the belief of early psychology that madness is manifested physically and is visually detectable. Furthermore, the author does not limit herself to the obvious culprits and includes also a discussion of helpers and companions of the mad scientists under analysis, considering their similarities to and differences from the mad scientist masterminds. Although the most space is naturally devoted to the classic Doctor Moreau, the author's analysis of *The Invisible Man* is particularly insightful and well-rounded. The last chapter of the dissertation brings all the points together and builds a bridge between the earliest examples of the mad scientist character type in literature and its latest reincarnations. Despite the above-mentioned shortcomings, the dissertation overall fulfills its aims and as such can be recommended for oral defence.


Mgr. Ema Jelínková
Katedra anglistiky
a amerikanistiky
FF UP
Křížkovského 10
771 80 Olomouc
tel. +420- 58-563 3135
email: ema.jelinkova@upol.cz