

Tightly focused on three performances by the same company and researched meticulously to develop and maintain a coherent central argument, this extended essay has a lot to be commended for. It is rare to witness such clarity of politically engaged argument in such a young researcher, and the way the student approaches the topic gives a clear demonstration of a commendable set of analytical and evaluative skills.

Blending dramaturgical and historiographical material, the student successfully debates, within the required word count, the issue of xenophobia in US society, and the strategies that The Bread and Puppet Theatre Company use to engage in a sharp social critique of their society's prejudices. The essay demonstrates in-depth knowledge and very good understanding of the chosen topic and, where appropriate, the essay is clearly and precisely placed within an academic context.

It is fully acknowledged that when it comes to a practice that is so modern, as with the work of this theatre company, it is not always possible to find enough published sources on the subject, but the student successfully uses all of the sources that are available within the public domain. The extended essay refers to a lot of websites, purely because most of the critical material regarding the company's work is online, but all of the sources used are appropriate, are accurate, provide valid arguments and are fully attributed.

In terms of the language used, there is some use of the first person, a style usually to be avoided in formal discourse, however, on this occasion the overall strength of the essay's ideas enables this oversight to be ignored. A critical and evaluative discourse has been built up with care and a steady hand throughout the essay.