

CANADA LECTURES AT HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITY

4. November 2004
18.00 - 20.00 Uhr
Hauptgebäude Raum 2103

„Stone Angels & Paper Airplanes: Literary Representations of Canadian Public Administration“

Prof. Eugenie Samier
Simon Fraser University, Canada

Adam Stanley, MA
Simon Fraser University, Canada

Although very little in literary or administrative studies has been written on the relationship between the two fields, the literary portrayal of administration can be traced back to the ancient literatures of Mesopotamia, Egypt, classical Greece and Rome, and continues up through to contemporary literary works in all national traditions. This lecture explores the understanding and critique fictional writings bring to administrative life, through selected Canadian novels and characteristic features of Canadian public administration. The lecture will include introductory remarks on the relationship between literary and administrative theory; characteristic features of Canadian public administration relevant to literary analysis; and administrative themes and critique prominent in the literary texts selected for this presentation.

Literary selections discussed include: Joy Kogawa, *Obasan*; Robertson Davies, *The Cunning Man*; and Margaret Laurence, *The Stone Angel*. This lecture will be followed by a seminar taking place the following day:

5. November 2004
10.00 - 12.00 Uhr
Hauptgebäude Raum 3085a

„Fictions of Bureaucracy: Administrative Character Types and their Poetic Construction“

Prof. Eugenie Samier
Simon Fraser University, Canada

Adam Stanley, MA
Simon Fraser University, Canada

This seminar provides an overview of both literary theory related to administrative themes in literature as well as administrative theory promoting the use of literature in administrative studies as an extension of treating literature as a source of social and political commentary, through a detailed discussion of selected Canadian novels. The administrative themes include: the effect of bureaucratic values in dehumanising administrators and the clients they serve; the purposes of government (e.g. colonialism); the nature of bureaucratic culture through its rituals, myths, and symbols; organisational politics through power struggles and the role of ideology; the “inner world” of administrators exhibited in personality types, crises of identity and meaning, and moral dilemmas; and bureaucratic poetics.

Literary selections include: Joy Kogawa, *Obasan*, discussed in contrast with the American novel by David Guterman, *Snow Falling on Cedars*; Robertson Davies, *The Cunning Man*; and Margaret Laurence, *The Stone Angel*. References to a number of other British, Canadian and American texts will be made to illustrate the administrative critique contained in literature.