Message in a Bottle: Paradox, Irony and Parable in the South Seas, 1767-1797

Jan Stewart

This paper examines Greg Dening's (1992) thesis that William Bligh, captain of HMS *Bounty*, mismanaged his use of language, leading to the infamous mutiny. It traces the history of European colonial ventures from 1767 to 1797, covering Polynesian culture, European culture, and practices of both cultures concerning various rituals. It discusses institutionalization of language in the British (as well as in the American) navy. The drama which unfolded in the aftermath of the mutiny also provides ample material for discussion, in particular the manner in which Peter Heywood's relatives managed his own imminent death sentence and (almost certain) pardon by King George III. It concludes that the mutiny resulted from a combination of language planning and social change. (13 ページ)

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Message in a Bottle: the Legacy of Language on Pitcairn Island

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In Greg Dening's book, *Mr. Bligh's Bad Language* (1992), the proposal is set forth that the Mutiny on the Bounty took place at least in part because of the bad use of language on the part of its captain, William Bligh. This two-hour presentation traced the origins of such language to the British Articles of War. Six conflicting theories regarding the causes of the mutiny were discussed. The presenter concluded that in addition to bad language, bad language planning not only led to the mutiny but also impacted larger areas of social change during this period of industrialization, including the American Revolution and the smaller revolt involving the mutineers on Pitcairn Island. (35 ページ; 120 分)

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