

# Current Issues

in North American Studies and Cultural Studies

Lecture Series | Summer Term 2015

**NORTH  
AMERICAN  
STUDIES  
PROGRAM**

**Dr. Sabine N. Meyer**

University of Osnabrück |

Käte Hamburger Center "Law as Culture"



## "Conceptualizations of Sovereignty in Postmodern Native American Literature"

Tuesday, May 19, 2015 | 6:00–8:00 pm  
Room A, IAAK, Regina-Pacis-Weg 5

As Eric Cheyfitz has recently argued, federal Indian law "has been the indispensable but obscured text and context to an understanding of U.S. Native American oral and written expression." In her talk, Dr. Meyer unravels some of the legal dimensions of Gerald Vizenor's 2012 campus novel *Chair of Tears*, which exposes the ongoing colonial domination of tribal reservation lands and reveals Native American political sovereignty as a historically tainted concept. Through the use of satire, *Chair of Tears* advocates a different form of sovereignty, an inherent or cultural sovereignty, at whose heart are Native artistic expression, storytelling, mimicry, irony, and humor.

GERALD VIZENOR



CHAIR OF TEARS



Sabine N. Meyer is an Assistant Professor of American Studies at the University of Osnabrück and the Coordinator of the Osnabrück Summer Institute on the Cultural Study of the Law. She is currently a fellow at the University of Bonn's Käte Hamburger Center for Advanced Study

in the Humanities "Law as Culture." Her research explores the history of American reform movements, concepts of gender, ethnicity, and civic identity in the United States in the nineteenth century, representations of Native Americans in U.S. popular culture, as well as the intersections of law and Native American literature. Her book, *We Are What We Drink: The Temperance Battle in Minnesota*, is forthcoming with the University of Illinois Press. She is currently working on her second book project, "The Indian Removal in Law and Native American Literature."