



“THE FUNAREAL PARADE OF YAWN-ENFORCING FACTS.”
CONFERENCES, LECTURES AND ARTICLES IN THE ACADEMIC
NOVEL

To an outsider, academic work may seem unclear, abstract, and rather unappealing. The campus novel helps to dispel such a misguided notion. The genre does satirise academe but it also acquaints the readers with academic life. It seems, however, that the authors of the campus novel, all too eager to criticise academia for its flaws, (un)consciously scorn the university. Such bitter mockery may result in the readers’ distrust towards academia for the image of a scholar presented in the campus novel verges on self-parody (the authors are usually scholars themselves) and may derogate from the prestige of the university. Nevertheless, an incompetent and clumsy scholar that features heavily in the campus novel should not be taken seriously since selfdeprecating humour is an inherent element of the genre. The intention is clear: to show how very human scholars are and to disprove the negative image of an academic as a self important intellectual. Discouraged from conducting research and disappointed with the lack of professional success, the scholars try to relieve the boredom of academic life. The characters in David Lodge’s *Small World* attend conferences, the protagonist in Malcolm Bradbury’s *The History Man* seduces his female students and colleagues and Jim Dixon from Kingsley Amis’s *Lucky Jim*, whose latest article contains nothing but the “funereal parade of yawn-enforcing facts”, seeks solace in alcohol. The purpose of the paper is to examine boredom presented in the modern campus novel as an inherent element of academic work.