

## UPCOMING EVENTS

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### 2004 AIATSIS Conference

The AIATSIS Conference 2004 is being held at the Australian National University in Canberra from Monday 22 to Thursday 25 November 2004. The theme of the conference is *Indigenous Studies - Sharing the Cultural and Theoretical Space* and its aim is to encourage and provide for discussion of intercultural approaches to research and related matters.

At present, proposed sessions include: Indigenous tourism in Australia, sharing land and the politics of property, Indigenist research, making space for Indigenous cultural expressions of well-being in Aboriginal health research and practice, mapping the shared terrain: Indigenous and non-Indigenous concepts of landscape, developing a mutual relationship between theory and practice in a framework for dealing with culture and conflict, sharing language: making dictionaries for Indigenous languages.

There are three registration types – full, AIATSIS Members, and full time students or unemployed concession. Costs vary from between \$100-\$260 for a three day registration and from between \$50-\$125 for one day registration.

For more information on the AIATSIS Conference, or to register, visit the Conference website at [www.aiatsis.gov.au](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au) and click on the 'AIATSIS Conference 2004' link.

### Indigenous Research Forum

The 6<sup>th</sup> Indigenous Research Forum is hosted by the U Mulliko Indigenous Higher Education Research Centre at the University of Newcastle. This year's theme is 'Centering Indigenous Voices in Research' and will take place from 29 November - 1 December 2004.

The forum is intended for Indigenous researchers and academic to present their research or works in progress, to provide an opportunity and a space for Indigenous researchers to get together, to allow Indigenous post-graduate students to meet and discuss

issues relevant to them, and to explore culturally appropriate expressions of research outcomes.

For more information call (02) 4921 6863 or go to: [www.newcastle.edu.au/centre/umulliko/irf2004/](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/centre/umulliko/irf2004/)

### The Body Politic

The Australian Studies Centre at the University of Queensland is holding a conference on racialised political cultures in Australia from 24 – 26 November. The Body Politic conference is focused on multiculturalism and race politics in Australia. One of the keynote speakers is Dr Aileen Moreton-Robinson who is presenting a paper on Indigenous Sovereignty and the Politics of Race: A Possessive Investment in Patriarchal White Sovereignty. More information is available from <http://asc.uq.edu.au/main/index.php?apply=&webpage=default&cID=51&menuID=151>

### Indigenous Sovereignty Symposium

The Australian Studies Centre at the University of Queensland is organising a one day symposium to showcase and share Indigenous Studies research across the Faculty of Arts and the University. The symposium is designed to begin a different dialogue about Indigenous politics and sovereignty across a variety of contexts. Indigenous scholars will present their work on Indigenous sovereignties across a variety of contexts.

A brochure for the conference can be downloaded from the AIATSIS website – <http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/rsrch/conferences/conferences.htm>. Or more information can be obtained by contacting Dr Aileen Moreton-Robinson on (07) 3365 3142 or [a.moretonrobinson@uq.edu.au](mailto:a.moretonrobinson@uq.edu.au) or Marilyn Barton on (07) 3365 1369 or [m.barton@uq.edu.au](mailto:m.barton@uq.edu.au).

### ASAA/NZ Conference

The Association of Social Anthropologists of Aotearoa/New Zealand (ASAA/NZ) is holding a conference on "Translations, Treaties and

Testimonies: The Cultural Politics of Interpretations' in Auckland on 3 – 4 December 2004. More information is available from [www.arts.auckland.ac.nz/ant/ASAAConference](http://www.arts.auckland.ac.nz/ant/ASAAConference).

### Sea Country Talk

The Native Title Studies Centre at James Cook University is hosting a presentation by Profes-

sor Helene Marsh on Sea Country Management: The Challenge of Reconciling Legal, Cultural and Ecological Scales on Fri 19 November from 2pm-4pm. All are welcome to attend this free public seminar, visitors from outside JCU are welcome to RSVP by emailing [Katie.Kiss@jcu.edu.au](mailto:Katie.Kiss@jcu.edu.au) or by phoning 4042 1198.

## FEATURES

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### **From the Fringes to Economic Advancement**

By Brian Wyatt - Churchill Fellow 2004, Executive Director, Goldfields Land and Sea Council

A constant companion during my recent Churchill Fellowship study tour of South Africa, Canada and the USA was the memory of mad-cap professor Julius Sumner Miller. For those of you too young to remember, Miller enthralled us all in the seventies with a down-to-earth science program on television. He would confront us with issues as complex as the Theory of Relativity, before explaining them with experiments that we could all perform at the kitchen sink.

As I travelled, my Theory of Relativity was the difference I perceived in progress toward economic independence between Indigenous Australians and our brethren in North America and South Africa. As I inspected the Maricopa Pima Tribe's multi-million dollar casino in Arizona, and the big game hunting tourist development in Pilanesburg National Park, whose profits are shared by the surrounding tribal communities, I could hear the good professor asking: "Why is it so?"

By the time I returned to Australia I had the answer: Indigenous people in North America and South Africa have a secure political framework within which they are working to haul themselves from the fringes of society into the economic mainstream. They enjoy widespread community acceptance of the need for this to happen and the political system is geared to making it happen, quickly!

### North America

In North America, there are numerous examples of Indigenous people and communities owning and controlling huge, sustainable businesses (casinos, agriculture, forestry, tourism etc), enterprises whose profits are being used to liberate them from the cycle of welfare dependence. Putting it another way: they have their own 'cash cows', while Aboriginal Australians do not. Our cash cow is still government and there is no change on the horizon.

Not only are Indigenous communities in North America well advanced toward participating in mainstream economic life, thereby stopping the rot of their cultural identity, but they also enjoy considerable power for deciding social priorities for their people.

Their economic clout has delivered effective political and social alliances with powerful non-Indigenous groups and individuals, including academia. For example, partnerships have been forged with the likes of Harvard University, through judicious sponsoring of Indigenous studies in the university's curriculum.

So what is this 'political framework' that has put Native North Americans into such a desirable position? At its heart is the treaties that were struck a long time ago between them and their respective governments. Specifically, the treaties have:

- Put to bed arguments over prior ownership and dispossession, allowing all parties to focus instead on the task of integrating In-