

AIATSIS Seminar Series 2012/2

12.30pm, Monday, 15 October 2012

The Mabo Room, AIATSIS, Lawson Crescent, Canberra ACT 2601

This seminar will be webcast at www.aiatsis.gov.au

Seminars are free and open to the public. Free parking is available.

An Indigenous Pedagogy

Dr Norman Sheehan

This presentation outlines the development and evaluation of the social and emotional wellbeing training program and the Sustaining Connections project conducted in Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander communities in Queensland. These programs are based on visual and narrative approaches that constitute an Indigenous pedagogy—a way of teaching and learning that is founded in Aboriginal cultural strengths. An outline of this pedagogy will be presented and research evaluating the approach will be discussed.

The most significant factor in this evaluation is that all the members of the group came to view the approach to learning as their own—as a widely applicable, personally and professionally utile, spiritually deep and profound expression of their Aboriginal culture. This fundamental engagement with an education program that is delivered in a room just like any other classroom is a profound verification of the relevance, effectiveness and cultural strength of Indigenous pedagogy.



Dr Norm Sheehan is a Wiradjuri man born in Mudgee, NSW. He completed a PhD in Education at the School of Education at the University of Queensland (UQ) in 2004, winning the NV Varghese Prize for Comparative Education and a nomination to the UQ Dean's List for research excellence. Commencing in 1999, Dr Sheehan convened Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Issues, Aboriginal Politics and Indigenous Knowledge and Education programs in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies major at the University of Queensland. In 2009 Dr Sheehan was awarded the South-East Queensland NAIDOC award for the contribution his teaching and scholarship has made to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. He has recently undertaken a major research project in partnership with Link-Up Queensland, which resulted in the publication of two books, *Stolen Generations education* and *Respectful design*. Both these works address Aboriginal community cultural development and social and emotional wellbeing in Aboriginal communities.

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