



Nulungu

Research Institute

The University of Notre Dame Australia

Nulungu Talking Heads Seminar Series



*Why does that old man dance? :
Indigenous Cultural Festivals and the
Possibilities for Life.*

Presented by Dr Lisa Slater, Lecturer in Cultural Studies at the University of Wollongong, Australia. PhD (Sydney University), MA (Sydney University), BA Hon (Sydney University) BA Comm (Canberra University).

Tuesday 30th September

12:30 – 1:30pm

Venue: Kailis Room, The University of Notre Dame Australia
88 Guy Street, Broome, 6725

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About Lisa

Lisa Slater is a Lecturer in Cultural Studies at the University of Wollongong, Australia. Her research seeks to understand and critique the processes of neo-colonialism, settler-colonial belonging, and contemporary Indigenous cultural practices, with a particular focus on the ways cultural production – most recently cultural festivals – are innovative sites for the expression of Indigenous sovereignty and ethical inter-cultural engagement. She is also writing a monograph on progressive settler women’s anxiety in intercultural encounters. Her recent projects have a strong focus on remote and rural Australia.

About the seminar

In this paper, I examine Indigenous cultural festivals as creative commitments to the ontological primacy of land and non-western sociality, which emerges in a deeply intercultural world dominated by settler liberalism. Like many Indigenous festivals, those I am examining - Garma (NT), Laura Aboriginal Dance (FNQ), KALACC festivals (WA) and Milpirri (NT). - have a similar purpose: to maintain and strengthen culture. Yet it is Indigenous culture that worries so many people in the mainstream. A hope and aim of these events, I argue, is to compose anti-colonial relations, arguably whereby ‘culture’ is not a commodity to be scrutinized and judged but recognised as emanating from complex life worlds. I set out to understand whether and how Indigenous cultural festivals are public spaces where Indigenous people model a repertoire of possibilities of how to live (well) in the liberal settler state.