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Powerful manuscript on Aboriginal child sexual assault wins esteemed award

Embargoed until 11am - 4 July 2011

A brave and powerful manuscript highlighting the prevalence of child sexual abuse in some Aboriginal communities has been named as the winner of this year's esteemed Stanner Award.

The manuscript, *Aboriginal child sexual assault and the criminal justice system*, written by the human rights lawyer and social justice activist, Dr Hannah McGlade, considers the emotional and social costs, the changing legal status, and points to directions that might change the conditions that lead to child sexual abuse.

Dr McGlade - a member of the Perth Noongar community and Adjunct Researcher with Curtin University Centre for Human Rights Education - was presented with the Stanner Award by AIATSIS Chairperson Professor Mick Dodson AM in a special ceremony in Canberra this morning.

The Stanner Award, sponsored by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) in Canberra, was established in 1985 as part of the Institute's commitment to facilitating and publishing high-quality research in Australian Indigenous studies.

Named in honour of the late Emer. Professor W.E.H. (Bill) Stanner, the Award recognises the eminent anthropologist's life and work and his significant contribution in establishment of the Institute.

For the first time, this year's national award was open to Indigenous writers of academic works.

Professor Dodson said Dr McGlade's manuscript amply fulfilled the award's aims by its contribution to a greater awareness and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identities.

“Judged to be a personal and courageous work, this is a timely manuscript which has the potential to provide a valuable Indigenous contribution to national debates.”

“Child sexual assault is a significant disadvantage in a child’s life that can impact their later opportunities in life in a myriad of ways, including the tragedy of suicide and repeat victimisation,” he said.

Professor Dodson said that the Institute was pleased to receive entries covering such diverse subjects as Aboriginality and public health, Citizenship in regional Queensland, representations of Aboriginal people in published narratives, Young Nunga men and education, Aboriginal men and racism in the health system, Copyright and Indigenous arts, Urban Aboriginal identity, Aboriginal women’s agency and sport and cultural continuity.

The Stanner Award was open this year to Indigenous authors of academic manuscripts.

The winner receives \$5000 in prize money, out-of-pocket expenses, a specially designed glass statuette and mentoring and editorial support. Aboriginal Studies Press, the award-winning publishing arm of AIATSIS, will publish the winning manuscript, and will consider all the entries for possible publication.

Further information: John Paul Janke 0408 600 867

The Stanner Award will be presented to Dr McGlade by Professor Mick Dodson AM at:

ROM Gallery, AIATSIS
Acton Peninsula
11am-12pm