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“Reflections on the politics of Indigenous knowledge”

In my talk I will reflect on the meaning of the term “Indigenous knowledge”. I explore the meaning of the term in three inter-related contexts: in its “everyday” context, in the context of the debates over the meaning of scientific knowledge, and as the term is evolving in contemporary Indigenous Studies. I will show that the resemblances and differences between these contexts has profoundly affected the way we understand Indigenous ways of knowing the world. I will show that over the past forty years Indigenous knowledge has evolved into a complex set of inter-related linguistic practices that have raised significant legal, political, and philosophical problems within mainstream academic disciplines. More importantly, Indigenous knowledge has instigated a kind of Indigenous linguistic turn to the land that has reshaped our understandings of the complex relationships between people, land, and language.