A public seminar exploring government administration of the “Stolen Wages” issue in Australia and the United States and the responsibility in law of the monies held in trust by government.

Both the federal government in the US and some Australian state governments took control of Indigenous finances in the late 19th century. These governments are accused of losing millions of dollars of trust funds through maintenance of flawed trust systems.

A class action of 500,000 past and present beneficiaries, led by Dr Elouise Cobell, was filed in the US District Court in 1996. The court has declared the government was trustee of the funds and must account for every cent held in trust since 1887.

In Australia, the Queensland Government in 2002 offered a maximum $4000 in full reparations conditional on a legal indemnity against litigation to retrieve outstanding monies. NSW has established a tribunal to consider applications for the return of monies owing. No-one has ever accounted for the monies ‘stolen’.

**International guest speaker**

Dr Elouise Cobell
Elder of the Blackfeet Nation and lead plaintiff in US Federal Court case *Cobell v Secretary of the Interior et al*; Executive Director Native American Community Development Corporation; former chair Blackfeet National Bank

**Brisbane speakers**

Mr Victor Hart
Victor Hart was born on the Aboriginal community of Hopevale, Cape York. He has taught and researched in the field of Indigenous studies for the past 10 years and has been actively involved in Indigenous community affairs in the Brisbane region. Victor represented Indigenous Queenslanders on the Stolen Wages Working Group executive. He is currently manager of QUT’s Oodgeroo Unit.

**Fr Frank Brennan SJ**
Frank Brennan is a Jesuit priest, an adjunct fellow in the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the ANU, professor of law in the Institute of Legal Studies at the Australian Catholic University, and professor of human rights and social justice at the University of Notre Dame Australia. He has written and commented widely on Indigenous and social justice issues.

**Dr Ros Kidd**
Author of *The Way we Civilise, Black Lives, Government Lies, and Trustees on Trial*; Adjunct Senior Lecturer, Griffith University; member at large ANTaR National; member AIATSIS; Royal Historical Society of Queensland, Professional Historians Association (Qld) Inc.

**Chair**
Justice Kate Holmes, Queensland Court of Appeal

**When:** Thursday, 5 October 2006, 5.30pm – 8.00pm

**Where:** Irish Club, 171 Elizabeth Street, Brisbane

**Cost:** $20 and $10 concession (including GST) – light refreshments included, beverages extra

**Structure:** 2 hour public seminar involving speeches followed by a structured question time.

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