

2011 Fall Lecture Series at Dalhousie University and the University of King's College

*Co-sponsored by the Christian Reformed Campus Ministry at Dalhousie
and the University Chaplaincy at King's College*

Education and Reconciliation: Journeying toward deep reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples in Canada

Dates:

September 21-22, 2011

Description:

Education policy was at the forefront of assimilation and the attempted destruction of Indigenous cultures in Canada; it must also be at the forefront of cultural renewal and reconciliation. Many words have been spoken concerning the need for reconciliation and right relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada; education policy provides a substantive opportunity to put those good words into action. However, significant funding and educational attainment gaps between First Nation and provincial education systems present a profound challenge to tangible reconciliation. We'll discuss the challenges and opportunities for substantive change in educational policy.

A bit of context:

The Prime Minister's Apology (June 2008), the convening of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and Canada's assent to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples along with numerous declarations from churches and civil society all point to a recognition of the need for a new relationship. Therefore, alongside substantive policy change (in education and more broadly) there is a need a deeper understanding of the history of Canada through the lens of the relationship between Indigenous and Non-indigenous people. That history shapes a reality: that all people in Canada live with the heritage of brokenness that comes from assimilation policy and residential schools. That past is not in the past. It is with us (to paraphrase Justice Sinclair). The Prime Minister's Apology implies that Indigenous peoples were right to struggle to protect their culture and identity and that assimilation policies caused the loss of a significant contribution to life in the place called Canada. Deep reconciliation includes a re-acquiring of that contribution. Reconciliation is a journey of remembering the past in its full truth and stepping toward a relationship of mutual trust and responsibility.

The Schedule:

1. Interactive Presentation & Discussion: "The Blanket Exercise"

Coffee, tea, and dessert to follow

Location: Dalhousie Multifaith Centre (1321 Edward St.)

Date: Wednesday, September 21

Time: 7-9 pm

Description:

In collaboration with Kairos' Indigenous Rights Circle and other partners, we, and our constituency are learning the history of indigenous and non-indigenous relations in Canada from Indigenous perspective. Our primary tool for this is the "Blanket Exercise." The Blanket Exercise begins with the blankets arranged on the floor representing Turtle Island (North America) before the arrival of Europeans. The participants, who represent Indigenous peoples, begin by moving around on the

blankets. While narrators read a prepared script, other participants (the Europeans) join and begin to interact with those on the blankets. As the script traces the relationship between Europeans and Indigenous nations in Canada, participants respond to various cues and interact by reading prepared scrolls. At the end of the exercise, only a few people remain on blankets that have been folded into small bundles, covering only a fraction of their original area.

2. Presentation and Dialogue: “Reconciliation: Indigenous Education as a Case Study”

Mike will take 20 minutes to introduce the paper “Moving from Regret to Substantive Change: Reconciliation in Indigenous Education.” He will specifically explore the question: “Why should reconciliation in education matter to non-Indigenous Canadians?”

Location: Peter Wilson Room, New Academic Building, King’s College

Date: Thursday, September 22

Time: 7-9 pm

Guest Lecturer:

Mike Hogeterp

Director of the Christian Reformed Centre for Public Dialogue

www.crcna.ca/PublicDialogue

Mike Hogeterp is Director of the Christian Reformed Centre for Public Dialogue - an Ottawa based, justice and peace advocacy and education office of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada. Mike manages the research and advocacy components work of the Centre for Public Dialogue, and is also deeply invested in the ecumenical community.

Mike received a Masters in Political Theory from the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto (1995) with concentrations in human rights and socio-economic policy. He has worked with the Centre for Public Dialogue and social justice ministries in the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada since 2002. Mike has served on: the Social Action Commission of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada; the Committee for Contact with the Government (Christian Reformed Church); the Board of Citizens for Public Justice; the Board of Micah Challenge Canada; the Canadian Social Development Program Committee of Kairos; and the Executive of the Canadian Council of Churches. Mike currently sits on the Dignity and Rights Circle of KAIROS and is Vice-Chair of the Commission on Justice and Peace of the Canadian Council of Churches.

The Centre for Public Dialogue's work is shaped by commitments to relevant and constructive research; relational advocacy with policy makers and shapers; and a firm belief in the importance of the contribution of a wide variety of voices in public discourse in the pluralistic realities of Canada. The current priorities of the Centre for Public Dialogue are:

- 1) *Indigenous Justice and Reconciliation* (2007-present)
- 2) *Canada's mission in Afghanistan* (2006-present)