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HUMA 5105

April 18, 2010

Abstract

This paper first presents a description of the Sudbury Catholic District School Board Aboriginal Education practicum placement assignment: the modification of an elective Native Studies course with the intent to present the course as an alternative to required Religious Studies courses. The assignment description provides context for three underlying issues connected to aboriginal education. The issues of historical aboriginal education, aboriginal perceptions of the Christian God and reclaiming aboriginal authority over aboriginal education are discussed. The paper provides an overview of the issue of residential schools to explain the historical and current themes that have led to the formation of the Sudbury Catholic Schools Aboriginal Education unit. An examination of the historic and current Catholic and aboriginal images of the Christian God are positioned in an exploration of possible spiritual connections between Catholicism and Native Spirituality. An examination of suggested aboriginal educational reform measures are contrasted with the Sudbury Catholics Schools Aboriginal Education unit as a method of aboriginal education redress.