



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Arts

of

JULIAN EVANS

BA (Concordia University, 2008)

**“The Experiment of Friendship: Anarchist Affinity in the Wake of Michel
Foucault”**

Department of Political Science

Wednesday, April 27, 2016

1:00PM

Technology Enterprise Facility Building
Room 170

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Arthur Kroker, Department of Political Science, University of Victoria (Supervisor)

Dr. Warren Magnusson, Department of Political Science, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:

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Dr. Kevin Kerr, Department of Writing, UVic

Abstract

This thesis considers Michel Foucault's understanding of friendship as a *way of life* and its relationship to anarchist models of affinity based organizing. I argue that Foucault's interviews on friendship, his understanding of power structures as simultaneously individualizing and totalizing, and his notion of the care of the self all help us to rethink what friendship means today. Further, friendship can be a guide towards experimental and aesthetic forms of political resistance. Friendship for Foucault is not utopian, however, and I examine its use as a technique of police surveillance and intelligence gathering in the context of the G20 protests in Toronto in 2010. If friendship can play an important role in the regime of what Foucault termed *governmentality*, it can also be a site of struggle whereby an alternative vision for politics is elaborated. I argue that this has particular resonance with anarchism, and that while friendship has the danger to becoming an *invisible* form of power, anarchism responds to this by proposing a culture of solidarity. Overall, I argue that Foucault offers an original account of friendship that fundamentally shifts our understanding of the relationship between friendship and politics.