Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

of

THIRSTAN FALCONER

MA (University of Waterloo, 2012)
BA (University of Waterloo, 2010)


Department of History

Friday, October 27, 2017
10:00 A.M.
Clearihue Building
Room B007

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Penny Bryden, Department of History, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Jordan Stranger-Ross, Department of History, UVic (Member)
Dr. Matt James, Department of Political Science, UVic (Outside Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Stephanie Bangarth, Department of History, King’s University College/Western University

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Myer Horowitz, Department of Education Psychology & Leadership Studies, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract

During the 1960s and 1970s the Liberal Party of Canada sought to engage ethnocultural communities in an effort to win federal elections. The author argues that the Liberal Party’s relationship with ethnocultural communities during the 1960s was characterized by indifference. Though it adopted a programme that encouraged the courting of ethnocultural communities, the Pearson-led Liberal Party showed limited interest in welcoming ethnocultural communities into the party’s electoral coalition. The efforts of Andrew Thompson, the Liberal Party’s Ethnic Liaison Officer during the Pearson years, were separated from the rest of party’s organization and campaign structure. Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau ended Pearson’s lost decade and strengthened party bonds with ethnocultural communities. Trudeau welcomed ethnocultural communities to the Liberal Party, declared Canada as multicultural, and distributed patronage to leaders of non-English and non-French communities. This dissertation differentiates between groups and categories, and critically analyzes how people and organizations do things with categories. This dissertation argues that Thompson and the Liberal Party grouped ethnocultural communities as “ethnic groups” and “ethnic voters” in order to simplify diverse and unbounded peoples they did not understand. This dissertation is critical of those groupings and explores their consequences.