



University
of Victoria

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Social Work

of

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BA (University of Victoria, 2011)

**“De-Colonizing Post-Secondary Education: Using Ktunaxa Students Experiences to Inform
Decolonization Processes of Post-Secondary Institutions”**

School of Social Work

Wednesday, August 26, 2015

1:30PM

David Turpin Building

Room A136

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Leslie Brown, School of Social Work, University of Victoria (Supervisor)

Dr. Todd Orniston, School of Social Work, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Carmen Rodriguez de France, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Christopher Darimont, Department of Geography, UVic

Abstract

The Ktunaxa (pronounced 'k-too-nah-ha') believe in the interconnectedness of all things. Their creation story talks about a sea monster called the Yawuʔniḱ who was known for killing all the animals of the land. Naʔmuqʕin, a creature so tall that he needed to crawl on his hands and knees so that he wouldn't hit his head on the roof of the sky, formed a hunting party to catch the Yawuʔniḱ and together they chased him around and around the Kootenay and Columbia river system. It is believed that at that time, the Kootenay and Columbia river systems were connected. While the hunting party chased the Yawuʔniḱ, Naʔmuqʕin gave names to many places in the area. After many rounds chasing the Yawuʔniḱ through the river system, a wise old creature named Kiḱ um told Naʔmuqʕin to stop wasting their time, and told them to block the river so that the next time the Yawuʔniḱ came into the lake he would be trapped. Naʔmuqʕin did this and the hunting party was able to trap the Yawuʔniḱ and kill him. As Naʔmuqʕin butchered the Yawuʔniḱ he gave pieces to each of the animals, and he scattered the ribs to make the Hoodoos, and then he made the four races. He scattered the white balloon-like organ in all directions and said this would be the white race of people. He took the black flesh from the backbone and kidney and scattered it saying this would be the black race of people. He took the orange roe and scattered it saying this would be the yellow race of people, and in the end his hands were covered in blood. He reached down and picked some grass to wipe his hands and said, this will be the red race of people, and they will be here forever. Each of the animals were asked what they would give to support the humans and each animal gave what they could to the humans with the expectation of certain thanks back from the humans for their sacrifice. Naʔmuqʕin was so excited for the coming of the humans that he stood up and hit his head on the ceiling of the sky. He knocked himself dead and his body now forms the Rocky Mountains. (Ktunaxa Nation, 2015; Joe Pierre, personal communication 2014). The Ktunaxa creation story gives us many clues as to how we are to interact with one another, our planet and everything on it. Although the rendition above is not the full story, the creation story talks about how we have all come from the same place, we are interconnected. The story also talks about how we are to honour each other and all things. It is with this in mind I give thanks.