



**University  
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

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

of

**PHILIP HENDERSON**

BA (University of Western Ontario, 2014)

**“Worlds on the Edge: The Politics of Settler Resentment on the Saugeen/Bruce Peninsula”**

Department of Political Science

Tuesday, July 19, 2016

10:00AM

David Turpin Building

Room A357

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Simon Glezos, Department of Political Science, University of Victoria (Supervisor)

Dr. Heidi Stark, Department of Political Science, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Michael Asch, Department of Anthropology, UVic

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Dr. Linda Hardy, Theatre Department, UVic

## **Abstract**

Why is it that, at a time when countless state officials are apologizing for historic wrongs and insisting that Canada has entered a period of reconciliation, many settlers continue to act towards indigenous peoples with an unabated aggression and resentment? This thesis attempts to explain the continual reproduction of settler colonialism through an investigation of the processes involved in the formation of settlers as political subjects. Developing a Butlerian account of the subject, the author suggests that settlers are produced through colonial regimes as political subjects with deep and often unacknowledged investments in the reproduction of systems of oppression that provide for their material and psychic position of privilege. While the instability inherent in such systems ultimately threatens settlers themselves – as seen in the collapsing North American middle class – the fragility and precarity experienced by settlers who are targeted by neoliberal reforms often leads them to reinvest in, and aggressively defend, those very systems of power as a matter of subjective continuity.

The author's inquiry into these issues emerges from his own experience as a settler, and as an attempt to understand what motivates the aggression and resentment that many elements within his own community direct towards indigenous peoples. Because of these motivations, much of this thesis is grounded in discussions about the ways in which the author's home community, in the southern Ontario riding of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, is predicated in ongoing acts of colonization. From burial ground reclamations, to mob violence, to the problems inherent in combatting white supremacy without at once critiquing settler colonialism, each of the examples brought forward in this thesis attempts to analyze why this community of settlers seemingly throbs with a collective anger and indignation that is continually directed at the Saugeen Anishinaabek.