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

of

MEGAN McKENNA

BKin (University of the Fraser Valley, 2010)

“Ec k yúcwementwecw-ep (Take care of each other): Exploring Sport in the Lives of Urban Living Indigenous Women”

Department of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education

Friday, April 20th, 2018
1:00 p.m.
First Peoples House
Ceremonial Hall

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Joan Wharf Higgins, School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Christine O’Bonsawin, Department of History, UVic (Co-Supervisor)

External Examiner:
Dr. Robina Thomas, School of Social Work, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Robert Hancock, Department of Anthropology, UVic

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

This study explored the value of team sport in the lives of seven urban living/playing Indigenous women attending three open talking circles to discuss the influence of personal sport stories, definitions and experiences of wellness, and, prioritizing sport into adulthood. With a strengths-based approach and guided by the Indigenous methodologies that reflect the often-transformative journey of the Indigenous re-searcher, seven themes emerged from qualitative analysis, capturing the resilient and relational stories of participants: (1) Cgwesgwsének (Sunny side of the mountain), acknowledges the overarching benefits of team sport participation and the strength-based perspective that the women shared. (2) Ecyúcwementwecw-ep (Take care of each other), reflects the connectedness present in all of the women’s stories, thus woven throughout the following five themes as well. (3) Yeųne ren úq̓wi (This is my sister), recognizes the sisterhood created through team sport in the city. (4) Cnéwelc (Follow the trail), captures the role model relationships the women shared as well as their feelings about being a role model. (5) Letwilc (Healthy once again), shares the views of wellness and how continually pursuing sport directly influences our wellness. (6) Ct̓éxelc (Swim up-stream) acknowledges the many adversities for sport participation. Yet, the narrative revealed how women continue to overcome barriers in pursuit of sport. Finally, (7) Ct̓íxwtsnem (Raise one’s voice loudly), poses the question ‘who needs to hear about this work and these stories of strength and sisterhood in sport in the city?’ This work contributes to the relatively sparse scholarly literature on Indigenous women and sport, and creating space for the voices of all Indigenous women, both in the game and in the academy.