



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

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

of

MARK McINTYRE

BA (University of Victoria, 2016)

**“Home and Away: Circular Migration, Mobile Technology,
and Changing Perceptions of Home and Community
in Deindustrial Cape Breton”**

Department of Anthropology

Tuesday, April 17, 2018

1:00 P.M.

Cornett Building

Room A319

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Alexandrine Boudreault-Fournier, Department of Anthropology, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Leslie Butt, Department of Anthropology, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Jentery Sayers, Department of English, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:

Prof. Conrad Alexandrowicz, Department of Theatre, UVic

Abstract

This thesis engages deindustrialization as a lived process and applies the concepts of precarity as they relate to communities navigating processes of deindustrialization. Through ethnographic interviews and participant observation research conducted over the summer of 2017 I examine the lived experiences of circular migrant labourers and their significant others, who live in the former coal town of Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, Canada, as they engage in strategies to keep their families in the community. I explore the continuities of industrialization, deindustrialization and labour; the history of work in the region; the present sacrifices that families make to stay in the communities; why families stay; and what they circular migrant labourers and their significant others imagine the future of the region will look like as they raise their children there. Further, as circular migrant labourers are away from home and their families for significant amounts of time, often at irregular schedules, I ask about the strategies that labourers and their families use to eke out a living in a marginalized community. I ask participants what it is like to have to leave the community for work; what it is like to stay behind while your significant other is away for work; what is it like to be home together; and what strategies do they use to keep in touch. One such strategy is the use of internet communication technologies to negotiate physical and social distance. However, these technologies do not always necessarily make up for time spent away from loved ones.