



University
of Victoria

Graduate Studies

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

of

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MA (University of Victoria, 2010)

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**“Teaching national values in an era of reconciliation:
A critical examination of B.C.’s draft high school Social Studies
curriculum, 2015-2018”**

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Wednesday, April 3, 2019

10:00 A.M.

Clearihue Building

Room B017

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Graham McDonough, Department of Curriculum and Instruction,
University of Victoria (Co-Supervisor)

Dr. Helen Raptis, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, UVic (Co-Supervisor)

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

External Examiner:

Dr. Michael Marker, Department of Educational Studies, University of British Columbia

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Irina Paci, Department of Chemistry, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Abstract

Canadian public life is currently informed by what can be broadly considered an era of reconciliation. While definitions abound, reconciliation aims to achieve just relations between the Canadian nation state and Indigenous nations. Efforts on the parts of federal and provincial governments to apologize and atone for the discriminatory treatment of racialized immigrant groups have also been characterized under the broad banner of reconciliatory politics. While official positions indicate that there is to be a role for schooling in reconciliation efforts, what this means – both in terms of the nature of the problem they aim to address and the remedies they propose – remains unclear. At the same time, a new high school Social Studies curriculum in British Columbia (B.C.) is intended to contribute to reconciliation. This dissertation critically examines B.C.'s most recent high school Social Studies curriculum, 2015-2018, and asks how it is making space, or not, for robust and meaningful inclusions of previously marginalized and excluded histories and perspectives. Specifically, in this dissertation I probe how the production of national values and priorities in curricula both accommodates the goals of reconciliation and reveals its limits. This dissertation contributes to literature that examines the condition of settler colonialism in educational settings in countries like Canada. Its analysis indicates that while progressive curricular inclusions like those in the B.C. curriculum, 2015-2018, contribute to increased plurality in educational spaces, there are limits to their efficacy. This is the case primarily because these inclusions are produced through and operate within liberal frameworks that re-center the Canadian nation state and thus reinforce dominant national values. Its conclusions suggest that the efficacy of curricular inclusions that pursue reconciliation will be limited unless teacher education – both pre- and in-service – includes a critical self-analysis of settler colonial privilege, conditionality, and the nation state.