



University
of Victoria

Graduate Studies

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

of

SCOTT KOURI

MA (University of Victoria, 2014)

BA (University of Victoria, 2011)

**“Counselling in an Age of Empire:
Intervening in the (Re)Production of Majoritarian Subjectivity”**

School of Child and Youth Care

Thursday, May 30, 2019

1:00 P.M.

Clearinue Building

Room B007

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Sandrina de Finney, School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria (Supervisor)

Dr. Hans Skott-Myhre, School of Child and Youth Care, UVic (Member)

Dr. Vikki Reynolds, Master of Counselling Program, City University-Vancouver (Outside Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. John Winslade, College of Education, California State University San Bernardino

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, School of Public Administration, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Abstract

In an age of unbridled global capitalism and caustic neocolonial relations to land and life, the question of the aims and approaches of doing counselling with young people, particularly those majoritarian youth who are inheriting the privileges and specters of capitalist and colonial conquest, is pertinent. This dissertation is a collection of three theoretical papers on critical counselling with majoritarian young people in the context of contemporary Empire. A critical lens drawn from decolonial analyses was applied to mainstream counselling practice and theory. By developing a map of how contemporary Empire functions as a permutation of settler colonialism and globalized capitalism, this work investigates the forms of power and discourse that structure contemporary counselling, particularly the bio-medical-industrial-complex of psychiatry and the pharmacology industry, societies of control and digital technology, affective labour, and coloniality. Practices of vulnerability, self-reflexivity, decolonization, accountability, and critique are weaved into a cartographic methodology to redefine counselling as an ethics-driven and politicized intervention in the reproduction of majoritarian subjectivity.

In the 21st century, globalized capitalism and settler colonialism seek to push past material limits and appropriate the products of human relatedness—feelings, ideas, cultures, and creations. In resisting this affective extractivism, these papers explore what it might mean to position engagement, living encounter, and relationship in an ethics-based counselling paradigm of resistance and social justice. The challenge of a critical counselling praxis commensurate with such a paradigm is to find avenues to intervene in the majoritarian psyche's capito-colonial grip on all forms of land and life. *Counselling in an Age of Empire* proposes that a politicized account of counselling with majoritarian subjects might prove to be a productive space for recrafting subjectivities. Through a careful critique of the majoritarian subject, in the roles of both counsellor and client, a praxis of counselling attentive to political context, based in living encounter, and grounded in a settler ethics of vulnerability and accountability is sketched out. Overall, the work is aimed at majoritarian students and counsellors, their teachers, and those interested in developing a counselling praxis grounded in settler ethics, critique, vulnerability, and the power of living encounter.