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

SHIANNA McALLISTER

BA (Thompson Rivers University, 2016)

“Speaking with Authority: Gender and Indigenous Politics in the Mount Polley Mine Disaster”

Department of Political Science

Thursday, August 29, 2019
1:00 P.M.
Clearihue Building
Room B007

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Rita Dhamoon, Department of Political Science, University of Victoria (Co-Supervisor)
Dr. Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark, Department of Political Science, UVic (Co-Supervisor)
Dr. James Tully, Department of Political Science, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Sarah Hunt, First Nations and Indigenous Studies, University of British Columbia

Chair of Oral Examination:
Prof. Lee Henderson, Department of Writing, UVic

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

This thesis explores the role of authority and how Indigenous people have been gravely impacted throughout the 2014 Mount Polley Mine Disaster. Through critical engagement of political theory, environmental racism, and Indigenous Nationhood, I offer an analysis of the disaster that asks: How do we construct, accept, and uphold notions of authority in the Mount Polley Mine Disaster? I answer this by conducting a discourse analysis informed by Kwakwaka’wakw geographer Sarah Hunt’s colonialscape, Environmental historian Traci Brynne Voyles’s wastelanding, and Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben’s spatiolegal concepts of the state of exception and bare life. To conclude, I will provide an alternative understanding of authority that is grounded in Indigenous feminist approaches that can better represent what authority should look like.