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

of

JOËLLE ALICE MICHAUD-ŒUELLET

MA (University of Victoria, 2009)
BA (Laval University, 2006)

“On the Relationship between Vulnerability and Sovereignty in Québécois Settler Self-Determination and the Shift to a Relational Conception of the Self as Treaty Partner”

Department of Political Science

Thursday, April 18, 2019
10:00 A.M.
Clearihue Building
Room B021

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. James Tully, Department of Political Science, University of Victoria (Co-Supervisor)
Dr. Michael Asch, Department of Political Science, UVic (Co-Supervisor)
Dr. John Borrows, Faculty of Law, UVic (Outside Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Dalie Giroux, School of Political Studies, University of Ottawa

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Billie Allan, School of Social Work, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract
The dissertation studies the relationship between Québécois and Indigenous peoples with regards to two different approaches to self-determination. It offers a critique of sovereignty-based self-determination in the form of the nation-state – a hegemonic model throughout the world and within Québécois political imagination – by shining light on the co-constitutive relationship between vulnerability and sovereignty, tracing the origins of their conceptual association in the work of Hobbes. The dissertation argues that, comparatively, by asserting the priority of relationality over individuality, the work of Marcel Mauss contributes to a relational theory of self-determination. By positing togetherness, relationality, reciprocity, and difference as forming the most basic reality of politics, Maussian gifting offers new perspectives on the question of vulnerability in the context of intercultural relations. Finally, through a study of the ethos of Indigenous treaty philosophy, the dissertation argues for re-envisioning Québécois self-determination through the role of treaty partner and honouring the gift of hospitality contained in the early treaties and alliances of peace and friendship with Indigenous peoples.