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

of

JAKE SHERMAN

BA Hons (The University of British Columbia, Okanagan, 2014)

“They are a Scum Community Who Have Organized:” The Georgia
Straight, freedom of expression, and Tom Campbell’s War on the
Counterculture, 1967 – 1972”

Department of History

Wednesday, December 12, 2018
10:00 A.M.
Clearihue Building
Room B017

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Jason Colby, Department of History, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Lynne Marks, Department of History, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Lara Campbell, Gender, Sexuality and Women’s Studies, The University of British Columbia, Okanagan

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Ulrich Mueller, Department of Psychology, UVic

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

The 1960s have a special place in the cultural memory of the West Coast of Canada. They have informed its regional identity, the cityscape of Vancouver, and the social infrastructure of the modern state. But lost in the mythos that has surrounded Vancouver’s long sixties is the story of the Georgia Straight. Founded by a group of poets in 1967 to combat a campaign launched by the municipal government to discriminate against the counterculture, it is today, in 2018, the most prosecuted newspaper in Canadian history. Between 1967 and 1972, the municipal and provincial government deliberately took advantage of the legal justice system to censor an outlet for dissent, with the end goal of inhibiting it from publishing. This thesis challenges popular conceptions of the 1960s in British Columbia’s popular memory by demonstrating the extent to which the state deliberately censored freedom of expression by attempting to silence an outlet for dissent, and highlights how the municipal and provincial government infringed on the civil liberties of Vancouver’s counterculture community, in one instance in August 1971, threatening it with outright violence.