



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

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

of

ELISSA WHITTINGTON

BA Honours (Queen's University, 2013)

"Settler-colonial politics in B.C.'s consultation and accommodation policy: A critical analysis"

Department of Political Science

Wednesday, April 24, 2019
10:00 A.M.
David Turpin Building
Room A357

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. James Lawson, Department of Political Science, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Rita Dhamoon, Department of Political Science, UVic (Member)

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Dr. Anita Girvan, School of Environmental Studies, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Anne Marshall, Department of Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Abstract

This thesis explores technologies of power that operate in British Columbia's policy for consultation with Indigenous peoples about proposed natural resource development projects. I use the concept of settler colonialism to analyze the contents of British Columbia's consultation and accommodation policy to assess whether and how the policies are oriented toward settler-colonial relationships. I analyze a British Columbia provincial policy document entitled *Updated Procedures for Meeting Legal Obligations When Consulting First Nations Interim*. I examine how power operates through settler law and policy by focusing on this policy document. I use a Foucauldian approach to critically analyze three technologies of power that operate in British Columbia's consultation and accommodation policy: the administrative law principle of procedural fairness, recognition politics, and the assumption of legitimate settler sovereignty. I consider how the policy's focus on process reveals colonial power dynamics. Furthermore, I argue that recognition politics operate in the policy because Indigenous difference is recognized and some space is made for Indigenous actors to exercise authority, however the settler state retains final decision-making authority, which shows a colonial hierarchy of power. Finally, I consider how the assumption of legitimate settler state sovereignty that underlies B.C.'s law and policy is a source of authority through which the settler state has various types of power under the policy, including definitional power and final decision-making power.