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

of

KYLA FITZGERALD

BA (University of Victoria, 2014)

“An Unjust Execution:
A Case Study of Inouye Kanao, the Kamloops Kid”

Department of History

Monday, August 24, 2020
1:00 P.M.
Conducted Remotely

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. John Price, Department of History, University of Victoria (Co-Supervisor)
Dr. Lynne Marks, Department of History, UVic (Co-Supervisor)

External Examiner:
Dr. Pooja Parmar, Faculty of Law, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Susan Boyd, Studies in Policy and Practice, UVic

Dr. Stephen Evans, Acting Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract

This thesis examines the legal case of Inouye Kanao, a second-generation Japanese Canadian who was executed for high treason in August 1947 in Hong Kong. In this thesis, I trace not only Inouye's legal case, but also his early life, the broader political context, diplomatic correspondence, and other war crimes cases. By employing race-thinking and Critical Race Theory as theoretical frameworks, I consider the role of race and racism and aim to better understand its influence on Inouye's legal case. In doing so, this thesis challenges previous narratives and misinformation about Inouye. I conclude that racism was a significant factor that affected all aspects of Inouye's case, resulting in an unjust execution that did not reflect the crimes. Ultimately, Inouye was executed not because of his actions but because he was racialized as a treacherous and cruel Japanese Canadian.